

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO MANAGING EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Annotation

The article explores the theoretical foundations of innovative approaches to managing educational institutions, as well as their role and significance in modernizing the education system. Innovative management involves restructuring organizational activities to meet contemporary demands, integrating digital technologies, and enhancing leadership activities based on strategic thinking. Based on international practices and reforms in Uzbekistan, the article analyzes key mechanisms of innovative management, leadership competencies, and effectiveness assessment criteria.

Keywords

innovative management, education system, strategic thinking, leadership competencies, effectiveness assessment criteria.

Modernizing the education system in the 21st century is emerging as one of the decisive factors in societal development. The use of innovative approaches in modern management ensures the competitiveness of educational institutions, enhances the quality of education, and serves to develop leadership activities in a strategic direction.

The reforms being implemented in the field of education in Uzbekistan are also reflected in the works and speeches of President Sh.M. Mirziyoyev. In particular, the following view serves as a clear example: The foundation of every reform in the education field consists of relying on an innovative approach and creating new systems that meet the demands of the times [1].

Innovative management is not merely the introduction of new technologies, but a comprehensive approach aimed at restructuring organizational activities in accordance

with contemporary demands, updating leadership styles, modernizing internal organizational communication, and effectively managing the educational process. This requires leaders to possess strategic thinking, the ability to introduce advanced practices, and the capacity to form a systematic innovative environment [2].

International experiences also show that for the effective implementation of innovative management, leaders must not only be able to solve organizational issues but also deeply understand social and pedagogical processes. For instance, in the Finnish education system, leaders play a leading role in developing educational institutions through independent decision-making, collaborative work with the pedagogical team, and supporting innovations [3].

The effective organization of innovative activities primarily depends on the leader's managerial potential, strategic thinking, and ability to put new ideas into practice. The main mechanism for organizing this process in educational institutions consists of forming an innovative environment and systematically developing it.

The following mechanisms are of significant importance in organizing the leader's innovative activities:

1. Developing and implementing an innovative strategy. This includes defining the long-term goals of the educational institution, identifying innovative priority areas, and drawing up specific plans for their implementation [4].
2. Introducing advanced management technologies. For example, using digital platforms, electronic document management, online monitoring, and management systems increases leadership efficiency [5].
3. Working in collaboration with the pedagogical team. Innovative activity must be carried out not only through the leader's initiative but also in cooperation with teachers, methodologists, and other staff members [6].

4. Creating a system of motivation and incentives. Material and moral encouragement of educators who introduce innovations ensures the sustainability of innovative activities [7].

5. Establishing external cooperation. New ideas and resources are attracted through collaboration with scientific institutions, foreign educational centers, local authorities, and non-governmental structures [8].

As leaders introduce these mechanisms, their main task is to create an atmosphere of openness, striving for novelty, and collective cooperation within the educational institution. In international practice, effective models of this are observed in the education systems of Finland, Singapore, South Korea, and Germany. For example, in Singapore, leaders have the right to make independent decisions when implementing innovative programs, and they are supported by the state [9].

Systematic work is also being carried out in this regard in Uzbekistan. In particular, the “Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022–2026” defines digitalization in education, management automation, and the introduction of innovative mechanisms as one of the priority tasks [10]. At the same time, special attention is being paid to forming innovative management skills in professional development courses for leaders as an important part of this process.

The role of the leader's personality is of incomparable importance in the process of managing educational institutions on an innovative basis. A modern leader must manifest not only by performing administrative management functions, but also as a leader who directs the pedagogical team to implement advanced ideas, unites and inspires them [11].

The role of the leader's personality manifests in the following areas:

1. Strategic leadership — the leader determines the future development directions of the educational institution and develops innovative strategies based on

long-term goals. In this regard, they must possess the ability to analyze global and national trends, evaluate the competitive environment, and guide the team toward a clear goal [12].

2. Motivation and inspiration — innovative processes often impose new and unusual tasks on employees. In such conditions, the leader must use various motivational mechanisms to inspire employees, form a positive attitude toward novelty in them, and ensure their active participation [13].

3. Creating an innovative environment — the leader forms an atmosphere of open communication, experience sharing, and striving for novelty in the educational institution. This, in turn, ensures that members of the pedagogical team freely put forward and implement new ideas [14].

4. Managing organizational and resource potential — introducing innovations requires the efficient allocation and management of financial, human, and informational resources. The leader ensures the development of the educational institution through the rational use of these resources [15].

5. Research and analytical capability — in innovative management, the leader relies on a scientific approach, analyzes research results, and uses them in decision-making. This is an important part of modern management, ensuring that decisions are made based on facts and analysis rather than subjectivity [16].

6. Social partnership and external relations — in innovative management, the leader does not limit themselves to internal resources, but establishes cooperation with local and international educational institutions, scientific centers, business structures, and state organizations. Through this, new experiences, knowledge, and financial resources are attracted [17].

Key competencies that should be formed in the leader's personality:

- Innovative competence – the ability to accept, analyze, and implement new ideas.

- Leadership competence – the ability to unite the team, provide strategic direction, and inspire.
- Information and communication competence – skills in using digital technologies, analyzing, and disseminating information.
- Pedagogical competence – a deep understanding of the content and methods of the educational process, the ability to work effectively with the pedagogical team.
- Organizational and management competence – the ability to systematically manage resources and processes.
- Social and ethical competencies – ensuring an atmosphere of fairness, openness, and trust in communication with the team [18].

On the example of international practice. In the education systems of Finland, Singapore, and Germany, the innovative competencies of the leader's personality are supported at the state policy level. For instance, in Finland, school principals are trained in special “innovative leadership” courses, while in Singapore, every leader receives state grants to implement innovative projects [19].

In recent years in Uzbekistan as well, modules on innovative management, digital skills, and strategic thinking have been introduced into the professional development programs for leaders. Special attention is being paid to forming competencies that meet modern requirements in the leader's personality through the digitalization of the education system, the introduction of information platforms, and the automation of management processes.

One of the main tasks of innovative management in the modern education system is to form a system for evaluating the effectiveness of ongoing reforms and introduced innovative mechanisms. Evaluating effectiveness is not just calculating results, but the process of determining the substantive and structural degree of the innovative character

of management processes, conducting a systematic analysis, and defining development prospects.

The system for evaluating effectiveness in innovative management relies on several measurements and criteria. Among them, the following are of special importance:

1. Strategic criteria – the development concept of the educational institution, the precision of strategic goals, and their implementation through innovative approaches. This criterion shows the existence and degree of implementation of long-term innovative policy in the educational institution [20].
2. Organizational and management criteria – the application of innovative management methods in leadership activities, the digitalization of management processes, and the level of using modern information technologies in decision-making. This criterion also encompasses the culture of cooperation between leaders and the pedagogical team [21].
3. Pedagogical criteria – indicators of introducing new approaches into the educational process, updating the content and forms of education, and developing the innovative potential of teachers. This criterion directly affects the quality of education [22].
4. Social-psychological criteria – the level of satisfaction of employees and students in the innovative environment, the formation of openness to novelty, creative activity, and a spirit of cooperation in the team. This criterion determines the stability of the internal environment of the institution and its development potential [23].
5. Economic criteria – include indicators of efficient use of funds through innovative management, attracting investments, redistributing resources, and ensuring financial stability. This criterion is important in evaluating the long-term economic efficiency of innovative activities [24].

In the system of evaluating innovative management effectiveness, it is not enough to merely define criteria. Indicators and methodological approaches also play an important role in this system. For example, specific measurements (indicators) are defined for each criterion, based on which data are collected and analyzed. In this process, it is recommended to widely use methods such as SWOT analysis, monitoring, sociological surveys, and expert evaluations [25].

Additionally, in international practice, approaches such as the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) model, the ISO 21001:2018 educational quality management standard, and the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) are widely used in evaluating the innovative activities of educational institutions. Through these models, it is possible to deeply analyze not only results but also the quality of processes [26].

The system for evaluating the effectiveness of innovative management in the education sector in Uzbekistan is being improved in stages. The “Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022–2026” outlines the task of creating a system for result-based evaluation of the activities of educational institutions and introducing rating and incentive mechanisms based on the level of innovative activity [27].

In the process of evaluating management effectiveness, not only statistical indicators should be limited, but the innovative culture of the educational institution, the attitude of the leader and the team toward novelty, the creative environment, and the system of continuous improvement must also be taken into account. This is the factor that ensures the true effectiveness of innovative management.

Conclusion. Innovative management plays a decisive role in modernizing the education system and transforming it into a modern institution operating effectively in a global competitive environment. In contemporary conditions, managing educational institutions requires more than just performing administrative functions; it requires forming a comprehensive management system encompassing strategic thinking, the

introduction of innovative approaches, the integration of new educational technologies, and all levels of the organization.

As can be seen from the analytical data above, the theoretical foundations of innovative management are aimed at systematically improving the activities of educational institutions, creating an innovative environment, and developing advanced management competencies of leaders. President Sh.M. Mirziyoyev's views and initiatives in the field of education particularly emphasize that innovations occupy a central place in bringing the education system to a new stage. These thoughts practically demonstrate the necessity of reconstructing management in educational institutions on a strategic basis.

The system for evaluating innovative management effectiveness is an integral part of this process. Scientific literature and international practice particularly emphasize the multidimensionality of this system. Evaluating effectiveness requires the harmonious application of strategic, organizational, pedagogical, social-psychological, and economic criteria. These criteria serve to determine not only results but also the internal content and innovative value of management processes.

At the same time, advanced models of effectiveness evaluation — international standards such as EFQM, ISO 21001:2018, and Balanced Scorecard — serve as an important methodological basis for in-depth analysis of innovative activities and establishing systematic monitoring in educational institutions. A regulatory and legal framework for evaluating the performance and innovative potential of educational institutions has also been created in Uzbekistan, with specific tasks defined in this regard in the “Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022–2026.”

Improving the management effectiveness evaluation system, developing the innovative environment, and enhancing leader competencies ensure the strategic development of educational institutions. This, in turn, serves as an important factor in

improving the quality of education, adapting the educational process to the requirements of scientific and technical progress, and shaping an educated, competitive generation in society.

From an analytical perspective, it can be concluded that:

- It is impossible to effectively implement the innovative management system without theoretical foundations;
- If the management effectiveness evaluation system is formed based on clear criteria and indicators, the results of the educational institution's development increase;
- It is important to adapt international models to national conditions and harmonize them with legislation and practical activities;
- If enhancing the innovative potential of leaders and pedagogical teams is organized as a systematic process, the management culture of educational institutions will be elevated to a new level.

Thus, innovative management manifests as one of the strategic factors for the sustainable development of the education system, increasing efficiency, and societal progress. The harmonious application of scientific-theoretical research, practical programs, and evaluation systems in this direction serves to fully realize the innovative potential of educational institutions.

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