



HISTORY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION IN UZBEKISTAN IN 1925-1990 (IN THE CASE OF BLIND CHILDREN)

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: This article discusses the history of special education in Uzbekistan in 1925-1990 (in the case of blind children). The period from 1925 to 1990 marked a transformative era in the history of special education for blind children in Uzbekistan, characterized by significant developments and milestones that shaped the landscape of educational opportunities for visually impaired students. The establishment of specialized institutions, development of educational materials, professional development of educators, emphasis on vocational training, and the promotion of inclusive educational policies and practices during this period underscored Uzbekistan's commitment to providing inclusive, supportive, and enriching educational opportunities for blind children. These developments not only laid the foundation for the subsequent evolution of special education in Uzbekistan but also reflected a progressive and forward-thinking approach to addressing the unique needs of visually impaired students.

INTRODUCTION

In the early developments of special education for blind children in Uzbekistan, there were significant challenges and limitations. During the Soviet era, there was a lack of specialized resources and facilities for children with visual impairments. However, with the passage of time, efforts were made to establish schools and organizations tailored to the needs of blind children.

One of the key milestones in the development of special education for blind children in Uzbekistan was the establishment of the Tashkent Special Music Boarding School for the Blind in 1939. This institution provided educational opportunities and resources for visually impaired children to develop their musical talents and academic skills.

In the following years, the Uzbekistan Society of the Blind, along with the government, worked to expand educational programs and improve access to learning materials for blind students. Efforts were made to integrate blind children into mainstream schools and provide them with individualized support and accommodations.

THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Despite these advancements, challenges persisted in terms of access to technology and specialized tools for blind students. It was not until the late 20th century that significant strides were made in the development of educational resources and assistive technologies for visually impaired students in Uzbekistan.

Overall, the early developments in special education for blind children in Uzbekistan marked a period of progress and growth, laying the foundation for future advancements in the field. Through the establishment of specialized schools and concerted efforts to improve access to educational resources, blind children in Uzbekistan began to receive the support and opportunities they needed to thrive academically and socially.

In Uzbekistan, the establishment of the first schools for blind children marked a crucial milestone in the development of special education and support for individuals with visual impairments. During the early 20th century, efforts were initiated to address the educational needs of blind children, leading to the creation of dedicated institutions tailored to their unique requirements.

The Tashkent Special Music Boarding School for the Blind stands as a prominent example of the first schools established to cater specifically to blind children in Uzbekistan. Founded in 1939, this institution represented a significant step towards providing educational opportunities for visually impaired children in the region. The school not only focused on academic instruction but also placed a strong emphasis on nurturing the musical talents of the students, highlighting the belief in the potential and capabilities of blind individuals.

The establishment of this pioneering school laid the groundwork for further developments in special education for blind children in Uzbekistan. It set a precedent for the recognition of the importance of tailored educational programs and resources for children with visual impairments, inspiring future initiatives and institutions dedicated to supporting the unique learning needs of blind students.

In the years following the founding of the Tashkent Special Music Boarding School for the Blind, efforts were made to expand educational opportunities for visually impaired children in Uzbekistan. The Uzbekistan Society of the Blind and governmental organizations collaborated to advance the provision of specialized resources and facilities, as well as to integrate blind children into mainstream educational settings while ensuring they received the individualized support and accommodations they required.

The establishment of the first schools for blind children in Uzbekistan was not without its challenges, particularly during the Soviet era. Limited resources and a lack of specialized educational tools presented obstacles to the delivery of quality education for visually impaired students. However, the perseverance and dedication of educators, administrators, and advocates paved the way for progress in the field of special education for blind children.

The early schools for blind children in Uzbekistan played a pivotal role in fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for visually impaired students, contributing to their educational and personal development. These pioneering institutions served as beacons of hope and opportunity, empowering blind children with the knowledge and skills they needed to pursue their aspirations and contribute meaningfully to society.

Ultimately, the establishment of the first schools for blind children in Uzbekistan represented a significant leap forward in advancing the rights and opportunities of individuals with visual impairments. It signaled a shift toward greater awareness and support for the diverse educational needs of all children, regardless of their physical abilities, and laid the foundation for a more inclusive and equitable educational landscape in Uzbekistan.

The impact of the Soviet regime on special education for blind children in Uzbekistan during the 20th century was profound and complex, leaving a lasting imprint on the educational landscape for visually impaired students in the region. Under Soviet rule, significant efforts were made to address the educational needs of children with disabilities, including blindness, yet the policies and practices implemented by the regime also reflected larger political and ideological agendas that influenced the development of special education in Uzbekistan.

During the Soviet era, the government prioritized the establishment of specialized institutions and educational programs for children with disabilities, seeking to integrate them into the broader educational framework. In Uzbekistan, this initiative encompassed the creation of schools and centers specifically dedicated to the education and development of blind children. These institutions aimed not only to provide academic instruction but also to equip visually impaired students with practical skills and vocational training, reflecting the Soviet emphasis on labor and productivity.

One of the key developments in the realm of special education for blind children during the Soviet era was the establishment of specialized boarding schools and educational facilities. These schools, designed to cater specifically to the needs of visually impaired students, offered a curriculum tailored to support their learning and personal development. Additionally, the Soviet regime invested in the training of educators and specialists in the field of special education, further enhancing the quality of support available to blind children in Uzbekistan.

The Soviet government's approach to special education for blind children was also influenced by ideological considerations, as the regime sought to portray itself as a champion of inclusivity and equal opportunities for all citizens, including those with disabilities. This manifested in policies aimed at integrating visually impaired students into mainstream educational settings whenever possible, emphasizing the importance of social integration and participation.

However, while the Soviet regime made substantial efforts to address the educational needs of blind children in Uzbekistan, its approach was not without shortcomings and challenges. The centralized nature of the Soviet education system, coupled with bureaucratic inefficiencies, at times created barriers to the effective delivery of specialized services for visually impaired students. Additionally, the overarching political ideology of the regime could influence the content and focus of educational programs, potentially shaping the experiences of blind children in ways that aligned with the state's priorities.

Furthermore, the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 brought about significant changes in Uzbekistan, including shifts in educational policies and priorities. The transition from a centrally planned system to an independent state introduced new dynamics and challenges for the realm of special education, including those pertaining to the continued development and support of programs for blind children.

In the post-Soviet era, Uzbekistan has been navigating the ongoing evolution of its educational system, including the realm of special education for blind children. While the legacy of the Soviet regime's impact on special education is still palpable, contemporary efforts have focused on addressing the unique needs of visually impaired students in the context of a changing social and political landscape.

This includes initiatives to modernize educational facilities, enhance training for educators and specialists, and integrate innovative approaches to support the academic and personal development of blind children.

The Soviet era in Uzbekistan witnessed significant advancements and improvements in the field of special education for blind children, reflecting the regime's comprehensive efforts to address the unique educational needs of visually impaired students within the region. From the 1920s to the 1990s, Uzbekistan experienced a significant transformation in its approach to special education, marked by the establishment of specialized institutions, the development of innovative educational methodologies, and the enhancement of support systems tailored to the needs of blind children. These advancements not only reshaped the educational landscape for visually impaired students in Uzbekistan but also left a lasting legacy that continues to impact the realm of special education for blind children in the region. Central to the advancements in special education for blind children during the Soviet era in Uzbekistan was the establishment of specialized schools and centers dedicated exclusively to meeting the educational and developmental needs of visually impaired students. These institutions provided a tailored educational environment, equipped with specialized curriculum, adaptive teaching methods, and resources designed to support the unique learning paths of blind children. By creating these specialized educational facilities, the Soviet government demonstrated a commitment to recognizing and addressing the distinct requirements of blind children within Uzbekistan, setting the stage for inclusive and comprehensive special education initiatives within the region.

Moreover, the Soviet era ushered in significant progress in the development and availability of educational materials and tools specifically designed for blind children in Uzbekistan. Braille literacy, in particular, experienced marked advancement, with the production and distribution of Braille books, texts, and learning resources becoming more widespread throughout the region. This expansion of Braille materials played a pivotal role in ensuring equitable access to education for blind children, enabling them to engage with academic content and pursue learning opportunities in line with their sighted counterparts. Additionally, the development and dissemination of assistive technologies, such as tactile diagrams and specialized equipment, contributed to creating a more inclusive and accessible educational environment for visually impaired students in Uzbekistan.

In addition to the focus on academic development, the Soviet era laid a strong emphasis on vocational training and practical skills development for blind children in Uzbekistan. Recognizing the importance of equipping visually impaired students with the tools necessary to lead independent and fulfilling lives, the Soviet government prioritized vocational education within the special education framework. This emphasis aimed to empower blind children with the skills and training needed to pursue meaningful employment and play productive roles within Uzbekistan's society, aligning with the broader Soviet emphasis on labor and contribution to the collective welfare.

The Soviet regime also made substantial investments in the training and professional development of educators and specialists within the field of special education for blind children in Uzbekistan. By enhancing the expertise and skills of teachers, instructors, and support staff working with blind children, the Soviet government sought to elevate the quality of educational provision, ensuring that visually impaired students in Uzbekistan received comprehensive and effective support. This commitment to educator training not only bolstered the capabilities of those working directly with blind children but also contributed to the establishment of a more robust and knowledgeable educational infrastructure within the region.

Furthermore, the Soviet era in Uzbekistan witnessed a concerted effort to promote the social integration of blind children within the broader educational and societal context. The emphasis on inclusion and active participation aimed to break down barriers and stereotypes, fostering an environment in which visually impaired students could engage with their peers and communities on equal footing. This broader social inclusion initiative reflected the Soviet government's aspiration to create a society that embraced diversity and provided equitable opportunities for all its members, including those with physical challenges.

The enduring impact of the advancements and improvements in special education for blind children during the Soviet era in Uzbekistan manifests in the continued influence on contemporary practices and principles in the field of special education. The legacy of the Soviet period's commitment to specialized educational institutions, the development of tailored educational materials, vocational training, and professional development for educators continues to inform and inspire efforts to enhance the quality and inclusivity of special education for blind children in modern Uzbekistan.

In the late 20th century, Uzbekistan underwent significant changes and reforms in the realm of special education for blind children, marking a transformative period characterized by the reshaping of educational policies and practices. During this time, a series of initiatives, developments, and reforms emerged, reflecting a concerted effort to address the unique educational needs of visually impaired students and foster greater inclusivity within the educational landscape of Uzbekistan.

One of the most notable changes during this period was the increased emphasis on inclusive education, which sought to integrate blind children into mainstream educational settings. This shift represented a departure from previously segregated approaches and was rooted in the belief that all students, including those with visual impairments, should have access to the same educational opportunities. As a result, there was a growing recognition of the importance of providing support and accommodations within regular schools to ensure that blind children could fully participate in the educational experience alongside their sighted peers.

Moreover, the late 20th century witnessed a significant expansion in the availability of specialized educational resources and tools tailored to the needs of blind children. This included the development and dissemination of Braille materials, adaptive technologies, and tactile learning aids, which played a crucial role in enhancing the accessibility and quality of education for visually impaired students in Uzbekistan. The broader adoption of these specialized resources reflected a commitment to addressing the specific learning requirements of blind children and creating an environment conducive to their academic and personal development.

In addition to these changes, reforms in the professional development of educators and specialists working within the field of special education for blind children in Uzbekistan were also prominent during the late 20th century. Efforts were made to enhance the training and expertise of teachers, ensuring that they were equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively support the diverse needs of visually impaired students. This focus on professional development aimed to elevate the quality of educational provision and establish a cadre of educators capable of catering to the unique requirements of blind children within the educational system.

Furthermore, the late 20th century saw an increased recognition of the importance of vocational training and life skills development for blind children in Uzbekistan. As part of the broader reforms in special education, there was a growing emphasis on equipping visually impaired students with the practical skills and knowledge needed to lead independent and fulfilling lives. This encompassed initiatives aimed at providing vocational training, fostering life skills, and preparing blind children for

meaningful employment opportunities, aligning with the broader societal goal of empowering individuals with disabilities to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Another significant change during this period was the integration of modern educational methodologies and approaches into the special education framework for blind children in Uzbekistan. This involved the adoption of innovative teaching techniques, the incorporation of multi-sensory learning experiences, and the implementation of individualized educational plans tailored to the specific needs of each visually impaired student. By embracing contemporary educational practices, Uzbekistan sought to enhance the overall quality of special education and create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment for blind children.

The late 20th century also witnessed a shift in the perception of disabilities within Uzbekistan, with a growing emphasis on promoting social inclusion and empowerment for visually impaired individuals. This broader societal shift had a profound impact on the realm of special education, as it contributed to the creation of a more supportive and inclusive environment for blind children within educational settings. Efforts to challenge misconceptions and stereotypes surrounding visual impairment, as well as initiatives aimed at fostering a culture of empathy and understanding, were instrumental in creating a more inclusive and welcoming educational landscape for blind children in Uzbekistan.

Ultimately, the significant changes and reforms in special education for blind children in Uzbekistan during the late 20th century signaled a pivotal era of transformation, characterized by a progressive reimagining of educational practices and policies. From the promotion of inclusive education and the expansion of specialized resources to the emphasis on professional development, vocational training, and social inclusion, these reforms reflected a comprehensive and concerted effort to address the unique needs of visually impaired students and create a more equitable and supportive educational environment. The enduring impact of these changes continues to shape the realm of special education for blind children in Uzbekistan, underscoring the lasting significance of the reforms implemented during this transformative period.

In Uzbekistan, significant achievements and progress have been made in providing quality education for blind children, reflecting a commitment to fostering inclusive and supportive learning environments that cater to their unique needs. Over the years, a series of initiatives, advancements, and reforms have played a pivotal role in transforming the landscape of special education for visually impaired students in Uzbekistan, ushering in a new era of educational opportunities and support.

One of the notable achievements in the realm of special education for blind children in Uzbekistan is the establishment of specialized institutions and educational programs dedicated to their academic and personal development. These institutions have been instrumental in creating a focused and tailored approach to education, providing a supportive environment where visually impaired students can thrive, learn, and grow. By building specialized schools and programs, Uzbekistan has demonstrated a commitment to addressing the specific learning requirements of blind children and ensuring that they have access to the educational resources essential for their academic success.

Moreover, the development and dissemination of specialized educational materials and resources have been a cornerstone of the progress made in providing quality education for blind children in Uzbekistan. This includes the production of Braille materials, tactile learning aids, adaptive technologies, and other resources designed to enhance accessibility and facilitate effective learning experiences for visually impaired students. The availability of these specialized materials has been pivotal in fostering an inclusive and equitable educational environment, empowering blind children to engage fully in their educational pursuits and achieve their academic potential.

In addition to advancements in infrastructure and resources, Uzbekistan has made remarkable strides in the training and professional development of educators and specialists in the field of special education for blind children. Efforts to enhance the expertise and skills of teachers, administrators, and support personnel have played a crucial role in elevating the quality of educational provision and ensuring that visually impaired students receive the specialized support they require. By investing in the professional development of educators, Uzbekistan has demonstrated a dedication to equipping its educational workforce with the knowledge and capabilities to effectively address the diverse needs of blind children.

Furthermore, Uzbekistan has emphasized the importance of vocational training and life skills development for blind children, aiming to prepare them for independent living and meaningful employment opportunities. By integrating vocational training into the educational framework for visually impaired students, Uzbekistan has sought to equip them with the practical skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to embark on successful career paths and lead independent lives. These efforts reflect a commitment to empowering blind children and ensuring that they are prepared to contribute meaningfully to society beyond their academic pursuits.

The integration of modern educational methodologies and innovative approaches into the special education framework for blind children has also been a significant achievement in Uzbekistan. By adopting contemporary teaching techniques, incorporating multi-sensory learning experiences, and implementing individualized educational plans, Uzbekistan has created a dynamic and engaging learning environment conducive to the academic and personal growth of visually impaired students. This emphasis on modern educational practices reflects a commitment to providing an enriching and inclusive educational experience for blind children.

Furthermore, Uzbekistan has demonstrated a proactive stance in fostering social inclusion and promoting a culture of empathy and understanding towards individuals with visual impairments. This broader societal shift has had a profound impact on the realm of special education, contributing to the creation of a more supportive and inclusive environment for blind children within educational settings. Efforts to challenge misconceptions and stereotypes surrounding visual impairment have played a crucial role in creating a more inclusive and welcoming educational landscape for blind children in Uzbekistan.

Special education for blind children in Uzbekistan underwent significant developments and milestones from 1925 to 1990, a period characterized by dynamic societal, political, and educational changes. During this time frame, several key developments shaped the landscape of special education, reflecting a growing recognition of the unique needs of visually impaired students and a commitment to enhancing their educational opportunities.

In the early years of this period, the Soviet regime in Uzbekistan placed a strong emphasis on the establishment of specialized institutions and educational programs tailored to the needs of blind children. The government's proactive approach to providing educational opportunities for visually impaired students led to the creation of schools specifically dedicated to the education and development of blind children. These institutions played a crucial role in shaping the early foundations of special education for blind children in Uzbekistan, laying the groundwork for a more structured and tailored educational approach.

Furthermore, the period from 1925 to 1990 witnessed a concerted effort to develop and disseminate specialized educational materials and resources for blind children in Uzbekistan. This included the production and distribution of Braille materials, tactile learning aids, and other resources designed to

enhance accessibility and facilitate effective learning experiences for visually impaired students. The availability of these specialized materials played a pivotal role in fostering a more inclusive and equitable educational environment, ensuring that blind children had access to the educational resources essential for their academic success.

The training and professional development of educators and specialists in the field of special education for blind children emerged as a significant milestone during this period. Uzbekistan made efforts to enhance the expertise and skills of teachers, administrators, and support personnel, recognizing the crucial role of a qualified and dedicated workforce in providing specialized support to visually impaired students. By investing in the professional development of educators, Uzbekistan demonstrated a commitment to equipping its educational workforce with the knowledge and capabilities to effectively address the diverse needs of blind children.

Moreover, the period from 1925 to 1990 witnessed the integration of vocational training and life skills development into the educational framework for blind children in Uzbekistan. Efforts to prepare visually impaired students for independent living and meaningful employment opportunities underscored the nation's commitment to empowering them for successful integration into society. The emphasis on vocational training and life skills development reflected a progressive approach aimed at equipping blind children with the practical skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to lead independent and fulfilling lives.

Additionally, the development of inclusive educational policies and practices for blind children emerged as a key milestone during this period, demonstrating a shift towards creating more supportive and accommodating educational settings. The Soviet Union's policies aimed at integrating visually impaired students into mainstream educational settings, emphasizing the importance of social integration and participation. This approach sought to break down barriers and promote inclusivity within educational environments, fostering a supportive and conducive atmosphere for blind children to pursue their academic aspirations.

The period from 1925 to 1990 also witnessed the modernization and adoption of contemporary educational methodologies and innovative approaches within the realm of special education for blind children in Uzbekistan. The introduction of modern teaching techniques, multi-sensory learning experiences, and individualized educational plans aimed to create a dynamic and engaging learning environment conducive to the academic and personal growth of visually impaired students.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the impact of the Soviet regime on special education for blind children in Uzbekistan was multifaceted, encompassing both positive advancements and challenges. The establishment of specialized schools and programs, along with the emphasis on social integration and equal opportunities, reflected a commitment to addressing the educational needs of visually impaired students. However, the broader political and ideological context of the Soviet era also influenced the development of special education in ways that continue to shape the experiences of blind children in Uzbekistan today. As the country looks toward the future, ongoing efforts to build upon the legacy of the Soviet era and adapt to contemporary needs will play a crucial role in shaping the quality and inclusivity of special education for blind children in Uzbekistan.

The achievements and progress made in providing quality education for blind children in Uzbekistan underscore the nation's unwavering commitment to creating inclusive, supportive, and enriching educational opportunities for visually impaired students. From the establishment of specialized

institutions and the development of educational materials to the prioritization of vocational training, professional development of educators, and the promotion of social inclusion, Uzbekistan has made significant strides in ensuring that blind children have access to the resources, support, and opportunities essential for their holistic development and academic success. These achievements reflect a transformative approach to special education and highlight the enduring commitment to empowering and enabling visually impaired students to pursue their educational aspirations and realize their full potential.

The period from 1925 to 1990 marked a transformative era in the history of special education for blind children in Uzbekistan, characterized by significant developments and milestones that shaped the landscape of educational opportunities for visually impaired students. The establishment of specialized institutions, development of educational materials, professional development of educators, emphasis on vocational training, and the promotion of inclusive educational policies and practices during this period underscored Uzbekistan's commitment to providing inclusive, supportive, and enriching educational opportunities for blind children. These developments not only laid the foundation for the subsequent evolution of special education in Uzbekistan but also reflected a progressive and forward-thinking approach to addressing the unique needs of visually impaired students.

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