



## EDUCATIONAL CLUSTERS – NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

Umirjonova Marjonabonu Jaxongir qizi

Master`S student National Institute of Professional Development and  
Teacher Training in New Methods of the A. Avloni Research Institute

umirjonovamarjon@gmail.com

### **Abstract:**

The contemporary reality of societal development poses new challenges for education. Education must be synchronized with the needs of society and innovative development promotes the emergence of new structures. Educational clusters are comparatively new and one of the less researched phenomenon in pedagogical science. The goal of the current inquiry is to present the outcomes of a practical experience with a functioning educational cluster related to the qualification of teachers in Uzbekistan. The article examines the formation of educational clusters as a catalyst for innovative policies and practices in the education of teacher teachers. it looks at the types of educational clusters, and suggests a structure of an educational cluster for continuing teacher training and qualification, based on experience of the department for information and in-service teacher training

**Keywords:** educational clusters, teacher qualification, innovations.

### **Introduction**

Educational clusters are a relatively new and poorly studied phenomenon in pedagogical science. they arise in response to the modern needs of society and, in particular, education. education should meet these requirements and prepare students, university professors and teachers for the implementation of a modern educational process. increasingly globalized world and the rapid development of technology are a new challenge for education, which should, on the one hand, include innovative technologies in training, and on the other, meet the needs and thinking of modern students. Universities there and schools find it difficult to meet all these challenges. It is necessary to integrate institutions interested in the development of education. this opportunity is provided by clusters, and more specifically, educational clusters.





## **The essence and specifics of educational clusters**

About the concept of "cluster" global globalization and the rapid development of technology leads to changes in all spheres of life, including management. The emergence of clusters is one of the solutions to a number of problems that arise in this regard at various levels - global, national and regional. one of the most prominent researchers of clusters and the cluster approach is Maykl Porter. it defines clusters as "a geographically connected concentration of similar, interconnected, complementary firms, active channels for business relationships, communication and dialogue, which share a common specialized infrastructure, labor markets and services, and which share common development opportunities and risks"; as "a closely located group of companies that are united in a single business environment. in a certain area and similar mutual additions" (porter, 2004). Taking into account this study, we can outline the following main characteristics of the cluster:

- the main goal of the cluster is to increase efficiency and strengthen the national markets, as well as the possibility of breaking into foreign markets.

- \* The efficiency of a cluster does not depend directly on the number of its members.

The advantages of a cluster are related to the possibility of combining and partnering in the network and from the synergistic effect in it.

- \* clusters include firms (manufacturers, customers, suppliers, firms from different sectors) and organizations with a supportive function (training and professional development, innovation, advertising and presentation organization, research, administration, etc

- relationships in the cluster are based on cooperation and mutual obligations in a market economy.

- \* The cluster provides an opportunity for various institutions to participate in the economic development of the regions. there are several types of clusters:

- objects of traditional industries that focus on the development of the industry and in which intensive development is expected in the future;

- temporary alliances created to achieve "critical mass" in the development of projects that would not be available to individual firms. This can be a form of consortia for joint scientific and applied projects, joint development of new products and services, etc.

- agreements between mutually related enterprises with less strategic significance, implemented through intermediaries (for example, through chambers of industry), which set themselves the goal

of sharing resources in different areas: common promotion of export strategies, joint training activities, provision of common equipment or logistics, development of common strategies for purchasing materials and raw materials, etc.





## Educational clusters

The concept of "educational cluster" is relatively new in cluster theory a prerequisite for its development is the need to introduce and transfer innovative technologies to all spheres of life.

A theoretical analysis of the scientific literature gives us grounds to accept the definition of E. I. Chuchkalova and O. G. Mosunova: an educational cluster is "a set of educational institutions, research organizations, economic entities, and state bodies located on the same territory, connected horizontally and vertically, which are legally formed, operate in the field of education, and are not connected to the state." to achieve a common goal based on the individual goals of individual participants" (Chuchkalova & Mosonova, 2012) educational clusters are created with the aim of increasing the competitiveness of each cluster member, innovative development, raising funds for the formation of additional financial support for the educational process, equipping classrooms and modern laboratories, and applying innovations in practice. the main difference between educational clusters and other types of clusters is the fact that they are mainly related to educational services. assessment of the role of educational clusters includes their innovativeness and their role in the development of education. Naturally, the leading role in educational clusters belongs to universities as scientific and educational institutions. Their cooperation with business organizations is a prerequisite for the quality and effectiveness of the educational process. educational clusters form a link between educational, scientific, and industrial organizations, public associations, and the information environment (it clusters) for the cluster to be successful,

the following main processes need to be coordinated and controlled

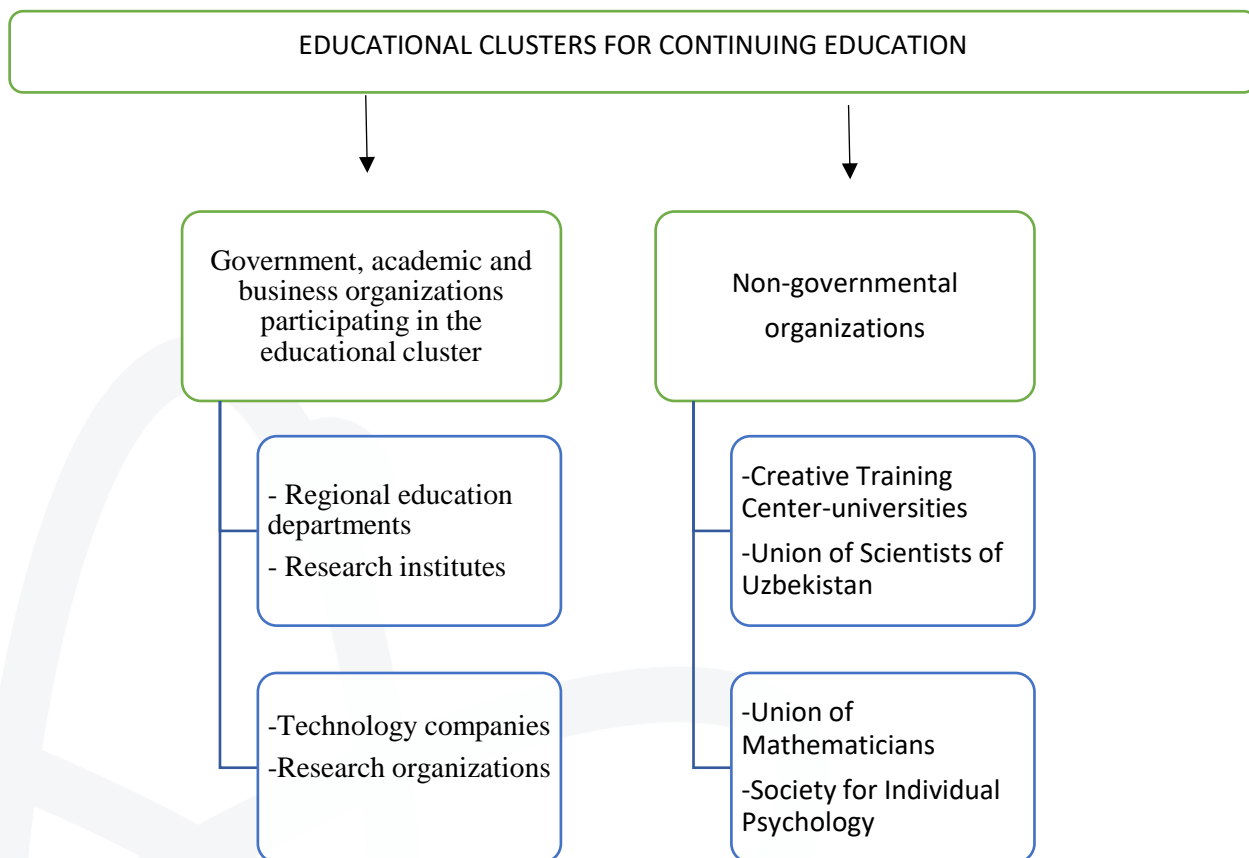
- \* information exchange and communication;
- \* maintaining a balance of interests and minimizing conflicts;
- \* creating mutual trust between partners in the network;
- \* preparation of solutions;
- \* create and strengthen a shared interest.

Naturally, our cluster developed and expanded, including other organizations engaged in specific educational, scientific and managerial activities in the field of education. We have also included regional education inspectorates, with which we cooperate in organizing qualification courses; schools-bases where we conduct experiments with innovative technologies; non-governmental organizations. thus, along with the expansion of partnerships, cluster networks have emerged - organizations with which we consolidate in the development of innovative scientific and educational projects, including strategic ones, the purpose of which is to study





foreign and support national educational projects in the field of ICT application in education, work with talented and gifted children education in natural sciences and mathematics, emotional and social training, etc. In education, we have implemented a computer laboratory for teaching natural sciences, used from grade 3 to grade 12; electronic whiteboards, dynamic software for implementing a research approach and for managing the learning process at school. We are currently working on a project to use cloud technologies in teacher qualification training.



Results of SWOT analysis of educational clusters in improving qualifications teacher registrationThe purpose of the study is to identify shortcomings and difficulties in the implementation of cluster policies and practices in the field of education and advanced training in Uzbekistan . Outlining actions to address these deficiencies is important for learning and professional development of teachers, and in the future for the development of the system education and advanced training systems. The study used SWOT analysis method, which distributes factors that describe educationly clusters, in four categories: strength (strengths), weakness (weaknesses sides), opportunities, threats.



Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors early environment (the cluster itself is able to influence them); opportunities and roses are environmental factors (external influence on the cluster). SWOT analysis is considered as a link between the formulation of the mission of the institution and the definition of strategic goals and objectives.

**Table 1. Results of SWOT analysis of educational clusters**

<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- the ways of cluster development are clearly understood;- clearly defined goals, objectives, types of activities and deadlines;</li><li>-education-business relations are preserved</li><li>-- relationships in the cluster are built on the basis of cooperation, association and mutual obligations;</li><li>- innovations in education are being developed and applied;-technology transfer is underway.</li><li>- investments are made in human resources;</li><li>-increasing the competitiveness of participating institutions</li></ul>	<b>Weakness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- national policy in education Research in the field of innovation and development in Uzbekistan are not bound by agreements with educational clusters;</li><li>- cooperation between businesses and the academic community limited;</li><li>- additional specialization is required implementation of those participating in the cluster institutions;</li><li>- the technological sequence is brokenactivity between activities and deadlines;</li></ul>
<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-the possibility of developing three levels of learning- formal, informal, and independent. Development and/or adaptation of specific Training methods;</li><li>- creating an educational environment(atmosphere) that supports teachers ' professional development;</li><li>- increase of opportunities and competitiveness in the cluster area;</li><li>- development to new business models in favor of education;</li><li>-the possibility of increasing the number of educational services;</li><li>-the possibility of expanding cooperation with international organizations;</li><li>- research and analysis of the needs of various users of educational services;</li><li>- participation in the economic development of the regions.</li></ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-lack of information about needs.</li><li>- insufficient promotion of activities and educational services;</li><li>- insufficient competence to apply innovative technologies;</li><li>- lack of mood (motivation);</li><li>- rapidly changing educational environment.</li></ul>



### **Discussion questions**

Educational clusters in Uzbekistan are still under-researched and are the subject of future research in national policy, encourage-the creation, action and results of their functioning. The presented the functioning of the educational cluster related to qualifications teachers in Uzbekistan, is applicable in different versions and at different stages of education. Research is needed into the potential of educational clusters, their direct possible impact on the development of the education system, as well as the effect that their functioning contributes to the development of regions.

### **Main Conclusions**

1. Educational clusters can be considered a useful tool in creating an innovative educational and research environment.
2. Created environment for advanced training of teachers based on cluster interaction requires innovation and turns into research and positivity creative environment for learning, research and development.
3. The creation of scientific educational clusters forms connections between education education, scientific organizations and business, public associations.and information environment (IT clusters), which is the basis for integration institutions interested in the development of education.
4. National policy is needed in the development of educational clusters and the creation of expert groups at the national level that would play a role coordination units, periodically assessing the policies and work of the educational clusters.

### **Conclusion**

Modern conditions for the development of education in Bulgaria are characterized by radical globalization and growing competition in the field of educational services. State policy of the Ministry of Education and Science in the Republic Uzbekistan does not provide for centralized financing of institutions responsible for looking forward to improving the qualifications of teachers. This provokes an increase in competitions in this area and the search for modern approaches to organizing continuous updating the scope of teacher training. Educational clusters are a natural way to develop and implement innovation in the educational process at all levels. Clusters are effective an effective model for the implementation of national and regional policies and practitioner in the field of teacher training. They join forces and allow us to solve problems that are beyond the capabilities of a single institution. Increased interaction increases - the effectiveness of educational activities increase at all levels.





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