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*Based on the review of Sh. Bobojonov Associate Professor, PhD*

## EDUCATIONAL MIGRATION: THE KEY REASONS OF FLOWING FROM HOME TO FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

Annotation

This article is about the Uzbek youth who have overcome such obstacles and are improving their knowledge in the most developed countries of the world, the paths they have taken to achieve this goal and the main factors in attaining these achievements, difficulties encountered in adapting to higher education, the process of acculturation, peculiarities of foreign elite education system and these themes are revealed based on the point of view of Uzbek youth. The above issues are considered based on the acculturation model of human development which is regarded as anthropological concepts.

**Key words:** Educational migrations, adaptation, tertiary education, universities.

## ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНАЯ МИГРАЦИЯ: ОСНОВНЫЕ ПРИЧИНЫ ПЕРЕЕЗДА ИЗ РОДНОЙ СТРАНЫ В ЗАРУБЕЖНЫЕ УНИВЕРСИТЕТЫ

Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются пути достижения этой цели и основные факторы успеха, трудности адаптации к системе высшего образования, процесс аккультурации, особенности зарубежной элитной системы образования, а также данные темы раскрываются с точки зрения самой узбекской молодежи. Указанные вопросы анализируются на основе модели аккультурации человеческого развития, рассматриваемой как одна из антропологических концепций.

**Ключевые слова:** Образовательная миграция, адаптация, высшее образование, университеты.

## TA'LIM MIGRATSIYASI: O'Z MAMLAKATIDAN CHET EL UNIVERSITETLARIGA KETISH ASOSIY SABABLARI

Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqola ana shunday to'siqlarni yengib o'tgan va dunyoning eng rivojlangan mamlakatlarida bilimlarini oshirayotgan o'zbek yoshlari, ularning ushbu maqsadga erishish yo'llari hamda muvaffaqiyatga erishishdagi asosiy omillar, oliy ta'lim tizimiga moslashish jarayonida uchraydigan qiyinchiliklar, akkulturratsiya jarayoni, xorijiy elita ta'lim tizimining o'ziga xos jihatlari haqida bo'lib, ushbu mavzular o'zbek yoshlarining nuqtai nazari asosida yoritilgan. Yuqoridagi masalalar antropologik konsepsiyalardan biri hisoblangan inson rivojlanishining akkulturratsiya modeli asosida tahlil qilingan.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Ta'lim migratsiyasi, adaptatsiya, oliy ta'lim, universitet.

**Introduction.** In today's globalized world, many people are increasingly interested in visiting foreign countries, building a new life, and creating themselves as independent individuals. Specifically, most people in nations that temporarily lost their freedom believe that any other country is superior and brighter (Beech, 2014). As a result, there is a growing global student mobility process and a growing desire among many young people in those nations to study abroad. Specifically, the number of international students has increased steadily in recent years, from 4.1 million in 2012 to 6.4 million in 2021, according to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (2023). Therefore, it is becoming increasingly important to solve the issue by doing a scientific study on the factors impacting the process's genesis.

In recent years, dreams of studying abroad have become widespread among Uzbek youth. In particular, higher education policy specialist Emma Harden-Wolfson, who visited to participate in the international conference held in Uzbekistan in May 2023, also recorded her thoughts on this trend (Harden-Wolfson, 2023). According to her, in 2020, there were over 80,000 Uzbek youth traveling abroad to study, making Uzbekistan the unquestioned leader in Central Asia in this area. (Harden-Wolfson, 2023).

The attached graphic shows that there has been a significant increase in the number of young people leaving Uzbekistan to study abroad in recent years. Unfortunately, there are few scientific researches that explore and identify the

issues related to this topic in Uzbekistan. This leads to an increase in the importance of conducting scientific work in this direction. Due to a lack of literature, I analyzed the scientific works conducted on this topic in neighboring Kazakhstan. The reason for this is that Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have a common history and culture, and there are many similarities in the lifestyles and conditions of people in the countries. Researcher Zhalnina also noted that the scientific study of international students of Kazakhstan and its neighboring regions was not carried out at a sufficient level (Zhalnina, 2021). Simultaneously, I learned about the research carried out on student mobility in other areas that have a cultural and regional difference with Uzbekistan. Despite regional and cultural differences, there are several similarities between issues related to student mobility in Uzbekistan and these countries. I will discuss these articles in detail in the literature review.

The article examines the educational experiences of Uzbek students pursuing bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in UK universities as well as those of graduates who work in different state agencies in Uzbekistan. The dissertation aims to contribute to educational anthropology and migration fields through studying below issues:

Researching the reasons why Uzbek youth choose foreign universities, and in particular, the UK higher education system, and what factors caused them to study abroad. This topic mainly highlights the various problems faced by Uzbek

students in the educational system of Uzbekistan and their future aims. Based on this, the dissertation collects comprehensive data on Uzbek students' arrival in the UK, their objectives, and their decision to pursue higher education in the UK. This data is useful for tertiary education in the UK for developing educational programs that will increase the study efficiency of students visiting the UK from Uzbekistan and other Central Asian nations. The dissertation uses the push and pull factors in the migration field to explain this topic. I will introduce the literature related to this topic in detail in the literature review.

**Literature review.** One of the interesting themes in this topic is the background of students who come to Western countries to study and improve their experience. Although thousands of young people in many countries aim to study abroad, only a minority of them have this opportunity, and it is always attractive to study the background of students who have achieved their goals. The reason is that living and studying in European countries requires a certain amount of financial affordability and intellectual abilities from a migrant student. This is because their story consists of their discipline and hard work, family support, and many other processes. Of course, several interesting studies have revealed this topic. Particularly, Eulalie van Heerden's article "Black University Students in South Africa: The Influence of Sociocultural Factors on Study and Performance" examines the impact of backgrounds, including, social and cultural factors on students' academic success. According to him, a child's school education, learning styles, and attitudes, language, government policy on education, economic and physical environmental factors, individual character, norms, and values are essential for his or her future academic success and successful career. Urie Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological theory of human development will be used as a theory. According to the theory, the micro-system, which is the family and school; the meso-system, which is the collaboration of these two micro-systems; the exo-system, which is the factors that surround the child: the profession of the parents and the neighbourhood; and the macro-system, which is cultural, political, and environmental factors, are important in human development (Elliot et al., 2016).

Another interesting topic is the first experience and impressions of international students toward the host country. Many international students undergo culture shock in the early days in the host country. After some time, they adapt to the host culture and country. However, this adaptation period prolongs various periods for each student based on their flexibility. As an international student who experienced this adaptation process, I am interested in researching this topic. Jang et al. are one of the scientists who have studied this topic. They researched the acculturation processes of Korean students who came to the USA, their ability to adapt to a new culture, and their attitudes towards heritage culture and host culture, based on Berry's bi-dimensional model of acculturation framework in their article entitled "A Bidimensional Model of Acculturation for Korean American Older Adults". Luo et al. also studied the acculturation attitude preferences of international students studying in China. According to them, acculturation attitudes consist of integration, separation, assimilation, and marginalization attitudes, and the conditions of international students, such as gender, duration in China, English proficiency, and social ties, affect their preferences for acculturation attitude (Wang et al., 2021). For example, assimilation is to adapt to the host culture faster and easier while gradually forgetting or minimising one's own culture. In other words, high adaptation of the host country and low maintenance of the original culture. As for separation, the individual is in less contact with the host culture, which means high maintenance of the original culture

and low adaptation of the host culture. International students who choose the integration attitude live a balanced lifestyle and stabilize the host and original cultures. Students with a marginalization attitude are individuals with unique private lives isolated from others. In this case, they are far from the original and host cultures that live in their own world (Jang et al., 2007). International students experience the adaptation process via one of these four adaptation attitudes depending on their character and attitude towards life. Furthermore, it is common for international students to fall into stress during the adaptation process and to undergo much mental pressure due to academic difficulties. Bashir et al. (2020) studied the factors that cause students' stress. Academic and financial problems are considered the main factors that cause stress in many students. Elliott et al. also researched the acculturation processes of PhD students. According to him, there is an informal "third place" for students to feel free, help them adapt to the host culture faster and easier, and forget their academic stress (Elliot et al., 2016a). Boubekri et al. also studied the adaptation process of sub-Saharan students to the cross-cultural Moroccan society. The scientist emphasized that literacy of local language and culture, social ties with local people, host receptivity, and flexible personality help international students quickly and easily adapt to a new society (Boubekri et al., 2022). Students' positive or negative attitudes towards the host country and culture are also of great importance in their adaptation to the new society (Pekerti et al., 2020).

**Methodology.** Due to the lack of literature on this topic, I analysed the literature exploring the neighbourhood Kazakhstan educational migration and also compared with foreign literature such as China, Morocco, and western countries. I also used the interview research method to collect data for this article, which is the primary research method for my article. Based on the goals and tasks of the research, all interview participants are Uzbek international students studying in the UK. The research participants are independent, over 18, and mostly have fully covered scholarships by the Uzbek government. I will select them from the "El-yurt Umidi" scholarship established by the Uzbek government. I am also one of the members of this scholarship and have good networking with other scholarship holders. They were interviewed with semi-structured questions. Interviews were held in-person or online using the University of Sussex Teams platform. In-person interviews were carried out in public spaces. The online interviews were conducted using the University of Sussex Microsoft Teams platform. Furthermore, I also established interviews with personnel who graduated the UK universities and work in Uzbek government organizations.

**Analysis and results.** Firstly, in finding an answer to the question of why Uzbek students want to study abroad, the article starts by studying the initial factor that creates this trend. Nowadays, the desire to enter university and obtain higher education degrees is very strong among Uzbek youth. For example, according to the information provided by Oliyogh.uz, it is clear how important it is to study among young people by taking into account the number of applicants applying for universities in the last eight years (Oliyogh.uz, 2024). Particularly, there was 63.304 applicants in 2016 and 1 018 000 applicants in 2023.

In the last 2023-2024 academic year, 414,600 students finished secondary school (Daryo, 2024). It can be seen that entering the University and getting a degree in Uzbekistan is becoming more and more important every year. This situation is caused by the desire of the population to live in a better way of life and to have a good profession. As research participant Sangir stated, his father encouraged him and his siblings to study in the family. The reason for this is to live a stable life and avoid living in need of someone. Sangir's uncle does not

have a degree and often makes ends meet with seasonal jobs. Usually there is less work in the winter season, and as a result, there are often shortages in their family. It can be seen from this that society has formed the idea that a person who has a degree will lead a better and more stable income. But the study found that this is not the only reason that motivates young people to study. Based on the collected data, the dissertation divides Uzbek students studying abroad into two parts. The first group consists of Uzbek students studying at universities in Central Asia, including Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, and the second one is Uzbek students studying in the developed countries of the world. In this place, the word developed is used in relation to European countries, USA and Canada. Because, depending on my personal experience, recognition of these countries as developed countries is widespread in Uzbekistan.

Today, most of Uzbek international students are studying in neighboring countries for higher education. In particular, according to the data of the researcher Harden-Wolfson, Uzbekistan ranks first in the number of international students in Central Asia (Emma, 2023). Below is the diagram cited by the scientist:

According to the research, the total number of Uzbek international students in 2020 was around 84,000, of which 40,763 studied in neighboring countries of Uzbekistan (Emma, 2023). Research participant Sitora said that the main goal of the students going to the neighboring countries to study is to be a student there and return to Uzbek universities after studying there for a while. This situation is caused by the difficulty of the entrance exams to the universities of Uzbekistan and the high cost of the tuition fee. Khalima, for instance, said that the cover of Uzbekistan universities does not correspond to the rate of human growth. As a result, many youth apply their documents to universities, which causes strong competition among applicants. Although many new universities have been opened recently, they are not sufficient and not appropriate for the rate of young population. Moreover, the quality of newly opened universities is not satisfactory. For instance, the total number of university applicants is around 1,018,000, of which 193,421 applicants attained student status in 2023 (Gazeta.uz, 2023). It is shown that approximately 20% of the total number of applicants in Uzbekistan was accepted to universities. That is why applicants who fail the exam try to go to other countries.

Another factor is that universities in neighboring countries are affordable. Participant Rakhim stated that the average tuition fee of the Kyrgyz University is around \$300-500, and the tuition fee of universities in Uzbekistan is around \$1,000. This is a factor that encourages many young people to go to neighboring countries. In other words, according to research participants, the fact that the university coverage in Uzbekistan is low compared to the young population rate, the high demand for higher education, and the affordable tuition fees in neighboring countries encourage young Uzbeks to study in neighboring countries.

**Conclusion/Recommendations.** The first research question is why do Uzbek students want to study abroad. Researcher Zhalnina found that the main purpose of young people from neighboring Kazakhstan to study abroad is to receive high-quality education and great-value European and American diplomas (Zhalnina, 2021). This study also revealed that young people of Uzbekistan are going abroad to get quality education and highly prestigious American and European diplomas. But these factors are not the only reason. Unlike the study conducted by Zhalnina, this study divides Uzbek international students into two types depending on the country of departure. Uzbek students going to neighboring countries to study belong to the first type, and their main goal is to achieve the status of a student and obtain a degree. Because the number of applicants to universities in Uzbekistan is very large and the competition is strong. The second type of Uzbek international students are going to the most developed countries of the world, and their main goal is to get a quality education. The reason for this is that the programs of the old Soviet system are still being used in the higher education of Uzbekistan and the lack of new relevant directions. Another difference is that this dissertation found that international Uzbek students have different goals based on gender. Uzbek girls get married at the ages of 19 and 20, and some girls go to study abroad to avoid this process and to feel freedom. So, the intense competition for entrance to universities, the problems in the higher education system, the process of marrying girls as push factors; the advanced and quality education system abroad, and the ease of entering the university as pull factors make Uzbek students leave abroad. This topic shows the problems of tertiary education in Uzbekistan, in particular, the disadvantages of the old Soviet system and the low coverage of Uzbek youth in tertiary education.

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