



MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLISHING AND LIBRARIANSHIP IN UZBEKISTAN AFTER INDEPENDENCE

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Library and information activities

Abstract: *Since gaining independence in 1991, Uzbekistan has made remarkable progress in developing its publishing industry and library systems. These sectors have evolved through legislative reforms, modernization initiatives, and a renewed emphasis on cultural preservation. This paper explores the growth of the publishing industry, the digitization and institutional support for libraries, and the government's efforts to promote literary culture. The modernization of key institutions like the National Library of Uzbekistan and the rise of private publishing enterprises highlight the country's commitment to fostering a vibrant intellectual and cultural environment. Challenges remain, especially in digital access, but overall, Uzbekistan's publishing and librarianship sectors reflect significant strides toward integration with global cultural standards.*

Keywords: *Uzbekistan, publishing industry, librarianship, independence, digitalization, cultural heritage, National Library, book publishing, library modernization*

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked a pivotal turning point for Uzbekistan, catalyzing profound social, political, and cultural transformations. One critical area of development has been the publishing and librarianship sectors, which play essential roles in preserving and promoting national identity, culture, and knowledge dissemination. Prior to independence, Uzbekistan's publishing and library services operated within a Soviet centralized system that often limited the diversity of voices and restricted access to international literary trends. Independence ushered in opportunities for reforms, expansion, and innovation in these fields, aiming to align them with both national priorities and global standards.

Since independence, Uzbekistan has embarked on an ambitious path to revitalize its publishing industry, fostering the growth of private publishing houses and expanding the volume and variety of books produced. Annual book production has increased substantially, with new policies providing tax incentives and state support to stimulate literary output. Additionally, the government has initiated programs to promote literature aimed at youth and children, distributing free books to schools and libraries, thus cultivating a culture of reading among younger generations.[1]

Simultaneously, librarianship in Uzbekistan has undergone considerable modernization, focusing on digitizing vast library collections and establishing institutions to coordinate and enhance library services across the country. The National Library of





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Uzbekistan named after Alisher Navoi exemplifies this modernization, serving as a cultural hub with improved facilities and digital resources. Moreover, the establishment of the Association of Libraries demonstrates the country's commitment to adopting international best practices and ensuring methodological support for thousands of libraries nationwide. This paper examines the development trajectories of publishing and librarianship in Uzbekistan after independence, highlighting key institutional reforms, government initiatives, and ongoing challenges.

Following independence, Uzbekistan's publishing sector experienced rapid growth and diversification. The transition from a state-controlled system to a more market-oriented environment paved the way for private publishers to flourish. Today, there are approximately 590 publishing houses, with 90% operating as private entities. The annual output reaches around 11,000 book titles, totaling roughly 40 million copies. This growth is supported by government initiatives such as the exemption of publishing enterprises from profit tax for a five-year period, encouraging entrepreneurship and investment in the sector.[2]

The government also actively commissions literary works, particularly focusing on educational materials and children's literature. Every year, 100 top literary works and 50 children's and adolescent books are produced, with royalties and large print runs enabling broad dissemination, especially in schools and libraries. Such programs reflect the state's dedication to nurturing a literate and culturally aware population, ensuring that the younger generation has access to quality literature in the Uzbek language.

Librarianship in Uzbekistan has seen equally significant developments. In 2018, the government established the Association of Libraries, a coordinating body aimed at supporting more than 12,000 libraries spread across various ministries and regions. This institution promotes best practices, provides methodological guidance, and helps implement technological upgrades nationwide. One landmark in the modernization effort is the National Library of Uzbekistan named after Alisher Navoi. The library has been renovated to offer improved infrastructure, including modern reading rooms, digital catalogs, and online resources. Digitization projects are underway to preserve the extensive collection of nearly 40 million books, manuscripts, and other materials, enhancing accessibility and safeguarding Uzbekistan's literary heritage for future generations.

Despite these advances, challenges persist, particularly regarding digital access and user experience. Some library users have noted difficulties in navigating online platforms, suggesting that further improvements are necessary to fully realize the benefits of digital transformation.

Uzbekistan's publishing and librarianship sectors are supported by major institutions like Sharq Publishing and Printing Joint-Stock Company, the largest publisher and printer in the region. Additionally, the government organizes cultural events such as book fairs, literary contests, and forums to stimulate public interest in literature and celebrate





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national authors. These initiatives also serve an international dimension, linking Uzbekistan's literary scene with global networks and fostering cultural exchange. The emphasis on producing Uzbek-language books and translating foreign works has contributed to a rich and diverse literary environment, balancing tradition and modernity.

The development of publishing and librarianship in Uzbekistan since independence illustrates the country's commitment to preserving its cultural heritage while embracing modernization and global standards. The transformation from a Soviet-era centralized system to a more dynamic and diversified environment has enabled significant growth in book production, with private publishing houses playing a leading role. Government support through tax incentives, literary commissions, and distribution of books to educational institutions underscores the priority placed on cultivating literacy and cultural awareness. At the same time, the modernization of libraries, particularly through digitization efforts and institutional coordination, has improved access to information and safeguarded valuable literary resources.

The National Library of Uzbekistan named after Alisher Navoi stands as a symbol of this transformation, reflecting both the country's rich cultural history and its forward-looking approach to information management. The establishment of the Association of Libraries has strengthened professional development and introduced international best practices into the Uzbek library system. Nevertheless, challenges remain, particularly in enhancing digital infrastructure and ensuring user-friendly access to online resources. Continued investment and innovation will be necessary to bridge these gaps and fully harness the potential of digital technologies.

Overall, Uzbekistan's progress in publishing and librarianship demonstrates a successful blend of cultural preservation and modernization. As the country continues to develop its literary and informational infrastructure, it positions itself as a regional leader in cultural development, contributing to the broader goals of education, national identity, and global cultural dialogue.

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