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THE ESSENCE AND CONTENT OF THE CONCEPTS OF “INDEPENDENT
LEARNING” AND “INDEPENDENT WORK”**Mamajanov Ikramjon Ganijonovich**

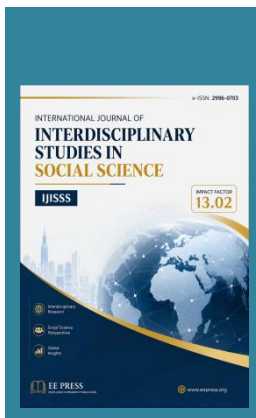
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**ABSTRACT**

This article analyzes the pedagogical and psychological aspects of the concepts of “independent learning” and “independent work,” which are of great importance in the higher education system. Based on the scientific approaches of international and local scholars, the differences and similarities between these two concepts, as well as their role in the professional development of students, are examined.

Keywords: independent learning, independent work, cognitive activity, zone of proximal development, intrinsic motivation, reflection, subject-subject relationship.

INTRODUCTION. In recent years, it can be observed that the socio-economic reforms being carried out in our republic are yielding positive results. The changes taking place in continuing education, particularly in the higher education system, are clear evidence of this process. In particular, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-5847 dated October 8, 2019, “On Approval of the Concept for the Development of the Higher Education System of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030,” adopted with the aim of “determining the priority areas for systematic reform of higher education in the Republic of Uzbekistan, raising the process of training highly qualified personnel who possess modern knowledge and high moral and ethical qualities and are capable of independent thinking to a qualitatively new level, modernizing higher education, and developing the social sphere and sectors of the economy based on advanced educational technologies,” serves to ensure the quality and effectiveness of education based on the integration and continuity of the state and society, the individual, continuing education, science, and production; to fundamentally reform the education sector; to train highly qualified personnel who meet the standards of developed democratic states and high moral and ethical requirements; and to organize the educational process on the basis of quality education.

The Concept also defines the task of “increasing the share of independent learning hours, developing students’ abilities for independent learning, critical and creative thinking, systematic analysis, and entrepreneurial skills, introducing methods and technologies aimed at strengthening competencies in the educational process, directing the educational process toward the development of practical skills, and widely implementing advanced pedagogical technologies, curricula, and teaching-methodological materials based on international educational standards.”

It also emphasizes that through learners' independent learning, independent work, and continuous improvement of their skills, specialists can acquire the necessary competencies and develop their creativity, research abilities, and logical thinking.

The concepts of "independent work" and "independent learning" as pedagogical concepts have become the subject of research by a number of pedagogical scholars. In particular, the renowned pedagogue P. I. Pidkasisty, in his studies, states that "independent work is a means of organizing and managing students' activities for solving didactic tasks." According to him, external influence (the teacher's design) plays an important role in independent work.

The Uzbek pedagogy scholar, Academician R. Kh. Juraev, in the context of modernizing the educational process, regards independent work as a key factor in the formation of students' professional competencies. In his view, independent work is a purposeful didactic process carried out both under the guidance of a teacher and independently of the teacher.

Professor B. Kh. Khodjaev characterizes independent work as an organized activity aimed at developing a student's ability to think independently and having a specific algorithm and system. Here, the main emphasis is placed on the system of assignments, whose purpose and duration are determined by the teacher.

The main goal of modern higher education is not merely to transmit ready-made knowledge, but to develop students' skills to acquire new knowledge independently and apply it in practice. Under the credit-module system, a large part of study time is allocated to students' independent activities. However, in pedagogical and psychological literature, the concepts of "independent learning" (self-education) and "independent work" are often used as synonyms, or their conceptual boundaries have not been fully defined. A theoretically accurate interpretation of the essence of these concepts is the basis for systematically organizing students' independent activities.

An analysis of the pedagogical and psychological literature shows that although the concepts of "independent work" and "independent learning" are closely interconnected, they differ from one another from certain didactic and psychological perspectives.

"Independent work" is characterized as a didactic means of organizing education, whereas "independent learning" is regarded as a factor in an individual's cognitive and psychological development. From psychological perspectives, independent learning is evaluated in a broader sense as cognitive activity based on an individual's internal need and a high level of motivation.

The theory of the "Zone of Proximal Development" developed by psychologist L. S. Vygotsky constitutes the psychological foundation of independent learning. According to Vygotsky, a student initially performs a task with the help of a teacher (independent work), and later, having fully mastered it, begins to develop it independently at the level of their own internal capabilities (independent learning).

Based on S. L. Rubinstein's principle of activity, "a person develops and is formed only through his or her own activity." Thus, independent learning is described as a process in which a student transforms knowledge through his or her own consciousness and inner desire, without external influence. Uzbek psychologist M. G. Davletshin, while studying the intellectual development of students during the period of youth, connects independent learning with an individual's self-activation and professional identification. In his view, a genuine need for independent learning arises in a student only when the student perceives himself or herself as a future specialist.

As Professor O. Musurmonova emphasizes, independent learning is not only the acquisition of knowledge but also a process of satisfying students' spiritual and intellectual needs and developing in them a sense of responsibility and a culture of self-management.

Summarizing the views of the above-mentioned pedagogical and psychological scholars, the following conclusion can be drawn: independent work is a means, whereas independent learning is a result.

Table I Approaches to “Independent Work” and “Independent Learning”

Scholars	Field of approach	Main aspect emphasized
P.I.Pidkasisty, R.Kh.Juraev	Pedagogical (Didactic)	Independent work is a system of assignments designed by the teacher to consolidate knowledge.
L.S.Vygotsky, S.L.Rubinstein	Psychological (Cognitive)	Independent learning is the individual's development resulting from internal need and activity.
M.G.Davletshin, O.Musurmonova	Pedagogical-psychological	Independent learning is the student's professional development, self-awareness, and intellectual culture.

The approaches presented above can also be explained as follows. Regular and systematically organized independent work (a process under the teacher's supervision) gradually becomes an internal need of the student and leads them to the level of independent learning (self-development). In this process, educational relations shift from the “teacher → student” (object) form to the “teacher ↔ student” (subject-subject) form.

Based on the above, an analysis of the psychological and pedagogical foundations of the problem of independent learning makes it possible to draw the following general scientific conclusions:

First, independent learning is not a random activity; rather, it is based on psychological regularities concerning the formation of a person through his or her own activity. Independent learning also occurs through the transformation of external actions performed with the teacher's assistance into the student's internal consciousness.

Second, from a pedagogical point of view, independent learning is a special “didactic tool” in the hands of the teacher, with a specific algorithm and a system of purposeful assignments, and it manifests itself as an integral didactic process carried out both under the teacher's guidance and independently of the teacher.

Third, independent learning is not limited to the accumulation of knowledge; it is connected with the student's awareness of his or her professional “Self” and professional identification. It becomes a leading factor that satisfies the student's spiritual and intellectual needs and develops a high level of responsibility and a culture of self-management.

Thus, independent learning is a complex psychological and pedagogical process managed by the teacher on the basis of a systematic algorithm, relying on the student's intrinsic motivation and professional identification, and ensuring the formation of the student as a responsible and self-managing individual.

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