

PECULIARITIES OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION COMPETITIVENESS EVALUATION IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

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Abstract: *The etymology of the competitiveness concept is analyzed in the article. The concept the higher education' competitiveness is singled out. The evaluation of repeatability of each factor in the researcher's works has been discovered by means of analyze the factors that influence the higher education' competitiveness. The most important factors are singled out. The process of student's mobility by the educational space at the current stage is analyzed. It was found that the main indicator of the higher education' competitiveness in any country is demand for educational services. Influencing factors of the higher education' competitiveness have been considered as evaluation criteria.*

Keywords: *concept of the higher education' competitiveness, influencing factors, scientific and educational potential, educational services, quality, mobility of students*

INTRODUCTION

One of the crucial tasks for the government is transforming the regulatory mechanisms of the economic sector to require the Standards of European Community, and in particular, their legal framework. Higher education is one of the strategically important spheres under the conditions of globalization. As a result, increasing competitiveness in national context is a very important issue, as well as perspectives to its extending with the intent of building rapport with the European space.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Significant contributions regarding the higher education' competitiveness were made by such scientists as: N. Verkhoglyadova [1], H. Fashiyev [2], I. Moiseeva [3], T. Tardaskin, I. Zubkov [4], N. Moiseeva, N. Piskunov, G. Costin [5], L. Korchahova [6], R. Fatkhutdinov [7] et al. However, estimation the weight of factors, influencing on the level of higher' education competitiveness under the conditions of globalization require more detailed research.

The *purpose of our research* is to analyze the factors of the higher' education competitiveness nowadays and quantitative determination the most influential of them, as well as the level of higher education' competitiveness in Ukraine in global context.

RESULTS

In general, higher education as the economic sphere is an important priority lever for development of any country, because it is responsible for the quality and competitiveness of human resources in each national economy. In today's informational society the intellectual component becomes a key indicator. Nowadays, development of science and education determine the ability to accumulate wealth of country and its society. Thus, higher education' competitiveness is an indicator of success of society. Higher education transmits the achievements of modernity to our future generations because of the result of their work, i.e. highly intellectual and human resources.

New Law of Ukraine "On higher education" has been adopted on January, 07, 2014 [8] under conditions of further integration of Ukraine into the European space. This law aims to increase domestic education' competitiveness, as well as to bring the educational market to the international standards. From the point of etymology, "competitiveness" comes from eng. verb "compete". According to the Ukrainian lexicology, "competitiveness" combines two words "competition" and "ability", which means the ability (possibility) to compete [9].

Well-known, firstly the concept of competitiveness has been introduced by Michael E. Porter in his book "Competitive strategy", where author examines this category as a complex of specific competitive advantages of any object among similar at the market. Thus, we can define higher education' competitiveness. It is the ability of higher education to provide full needs at the educational market among their customers. Considering that the sphere of higher education at the national level accumulates the institutions of III-IV level of accreditation, we can confirm the ability to compete at the boundary of macro-environment. It should be understood primarily as a contest between them, in other words, the universities' competitiveness.

The concept of the domestic and foreign universities' competitiveness is the subject of our research. Comparative analysis of the scientist's views is presented in *Table 1*:

Table 1

The concept of universities' competitiveness in different interpretations

Author	Determination
Romanova I. [10]	property of universities that determines the fate of the relevant educational services market, appertained to such university and the ability to confront the redistribution of market in the favor of other subjective
Fatkhutdinov R. [7]	1) training of specialists who are able to maintain a competitive struggle at the internal and external labor market; 2) ability to develop competitive innovations in education; 3) ability to conduct effective policies in all areas of activity
Pashchenko M. [11]	potential abilities with providing the appropriate level of educational services, which satisfy the needs of society in the training of highly qualified specialists and the need to design, develop and implement of scientific-methodological and scientific-technical term products nowadays and in the future
Lazarev V. [12]	complex of characteristics a certain time period in the conditions of the specific market, which represents the advantage over competitors by determinative indicators, i.e. financial, economic, marketing, logistical, human, social and political, as well as the ability of the universities to risk-free operation and timely adaptation to the external environment, which are continuously changed
Korchahova L. [6]	ability to be allocated among other universities due to the best socio-economic indicators
Verkhoglyadova N. [1]	ability to operate and to give the educational products and assortment the services that meet the needs of a competitive market

Source: created by author

Given the large number of scientific works towards identifying factors, which influence the competitiveness of universities, we will analyze the most renowned expert opinions (*Table 2*):

Table 2

Analysis of factors, which influence the universities' competitiveness

Author	The list of factors, which influence the universities' competitiveness	Functional model
Fatkhutdinov R. [7]	Scientific and educational potential (A1); material and technical base (A2); range of educational services (A3); cost of training (A4); form of education (A5); promotion of educational services at the market (A6)	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6
Moiseeva N, Piskunov N., Costin G. [5]	Overall popularity and reputation (A7); responsiveness to the changing demands of consumers (students and employers) (A8); innovative potential and its realization (A9); prestige of the specialties (A10); advertising policy (A6); level of foreign relations (A11); financial security (stability) (A12); competitive status (A13)	A7, A8, A9, A10, A6, A11, A12, A13
Korchahova L. [6]	Quality of education (A14); price (A4); forms and methods of teaching (A5); conditions, location, prestige (A7); advertising (A6)	A14, A4, A5, A7, A6
Verkhoglyadova N. [1]	Qualification of the teaching staff (A1); degree of development of the scientific and methodological bases (A2); breadth of coverage of training areas (A5); competitive graduates of the universities (A14)	A1, A2, A5, A14
Tardaskin T., Zubkov I. [4]	Quality of education (A15); quality of teaching (A1); scientific work and research activities (A9); scientific and pedagogical potential (A1); prestige in academic environment (A7); assessment of graduates by employers (A16); international activity of universities (A11); conformity the education, which brings universities to the needs and requirements of the labor market (A14)	A15, A1, A9, A1, A7, A16, A11, A14

Table 2: Continuation

Fashiyev H., Garayev I.[2]	Qualification potential of the educational institution (A1); development of scientific and methodological base (A2); material and technical base (A2); quality of education (A14); coverage of areas of training specialists (A5)	A1, A2, A2, A14, A5
Moiseeva I. [3]	Quality of education (A15); level of scientific research (A9); intra-corporate environment (A17); external image (A13); marketing factor (A4, A6); demand of graduates at the labor market (A14)	A15, A9, A16, A13, A4, A6, A17

Source: created by author

The next step will be the qualitative analysis, using the quantitative calculation of factor repeatability. According to the calculation results, we can determine the specific weight of each author, quantitative value of 1 of repetition equals 0.125 of specific weight (*Table 3*).

Table 3

Analysis of factors, which influence the universities' competitiveness

Factors	The frequency of the authors	Specific weight of factor
A1 – Scientific and educational potential	5	0.625
A2 – Material and technical base	4	0.500
A3 – Range of educational services	1	0.125
A4 – Cost of training	3	0.375
A5 – Form of education	4	0.500
A6 – Promotion of educational services at the market	4	0.500
A7 – Overall popularity and reputation	3	0.375
A8 – Responsiveness to the changing demands of consumers (students and employers)	1	0.125
A9 – Innovative potential and its realization	3	0.375
A10 – Prestige of the specialties	1	0.125
A11 – Level of foreign relations	2	0.250
A12 – Financial security (stability)	1	0.125
A13 – Competitive status	2	0.250
A14 – Competitive specialists who are trained in the universities	4	0.500
A15 – Quality of education	2	0.250
A16 – Assessment of graduates by employers	2	0.250
A17 – Intra-corporate environment	1	0.125

Source: calculated by author

This analysis allows allocating the most significant factors which influence the universities' competitiveness, e.g.: scientific and educational potential; material and technical base; available forms of education; promotion of educational services; competitiveness of graduates. The least influential are: speed of response on the changes of consumer's inquiries, range of educational services, specialties prestige, financial security and intra-corporate environment. Thus, factors form the level of universities' competitiveness that directly effect on alumni's demand. In aggregate all universities in Ukraine consists the higher education system of Ukraine. The level of higher education competitiveness in Ukraine can be viewed through analysis of demand for its educational services.

According to the UNESCO, Ukraine as a country at the global market of educational services is presented by means of international review. Student's mobility in universities shows that Ukrainian universities are popular among the students of such countries as: Turkmenistan (6861 persons), China (4341), Russia (2990), India (2516), Jordan (2108), Turkey (1077), Morocco (1022), Syrian Arab Republic (1014), Iran (905), Tunisia (473), Vietnam (352), Pakistan (207). While Ukrainian students go to Russia (12805), Poland (6118), Germany (5875), Italy (1780), Czech Republic (1727), France (1524), the United States of America (1487), Hungary (1019), Austria (865), the UK (822), Spain (764), Greece (452), Bulgaria (370), Switzerland (309), Netherlands (287), Norway (284), Canada (234), Turkey (232), Romania (226), Moldova (157), Portugal (155) and others [13].

Our calculations show that today 43.6 thousand of foreign students in Ukraine are studying; it is only 1.2% of the total share of students studying outside their own country. The number of Ukrainian students going abroad is 39.6 thousand persons, i.e. 1.1% of the total number of mobile students [13]. *Figure 1* shows the number of coming foreign students and Ukrainian students abroad:

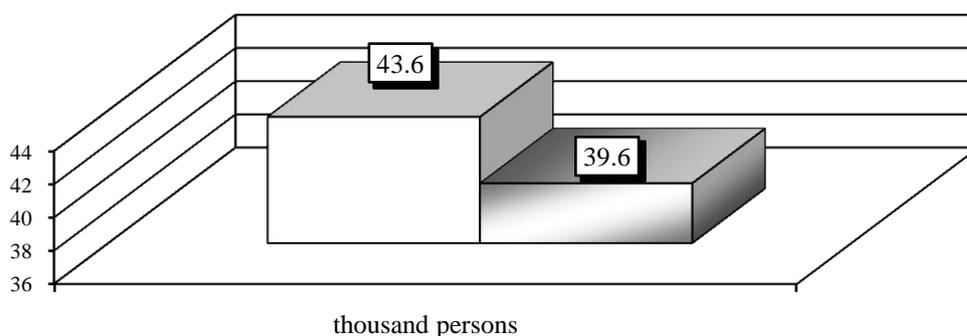


Figure 1: Ratio of foreign students in Ukraine and Ukrainian students abroad

Source: calculated by author according to [13]

Thus, looking at the map of countries we can conclude that mainly universities of Ukraine are demanded for students in developing countries, while Ukrainian students go to developed countries (EU-countries, the USA and Canada), i.e. Ukrainian universities' competitiveness is inadequate in comparison, for example, with European universities.

At the same time, the leaders of the most popular countries among the all mobile students are: the United States of America (21.1%), the UK (12.2%), France (7.7%), Australia (7.1%) and Germany (5.9%), which are equal to 54% of the total share of mobile students [13]. Comparing countries, we can see that the share of Ukraine is 17.6 times less than in the USA; 10.2 times less than in the UK; 6.4 times less than in France; 5.9 times less than in Australia and 4.9 times less than in Germany. Thus, Ukrainian universities are not so popular in the international context as European or American.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Consequently the universities' competitiveness is a strategic indicator for further accumulation of public goods within the country. Therefore, researches of factors, which influence on the university's competitiveness, are important.

Having analyzed numerous researches on those problematic issue, we can see that most influential factors has been singled out with using the quantitative analysis of frequency repeating in scientific papers. As it was found, the most influential factors are simultaneously criteria of the methodology for determination the universities' position by using ranking system.

The level of the higher education' competitiveness of any country is characterized by means of demand on educational services.

One of its indicators within the international education market is the rate of student mobility that reflects the advantages of some national higher education systems among the others.

Our research showed that mostly Ukrainian universities are in demanded by students from developing countries, while Ukrainian students prefer the universities in developed countries, such as Germany, Italy, France, the USA, the UK, Canada, Switzerland and others.

For future researches we consider more appropriate to compare the influence on higher education in general, i.e. at the macro-level; to conduct a comparative analysis of European countries; to create a SWOT-matrix for the system of higher education in Ukraine; to identify the effective ways to overcome the major threats; to improve competitiveness higher education in Ukraine.

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