

СТАТЬЯ НОМЕРА

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**INTEGRATION OF THE RUSSIAN
HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM
IN THE GLOBALIZING MARKET
OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES:
CONDITIONS, MODELS AND FACTORS
DETERMINING ITS EFFECTIVENESS**

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ABSTRACT

The present work is an attempt to define the conditions, models and factors determining the effectiveness of the integration of the higher education system of the Russian Federation in the globalizing market of educational services.

The authors have identified and analyzed a number of conditions that make up the basis for the higher education institutions functioning at the regional and international levels, on the one hand, and predetermine the integration, on the other. The paper describes the models implemented in the higher education system of our country, within which the development and implementation of joint educational projects is carried out. In addition, the authors analyze the nature and the content of the factors that have the strongest and the most significant effect on the functioning of the international market of educational services in the system of higher education at the present stage of its development

Keywords: the system of higher education of the Russian Federation; international market of educational services; globalization; integration.

MAIN FEATURE

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ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ РОССИЙСКОЙ СИСТЕМЫ ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ В ГЛОБАЛИЗИРУЮЩИЙСЯ РЫНОК ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНЫХ УСЛУГ: УСЛОВИЯ, МОДЕЛИ И ФАКТОРЫ, ОПРЕДЕЛЯЮЩИЕ ЕЁ ЭФФЕКТИВНОСТЬ

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АННОТАЦИЯ

Настоящая работа представляет собой попытку определить условия, модели и факторы, предопределяющие эффективность интеграции системы высшего образования Российской Федерации в глобализирующийся рынок образовательных услуг.

Авторами выделен и проанализирован ряд условий, составляющих основу функционирования высших учебных заведений на региональном и международном уровнях, с одной стороны, и создающих предпосылки к интеграции, с другой. В работе описаны модели, реализуемые в системе высшего образования нашей страны, в рамках которых осуществляется разработка и имплементация совместных образовательных проектов. Кроме того, авторы анализируют сущность и содержание факторов, оказывающих наиболее существенное влияние на функционирование международного рынка образовательных услуг в системе высшего образования на современном этапе его развития

Ключевые слова: система высшего образования Российской Федерации; международный рынок образовательных услуг; глобализация; интеграция.

Introduction. The current stage of the world economy development is characterized by the intensification of the integration processes in various fields. Today, numerous integration associations are tackling similar tasks and problems related to the creation of a favorable foreign policy environment able to strengthen the incorporating parties mutual understanding; the optimization of the trade policy; the promotion of the economic restructuring; the support of the young industries development, etc. [2]. Under the influence of the labor market integration, the international community is implementing serious measures to boost integration in the sphere of education. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the conditions of the effective integration of the higher economic education of the Russian Federation in the globalizing educational market.

The impulse to coordinate the diverse higher education systems was given by the Declaration of the Ministers of Education from 34 European countries, adopted in 1999 in Bologna (Italy). Its ratification marked the beginning of the Bologna process. Russia joined the Bologna Declaration in 2003. The Bologna Process Integration measures are aimed at promotion of the regional economic education, enabling the particular groups of countries to create a more favorable environment for the educational services trade. In practice this requires, first of all, the universal transition to the two-step educational system, with the first stage of the higher (university) education lasting four years and the second stage of the higher education, the completion stage lasting two years. Therewith, the system of «credit units», i.e. the standardized clusters, should be implemented. Their equal presence in the educational systems of different countries will allow speaking about the comparability of the curricula and the possibility of transition from one institution to another with a guarantee of the final result of education identity, regardless of the home base country.

Main Part. The actual process of globalization and economic integration of the higher economic education (and higher education in general) is a recent time phenomenon. The objective processes in the socio-economic development,

forming the basis of the global changes, underlie the educational institutions integration.

Factors accelerating the integration of educational space include both, factors acting on a sufficiently long time interval, and those appeared in the recent years [13]. The factor of educational services export increase is the most important for the processes of integration and globalization in the sphere of higher education, including the economic one. It can be explained by the fact that universities, previously limited in the educational services delivery within their countries, have started to actively export them to other countries [7].

Other factors accelerating the integration of educational space, include the strengthening of the interrelation and interdependence of national economies; the increase of the factors of production (labor, capital, information, technology) mobility; the amplification of the national economies openness degree, expressed in the liberalization of goods and services trade; the transition to democracy and market economy as the main mechanisms of social development; the growth of human capital role in the conditions of transition to the innovative development [1]; the conversion of the higher education into the common advantage [14].

Currently the integration process of higher economic education can be characterized by the active cooperation of the Russian higher education institutions with the foreign educational centers, which began after the liberalization of external relations and the adoption of the new laws in the field of education. International strategic alliances (ISA) are recognized as the most effective forms of the «soft» transnational corporate integration on the international market of higher educational services. International strategic educational alliances are considered as sites of the global educational space. They are designed to provide professional consulting and methodological support as well as practical support of the human capital innovation [6].

There are two models of international strategic alliances in Russia: the «validation» and «contract» [5]. Under the «validation» model the Russian university (with the participation

of the foreign partner) develops an educational program and with the consent of the latter acquires a right to issue its diplomas. This form of cooperation involves the establishment of long-term and fairly close partnership contacts. Its efficiency is stipulated by the students' expenses on the foreign university diploma savings, the quality of the educational process improvement, related to the export of management of the partner university. The «contract» model of international cooperation is based on the making of the special agreement between the universities of different countries, according to which the Russian university offers its students an educational program of the western partner. In recent years, due to the adaptation of these programs to the Russian realities, this model is increasingly being transformed into a model of «joint programs». Depending on the geographical location of the educational services receipt, it uses two variants of educational services providing: in Russia and abroad.

Russian specificity of the joint educational projects formation and functioning is connected with the fact that they, in contrast to the West-European ones, are usually limited by two participants. The negative impact of the project participants' limitation factor is particularly strong at the initial stage of the transnational integration, when the choice of the western partner is largely of a random character. The successful entry of the Russian universities in the unified educational space can be achieved in case the structural changes in the national education system are carried out. One of the issues of the higher education reform in Russia is to create new structural formations – federal and national research universities. New schools of higher learning, that have to become the leaders not only in Russia but also in the international education market, are usually formed by means of combining of several universities [3]. As a result of this process it is supposed to create a common educational and scientific research area in the region and (or) industry, which will increase the education and scientific research quality, strengthen the integration processes in the sphere of production, education and sci-

ence, help to successfully solve the problems of socio-economic development.

However, the increase of the educational institutions effectiveness by means of their associations at federal and regional level can be achieved under certain conditions. First of all, it should be noted that the effectiveness of the universities association depends on the economy of scale size in the sphere of educational services production. Since the economy of scale in the implementing of various educational programs is different, it is necessary to consider the structure of educational services in each of the merging universities.

As it is known, the economy of scale, expressed in the expenditure savings resulting from the increase of the quantity of the production, depends primarily on the technology used. Therefore, its value in different branches is different. Even if we assume the existence of a significant economy of scale in the education industry, it is necessary to carry out a special study of the effectiveness of the universities association, since with the different volumes of the produced output it is different. The economy of scale can occur, firstly, due to the integration of the educational process factors in the common to the universities' curricula, and, secondly, due to the association of the teaching staff of the university wide departments. As different training programs have different returns from the scale, it is necessary to do the specific research of every program's wins and losses, which algebraic sum will show the overall effect of association [13].

An absolute advantage to be expected from the ongoing upsizing of the universities is also connected with the gains resulting from the integration of the universities' scientific-research activities. A large university, as a rule, gets additional opportunities for the integration of educational and scientific-research activities. This, in its turn, contributes to the integration of the common scientific and educational space of the university with real production.

It should be remembered that the state policy aimed at promoting the multilateral international strategic alliances, can accelerate the integration processes, both at the national and

international levels, only on the condition that a formal association of universities will be the result of the already existing real relations and not its base. Otherwise there will be an inevitable long lag between the time of the merger and the time of benefits gain.

The study of the conditions under which the process of integration in the field of higher economic education can be effective, has shown that the forms, methods and conditions of integration largely depend on national policy of the country. In this regard, when formulating the national policy, it is necessary to analyze the possible benefits and threats associated with the integration and globalization of the educational process. First of all, the states should understand that the consequences of integration will be different for the participants of different segments of the market of educational services. The winning party will be the «strong» universities with a brand, i.e. those able to survive in a competitive environment [7]. Besides, the opening of the education market will lead to a stratification of the university teaching staff: the welfare of the qualified staff and employees will increase due to the increased opportunities to choose a place of job and remuneration, while wages and living standards of the less successful workers, at best, will remain unaltered [13]. The students, as the direct consumers of the educational services, will gain an absolute win, associated with the savings on transaction expenditures of transfer from one university to another, expanding employment opportunities, obtaining the education of a higher quality.

To mitigate the contradictions, emerging in the integration process, a special program of the state regulation is required. The concept of preserving and strengthening the system of basic national values in the fields of education, science, cultural and historical traditions should constitute the core of this program. Concurrently, the specific mechanism of this program realization in the conditions of the increasing international integration should be worked out. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the state's educational policy of the integration processes regulation depends on the degree of its orientation to promote the

already existing forms of cooperation of the Russian higher education establishments with the universities in other countries.

In addition, the government should encourage the establishment of the multilateral educational alliances. It will allow using both direct and indirect forms of economic support of the integration process. The direct support is connected with the allocation of budgetary resources in the form of subventions, subsidies, grants, loans, centralized program funding. The indirect support involves the use of such tools as tax incentives, alleviation of the bank loans receiving and repayment terms, priority distribution of the state orders for the training of the specialists and conducting scientific researches [12].

To evaluate the features of functioning of the international market of educational services in the system of the higher professional education as a process of educational services providing, it seems actual to analyze the main factors affecting its state and terms of functioning. Speaking about the factors determining the effectiveness of integration of the Russian higher economic education in the globalizing market of educational services it should be mentioned that the international market of educational services in the system of the higher professional education is a system of relations between producers, suppliers and consumers of educational services. In this connection, the most important factors determining the vectors of the present international market of educational services in the system of the higher professional education development, in our opinion, are: educational environment; subjects of the market; equipment and materials used in the provision of services and contributing to the provision of services; and material resources in the form of apartments, buildings and other real estate.

The educational environment is the space in which the subjects of the market such as suppliers and consumers of educational services act. In other words, it is the space of social relations where in the course of educational services the procession of knowledge and information of the service providers and their transformation into

a certain set of information that is being passed on to the consumers takes place, further it again transforms into knowledge, when, if we consider the process in terms of the human capital building, professional competence of the consumer as a specialist is formed.

The educational environment is a complex phenomenon, structural analysis of which is the starting point for the formation of the understanding about the competitive position of the supplier in the educational market. The principal characteristics of the educational environment in the system of the higher professional education are: the focus on the development of competencies, according to Federal state educational standards; the increase of the share of the students' individual work; the changing role of the university teachers (consultant, moderator, facilitator, tutor); the introduction of the teaching technologies, appropriate implementation of the competency approach [15].

Structurally the educational environment can be characterized as a complex multi-level education system, reflecting changes in the modern educational process in the system of the higher professional education, presented at the international, federal, regional level and the level of the higher education institution itself. The most important functions of the educational environment of the modern university in the system of the higher professional education are, to our minds, the forming and developing ones, allowing the harmonious development of student's and enabling optimum conditions for the self-realization creation. All those who are involved in the provision of services or in any way affect the perception of the consumer services including staff of the service provider, the consumer himself and other consumers in an environment in which the supply of services is carried out, make up the human factor. Material base is the environment in which the provision of the educational services takes place and in which the service provider and consumer come in contact, and all the material, tangible components that facilitate the provision of services. In the case of educational services, it also includes educational materials and products.

All the factors mentioned above, acting within the institutions in the system of the higher professional education, affect the quality characteristics of the international education market.

Striving of the subjects of the world education market to extract income and strengthen in the market stimulate the introduction of the new programs, the invention of the new forms and models of learning and the emergence of the new institutions capable of competing in the international arena. In other words, today there is a need for the new flexible mechanisms of the system of the higher professional education functioning, those focused on the activities of the market relations with the regard to the main processes of integration of the world economy. This means that in the current situation, only the orientation of the university on the adaptation and forecasting of the changes of the labor market conditions, identifying of the potential needs and the opportunities for their satisfaction by providing the educational services of the high-quality ensures the competitiveness of educational institutions in the domestic and global markets [11].

One of the key indicators to measure the scale of the international education market and the role of individual states in a given market is an indicator of international academic mobility [4]. The term «international academic mobility» is understood as the movement of anyone pertaining to education, for a specified period (usually from a semester to a year) to another educational institution (in the home country or abroad) for the learning, teaching or research, after which a student, teacher or researcher returns to his home institution [10].

They distinguish external, initiative and organized academic mobility. External (international) academic mobility is a trip for learning, teaching, research or other educational or research purposes to the foreign educational or scientific institutions. Initiative mobility is implemented by the travel of students and/or employees on their own initiative to implement the individual educational projects, academic and research programs. Organized academic mobility involves organizing visits of students and/or

employees of the university in order to realize individual or group academic and research programs also together with a partner universities and organizations.

Subjects of academic mobility are the university students, graduate students, faculty staff, non-teaching staff, as well as students, graduate students, teachers, researchers and leading experts of the outside educational institutions and organizations. Further, we shall have a closer look at the indicator «international academic mobility of students», which is measured as the ratio of students of a country receiving education abroad, to the total number of students who are citizens of this country.

Support and increase of the number of foreign nationals in the framework of the student's academic mobility are the priorities of the international activities of the universities in the system of the higher professional education. For example, according to the Institute of Economics' Development Programme for 2013-2017 [8], operating under the program aimed to improve the competitiveness of Belgorod State National Research University [9], these two indicators are leading in activities related to the development and implementation of joint educational programs (JEP) and projects with foreign partners, to increase of the contingent of the foreign students in the university and the expansion of the scientific and educational cooperation with foreign partner universities. Within the framework of agreements made between the partner universities the following forms of international student mobility are being implemented in NRU "BelSU":

- integrated education on student exchange programs in the partner institution, suggesting studying the development of the set of basic educational programs abroad, and focusing on recognition of disciplines studied by students at the partner university without getting academic degrees of the partner-university. Education at a partner university does not increase the total duration of training.

- education on joint educational programs implemented by the partner universities. Joint educational program involves the development and implementation of the two partner universities educational program, assigning the

graduates who have successfully mastered the program, degrees (qualifications) of one or two universities with the issuance of the relevant documents on higher education (diplomas, certificates) in this direction.

- language courses and internships; summer language schools, etc.

Conclusions. The undertaken study has shown that the national education system of higher education requires a number of structural changes which should contribute to the successful entry of the Russian Federation's universities in the unified educational space. The unified educational space formation can significantly change the situation on the education market of higher learning. The unification of the educational process, based on the common requirements and the unity of the educational programs, as well as the increase of competition will force the universities not to work for the system of abstract figures, but for the particular student. Besides, the educational process unification will increase the student mobility and change the educational product structure. The consumers will get the opportunity to acquire not the entire package of services in one higher school, but to form the optimal structure of the service portfolio offered by different universities. The changing of the situation in the field of the higher education will help to reduce the asymmetry in the distribution of information in the educational market of higher learning and will make its product more transparent and more specified for the educational services consumers.

The analysis of factors and indicators determining the functioning of the international market of educational services in the system of the higher professional education has revealed that the major factors of the international education market are educational environment and the subjects of the market, i.e. suppliers and consumers of the educational services at the national level. As a part of the educational environment subjects of national markets of educational services in the system of the higher professional education are increasingly participating and being involved in the international activities to integrate national systems in the international scientific and educational space.

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