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State Support of the International Mobility in Higher Education: Case of Kazakhstan

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Abstract

Relevance. In today's world there is a growing demand for qualified specialists who are prone to continuing education, the ability to migrate and adapt quickly in a countries with different institutional conditions. One of the main competitive advantages of Kazakhstan, along with natural resources, is a high literacy and a tendency of the nation towards education. Foreign investments and the growth of mobility in Kazakhstan's educational system require transparency of information about the structure, goals, objectives and perspectives of the system.

Statement of the problem. Globalization has opened up new opportunities for international mobility in the national educational system, using the experience of the more developed countries in the scientific and methodological activities of scientists and students. Government and companies are increasing financing for international educational and scientific programs.

Results of the study. The involvement of the educational experience of prestigious universities in the form of franchising and international research laboratories, in our view, could be useful for the development of education in Kazakhstan. With new forms of learning and development it is appropriate to implement western management, development of creative initiatives of students and young teachers, expanding opportunities for academic mobility.

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1. Introduction

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Along with rich natural resources, Kazakhstan's most important competitive advantage is a high level of education of the population. In 2012 Kazakhstan was at a decent 10th place in the world by the level of literacy. Foreign experts studying the socio-economic situation of the country, distinguish 99% literacy of the nation and a high propensity for education. According to the UNESCO World Report 2009 Kazakhstan is included in the group of developed countries with the education index 0, 965 leaving behind Switzerland and Japan. [1]

Purpose of the research. From the earliest stages of development Kazakhstan seeks to integrate into the world educational space. However, economic and institutional constraints limited this process. After a series of cyclical economic crises the country's economy entered the path of recovery and growth. In connection with the innovative development of Kazakhstan bringing the educational level up to global trends has become one of the main priorities of the government. At the same time reforming of the national educational system is carried out in a close connection with the global standards.

Objectives and methods of the research. Participation in the Bologna Process allowed Kazakhstan to achieve the significant progress in the internationalization of the educational system. At the same time, there are still problems which constrain improvement of the education quality to be resolved. This paper reveals some of these problems and suggests ways for solution.

Observation, theoretical and statistical analysis, comparison and generalization helped to get an idea of the problems and perspectives of internationalization of the higher education in Kazakhstan.

Currently there are 148 universities in Kazakhstan, including 51 national, 2 international, 93 private and 12 non-civil, which handle more than 600 thousand students. Almost every regional center has a universities focused on the development of scientific and intellectual potential in accordance with the climatic conditions of the region [2].

Objective preconditions for internationalization of education

It is known that the most important global trends affecting on setting priorities of human development are accelerated growth and aging of population, exhaustion of natural resources, and change of leaders of world economies. As a result of new tendencies we can mention the growth of interstate migration of capital, information and knowledge. Global challenges require new solutions, and one of them is the internationalization of higher education.

Today's world population is more than 7 billion people and by 2025 the estimated number is more than 8 billion people. The most dynamic growth of the world population has occurred over the past 50 years. At the same time, the rapid growth is observed in the "Third World".

There is an accelerated pace of the aging process of population, primarily in Europe and Japan. The UN Committee on Social Development has accepted a rate of 6% as a norm for aging population, allowable for pension payments and maintaining the balance of the state budget. The worldwide share of older people is 7%, while in the most developed it comes up to 14%, and in the less developed drops down to 5% [3].

A growing imbalance in the economically active population and pensioners in developed countries causes the increase of the fiscal burden on the social welfare of the older people.

Thus, global demographic and geopolitical changes, new technological modes, the expansion of capital transformation require renovation and internationalization of knowledge. There is growing demand for qualified specialists who are prone to continuing education, the ability to migrate and adapt quickly in countries with different institutional conditions.

Preparation of such a high level experts in developed countries is quite expensive, in the less developed countries there are no sufficient scientific and educational base in universities. The possibility of solving this contradiction could be found in the international integration of education and development of international academic mobility of students and scholars.

Another not less important prerequisite for the international integration of education is globalization of the capital and labour markets. Due to the expansion of international relations there is a growing demand for specialists who receive professional education relevant to international standards.

New technologies, the availability of information on the Internet, universalize a content of higher education, provide transfer of knowledge and remote access to learning in the world's leading educational centers.

2. The first experience in the internationalization of education

In 2003 Kazakhstan has signed the Great Charter of Universities, and in 2010 - the Bologna Declaration [4]. Bologna process allows building the university education in accordance with the needs of modern technological modes that requires constant development and self-improvement.

Signing of the Bologna agreement by leading universities of Kazakhstan creates conditions for raising academic mobility of students and teachers worldwide and allows talented youth to receive a qualitative education in prestigious educational centres of the world, it also gives the possibility of mutual recognition of qualifications and diplomas.

Higher education, especially western, considered as the most prestigious among Kazakh youth. According to UNESCO in 2009 there were 630 thousand Kazakhs studying abroad, including over 12 thousand in Russia, about 3,5 thousand in China and about 1,5 thousand in the UK, the U.S. and Turkey. Then followed by Germany, Czech Republic and Poland.

In 1997 Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has created a government scholarship program "Bolashak" for students who can study abroad for bachelor, master and doctor degrees. The program covers the cost of studying, insurance, living expenses and travel costs. During the years of independence more than 15 thousand young Kazakhs were studying in the best foreign universities. Since 2011 "Bolashak" program enrolls only masters and PhD.

But "Bolashak" represents only 10% of all Kazakhs studying abroad. Most of students get an opportunity to study by international programs, as well as through the sponsorship of companies.

There are some concerns about this situation, such as so-called 'brain drain' due to the fact that the most talented people of Kazakhstan after getting education in other countries are able to find a job there as well. In order to guarantee the return of students to their homeland Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan has established a requirement for students to leave their property as collateral, but still the desired result has not been achieved. The correct solution for this problem should be creating attractive working conditions for young professionals on their homeland.

3. Advanced forms of internationalization of the education system of Kazakhstan

One of the directions for internationalization of higher education could be, in our view, the involvement of the educational experience of prestigious universities in the form of franchising. Franchising can bring introduction of western management principles, development of creative initiatives of students and young teachers, creation of conditions for their development, etc.

At the same time the creation of industrial enterprises on the franchise basis and their provision of platforms for students practical trainings would enable developing professional and personal qualities of the new generation of experts in accordance with the requirements and standards of enterprises and universities with a worldwide reputation. [5]

Using franchising in a tandem with education and production can speed up the structural development of the domestic industry and higher education, as well as building "education - corporate training centres - production - science - innovation" model.

Peculiarity of the new approach in this integrated structure is in the fact that universities will become the leading element initiating innovations in production. At the same time Kazakh universities working on franchise may train specialists in their franchise - industries, focusing on assistance to enterprises in innovative development.

4. Results of the research

Thus, the development expectation of Kazakhstan's educational system associated with active integration into the world educational field. It is needed to develop a franchise, academic mobility of students and scholars, to organize international research laboratories and centres in companies and universities of the country (the first experience was in Nazarbayev University).

We believe that in order to promote the integration processes in the world educational field it is expedient to create an international organization of education and science, which would carry out coordination between national universities and research centres in the activities for the development and effective use of talent, ideas and knowledge of the population in different countries in the interest of the world's scientific and technological progress.

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