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**PERSPECTIVES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIA'S
UNIVERSITIES IN THE 2020S**

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Abstract

The present scientific paper deals with modern impacts on the development of science and higher education, in particular in Russia. The indicated effects make the traditional methods of students training to be ineffective. In this regard, research of potential trends in the evolution of universities is of immediate interest. The authors used foresight method for identification of the potential promising trends. They also used the expert interview method to characterize their consequences. Results of the tests were classified and structurized. In the present scientific work, the obtained by the authors trends that may arise in the 2020s in evolution of the Russian universities are discussed. Circumstances important for working out the growth policy for universities in Russia are also considered. Strategy tasks for development of higher education in specific conditions of Russia are identified. Finally, remedies necessary for development of a promising strategy for improving the university activities in Russia are also observed.

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1. Introduction

Wealth of conditions exert influence on the development of science and higher education. Evolution of IT solutions and related restructuring of the methods of goods and services production and supply, as well as social stratification and associated social risks, transformation of the labour market and change in the nomenclature of popular professions are among them.

Universities of the Russian Federation are no exception. Working out of growth policy requires taking into account not only the current situation and ecosystem condition in the region of a university localisation (Wakkee, van der Sijde, Vaupell, & Ghuman, 2018), not only understanding of the processes occurring internationally (Marginson, 2017), but also including the “vision of future” concept in the development strategy as its essential component..

2. Problem Statement

According to the expert forecast, a number of significant transformations in social and economic relations and educational technologies will take place in Russia in the near decade. The changes with great probability will determine outlooks for development of the universities of Russia in the 2020s. Teaching of students based on the existing methods is becoming ineffective for development of the information society. Debates on this issue are already hold at discussion platforms such as, for example, “Island 10-22” in the innovation centre Skolkovo (Moscow Region). In this regard, research of potential trends in the evolution of universities is of immediate interest. Study in this field considering possible risks and prospective changes would make it possible to develop strategies for their development taking into account possible risks and prospective changes.

3. Research Questions

The aim of the given research was receiving answers to to the following questions. What promising trends may arise in the 2020s in evolution of the Russian universities? What are their potential consequences and predictive potential?

4. Purpose of the Study

In order to define the way of higher education development capable to meet contemporary challenges and adequately correlate with technical, resource and informational conditions, it is important to reflect on the prospects for the development of job market, technology, society and, of course, the universities themselves. Therefore, the aim of the study is identification of promising trends that may arise in the 2020s in the process of evolution of the Russian universities, as well as a description of their content and discussion of possible consequences.

5. Research Methods

To identify potential promising trends, the authors used foresight method based on identification of general categories in an expert survey. Survey participants answered a series of questions related to the

development of universities in Russia in the 2020s and highlighted the most significant trends according to their opinion. Additionally, there was used the expert interview method, which allowed to identify potential promising trends and to characterize their consequences.

6. Findings

The study revealed a number of trends, which, according to experts, will have an effective impact on the development of universities in Russia in the coming decade. The experts' estimation was classified on the basis of the frequencies of mention of certain trends, then they were structured.

The most often was mentioned the *digitizing of higher education*. Mostly, it was mentioned in the general context of the world economic and social development trends, but experts unanimously noted it as one of the most important one for universities in Russia in the 2020s.

It is interesting to note that digitizing often means the proliferation of MOOC courses and distance teaching. Researchers define distance teaching as any form of computer-based training offered to students who are separated by distance (i.e., they are not physically present in the same place), and training content is planned and prepared by an educational organization. In addition to separation by space, distant students study in different time, i.e. they can learn at their own pace, according to their schedules. This temporal separation is called asynchronous distance learning, and the alternative (simultaneous learning) is called synchronous distance training (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2016).

At the same time, digitizing is the process of digital conversion of information, which allows creation of assets in virtual reality. This process will affect a number of structural elements: digital documents (diplomas, certificates, etc.) and cloud storage; digital applications for individualizing the rhythm of learning of a concrete student; formation of neural networks; processing and research with the use of Big Data. For this reason, digitizing as a process of restructuring the architecture of higher education, will receive its reinforcement in the coming decade. Just now, for example, students can already use social networks and blogs for training. This is both pedagogical and digital technology (Garcia, Moizer, Wilkins, & Haddoud, 2019). Gamification and game-based learning systems are developing to make learning more interesting, accessible and involving in activities (Subhash & Cudney, 2018).

Formation of the cluster of non-university educational environment is one of the most important trends.

Firstly, the development of information technologies leads to an increase in the share of educational platforms in the market of educational services, such as Coursera, EdX, Codecademy, Udacity, Udemy, etc. Universities lose their monopoly on knowledge. They still produce it, but cannot successfully convert it into goods. Short-term courses with less time and cost are much more attractive alternative for many educational institutions. In particular, when it comes to advanced training or professional retraining with minimum set of required competencies.

Secondly, many large companies create centres of competence on their own platforms. Often it is more effective to outsource an external specialist to train staff than to send an employee to a university off-job.

In the third place, in some cases a situation can arise, when teaching personnel for various reasons completely or partially leave the university and create private educational facilities, training centres or laboratories of their own. Of course, this phenomenon is not widespread; nevertheless, it promotes the development of cluster of non-university educational environment.

Stiffer competition for financial resources, the best applicants and prospective employers. Many experts believe that intensifying of competition, even among public universities, will continue. On the one hand, creation of an extensive network of national research universities that receive additional funding from state allows consolidating of human capital and concentrating of resources, which let to solve important strategic tasks in the terms of basic and applied research.

On the other hand, due to the growing budget deficit of many regional universities, risks of social and economic imbalance increase when regions face uncompensated scientific and educational migration (Boguslavsky, Ladyzhets, Neborskiy, & Sannikova, 2018a, 2018b) and with lack of resources to solve local tasks. Financial resources, of course, are one of the key factors in the development of any organization, especially when it comes to scientific, technological and educational projects.

The realm of science and higher education is a specific area; therefore, management methods typical for commercial companies are not always applicable to it. For example, an increase of the students-to-teachers ratio may reduce the cost of labour, but blunt the educational effectiveness.

Russian universities are in difficult situation, when the main type of their activity, which allows receiving some additional income, is educational activity. At the same time, the cost of education in Russia ranges from \$ 400 to \$ 8,000 per year. In accordance with international standards this price is not very high. While scientific patents, incomes from licensing, research and development, in the overwhelming majority of cases belong to the sector of research institutes that do not recruit and train students. Therefore, universities will have to, firstly, enhance research and scientific development, and, secondly, look for alternative sources of income. It is quite possible that large Russian universities will adopt the experience of universities in the United States and some other countries in investing their own resources in various funds, stocks and projects.

The main subjects of competition between universities will be applicants with higher tests score, and, of course, promising employers, with whom cooperation agreements will be concluded. Human resource is one of the most important values in the field of science and higher education and the comprehension of this fact, according to experts, will come in full force rather soon.

Transformation of the labour market has several important factors. Firstly, this is technological automation of workplaces, i.e. replacement of a number of professional tasks (routine actions) in particular professions, which will result in their modification or disappearance in the next 10-20 years (Dengler & Matthes, 2018).

Secondly, it is social prestige of professions, connected inter alia with the size of income.

In the third place, this is creation of digital innovations, that is design and introduction of new products and services creating completely new structures and practices that change, replace or complement the existing market rules as for individual organizations, so in various activity spectrum (Hinings, Gegenhuber, & Greenwood, 2018). This is what businesspersons call disruptive technologies

(Christensen, 1997). Breakthrough technologies can change nature of employment, use of intelligence and set of competencies in demand.

Because of the transformation of the labour market, another important trend is noted for Russian universities in the 2020s. It is *change in the nomenclature of popular professions*. The process of training specialists in various fields of knowledge is associated with the permanent risk of obsolescence of core information. That is, during the four years of bachelor degree course, the situation in the labour market can change in terms of both supply and demand for a particular profession or qualification, and in terms of changing requirements for core competencies and their meaningful content. Experts believe that the appeal of universities to the atlas of new professions and also carrying out of foresight sessions and research in this area will be implemented in parallel with the preparation of students more and more.

Increase in stratification of higher education. There are still hold discussions if higher education is public benefit or private commodity (Williams, 2016; Marginson, 2016) and, accordingly, if tuition fees should be charged and what should be its rate. For example, education is free or inexpensive in Germany, Scandinavian countries (Välilmaa, 2011) and France. State higher education is free in Turkey and Mexico. Neoliberal reforms were abolished in Chile, where education is currently free for poor families (Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2016). Privatization was partially cancelled in Poland (Kwiek, 2017). In many other countries, higher education is paid and its cost is very high.

There is a point of view that the high cost of higher education undermines social solidarity putting representatives of different social groups in an unequal position. The calculation of costs that increase the cost of higher education often is not directly related to the quality of the educational product itself. The developed infrastructure of the university, stadiums, expensive gyms, various clubs, dormitories comparable with expensive hotels require investments, which, in turn, are attracted from education consumers, that is, from students and their parents.

Of course, it is very expensive, especially when judging the leading universities of the world that are included in various international rankings. Perhaps this was one of the reasons for the increased tendency of stratification, when parents want to give their children a good higher education, but cannot pay for it at the level of elite universities. In Russia, the situation is aggravated by the fact that there is a free higher education, when the state pays for student tuition and educational services; however financing is "per capita" and not really high. Therefore, the solution of infrastructure questions happens, as a rule, due to paid educational services.

Differentiation of the quality of school education. School and university are two completely different social institutions. Each of them has its own goals and objectives, although they have such common functions as culture, education and upbringing. Strengthening continuity between the two institutions is one of the most important tasks. Many experts express concern that the creation of a single educational space on the territory of Russia is extremely problematic, and, tendency towards differentiation may appear in the next decade. This may result in weakening of the quality of applicants training and increasing of social stratification during the enrolment campaigns. Regional universities will have to put a greater emphasis on completing their juniors' education. As a result, less time will be devoted to research projects.

7. Conclusion

One of the most important tasks in the strategic development of higher education in Russia is finding a balance between the “raw materials scenario” and the “post-industrial scenario”. In the current economic situation in Russia, the share of the raw material sector is large. It forces universities to orient training of students to the current needs of employers, often and often hindering the development of innovations, which lie outside the commodity sector.

In this regard, it is necessary to change the social (state) procurement in relation to universities, and also strengthen the ties between schools and universities as in terms of training future applicants, so on developing strategic government projects aimed at creating such sectors of the economy that are competitive both at the domestic and foreign markets. In turn, this would allow training of specialists for the future, developing forward-looking strategies and implementing studies, inter alia in the application of specific products for national projects.

The results obtained may indicate the need to develop a promising strategy for improving the activities of universities in Russia, in particular, creating conditions for stimulating scientific activity. It can be:

1. Global research centres enabling to attract foreign professors and compete with universities in other countries (Cattaneo, Malighetti, Meoli, & Paleari, 2017).

2. University partnerships with various companies in the development and maintenance of technology or methodological guidance (Moon, Mariadoss, & Johnson, 2019). At the initial stage, the country's government should support these projects.

3. Eliminating of the administrative barriers, minimizing of bureaucratic pressure and introducing the principles of autonomy and empowering universities (Lašáková, Bajžíková, & Dedze, 2017).

4. Introduction and expansion of representations, such as trustees, supervisory boards with the participation of employers and government representatives.

5. Targeted state support for priority projects.

The above mentioned and other measures, according to experts, are necessary for healthy development the universities of Russia in the coming decade.

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