HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE BUKHARA EMIRATE (LATE 19TH – EARLY 20TH CENTURIES)

Iskandarova Mahliyo
Second-Year Student, Department of History Information Technologies and Management University

Abstract: This article examines the general condition of the traditional educational system of the Bukhara Emirate, which was considered one of the leading centers of science and enlightenment in the East during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Based on reliable historical sources, it analyzes the stages of education, the educational process, the structure and material support of schools, as well as the subjects taught in educational institutions.

Keywords: Maktabkhona, domla, ustod, otinbibi, eltibibi, Haftiyak, Tajwid, wooden tablet (lavh), “mat fee” (bo‘yra puli), “coal fee” (ko‘mir puli), Farzi Ayn, Chor Kitob, Gulistan and Bustan, Sabot ul-Ojizin.

“Every nation glorifies its history. However, nowhere in the world is there a past as rich as ours, nor scholars as great as our ancestors. We must deeply study this heritage and convey it to our people and the world. The New Uzbekistan begins at the school threshold” [1].

The cities of Bukhara, Samarkand, Termez, Nasaf, Khiva, Tashkent, and Margiana, located in present-day Uzbekistan, gained renown as scientific and cultural centers of the Muslim East. While Samarkand was considered the adornment of the world, Bukhara became famous throughout the Islamic world as a symbol of the strength and prestige of Islam. According to the traditional educational system of Central Asia, educational institutions consisting of two levels—primary schools (maktabs) and higher educational institutions (madrasas)—functioned for centuries.

The first traditional school in Bukhara was established in 714 by Qutayba ibn Muslim within the Bukhara Ark on the site of a former Zoroastrian temple. The word “maktab” derives from the Arabic verb kataba (“to write”) and refers to a place where writing is taught. In some sources, the term also denotes a school for scribes [2].

In Central Asia, traditional education consisted of two stages: the lower-primary school and the higher-level madrasa. These institutions were not fully financed by the state; instead, they survived through private donations and revenues from waqf (endowment) properties.

Schools (maktabkhanas) existed in virtually all cities, villages, and settlements of Central Asia. Since most schools consisted of a single classroom, they were commonly referred to as maktabkhanas. In accordance with Islamic traditions, boys and girls studied separately.

Most boys’ schools operated within mosques, madrasas, Qur’an-recitation centers (qorikhanas), or in the homes of private teachers. Girls’ schools were generally organized in the homes of women educators or wealthy families. Male teachers were called domla, ustod, ustoz, or muallim. Women who educated girls were known as otinoyi or otinbibi (in Tashkent), bibikhalifa or bibioltin (in Bukhara), and eltibibi (in Khorezm). It should be noted that in the territory of present-day Karakalpakstan, boys and girls were often taught together by a single teacher [3].

In some traditional schools, the salaries of teachers were specified in waqf documents. Such information can be found in the waqf deeds of Raufboy’s son Ma’rufboy, Nozikoy, daughter of

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

Mirmansur, and Mirzo Ghulom, son of Uzbek. One of the conditions imposed on teachers stated that "the teacher must not leave the school without a valid reason" [4].

According to waqf documents, school buildings were constructed from wood, adobe, or baked bricks. A school usually consisted of a single room where children sat on reed mats, carpets, or simple floor coverings. The classrooms were often small, narrow, poorly lit, damp, and uncomfortable.

In boys' schools, teaching was usually conducted by mosque imams, muezzins, or individuals who had graduated from a madrasa and were invited by the local religious community.

In 1910, a considerable number of traditional primary schools were operating in Bukhara. The number of students in these schools ranged from 10 to 50–60. Boys' schools generally accommodated 30–40 students, while rural schools rarely exceeded ten pupils. The number of girls attending school amounted to only 25–30 percent of that of boys.

The age of admission to schools in Bukhara ranged from five to twelve years. Students generally studied in traditional primary schools for no less than five years. Summer months and the month of Ramadan were designated as vacation periods.

For girls, education usually began at the age of seven and continued until the age of thirteen, though in some cases it ended at ten or eleven years of age. Home-based education for girls was widespread. In general, female education faced considerable challenges, and only girls from wealthy families had sufficient opportunities to become literate. In rural areas, the number of educated girls remained very limited.

The duration of study in traditional schools varied from four to ten years. In the mid-nineteenth century, the average period of study in Bukhara schools was estimated at seven years. Abdurauf Fitrat also indicated that schooling lasted between seven and ten years. In reality, the duration depended on students' abilities and diligence: gifted students could complete the curriculum within four years, whereas less capable students might require up to ten years [5].

Parents often rewarded teachers with bread in recognition of their children's academic success. In rural areas, families compensated teachers with grain or livestock. On average, the annual income of a schoolteacher with twenty students consisted of 10–16 rubles in voluntary payments, approximately 1,000 loaves of bread valued at 13 rubles, and gifts received during two wedding ceremonies amounting to about 4 rubles. Altogether, this provided an annual income of approximately 27 rubles. Teachers also collected additional payments known as "mat fees" (bo'yra puli), "coal fees" (ko'mir puli), and "broom fees" (supurgi puli).

Classes were held from sunrise until the afternoon prayer (around 5:00 p.m.). Students were exempt from attending classes on Fridays and religious holidays.

The educational process began with memorization of the Kalimai Shahadat and Kalimai Tayyiba, which concern the fundamentals of Islamic faith. Subsequently, students learned the Arabic alphabet. Teachers wrote letters on wooden or hard tablets, and students first memorized them before proceeding to syllabic reading. After mastering syllables, students began studying the Haftiyak, a collection of short chapters from the Holy Qur'an used as the first reading textbook [6].

Upon completing the Haftiyak, students advanced to the study of Tajwid, a textbook devoted to the proper recitation and pronunciation of the Qur'an.

Primarily, after mastering Tajwid—the rules governing proper Qur'anic recitation—students proceeded to study the Holy Qur'an itself. A pupil who memorized Surah Alam Nashrah was considered literate. Once basic literacy had been attained, students began reading other texts written in the nastaliq script without diacritical marks (zabar and zer).

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

At the next stage, students studied the book Farzi Ayn. This work provided explanations and information concerning the obligatory duties prescribed for all Muslims according to Islamic law (Sharia).

The subsequent textbook was Chor Kitob (Chahor Kitob), which expounded the fundamental principles of Islam. Written in the Persian-Tajik language in both prose and poetic forms, it reflected various religious customs and traditions. Chor Kitob consisted of four separate books and comprised three poetic and one prose collection.

The next text studied was Sabot ul-Ojizin, commonly referred to as "Sufi Olloyor," after its author. In addition to explaining the fundamental principles of Islam, the work contained moral teachings, ethical guidance, instructive stories, poems, and epics aimed at cultivating virtuous character and proper conduct.

Upon completing Sabot ul-Ojizin, students were introduced to Maslak ul-Muttaqin, a religious text written in verse that expounded Islamic doctrines. This collection of Persian poems contained moral advice, teachings on proper behavior, and explanations of the rules and regulations of Sharia.

It is also known that all schools taught Saadi's Gulistan and Bustan, which were regarded as outstanding sources of Eastern and Islamic pedagogy.

At the following stage, students studied the Divan of Khwaja Hafiz Shirazi. This work, which was also used as a textbook in madrasas, consisted primarily of lyrical poetry. Combining spiritual and worldly themes, it played a significant role in the moral education of young learners. In many schools, the main course of study concluded with this text.

Since students in Bukhara commonly spoke Persian-Tajik and Uzbek, instructional materials were designed to teach Arabic through Persian. There were also textbooks that taught Persian grammar alongside Arabic. However, Uzbek grammar was not included in the school curriculum.

Furthermore, during the educational process, students studied collections of poetry by Alisher Navoi, which were known under various titles such as Devoni Navoi, Amir Navoi, Devoni Amir Navoi, Mavlono Amir Navoi, and Kulliyoti Devoni Amir Navoi [7].

Particular attention was given to literature, especially poetry, in school education. The study of literary works enriched students' inner world, fostered creative thinking, and cultivated aesthetic appreciation.

Conclusion. In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the primary schools operating in the Bukhara Emirate during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries largely preserved the organizational structure, educational traditions, and financial arrangements inherited from previous centuries. These schools continued to play an important role in promoting literacy, teaching reading and writing in the Arabic script, and providing basic arithmetic skills.

The curriculum was primarily oriented toward elementary religious education, including the fundamentals of Islam, religious practices, and moral instruction, while also offering limited knowledge about society and the surrounding environment. However, inadequate financial support, lengthy periods of study, poor sanitary and hygienic conditions, dependence on charitable contributions and private or community funding rather than state support, insufficient attention to secular subjects, and the limited qualifications of many teachers prevented these institutions from adapting effectively to the demands of a rapidly changing era.

References:

1. Bahrom, K. (2022). Political-Administrative Territory of The City of Karshi in The Second Half of The 19th Century-The Beginning of The 20th Century. International Journal of Scientific Trends, 1(2), 86-90.

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

2. Mirziyoyev Sh. Yangi O’zbekistonda erkin va farovon yashaylik.
3. Бобожонова Ф., Бухоро амирлиги таълим тизими (XIX аср охири – XX асрнинг бошлари) / Ф. Бобожонова; - Тошкент: “Adib” нашриёти, 2014. 12-13 b.
4. Сафарова Р., Шермаматова Л., Мактаб // Ўзбекистон Миллий Энциклопедияси, V жилд. – Тошкент: Давлат илмий нашриёти, 2003. –Б. 410.
5. Солижанова Г. Ф. Туркистонда ўқитиш-маърифатчилик ўчоклари уларнинг ижтимоий аҳамияти (XIX аср охири - XX аср бошлари). Тарих фан. Номз. дисс. …- Тошкент, 1998. -Б. 31.
6. ЎзР МДА, 323- фонд, 1- рўйхат, 1116-иш, 1-варақ.
7. ЎзР МДА, 1010- фонд, 1- рўйхат, 66-иш, 74-варақ.
8. Фитрат А. Мунозара // Шарқ юлдузи, - Тошкент, 1997. --№1. – Б. 121.
9.