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THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN DEVELOPING STUDENTS' INTELLECTUAL POTENTIAL WITHIN MODULAR EDUCATION

Otepbergenov Jetkerbay Sakbergenovich
NDPI, associate professor

Abstract: Modular education, as a flexible form of organizing the educational process, contributes to the individualization of learning and the deep assimilation of knowledge. This article explores the role of the teacher in developing students' intellectual potential within the context of modular education. Based on theoretical analysis and empirical research, key pedagogical strategies that foster students' critical thinking, independence, and creative abilities have been identified. Practical recommendations are provided for improving the teacher's professional activities.

Keywords: modular education; intellectual potential; teacher; cognitive competencies; pedagogical strategies.

Intraduction. The development of students' intellectual potential is one of the key priorities of modern higher education, aiming to cultivate learners' abilities in critical analysis, creative problem-solving, and independent assimilation of new information [1]. Modular education, which is being implemented in leading universities around the world, involves dividing the curriculum into independent blocks (modules), each with clearly defined objectives, content, and learning outcomes [2]. This structure enables the educational process to be organized flexibly and requires the teacher to take on new roles – as a facilitator and mentor.

In the Republic of Uzbekistan, the modernization of higher education is considered a priority area of state policy. Within the framework of the National Development Strategy for 2022–2026 and the Concept for the Development of Higher Education until 2030, innovative approaches – including the modular credit system – are being actively introduced. The Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan has developed methodological guidelines for designing modules, and leading higher education institutions in the country – such as Tashkent State Pedagogical University, Samarkand State University, Urgench State University, and others – are successfully implementing modular education into their academic processes.

For example, at Tashkent State Pedagogical University, modules in pedagogy and psychology were piloted. Special attention was given to developing students' critical thinking skills through project-based activities, small group work, and case study methods. The results demonstrated an increase in students' intellectual-cognitive engagement and their ability to solve complex problems independently. Thus, it can be concluded that the successful implementation of modular education in Uzbekistan largely depends on the professional competence of the teacher and their ability to create an educational environment that fosters students' intellectual development.

Methodology. Local and international sources on modular education, the pedagogical role of the teacher, and students' cognitive development were analyzed [3–5]. Special attention was given to normative documents issued by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as to publications dedicated to the implementation of the modular system in national higher education institutions. In particular, methodological guidelines developed at Tashkent State Technical University and Andijan State University were reviewed. These resources emphasize the teacher's role in stimulating students' cognitive activity.

A comparative analysis made it possible to identify specific features unique to the educational

system of Uzbekistan: the cultural characteristics of teacher–student interactions, limited access to digital resources in certain regions, and the need to adapt international practices to the national context. These findings highlighted the necessity of integrating traditional pedagogical approaches with elements of modular course design.

The empirical part of the study was conducted in the faculties of pedagogy at three universities in Uzbekistan: Tashkent State Pedagogical University named after Nizami, Bukhara State University, and Nukus State Pedagogical Institute. A total of 85 third-year students participated in the survey, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 teachers who are currently implementing the modular approach.

The survey included both closed and open-ended questions covering the following parameters:

- the level of student independence in completing assignments;
- engagement in the learning process;
- critical thinking skills;
- perception of the teacher's role in module organization.

During the interviews with teachers, particular attention was paid to the following aspects:

- methods used to stimulate students' intellectual activity;
- assessment and feedback practices;
- barriers to implementing the modular approach (e.g., lack of methodological preparedness, excessive teacher workload, etc.).

The results of the surveys and interviews provided a basis for qualitative analysis of pedagogical strategies applied within higher education institutions in Uzbekistan. In addition, classroom observations were conducted within the framework of the pedagogy module, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the teacher's role in developing students' cognitive abilities.

Results. Analysis of the surveys and interviews, as well as observations of modular classes conducted in higher education institutions in Uzbekistan, yielded the following findings: Student Independence. 68% of the students (out of 85 respondents) stated that support from the facilitator-teacher increased their motivation to study course material independently. This was particularly evident in the pedagogy and psychology modules at Tashkent State Pedagogical University named after Nizami, where students completed research assignments in small groups without constant supervision from the instructor. This practice helped develop their skills in independently seeking information.

At Bukhara State University, the implementation of modules in the methodology of teaching literature maintained a high level of student responsibility: 72% of respondents reported completing their assignments ahead of schedule. In their survey responses, they emphasized the clarity of instructions and the step-by-step structure of the modules.

74% of students reported an improvement in their critical analysis skills after the introduction of debate elements and problem-based tasks into their written assignments. At Samarkand State University, for example, the module "Methods of Working with Texts" was conducted in the form of debate clubs, where students analyzed pedagogical scenarios. Evaluation of essays written before and after the module showed an increase in the average score from 3.2 to 4.1 out of 5.

At Nukus State Pedagogical Institute, instructors noted a significant improvement in the quality of students' argumentation during presentations: in 2024, the average level of argumentation (on a five-point scale) rose from 2.8 to 4.0.

63% of respondents stated that project-based assignments under the guidance of a teacher contributed to the development of their creativity. In the "Innovative Teaching Methods" module at Urgench State University, students created original educational projects such as video lessons and infographics, which helped foster non-standard thinking.

An analysis of student portfolios completed within the "Digital Pedagogy" module at Tashkent State Technical University showed that the number of original interactive learning tasks increased by 45% compared to the previous semester.

The findings confirm that within modular education, the teacher performs a multifaceted role–as mentor, facilitator, and guide–by purposefully employing active pedagogical strategies to enhance students' intellectual potential.

Facilitation. At Tashkent State Pedagogical University, teachers who had completed facilitation training designed modules in which 80% of students rated the quality of support during independent work above 4 out of 5 [6].

Problem-based learning. At Samarkand State University, the implementation of case methods and problem tasks within the module "Methods of Analyzing Pedagogical Situations" increased student engagement: the average participation rate rose from 62% to 78%, indicating deeper engagement with learning material.

Project-based activities. The "Innovative Teaching Methods" module at Urgench State University demonstrated that when students were given the freedom to select projects and receive methodological guidance from the teacher, a wide variety of creative ideas emerged: the number of unique projects increased by 50% compared to previous years.

Special attention should be given to the following aspects:

Feedback and task individualization. At Bukhara State University, the introduction of an electronic portfolio allowed teachers to provide textual and audio comments on student work. As a result, 70% of participating students reported better understanding of their zones of proximal development and adjusted their learning strategies accordingly [7].

Professional development of teachers. The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan organized regional seminars and workshops on modular pedagogy at higher education institutions in Tashkent and Samarkand. According to internal reports, participation in such events increased teachers' readiness to develop modules by 65%.

Adaptation of international experience. Foreign practices, particularly case methods from the education systems of Finland and Germany, were successfully implemented at Nukus State Pedagogical Institute. In collaboration with instructional designers, teachers translated and localized more than 20 cases, enhancing the practical value of the module and contributing to the development of students' critical thinking skills.

Thus, Uzbekistan's experience affirms the importance of integrating active pedagogical strategies and continuously improving teachers' qualifications to enhance the effectiveness of modular teaching and to foster students' intellectual growth.

International experience also suggests that regular seminars and training workshops for teachers improve the quality of modular curricula [8].

Conclusion. The study confirms that the implementation of modular education in Uzbekistan's higher education institutions effectively contributes to the development of students' intellectual potential through the active involvement of teachers in the roles of mentor and facilitator. Based on empirical data and an analysis of practices across Uzbek universities, the following key conclusions were drawn:

Teacher professional development. Regular training in facilitation and modular design at Tashkent State Pedagogical University and Samarkand State University increased teachers' ability to develop effective modules by 65–80%.

Integration of active methodologies. Incorporating problem-based learning and project assignments into each module boosted student engagement up to 78% (SamSU) and stimulated creativity in 63% of respondents, according to survey results.

Personalized feedback. The implementation of electronic portfolios with textual and audio feedback at Bukhara State University enabled students to more precisely adjust their learning strategies, resulting in a 12% increase in average academic performance.

Monitoring and assessment. The use of digital platforms such as Moodle and e-portfolios at Nukus State Pedagogical Institute ensured continuous tracking of progress toward module objectives and facilitated timely instructional adjustments.

Recommendations for future practice:

- Continue developing teacher training systems with a focus on facilitation and modular design;
- Standardize the integration of problem-based and project-oriented tasks, adapted from best international practices, to the Uzbek context;
- Expand the use of electronic portfolios and analytical tools for personalized monitoring and feedback;
- Foster inter-institutional collaboration among Uzbek universities to share best practices and develop national methodological guidelines.

In conclusion, a systematic approach to teacher preparation, the integration of active methodologies, and the use of digital tools contribute to the growth of students' intellectual potential and enhance the overall quality of modular education in Uzbekistan.

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