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THE STATE OF CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION INSTITUTION BUILDINGS IN THE 1950s–1960s

Iroda Rasulovna Tishabayeva
Associate Professor
Department of Social Sciences and Sports
Fergana State Technical University, Fergana, Uzbekistan
irodaxontishabayeva@gmail.com

Abstract: This article analyzes the construction and repair of preschool education institution buildings in Uzbekistan during the 1950s–1960s based on historical sources and archival documents. It examines the state policy aimed at restoring preschool education infrastructure in the post-war period, construction plans and the extent of their implementation, buildings erected according to standard (typical) designs, the allocation and utilization of budgetary funds, and the development of preschool facilities. Furthermore, the study provides a scholarly assessment of the disparities in material and technical support between urban and rural areas, the use of adapted buildings for preschool purposes, and the implementation of repair and renovation works.

Keywords: preschool education institutions, kindergartens, nurseries, construction, renovation, standard designs, material and technical base, state policy, adapted buildings, infrastructure, Uzbek SSR.

Introduction

The preschool education system constitutes an essential component of social development, as the intellectual, physical, and moral foundations of an individual are primarily formed during early childhood. Therefore, studying the historical development of preschool education is of considerable academic significance not only for pedagogy but also for history, sociology, and public administration.

In recent years, the development of preschool education has become one of the priority directions of state policy in Uzbekistan. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has repeatedly emphasized the strategic importance of preschool education, describing it as "the foundation of our future" and stressing that investments directed toward preschool education represent one of the most effective investments in the country's long-term development [11.]. This approach further underscores the necessity of conducting comprehensive scholarly research on the history of preschool education, particularly the formation and development of its material and technical infrastructure.

Historical experience demonstrates that evaluating the effectiveness of the large-scale reforms currently being implemented requires a thorough understanding of the developmental stages of the preschool education system. In particular, examining the post-World War II policies aimed at restoring the network of preschool institutions, constructing new buildings, repairing existing facilities, erecting buildings based on standard architectural designs, and strengthening their material and technical base contributes to revealing the historical foundations of contemporary reforms in Uzbekistan's preschool education sector.

Methodology and Literature Review

This study was conducted based on the principles of historicity, objectivity, systematic analysis, and comparative analysis. Throughout the research process, particular attention was paid to the interrelationship between historical events and processes and their close connection with socio-economic factors.

To examine the construction and repair of preschool education institution buildings, the historical-comparative method was employed to identify regional disparities within Uzbekistan and to

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compare construction plans with their actual implementation. A historical-systematic approach was applied to comprehensively analyze the stages of development of preschool education infrastructure in the post-war period, state policy, the activities of construction organizations, and the formation of the material and technical base.

Furthermore, statistical analysis was used to summarize construction plans, the number of buildings commissioned, budget allocations, and the extent of budget utilization. The reliability of historical evidence was verified through a comparative analysis of archival documents, government resolutions, statistical compilations, and periodical publications. The primary source base of the research consists of documents from the National Archives of Uzbekistan, the National Archives of Scientific, Technical and Medical Documentation of Uzbekistan, normative legal acts, and official statistical data.

Issues concerning the development of the preschool education system in Uzbekistan have been examined by several scholars in the fields of pedagogy, history, and sociology. Although these studies provide extensive coverage of the pedagogical foundations of preschool education, educational content, teacher training, and contemporary reforms, the construction, renovation, and material and technical development of preschool education facilities during the post-war period have not been comprehensively investigated from a historical perspective.

Statistical compilations published during the Soviet period, government decrees, reports of public education authorities, and archival documents contain valuable information on the construction of preschool institutions, financial allocations, and the commissioning of new facilities. However, these sources are predominantly descriptive and statistical in nature. They do not provide a critical historical analysis of the discrepancies between planned and actual construction outcomes, nor do they examine the infrastructural differences between urban and rural areas as a distinct subject of scholarly inquiry.

Although the number of studies devoted to the preschool education system has increased during the years of Uzbekistan's independence, comprehensive historical research analyzing the construction and repair of preschool education institution buildings in the 1950s and 1960s on the basis of historical sources remains extremely limited. The monograph by A. Nikolskaya is one of the significant scholarly works of the Soviet period devoted to the theoretical foundations of preschool education. In her research, the author paid particular attention to ensuring the integration of various components of the educational process [10.]. Likewise, O. Ishankhojayeva analyzed the historical and pedagogical development of preschool institutions, as well as the content and methodology of preschool education [9.]. In addition, the historian N. Quvvatova presented valuable information on certain aspects of the history of preschool education during the Soviet era in her scholarly work [7.].

In this regard, the present study contributes to the existing body of literature by examining the formation and development of preschool education infrastructure in the post-war period through a comprehensive analysis of archival documents, statistical materials, and normative legal sources.

Results

In the years following the Second World War, the restoration and development of the preschool education system became one of the state's priority tasks. According to Resolution No. 711 "On Kindergartens", adopted by the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR on 3 May 1937, economic organizations and institutions responsible for operating kindergartens were required to construct and maintain preschool buildings in accordance with established standards governing sanitary conditions, room dimensions, children's nutrition, and medical services. With the outbreak of the war, however, the construction of new kindergarten buildings was suspended, and the majority of preschool institutions operated in adapted rather than purpose-built premises [6.13.].

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Although the expansion of the preschool education network was declared one of the principal directions of state policy in the Uzbek SSR, actual implementation fell considerably short of the planned targets. Between 1945 and 1950, the construction of 990 standard kindergarten buildings was planned; however, only 92 buildings were completed, representing merely 9% of the target [1.14.]. The extremely slow pace of construction was primarily attributable to the severe economic difficulties of the post-war period, shortages of construction materials, and insufficient financial resources. Consequently, government programs intended to expand preschool infrastructure were not fully implemented. Moreover, the substantial discrepancy between planned and actual results suggests that construction targets had been established without adequately considering the available economic and material resources.

During this period, several normative legal documents were adopted to promote the development of the preschool education system. In particular, on 18 May 1949, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted the Resolution "On Measures to Expand Preschool Institutions and Maternity Homes and Improve Their Activities." To implement this resolution, the construction of a new generation of preschool institutions was initiated in Uzbekistan. These facilities were built by large industrial enterprises, factories, combines, collective farms (kolkhozes), and state farms (sovkhozes). Construction was carried out according to the project *Construction of Kindergartens and Nurseries* and the architectural designs developed by the design institutes Uzgosproekt, Uzgiprogor, and Uzgiproselstroy. Buildings erected according to these standardized architectural projects became known as "standard (typical) kindergartens." Construction activities were undertaken by the Ministry of Construction of the Uzbek SSR, the Ministry of Rural Construction of the Uzbek SSR, and the Glavtashkentstroy construction organization [2.56.]. For example, in 1950 the Department of Architecture approved a standard design for a 50-place collective-farm kindergarten, after which preschool buildings began to be constructed according to this project [9.97.].

State budget allocations for preschool education institutions increased steadily throughout the decade. While preschool institutions under the Ministry of Public Education received 35.1 million rubles in 1940, this amount rose to 46 million rubles in 1954, 70.5 million rubles in 1958 [3.39.], and 93.3 million rubles in 1959 [10.77.].

Although most of these funds were officially designated for repairing preschool education institutions, their actual utilization often differed from the intended purpose. For example, in 1951, of the 50,000 rubles allocated for the capital renovation of kindergartens in the city of Kattaqo‘rg‘on, Samarkand Region, only 30,830 rubles and 59 kopecks were spent [4.25.]. As a result, repair works were delayed, and the infrastructure of many preschool institutions failed to reach the required standards.

While preschool buildings in urban areas were constructed relatively quickly, the situation in rural areas remained considerably more difficult. During the 1950s, the preschool education system in Tashkent Region, particularly in rural districts, suffered from a poorly developed material and technical base. For instance, Kindergarten No. 8, located on the territory of the Stalin Collective Farm within the Voroshilov Rural Soviet, was housed in an adapted residential building rather than in a purpose-built facility [5.9.]. The building had wooden flooring and was heated by a stove; however, its immediate proximity to collective-farm stables created unsatisfactory sanitary and hygienic conditions [5.15.].

Nevertheless, such progress was uneven across the republic. In Kashkadarya Region, for example, almost no construction of kindergarten or nursery buildings had been undertaken before 1955, significantly restricting the operation and expansion of preschool institutions [7.95.].

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A republic-wide analysis reveals similar shortcomings. Between January and August 1959, the construction of kindergartens with a total capacity of 16,424 places was planned. By the end of the year, only 6,624 places had been commissioned, representing 40% of the planned target. Likewise, projects for specialized nursery buildings accommodating 13,425 places were approved during the same year; however, facilities providing only 4,598 places were actually completed, corresponding to 34% of the planned capacity [8.68.].

Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the construction and renovation of preschool education institution buildings in Uzbekistan during the 1950s–1960s took place under complex socio-economic conditions. Although the state adopted a series of normative legal acts aimed at expanding the preschool education network and strengthening its material and technical base in the post-war period, while gradually increasing budget allocations, the practical implementation of these measures did not achieve the intended results.

The analysis indicates that only 9% of the kindergarten construction projects planned for 1945–1950 were completed. This low level of implementation was primarily caused by the consequences of the Second World War, limited financial resources, shortages of construction materials, deficiencies in the performance of construction organizations, and inadequate consideration of existing capacities during the planning process.

Overall, although certain positive achievements were made in the development of preschool education infrastructure between 1946 and 1959, shortcomings in the implementation of construction plans, regional disparities, and problems related to material and technical support significantly constrained the full development of the preschool education system. This historical experience possesses considerable scientific and practical significance for improving contemporary planning of preschool education infrastructure, enhancing regional construction policies, and increasing the effectiveness of investment projects in the preschool education sector.

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