

## The Personnel Issue in The Bukhara Railway System in The 1950–60s

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the personnel issue in the Bukhara railway system during the 1950–60s, focusing on the training, retention, and motivation of qualified specialists. It also highlights the role of communist ideology in political propaganda, the system of training young personnel, and the creation of social and cultural conditions for railway workers. Based on archival sources and periodical press materials, the article examines кадровая policy in the railway system, revealing its achievements and shortcomings. The study concludes that personnel policy in this period was closely linked to the socio-economic policies of the former USSR.

**Keywords:** Bukhara Railway, Personnel Policy, Qualified Specialists, Communist Ideology, Political Propaganda, Railway Workers, Youth Training, Social Conditions, Incentives, Soviet Period

### 1. Introduction

As in all sectors, the issue of personnel has always been relevant in the railway system as well, especially the constant demand for qualified specialists. Efforts to retain skilled workers, encourage them, and promote their achievements through mass media as a form of moral incentive were regularly carried out [1]. In addition, experienced personnel were actively involved in training the younger generation, and their expertise was studied and utilized. This was particularly important during the post-war reconstruction period when restoration work was also carried out within the railway system. Almost all activities were conducted under the control of communist ideology and party propaganda [2]. Propaganda work was entrusted to communists and individuals who had completed party schools and received strong ideological training. According to one issue of the newspaper “Qizil O‘zbekiston” (1951), there were 781 propagandists working in the Bukhara regional railway system. Of them, 312 had higher education, 393 had secondary education; 163 were managerial staff, and 613 were engineering and technical personnel [3].

### 2. Methodology

This study employs a комплекс (mixed-method) research approach combining historical, comparative, and analytical methods to examine the personnel policy in the Bukhara railway system during the 1950–60s. The research is primarily based on qualitative analysis of archival documents, periodical publications, and secondary scientific literature.

The historical method was used to analyze the evolution of кадровая policy within the broader socio-economic and political framework of the former USSR. This method allowed the author to trace changes in personnel training, recruitment, and retention practices over time.

The comparative method was applied to evaluate differences between local and non-local кадровый composition, as well as to compare various railway divisions and their approaches to workforce management. This helped identify disparities in the involvement of indigenous specialists and assess the effectiveness of state кадровая strategies.

The analytical method was used to interpret statistical data and archival materials, including

reports, newspapers, and official партийные documents. Special attention was given to materials from periodicals such as “Buxoro haqiqati” and “Qizil O‘zbekiston”, which provided insights into propaganda activities, labor incentives, and social conditions.

In addition, the content analysis method was employed to examine ideological narratives within propaganda materials and party education programs. This approach helped to understand how communist ideology influenced personnel motivation, professional development, and labor productivity.

Primary sources for this research include documents from the National Archive of Uzbekistan (O‘zMA), фонд materials, and official партийные reports. Secondary sources consist of scholarly works on Soviet labor policy, railway development, and socio-economic history.

The combination of these methods ensured a comprehensive and objective analysis of the кадровая issue in the Bukhara railway system during the studied period.

### **3. Result and Discussion**

During the 1950–1951 academic year, 255 circles studying the “Short Course of the History of the VKP(b)”, 172 political schools, and 63 circles studying the biographies of Lenin and Stalin were organized. About 97% of communists in railway organizations were involved in party education. More than 1,700 people participated in party enlightenment programs at stations and sidings. The number of circles and political schools conducted in local languages increased, involving more than 2,000 Uzbek and Kazakh participants. Attendance rates in training sessions reached 90–95%. This indicates that fostering loyalty to communist ideology among railway workers was considered a primary task [4]. Political and ideological propaganda continued in subsequent years. Seminars for party group organizers were held twice a month under the Tashkent railway hub party committee. These seminars included lectures on the leadership role of the Lenin-Stalin party and the responsibilities of primary party organizations in production. Representatives from Bukhara railway units also participated [5]. Topics discussed included strengthening mass-political work, organizing socialist competitions, and improving visual and oral propaganda. Instructions from central authorities were transmitted to local areas through propagandists. In some cases, production achievements were interpreted as results of political and ideological education [6]. For example, in 1952, the Kogon railway political department improved its work and successfully fulfilled annual loading and unloading plans ahead of schedule. However, weaknesses in trade union activities were also noted, which could contribute to staff turnover [7].

Efforts were also made to organize cultural and recreational activities for railway workers. In 1951, an amateur artistic group was established at the Kogon railway hub to involve talented workers and youth [8]. Such initiatives played an important role in cultural life at the time. Special attention was given to attracting youth to railway professions. In 1951, a “Children’s Technical Station” was established in Kogon, where 140 students participated under the guidance of experienced railway worker G. Morshelova [9]. These initiatives aimed to familiarize young people with railway operations and prepare future specialists. Providing rest and recreation opportunities was another method of encouraging personnel. In 1951, advanced workers from the Ashgabat railway Kogon hub were sent to resorts across the republic and the USSR [10]. This served as both a reward and a motivational tool. However, not all aspects of the system functioned effectively. For instance, in 1952, poor service conditions were reported at the Karakul station canteen, including hygiene issues and misuse of resources by staff [11]. Such cases were considered violations of socialist principles. The introduction of advanced technology also required highly skilled personnel [12]. In 1953, gas-generator locomotives were introduced, increasing the demand for technically

competent specialists. Experienced workers were regularly rewarded and recognized. For example, Elmurod Toirov, who started as a worker in 1925, rose to become a master and was awarded the Order of Lenin and the title of “Best Railway Master of the Union.” Such recognition was considered a key factor in increasing labor productivity. Despite these efforts, the share of local personnel remained relatively low [13]. By 1954, local Uzbek specialists constituted just over 40% of engineering and technical staff. Policies aimed at supporting local personnel were introduced to reduce staff turnover and improve representation. Improving living conditions was also a priority. In 1957, the Olot siding saw significant development, including housing, infrastructure, shops, and communication services. These improvements were intended to attract and retain workers [14]. Technical training sessions were held regularly, such as twice-weekly sessions at the Kogon locomotive depot. These were often combined with ideological education. Women were also increasingly involved in the railway workforce. By 1963, around 350 women worked in the Kogon railway system, mainly in less physically demanding roles. Support measures included childcare programs and recreational opportunities for their children. Large-scale welfare programs were implemented, including sending workers and their families to resorts and camps. These efforts demonstrate the importance of railway personnel in the national economy. The construction of new railway lines, such as the Bukhara–Nukus–Moynaq line (1959–1965), further increased the need for qualified personnel and strengthened incentive systems [15].

#### 4. Conclusion

The Bukhara railway division played a crucial role in the national economy during the 1950–1980s and significantly contributed to the socio-economic development of Uzbekistan and the USSR. It is important to remember the leaders who guided its development: A.V. Agajonov (1947), Yu.V. Dashevsky (1948), A. Fedchenko (1949), P. Raznodrobniy (1949–1951), P. Nikolayev (1951–1963), G.G. Khurinov (1963–1983), S.T. Turdiqulov (1983–1997), and R.T. Rustamov (since 1997).

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