



THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL COUNSELORS IN THE REFORMATION OF UZBEKISTAN'S EDUCATION

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Annotatsiya. *Mazkur maqolada maktab maslahatchisi (school counselor) lavozimining jahon ta'lim tizimidagi shakllanish jarayoni, uning paydo bo'lishi va rivojlanish bosqichlari tahlil qilinadi. Shuningdek, O'zbekiston Respublikasining umumiy o'rta ta'lim tizimida maktab maslahatchisi lavozimining joriy etilishi, ushbu lavozimni tashkil etishdan ko'zlangan asosiy maqsadlar hamda maslahatchining funksional vazifa va majburiyatlari yoritib beriladi. Maqolada maktab maslahatchisi faoliyatining ta'lim jarayonida o'quvchilarning shaxsiy, ijtimoiy va kasbiy rivojlanishiga ta'siri ilmiy jihatdan asoslanadi. Bundan tashqari, milliy ta'lim tizimida mazkur lavozimning istiqboldagi rivojlanish yo'nalishlari, uni takomillashtirish imkoniyatlari va global ta'lim tendensiyalari asosida shakllanishiga oid prognozlar ilgari suriladi.*

Kalit so'zlar: *maktab maslahatchisi, ta'lim tizimi, kasbiy yo'naltirish, o'quvchi rivoji, umumiy o'rta ta'lim*

Abstract. *This article examines the emergence and historical development of the school counselor position within the global education system. It also analyzes the introduction of the school counselor role in the general secondary education system of the Republic of Uzbekistan, outlining the primary objectives, functional responsibilities, and professional duties associated with this position. The study provides a scientific rationale for the impact of school counselors on students' personal, social, and career development within the educational process. In addition, the article presents forecasts regarding the future development of the school counselor role in the national education system, highlighting potential areas for improvement and alignment with global educational trends.*

Keywords: *school counselor, education system, career guidance, student development, general secondary education*

Аннотация. *В данной статье рассматривается процесс становления и развития должности школьного консультанта в мировой системе образования. Проанализированы особенности внедрения должности школьного консультанта в системе общего среднего образования Республики Узбекистан, а также раскрыты*



цели её введения, функциональные обязанности и профессиональная ответственность специалиста. В статье научно обосновано влияние деятельности школьного консультанта на личностное, социальное и профессиональное развитие обучающихся. Кроме того, представлены прогнозы дальнейшего развития данной должности в национальной системе образования с учётом глобальных образовательных тенденций и перспектив её совершенствования.

Ключевые слова: *школьный консультант, система образования, профессиональная ориентация, развитие учащихся, общее среднее образование.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, increasing attention has been paid worldwide to the role of school counselors as an essential component of modern education systems. Rapid social change, globalization, technological advancement, and evolving labor market demands have significantly expanded the responsibilities of educational institutions, requiring them to support not only students' academic achievement but also their personal, social, and career development. In this context, the school counselor has emerged as a key professional figure responsible for providing systematic guidance and psychosocial support to students throughout their educational trajectory.

Historically, the concept of school counseling originated in the early twentieth century, primarily in Western countries, as a response to industrialization and the growing need for vocational guidance. Over time, the role of school counselors evolved beyond career orientation to encompass mental health support, social adaptation, academic planning, and the prevention of

behavioral and emotional difficulties. Today, school counseling is recognized internationally as a multidisciplinary practice that contributes to students' holistic development and overall well-being.

In many countries, the institutionalization of school counseling services has been accompanied by the development of national standards, professional competencies, and ethical guidelines. These frameworks aim to ensure the effectiveness of counseling practices and their alignment with educational goals. Research evidence consistently demonstrates that well-structured school counseling programs positively influence students' academic performance, career readiness, social skills, and psychological resilience, thereby enhancing the overall quality of education.

Within this global context, the Republic of Uzbekistan has initiated reforms to modernize its general secondary education system, including the introduction of the school counselor position in schools. This initiative reflects a growing recognition of the need to



provide comprehensive support for students in navigating educational choices, personal challenges, and future career pathways. However, as a relatively new institutional role in the national education system, the school counselor position requires careful conceptualization, clear definition of responsibilities, and adaptation to local socio-cultural and educational conditions.

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to examine the global evolution of the school counselor profession and to analyze the specific features of its implementation within the general secondary education system of Uzbekistan. The study also seeks to identify the objectives, functions, and responsibilities of school counselors, as well as to explore potential directions for the further development of this role in line with international best practices and emerging educational trends.

Official Policy Framework for the Introduction of the School Counselor Position in Uzbekistan

The introduction of the school counselor position in the Republic of Uzbekistan is anchored in national educational reform policy and official presidential decrees aimed at modernizing the general secondary education system. On September 8, 2025, the President of Uzbekistan approved a comprehensive set of measures titled “On Measures to Advance the System of Extracurricular Education to a New Level”, which formally introduced the school counselor

position within general secondary education institutions.

According to this presidential decree, the new position of school counselor will be established as part of a vertical support system led by newly created “Kelajak” centers based on existing structures such as the “Barkamol Avlod” children’s school and the Republican Student-Youth Center. The decree delineates the integration of school counselors into schools with a designated staff unit, whose remuneration is aligned with that of the deputy principal of a general education school. Additional incentives are provided to those with management certification through monthly supplements.

The key objectives outlined in the official policy include:

- Supporting student initiatives and fostering their talents and engagement through structured extracurricular and personal development frameworks.

- Strengthening the linkage between school education and students’ academic, social, and career trajectories by enhancing guidance and advisory services tailored to individual student needs.

- Promoting holistic student development by incorporating career guidance, facilitation of student portfolios, and counseling support into the mainstream education process, with deployment of digital tools such as the erp.portfolio platform for managing student progress.



Furthermore, recruitment and qualification processes for school counselors are regulated through supplementary orders of the Ministry of Preschool and School Education. These include amendments to existing regulatory documents that outline the structure, selection criteria, and deployment procedures for the school counselor workforce.

Overall, the official policy framework reflects Uzbekistan's commitment to aligning its education system with international standards of student support and guidance, thereby institutionalizing the role of school counseling as a core element of educational modernization.

Future Goals and Prospects of the School Counselor Role in Uzbekistan

The introduction of the school counselor position in Uzbekistan is expected to yield significant long-term benefits for the national education system. One of the primary goals is to establish a sustainable framework for student-centered support that integrates academic guidance, personal development, and career counseling. By systematically addressing students' social, emotional, and professional needs, school counselors are expected to contribute to enhanced student engagement, improved learning outcomes, and reduced dropout rates.

From a strategic perspective, the school counselor role is envisioned as a key instrument in bridging the gap between school education and the

evolving demands of the labor market. Early identification of students' interests, talents, and aptitudes will enable more informed educational and vocational decisions, aligning individual aspirations with national development priorities. Over time, this approach is anticipated to strengthen human capital development and foster a generation of students better prepared for higher education and future employment.

Looking forward, several prospects emerge for the evolution of the school counselor profession in Uzbekistan:

- Professionalization and Standardization: Development of nationally recognized standards, certification programs, and continuous professional development opportunities will ensure that counselors possess the necessary skills and competencies to deliver high-quality services.

- Integration with Digital and Analytical Tools: Platforms such as digital student portfolios and data-driven assessment systems will enhance the efficiency and impact of counseling services, allowing counselors to track student progress and provide personalized guidance.

- Expanded Scope of Influence: Beyond individual student support, school counselors are likely to contribute to policy formulation, school development planning, and community engagement initiatives, thereby strengthening the overall educational ecosystem.



-Alignment with International Practices: By adopting global best practices in school counseling, Uzbekistan aims to align its education system with international standards, enhancing the country's educational competitiveness and fostering cross-border collaboration.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the institutionalization of school counselors in Uzbekistan is not merely an administrative reform but a transformative initiative with far-reaching implications. If successfully implemented, the role has the potential to elevate student outcomes, promote equity and inclusivity, and guide the national education system toward a modern, holistic, and globally aligned future.

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