



Reforms in the Education System of the Republic Of Uzbekistan to Improve the Management of Higher Education Institutions

¹Anvar Gafurov

¹Department of Economy, Alfraganus University, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

*) Correspondence regarding this article should be addressed to: E-mail:

g.anvar@mail.ru

Abstrak: Artikel ini mengungkapkan reformasi utama di sektor pendidikan Republik Uzbekistan. Hingga tahun 2017, jumlah institusi pendidikan tidak cukup untuk mendaftarkan siswa Uzbek sekolah. Oleh karena itu, banyak siswa yang tidak mendaftar telah mulai mengejar keinginan pendidikan mereka di luar negeri, terutama di negara-negara tetangga, yaitu Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, dan Federasi Russia. Bahkan data statistik menunjukkan bahwa sekitar setiap tahun hingga 2017, hanya 9 persen lulusan sekolah yang bisa mendaftar ke universitas, sisanya lulusan baru tidak dapat mendaftar. Sementara itu, populasi Uzbekistan meningkat secara dramatis. Oleh karena itu, tujuan utama artikel ini adalah untuk menunjukkan pentingnya dan kebutuhan reformasi di sektor pendidikan Uzbekistan. Informasi dalam artikel ini didasarkan pada analisis data sekunder, serta laporan statistik dan dokumen yang diperoleh dari berbagai kementerian dan lembaga pemerintah. Selain itu, korelasi demografi dan cakupan institusi ditunjukkan.

Kata kunci: lembaga pendidikan tinggi, tata kelola pemerintahan, akuntabilitas, pertumbuhan, transparansi

Abstract: The article reveals the main reforms in the educational sector of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Until 2017, the number of educational intuitions was not enough to enroll Uzbek schools' pupils. Therefore, many unenrolled pupils have started to pursue their educational desires abroad, especially in neighboring countries, namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and the Russian Federation. Even statistical data showed that approximately every year until 2017, only 9 percent of school graduates could have enrolled in universities; the rest of fresh graduates could not be enrolled. Whereas, the population of Uzbekistan has been raised dramatically. Therefore, the main purpose of this article is to show the importance and need for reforms in the education sector of Uzbekistan. The information in this article is based on the analysis of secondary data as well as statistical reports and documents obtained from various government ministries and agencies. Moreover, the correlation between demography and coverage of intuitions has been shown.

Keywords: higher education institution, corporate governance, accountability, growth, transparency.

INTRODUCTION

After collapse of Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), 15 countries, after almost 70 years of colonizing, in the beginning of the 1990s. Many of them reluctantly gained their independence. During the period of colonization, countries were considered work force producers for the emperor. Therefore, the Jadidists (intelligence) who could read and write were accepted as insurgents by the Russian Emperor. Therefore, education was not essential for conquerors, but was considered harmful.

The reason why history was mentioned in this article is that, until the last decade, educational reforms have not been implemented in Uzbekistan. Whereas the population increased sharply, only 9 percent of school graduates could continue their studies in universities. Therefore, the research question is going to be, “*How far do current reforms impact the education coverage of Uzbek youth?*” Moreover, these educational intuitions as to the impact of *new reforms in educational sectors should be governed*.

A system of corporate governance was formed based on the views of the New Public Management in the public sector and its deep penetration into the wider set of management. New public management began to develop in the 1980-1990s, as a result of the weakening of efficiency and transparency indicators in management as a result of the bureaucratic system in the OECD countries. The basis of New Public Management was not taken from the sky; it was simply that private sector management methods were adopted by the public sector. The main methods adopted include decentralized management, results-based financing and accountability for the level of achievement of planned results, strategic management and planning, the adoption of contract-based relationships, and the strengthening of management culture (Aucoin 1990).

New reforms in the style of New Public Management have also had a great impact on the management of higher education institutions (HEIs) in European countries. In an alliance with a growing membership, HEIs have gained greater autonomy in managing their financial and human resources, in their educational process, in deciding on research programs, and in student enrollment. Increasing autonomy has been coupled with performance-based financing; increasingly, public

funding is tied to the achievement of targets expressed as output or outcome indicators (Karl-Heinz Leitner 2014).

Therefore, 21st century HEIs need to adopt new approaches aimed at improving governance, and the adoption of private sector models such as corporate governance is growing rapidly. Following this framework, HEIs should be managed by professionals who have experience in developing corporate policy and planning strategies and who have the ability to lead and manage. This corporate governance structure can implement control and accountability mechanisms for higher education institutions, draw up long-term business plans, define their mission and strategic vision, develop key activity and performance indicators, and set and control annual budget expenditures.

The implementation of corporate governance mechanisms can be expressed as a driving tool for improving university management and increasing its competitiveness, as it brings efficiency through collegial control and management in setting strategies (Florez 2014). Also, this system helps to solve the problems that may be encountered in the management of HEIs (transparency of management) or cope with growing competition (introduction of a new educational field or termination of a field that is losing its relevance), improve ranking positions, set limits for costs, and more for the wider community. Enables the adoption of a relationship characterized by economic and social commitment. Aimed at making university activities more efficient, increasing the responsibility of management bodies, and improving and expanding the range of directions offered by collegiate bodies (Trakman 2008).

Universities should form a corporate governance system to strengthen their institutional autonomy while at the same time leading to greater transparency and control over results for the community. University administrations must link independence, accountability, and evaluation. For this purpose, the initial steps of this system have been taken in our higher education institutions, including the decision of the President of Uzbekistan “On additional measures to ensure the academic and organizational-management independence of state higher education institutions”; financial independence was granted to 35 higher education institutions.

METHODS

The information in this article is based on the analysis of secondary data as well as statistical reports and documents obtained from various government ministries and agencies. Therefore, the main correlation of these data was conducted among them, such as demography indicators of the country, the number of schools and their graduates from these schools, the number of universities, including private and public, and the number of applicants who applied to universities. All of these data were obtained from Uzbekistan's statistical agency, and the author then correlated them to draw conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The population of Uzbekistan is one of the countries with a rapidly growing population. The purpose of our analysis of the demographic indicators of our country is to determine the proportion of the population, especially among young people. Now, the demographic index of Uzbekistan in 2016 was 31.5 million, and in 2017 it was 32.1 million people. In other words, it means the population was increased to 545,000 people, or to 1.6 percent (Figure 1).

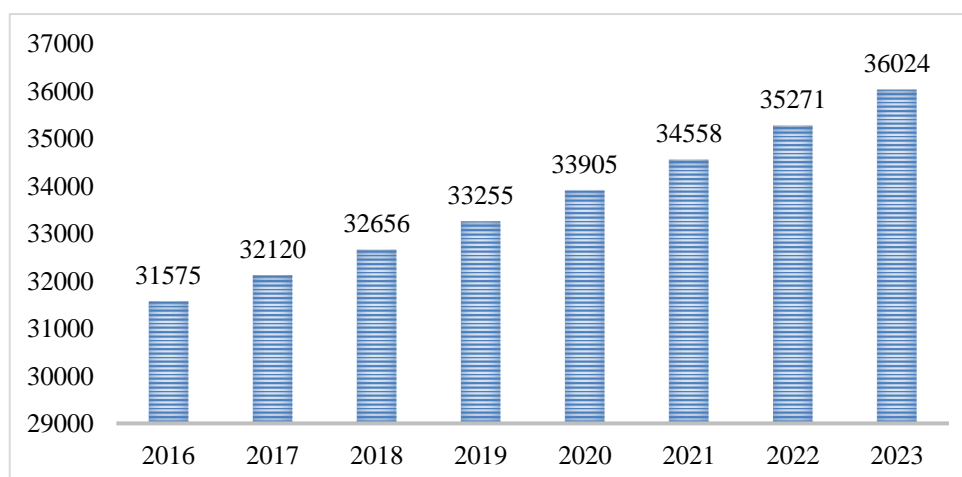


Figure 1. Demographic index of Uzbekistan (thousand people)

Source: Statistic agency, 2023

The demographic indicator increased to 599 thousand people (1.8 percent) in 2018 and 2019, 650 thousand people in 2020, 653 thousand people in 2021, 713 thousand people in 2022, and 36 million in 2023 (2.09 percent). Now, if we analyze according to the general indicator, in the period from 2016 to 2023, there was an

average increase of 654 thousand people per year, and the average increase percentage is 0.14. In the next chart, if we analyze the share of the main part of the population, i.e., between the ages of 15-19, this indicator is necessary to determine the proportion of those who have reached the age of vocational training and the transfer (Figure 2).

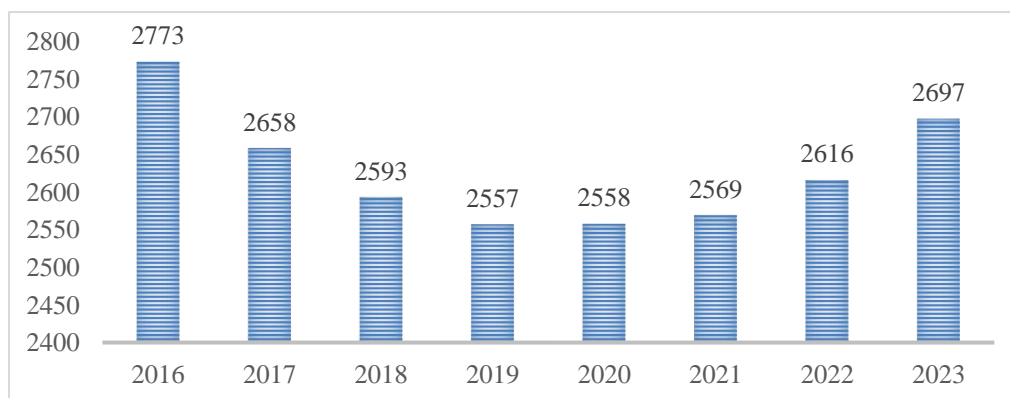


Figure 2. The share of the demographic indicator of Uzbekistan between the ages of 15-19 (thousands of people)

Source: Statistic agency, 2023

Currently, the number of general education institutions in Uzbekistan is growing significantly at the expense of representatives of the non-state sector (more than 1 percent from the previous year): 10 289 schools in 2021 (2 percent more than the previous year), and in 2022 the number of schools is 10 522, which means 1 percent less than 2021 (Figure 3).

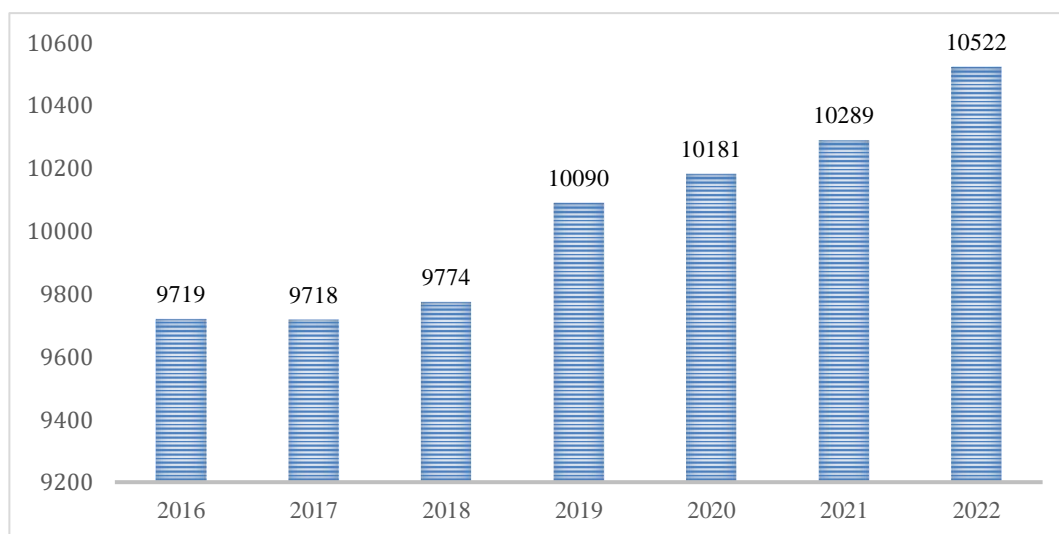


Figure 3. The number of general secondary schools operating in the Republic of Uzbekistan

Source: Statistic agency, 2023

Now, let's analyze the number of students who have studied in general secondary education schools during these years. So, in 2022, 6,461 thousand students studied in 10,522 schools, which means that 615 students' study in 1 school. Now, we can see that the number of students has increased by 3% by 2021, and if we look at the number of schools, 233 new schools are being built across the country (Figure 4).

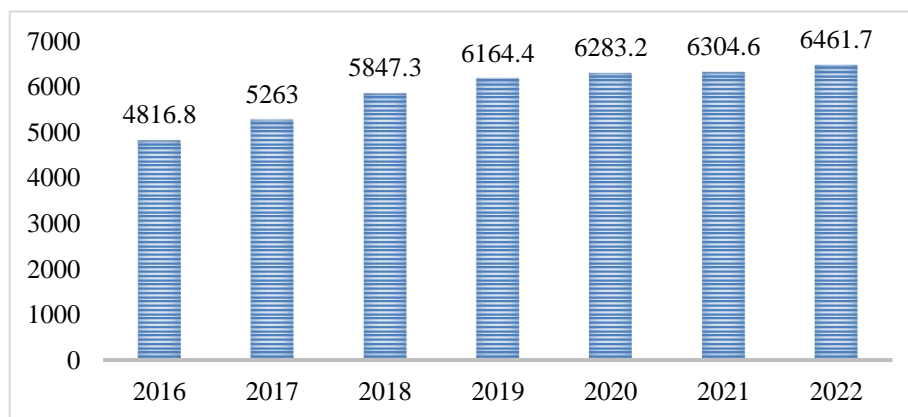


Figure 4. The number of students in general secondary schools of The Republic of Uzbekistan (in thousand)

Source: Statistic agency, 2023

If we look at the average annual increase in the number of school students, from 2016 to 2022, the number of students increased by 235,000 per year. If we analyze the number of schools, we can see that the number of schools has increased by an average of 115 per year. From 2016 to 2022, we can see a 7.63% increase in the number of newly built schools. If we analyze the school by students, we can see that it has increased by 25% from 2016 to 2022.

If we analyze the number of school graduates in the key picture of our research work, in 2016, 475 thousand students graduated; 9.8% of graduates graduated in 2016. In the 2016 academic year, 466,000 (8.85 percent) graduates graduated from a total of 5,263,000 students. In 2018, 475,000 students graduated, which is 2% more than in 2017 (Figure 5).

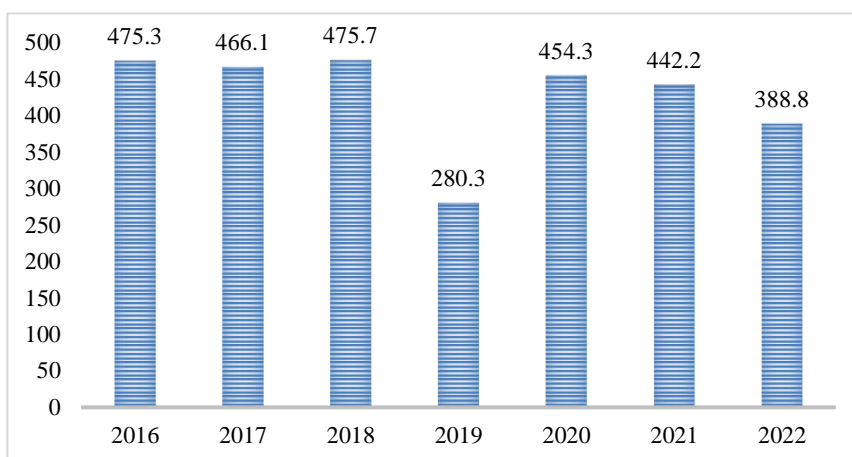


Figure 5. The number of school graduates (in thousand)

Source: Statistic agency, 2023

In the 2019 academic year, 280,000 graduates graduated from school, which is a decrease of 41% compared to 2018, which is 4.54% of all schoolchildren this year. Education increased by 174 thousand (38 percent) in 2020. From 2020 to 2022, we can see a further decrease; in 2021, we can see 12 thousand graduates compared to 2020. In 2022, we can see a further decrease of 54 thousand. First of all, we need to know how many higher education institutions there are in our republic in order to analyze how many general school graduates, in turn, have applied to higher education institutions. Until 2016, the number of HEIs in Uzbekistan was 70, and in the following year it reached 72 due to the opening of two new ones (Figure 6).

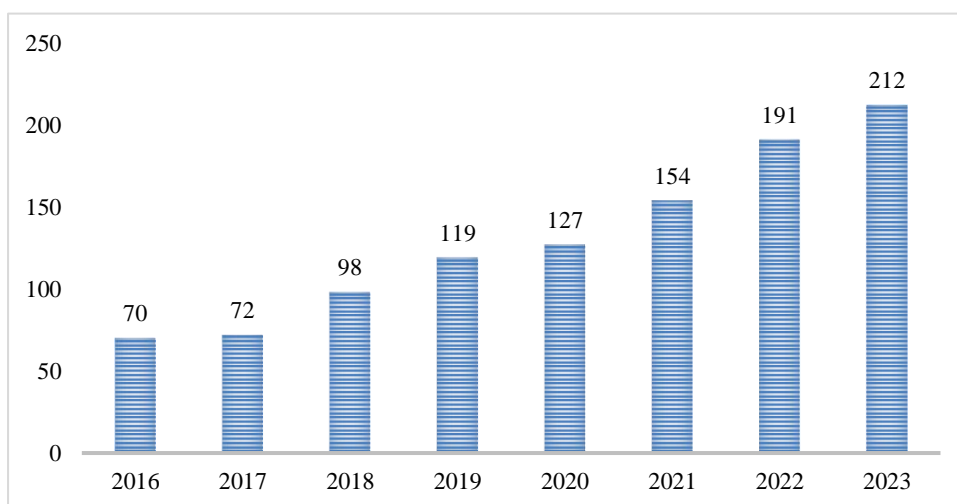


Figure 6. The number of HEIs in the Republic of Uzbekistan

Source: Statistic agency, 2023

In the following year 2018, due to the opening of a new OTM branch, it reached 98; compared to 2017, it increased by 26. In 2019, the number of HEIs increased to 119 due to the opening of 21 new scientific institutes. Due to the pandemic, the number of new HEIs reached 127 in 2020; in other words, we can see that nine new HEIs were opened. For the next new 2021-2022 academic year, 154 HEIs have started their activities, which is an increase of 27 compared to 2018.

The number of HEIs continued to grow, reaching 191 in 2022, and the highest number of HEIs opened this year. In the next figure, if we look at those who applied to higher education institutions, in 2016, 673,000 applicants applied, while the number of higher education institutions was 70. So, on average, according to the books, 9615 applicants corresponded to 1 OTM. In the following year, 2017, we can see that the number of applicants increased by 113 thousand (14 percent), while the number of school graduates in this year was 466 thousand, there were 40 percent more applicants than graduates (Figure 7).

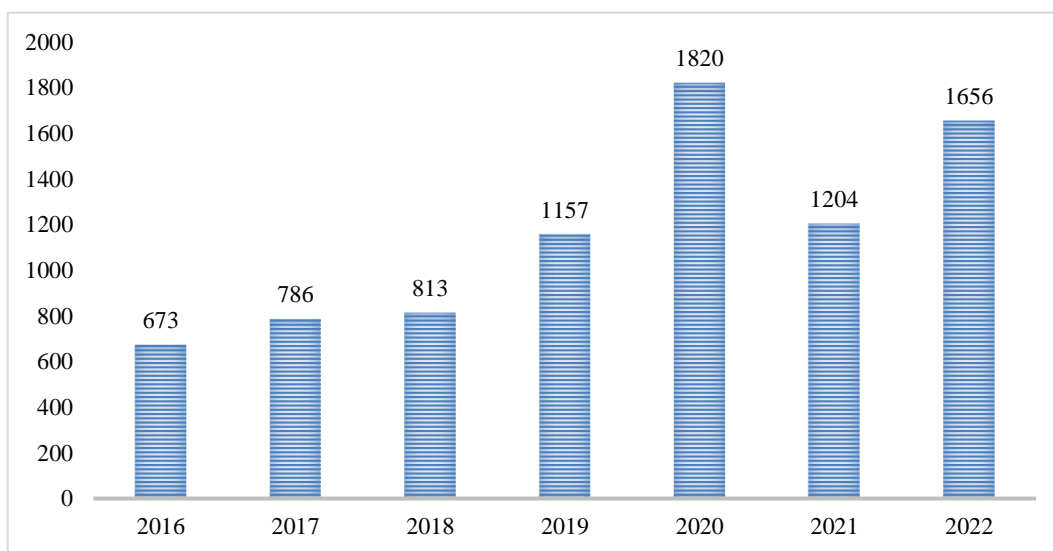


Figure 7. The number of applicants to OTM (in thousand)

Source: Statistic agency, 2023

In 2018, the number of applicants reached 813,000, which is 4% more than in 2017. The number of graduates this year was 475,000. If the number of HEIs was 98, the average number of students per university would be 8,295. In 2019, the number of applicants was 1,157,000, which is 344,000 more than in 2018. In 2020,

1,820,000 people submitted documents, which is 663,000 more than in 2019. This difference is the same as the number of people who submitted documents in 2016.

By 2021, we could see a sharp decline in the number of applicants, to just under 500,000, or 34 percent less. Also, this year, the number of higher education institutions in the republic was 191, and the number of school graduates was 442,000. In 2022, the number of applicants reached 1,656,000, which is 400,000, or 27%, more than in 2021.

If we analyze the number of students admitted to HEIs, we will have the following information: So, in 2016, 475,000 students graduated from school, 673,000 applied to 70 higher education institutions, and 61,200 received student status. This means that 9 percent managed to become students, and the remaining 91 percent, i.e. 610,000, could not enroll.

In 2017, with 466,000 school graduates and 320 people who could not enter higher education institutions in previous years, a total of 786,000 applicants applied to become students at 72 higher education institutions, but only 63,000 people managed to become students. Interestingly, compared to 2016, when the admission parameter increased by 2.9%, the share of 15-19-year-olds in the demographic index of Uzbekistan this year was 2,658,000, and our total population was 32,000,000. At the time of the establishment of the person (Figure 8).

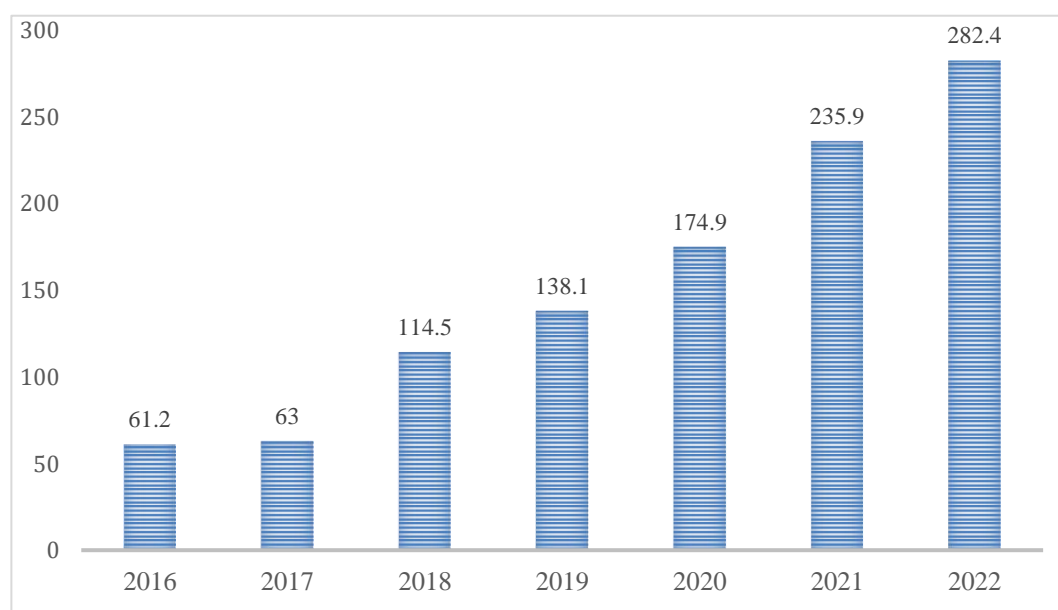


Figure 8. The number of students admitted to HEIs (in thousand)

Source: Statistic agency, 2023

In 2018, the population of 15-19-year-olds will be 2.5 million. Of which the number of school graduates was 476,000, a total of 813,000 applicants applied for admission to 98 higher education institutions; only 114,000 were students, which means that 14% of those who applied became students. If we compare it with the previous year, we can see that it has increased by 44%.

In 2019, the population of 15-19 years old is almost 2.5 million. Of which the number of school graduates was 480,000, a total of 1,157,000 applicants applied for admission to 119 universities; only 138,000 were students, and 11% of those who applied were students. If we compare it with the previous year, we can see that it has increased by 17%. In 2020, the population aged 15-19 will be almost 2.5 million. There are 6.2 million people studying in 10,181 schools. 454,000 students and graduates from 127 higher education institutions, for a total of 1.8 million. 9.6% of applicants, or 175,000, were students. This figure is 21% higher than in 2019.

The demographic indicator of Uzbekistan in 2021 is 34.5 million people, of which 2.5 million are aged 15-19. In this year, 442,000 graduates from 10,289 educational institutions submitted a total of 1.2 million gap-year students' documents for admission to 154 higher education institutions; only 236,000, or 19% of them, became students. In 2022, the number of school graduates was 388,000. A total of 1,656,000 applicants applied for admission to 191 higher education institutions; only 282,000, were students, which means that 17% of all applicants became students. If we compare it with the previous year, we can see that it has increased by 16%. Currently, in 2023, 212 HEIs will be operating in our republic, and a total of 1,203,125 students will be studying in these HEIs. If we consider gender, the number of male students is 601,325 and the number of female students is 601,800 (Figure 9).

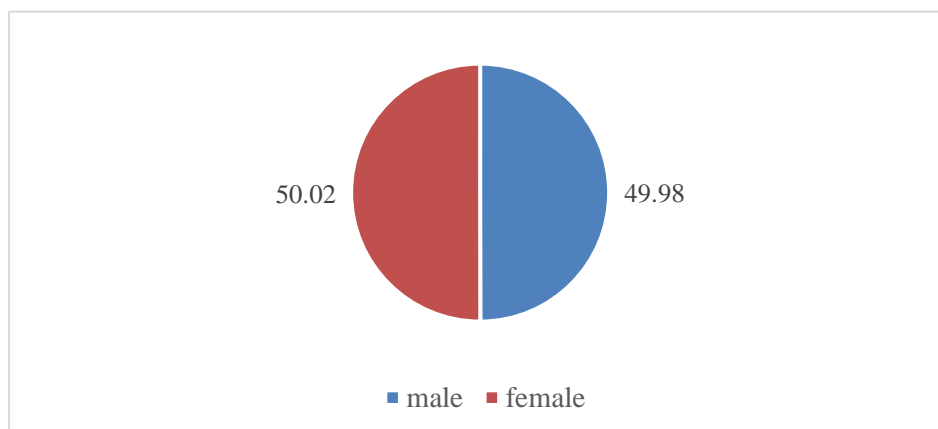


Figure 9. Composition of students studying at the HEIs by gender

Source: (O'zbekiston Respublikasi Oliy ta'lim, fan va innovatsiyalar vazirligi 2023)

If we analyze according to the form of education, we will have the following information; 657 thousand students in the form of full-time education, 482 thousand in the form of part-time education, and about the same in the form of evening education: 44,000 students' study (Figure 10).

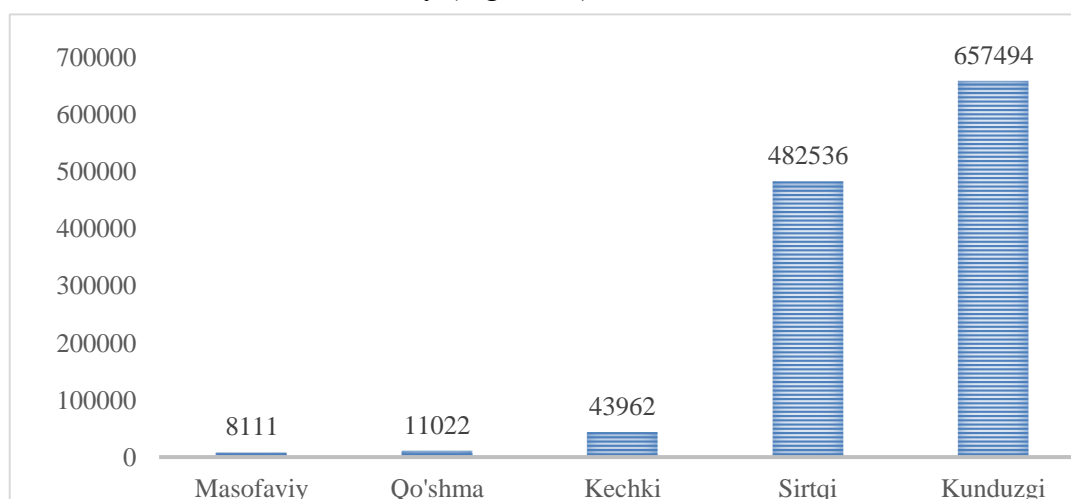


Figure 10. The number of students studying in higher educational institutions

Source: Statistic agency, 2023

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2023, 657 thousand (54 percent) of 1,203 thousand students are studying in the form of full-time education, and 482 thousand are studying part-time. (40 percent) students, 43 thousand (3.65 percent), joint 11 thousand (0.9 percent), and distance education 8 thousand (0.6 percent) study.

If we analyze the number of graduates of higher education institutions, we can get the following information: According to our analysis, in 2016, when 70 HEIs were operating in the republic, 61,200 students were admitted and 67,200 students graduated. The number of those who entered now is 6 thousand more than those who graduated, because those admitted in 2016 will graduate in 2020 according to the plan, and the students graduating in 2016 entered OTM in 2012. In 2017, 66,300 students graduated from 63 HEIs across the country, and 786,000 candidates applied this year. In 2018, the number of operating higher education institutions was 98, and the number of their graduates was 64,100 (Figure 11).

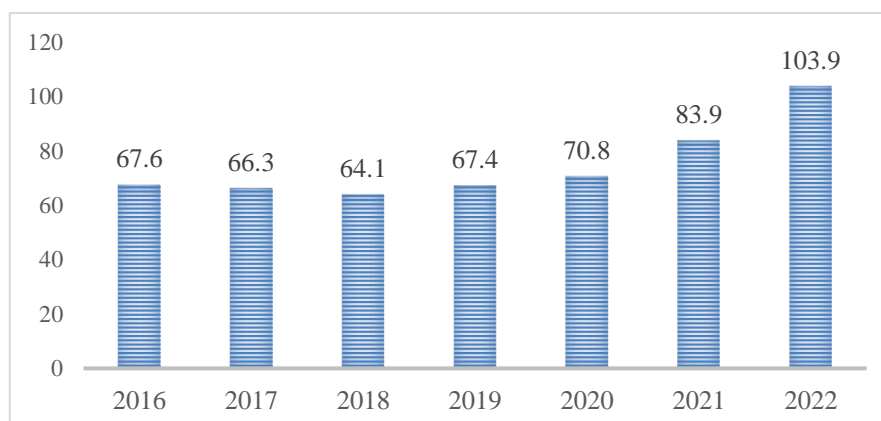


Figure 11. The number of students who graduated from HEIs (thousand)

Source: Statistic agency

Analyzing the following years, a comparative analysis is made with the year 4 years before this analysis year. In the next year of our analysis, 2019, the number of HEIs operating in our republic was 119, but the number of graduates in 2019 was those who submitted documents to HEIs in 2016. Therefore, in 2016, 673,000 applicants' documents were submitted, 61,200 of them became students, and 67,400, or 9%, more than those who entered graduated. The reason for this discrepancy is that some students took academic leave and graduated later.

According to our analysis, 70,800 students graduated in 2020, and 72 of these graduates graduated from higher education institutions in 2017. In 2017, 786,000 applicants applied, of which 63,000 were students. In order to analyze the next year, 2021, 813,000 applicants in 2018 applied; 114,500 of them were students, and 84,000 of these 114,500 graduated. In 2022, 104,000 higher education graduates graduated, and these graduates are applicants who applied to 119 higher educational institutions in 2019. Out of 1,157,000, only 138,100 are eligible students.

Now, if we analyze the level of coverage of OTMs operating in our republic, we can have the following information: in 2016, 475,000 graduates graduated from 9,719 general schools in our republic, and the coverage level of 70 higher education institutions was 9% (Figure 12).

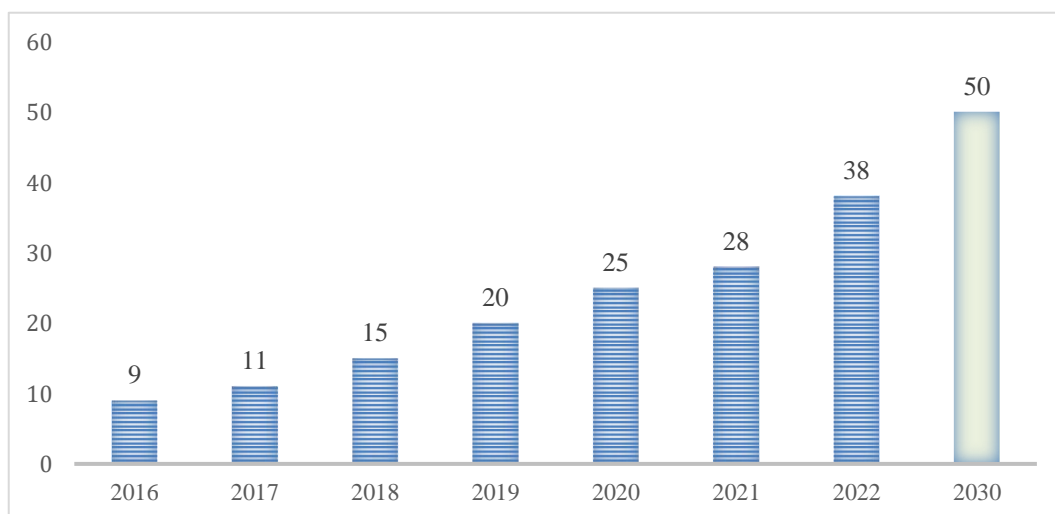


Figure 12. Level of coverage of students of higher education institutions

Source: Statistic agency

The following year, 72 HEIs operated in our republic and raised the coverage level to 11% by accepting 63,000 students. In 2018, the coverage level reached 15% and attracted 114,000 students. In 2019, as a result of adding 138,000 students to the student ranks, the coverage level reached 20%. In the next academic year of 2020, the coverage level reached 25%; 127 HEIs accepted about 175,000 students. The level of student coverage in 154 higher education institutions increased to 28% in 2021. Due to the operation of 154 higher education institutions, 236,000 applicants were added to the ranks of students. In the 2022 academic year,

282,000 students have been granted the status of 191 higher education institutions operating in the republic, increasing the level of coverage by 38%. In the concept of the development of the higher education system of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030, it is planned to increase the coverage level of higher education to 50% by 2030 (O'zbekiston Respublikasi Oliy ta'lim, fan va innovatsiyalar vazirligi 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

According to our observations, reforms in the education system carried out in the Republic of Uzbekistan need to be continued. In other words, it means that demographic indicators of Uzbekistan show the population is still growing, whereas the number of higher intuitions is not enough to cover needs; even private institutions are not capable of satisfying needs, and probably the reason could be higher tuition fees than public intuitions. Moreover, the main point still needs improvement, such as the governance of private institutions. The public institutions already have huge experience in the governance system, while the private ones are new and are looking to reduce expenses; therefore, the number of employees is limited.

Therefore, private institutions need to prepare for the introduction of a new management system, and this system calls for new approaches, which are an integral part of a developing independent state. Higher education institutions should identify priorities and target resources accordingly to fulfill their tasks. Universities cannot be effective and sustainable unless they are able to define strategies, set priorities, select and implement teaching and research goals, and generally adapt their structures and organizations to a changing environment.

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