DIGITAL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT REFORMS IN NEW UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract

This article analyzes the strategy of reforms aimed at the formation and development of a digital society in New Uzbekistan. It covers the implementation processes of the digital economy, e-government, and information and communication technologies, as well as their impact on social life, governance systems, and education. Furthermore, the article examines projects carried out under the "Digital Uzbekistan – 2030" strategy, their effectiveness, and state initiatives to enhance the digital competence of the population. The practical significance of this study lies in providing proposals and recommendations to ensure the success of digital transformation processes. The results highlight critical aspects of building a digital society in New Uzbekistan and outline prospective directions for further digital reforms.

Keywords: Digital society, digital government, digital governance, digital relations, digitalization, transformation.

Introduction

In our country, reforms aimed at human development and enhancing human dignity are elevated to the level of state policy and are gaining importance in scope and coverage. Concepts such as "digital society," "digital government," "digital governance," and "digital relations" are increasingly taking root in daily life.

Any country aiming for development and international presence must inevitably undergo this path and actively engage in digitalization processes. In other words, today digitalization has become the essential path that every country must follow to respond to global trends. The COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly affected the global economy since 2020, further accelerated the need for digitalization. For example, the education system in Uzbekistan has experienced a significant leap toward digitalization starting in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Main Part

The COVID-19 pandemic affected over 190 countries worldwide. In Uzbekistan, cases became noticeable by mid-March 2020. Before the pandemic, the global economy was experiencing positive trends, with an average growth rate of about 3% in recent years. Countries such as China, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Armenia showed especially high results. The onset of the pandemic led to a global economic crisis, forcing many countries to face the complex task of "survival."

The importance and relevance of digitalization, i.e., "online service delivery," in social life increased. Experts define digitalization as "the process of informatization of a specific sector

or system and its transformation based on information technologies." Today, digitalization is seen as a necessary stage to improve people's daily life and ensure convenient, high-quality, and transparent government services.

Uzbekistan is actively following this global trend. Recently, special attention has been paid to integrating digital technologies into the economy. The digital economy is not limited to e-commerce and services but encompasses all sectors. Economic development is interdependent with all sectors, so digitalization has become one of the priority directions of the "New Uzbekistan Strategy." Over 220 priority projects have been implemented across various sectors, aiming to expand information and communication technologies.

To further enhance the competitiveness of the economy, e-government development has been intensified. High-quality, in-demand digital government services are being expanded, and all state services are planned to be digitized, with automated services reaching 90% by 2030.

The pandemic particularly highlighted the need to digitalize spiritual, educational, and cultural sectors. Following the Presidential Decree PQ-5040 of March 26, 2021, the "oyina.uz" electronic portal and the Digital Promotion Department were established to collect and disseminate articles, analyses, and public opinion on social and ideological topics.

Today, obtaining information via social networks, expressing opinions on socio-political events, forming online groups, and other internet activities are becoming widespread. In 2006, the world population was about 6.5 billion, with 18% using the internet; by 2013, 7 billion people with 39% internet penetration; by 2019, 50% were active internet users. In 2021, out of 7.83 billion people, 59.5% were internet users, 53.6% social network users, and 66.6% mobile subscribers. According to Websiterating.com, as of January 5, 2024, 5.30 billion people (66% of the global population) used the internet, averaging 7 hours per day. Digital advertising and PR in 2024 are projected at $442.6 billion.

Digital technologies are increasingly integrated into everyday life, and the internet has become a strategic tool for states worldwide. Organizing spiritual, educational, and ideological work according to modern requirements helps protect youth from ideological attacks, raise awareness, and counter threats to the country's independence and security.

All higher education distance learning platforms were integrated into the unified ministry portal (https://dist.edu.uz), allowing students to access materials from other institutions. To provide open educational resources, the TAS-IX network launched https://tube.edu.uz, which now hosts over a thousand video lessons. To promote reading, the ministry established the audiobook electronic library https://audiobook.edu.uz, continually expanding its collection.

During the pandemic, the Ministry of Public Education, in cooperation with the National Television and Radio Company of Uzbekistan, organized "Online School" video lessons for general education students.

Integration into the global community and the use of digital technologies in public life enable a more advanced society and strategic reforms. Sustainable national development is driven by science, social-humanitarian technologies, and the digital economy. Thus, digitalization based on data creation, processing, exchange, and transmission is vital for implementing the "Uzbekistan – 2030" strategy. Digital knowledge and modern information technologies are key

to advancing science, raising highly educated and cultured youth, developing a competitive economy, and continuing democratic reforms.

Conclusion

Digital reforms in New Uzbekistan are transforming the country's economic, political, and social life. Under the "Digital Uzbekistan – 2030" strategy, significant results have been achieved in modernizing technology infrastructure, improving e-government, digitizing state services, and enhancing digital competence.

Implementation of digital solutions in education, healthcare, transport, and finance is improving citizens' quality of life and access to services. However, issues such as the digital divide, information security, and workforce capacity remain critical challenges.

Overall, the digital reform strategy strengthens global competitiveness, ensures citizens' welfare, and modernizes governance. Its consistent implementation lays a solid foundation for building a robust digital society.

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