

Shahboz, a graduate of the Institute of Entrepreneurship and Service, has been trading at the Ganjina market for the past two months. Although he graduated from the Institute two years ago, he did not find a suitable job for his profession.

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“I thought that having a diploma (of economist) would open up great opportunities for me, but the reality turned out differently. Having received the diploma, I went to one of the banks of the republic, where I wished to work for a long time”, says Shahboz.

In the bank, first, he was asked about work experience and recommendations from the previous job.

“I had to leave due to lack of work experience”, Shahboz explained.

He said that all his following attempts to find work were ineffective. At some places, work experience was required, at others – wages were too low. Often they promised to call back. Since Shahboz did not want to be a burden for his parents, he had to go to work in the

market.

Many graduates of universities in Tajikistan experience similar problems.

Only few, richer ones, can continue their studies abroad, which increases their chances of finding a permanent job.

Farzon Sharipov is one of them. After graduating from the National University, he worked for some time as a journalist and translator. A small salary did not suit him, and he applied to one of the universities teaching economy in China. According to him, the current practice of bribery and nepotism in Tajikistan in the process of job recruitment does not make it possible for young people to fulfil their dreams.

“In foreign universities, along with receiving a profession, you have the opportunity to learn one of the languages of great importance in the region, which will increase the chances of finding a job in the future”, says Farzon Sharipov.

Now Sharipov is thinking of staying in China after graduating and finding a job by profession there.

According to some analysts, the Soviet education system was the best training system in the world. However, after the USSR collapse, it was filed as a history, which led to great problems in the late 90s of the last century.

In addition, according to analysts, the civil war in Tajikistan was another cause of the education crisis and the outflow of thousands of qualified specialists who were forced to depart to other countries.

Khilvatshohi Mahmud, Tajik sociologist, says that there is almost nothing left of the Sukhomlynsky and Makarenko system in the current education system.



*Farzon Masharipov: Photos from Facebook.*



*Khilvatshohi Mahmud. Photo: Cabar.asia*

“I think that it is impossible to solve the existing problems only by adopting a new model of education: semi-European or semi-American, since there are many other mechanisms that affect the education system in Tajikistan”, says Khilvatshohi Mahmud.

In his opinion, the lack of attention of public and management system to the teachers’ problems and reputation is another problem for the education sector.

“If we want to have a developed education system, we must raise the status of a teacher: assign an appropriate salary, ensure an appropriate level of well-being, free them from unnecessary worries and social burdens (dances, marathons, marches, elections). Otherwise, problems in the education system will intensify”, said Khilvatshohi Mahmud.

People, who have worked in this sector for a long time, believe that the lack of specialists is the weakest link.

Hamrokul Khazratkulov, former education worker, says that due to a shortage of teachers, unqualified teachers are attracted to work, leaving most young people with insufficient knowledge.

“It came to the point when those who studied a little better than their peers were hired to work at schools. People of retirement age were removed from their posts. It was necessary to give them the opportunity to work and share their experience with the youth. This was not the case under the Soviet rule”, he added.

Meanwhile, an employee of the Ministry of Education and Science of Tajikistan said that a special working group created in this institution conducted an analysis of the education quality and the degree of comprehensibility of the curriculum. Research results showed that these indicators increased by 1.6% and 0.4% respectively compared with the 2016-2017 academic year.

**Research of the Ministry of Education and Science of Tajikistan on the level of knowledge and degree of comprehensibility of the curriculum in the country:**

**Сатҳу сифати дониш ва азхудкунии барномаи таълимӣ дар кишвар**

Шаҳр, вилоят, минтақа	Азхудкунии барномаҳои таълимӣ (%)	Сифати таҳсилот (%)
Душанбе	99,2	36,8
Суғд	99,1	36,7
Хатлон	98,7	36,2
НТҶ	98,1	34,8
ВМКБ	98,3	35,1
Дар ҷумҳурӣ	98,7	36,0

The Ministry of Education and Science of Tajikistan reported to CABAR.asia that graduates of universities in Tajikistan could easily find a suitable job in the CIS countries and even beyond.

Tamara Nasimova, Head of the Department of Nostrification and Educational Documentation of the State Service for Education Supervision, said that only those who have no idea about some procedures in other countries commit “inappropriate” actions.

“Each country has its own job recruitment procedures. For example, in accordance with the agreement that we have with the CIS countries, they must submit a simplified form when applying for a job. In Europe and USA it is necessary to submit a larger number of documents. For example, the United States needs nostrification. Unfortunately, our citizens ignore this and work wherever they please. Maybe they do not know these rules or they want to engage in something else”, she explained.

Complaints about the quality of university education in Tajikistan are heard amid the fact that thousands of foreign students visit Tajikistan every year.

According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Tajikistan, in 2018-2019 academic year, 6,257 foreign students were enrolled in higher educational institutions of the country, which is 2,401 more than last year.

Sohail Chowdry came from India. He is studying at Tajik Medical University. Chowdry says he had the opportunity to choose to study at one of the Central Asian countries.

“I heard a lot about Tajikistan and its education system from my friends who studied here and found job in India. Therefore, I did not think a lot about choosing a country where to study. I learned a lot about your medical science, maybe I will also become one of Abu Ali Sina’s successors”, says Chowdry.

### **Do Experts Believe in a Better Future?**

Experts assure that, despite the problems in the education sector, there are still reasons for good forecasts.

“What we read before, our study rooms, libraries, everything was different. Now there are much more educational opportunities. We live in a competitive environment, and we must strive to become better”, says Rahmon Ulmasov, an expert on migration issues, teacher at the Slavonic University of Tajikistan.

According to official statistical data, more than 30 thousand Tajik students are studying in foreign universities currently. Just over the past year, 5 thousand people have left Tajikistan abroad to receive a higher education.

According to a recent study by the Open Society Foundation “Youth Educational Migration in Tajikistan: Problems and Prospects,” 65% of Tajik students abroad plan to find a job in their country of study, and only 28% said they intend to return to Tajikistan.

Analysts hold the opinion that improving the quality of education in Tajikistan by solving some problems will not be able to change the whole situation.

“Those selective and fragmentary changes that were observed in the education system were implemented according to that logic. The problems in the field of education are systemic and it is necessary to focus on the system as a whole”, says Guldest Alibakhshov, a specialist at the Center of Sociological Research “Zerkalo”.

According to him, the current education system of Tajikistan is not ready for the changes that are happening in the world today and will happen in the future.

“The education system is not ready for the changes that are and will be happening in the world. According to UNESCO forecasts, the demand for sound higher education will grow and developing economies will have 63 million more students by 2025. In addition, the level of the student mobility and the internationalization of universities have been high recently, and this trend will continue. International universities run massive open online courses (MOOCs) and the number of students using these services will increase. For example, the number of students on Coursera (MOOC provider) in April 2014 was 7 million; in February 2017, the numbers reached 24 million users. These and other educational trends can dramatically change the educational landscape and the state should take them into account in order to timely adapt the national education system to these conditions”, said Alibakhshov.



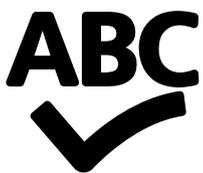
Guldast Alibakhshov. Photo: Cabar.asia

Shahboz hopes that his studies at the university will not be in vain and will help him in developing his business. Otherwise, he, just like thousands of other unemployed young people, will have to migrate.

“To be honest, there have been many proposals to go to Russia, but I think that it is necessary to try the best here first”, said Shahboz.

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