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### Modern Tools for Sustainable Development of Territories. Special Topic: Project Management in the Regions of Russia

#### FACTORS OF FORMING REGIONAL POLICY: EXPECTATIONS OF CONSUMERS OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

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#### *Abstract*

The research is devoted to the problem of expectations of consumers of educational services. In the work, such notions as “the market of educational services”, “educational service”, “actors of educational services”, “the consumer of educational services”, “satisfaction with the education quality” were analyzed. It is the mentioned data that must be one of the most important factors of forming the educational policy of a region.

Education is one of the main factors forming the society of the state and its regions, and ensuring its development. Prerequisite of progressive development of the society is the extended reproduction of labor and education potential of the state which can be implemented due to the development of the marketing system of educational services in modern conditions.

This is why the educational field, particularly the higher professional one, faces new tasks, the most important of them being the provision of production and infrastructure areas with highly qualified specialists.

Till the end of the 20th century, the educational model aimed at producers (traditional) has reigned - the state was the chief customer, the source of financing, and the only consumer of specialists trained. In recent years, due to the development of modern information technologies, the initiative has passed to customers of educational services, and a new model of the market of educational services focused completely on customers has been formed.

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**Keywords:** Educational marketing, educational policy of a region, educational service, the consumer of educational services.



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## **1. Introduction**

Cardinal changes in all areas taking place in conditions of crisis of economy of the state and its individual regions increase weight of researches aimed at the development of ideas of theoretical and practical marketing according to modern tendencies (Kotler, 2005; Saginova, 2003; Rice & Traut, 2006; Porter, 2005).

## **2. Problem Statement**

A wide range of problems of the market of educational services is the subject of numerous researches. In conditions of the consumer-oriented economy, scientists have made a weighty contribution in the development of theoretical and methodological foundations of marketing organization of an independently developing educational institution in the market of educational services.

## **3. Research Questions**

Development of the modern educational market has begun in the early 90s. This trend was caused by the transition of the domestic economy to the market system and the introduction of a paid tuition system in many higher education institutions. From this period the development of the market of educational services has been traced.

Based on the analysis of theoretical literature, this term should be understood as the entity of all potential consumers aimed at satisfying their needs in the field of education and capable to enter into exchange relationships with the seller. Another point of view on the market of educational services allows interpreting it as a complex of economic relationships between the actors of economic system of higher education which is called up to satisfy the needs of the society for specialists and consumers of certain future qualification in a corresponding specialty.

Today, most researchers in the area of education market relationships understand the notion “the market of educational services” as the totality of all economic relationships between producers (educational goods) and consumers in the field of purchase and sale of goods “educational service”. The market of educational services is the socially significant market for purchase and sale of educational services and products by main actors of this market (Batalova, 2010).

Based on the analysis of modern scientific approaches to the essence of the term “educational service”, let us specify that in the domestic science this notion means the following: the organized educational process to obtain necessary knowledge, skills and capabilities; the system of knowledge, skills and capabilities obtained in the process of education and used afterwards to satisfy needs of a person, the society and the state; purposeful activities characterized by the interaction of education process participants, and aimed at satisfying the educational needs of a person (Strizhov, 1999); the totality of knowledge, skills, capabilities and certain volume of information which are used to satisfy the specific need of a person and the society for intellectual development and acquiring professional skills and capabilities; the system of knowledge, skills and capabilities used to satisfy the needs of a person, the society and the state, and aimed at the growth of human capital, active transmission of systemic

knowledge, and inculcation of proven skills in a certain kind of occupation by the way of direct communication with learners (Dzhaparova, 2005).

Thus, the educational service is an interaction between the producer and the consumer in the process of selling and buying this specific good.

A specific feature of educational services is the satisfaction of spiritual and intellectual demands of a person and the society, i.e. the social need for education.

Increasing efficacy of the functioning of the market of educational services calls for marketing approach to the organization of activities in the field of educational services. Marketing of educational services is the complex of activities aimed at creating, maintaining, or changing the behavior of the target audience towards these services and their actors. Educational marketing is aimed at providing the most effective satisfaction of needs:

- of a person for education;
- of an educational institution for competitiveness on the market and the increase of material welfare of teachers;
- of enterprises and organizations for qualified personnel;
- of the society for the extended reproduction of labor and intellectual potential of the country.

According to the researches of Batalova (2010), in the market of educational services there are its “own” producers, consumers, intermediaries. But in the market of professional education more than two actors (producers and consumers) interact, namely, four: consumers obtaining directly the educational services; parents paying for educational services and influencing the choice of an educational institution; employers which are interested in the renewal of their personnel and the increase of qualification of employees paying for the education of their employees, and which serve as a base for internship of students; the state which is both the customer and the consumer interested in qualified work force (Batalova, 2010).

Implementation of the marketing approach assumes that the producers of services should form their resources, taking into account the needs, demands and expectations of consumers and other target audiences of higher educational institutions: applicants, students, employers, public educational and civil authorities.

The rights of consumers of educational services are often associated with such factors as access to education, quality of educational services, or with some other indicators which do not have an exact social and economic content, and require to be clarified.

Analysis and consideration of the expectations of the consumers of educational services will allow planning really optimal educational policy of the region and preparing managers for the educational field which possess approaches and ways to satisfy the consumers of educational services in the modern conditions.

In this connection there arises a problem of studying the expectations which the consumers of educational services can have.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

In this work, our goal is to study the expectations of the consumers of educational services as a factor forming an objectively optimal policy of the region.

#### **5. Research Methods**

In our opinion, it is impossible to study the expectations of the consumers of educational services without assessing the satisfaction of students with the quality of education. Every educational institution studies the expectations and assesses the satisfaction of the consumers of educational services by its own way, using various tools:

- studying internal and external documents and records;
- survey;
- questioning;
- interview;
- monitoring;
- benchmarking;
- testing;
- calculation of rating indicators (Donina & Vezetiu, 2019).

To solve the research tasks, we used the following methods: theoretical analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature devoted to the problems of the quality of education, and the issues of educational services and their actors; studying the legislative, regulatory documents, and the actual experience of implementing the educational marketing. To achieve the main goal of the study, the following methods were applied: observation; a survey method (questioning); methods of data mathematical processing.

In this research, it is advisable to analyze the system of assessing the expectations and the satisfaction of the consumers of educational services, taking as an example an individual higher education institution (the Institute of Pedagogy, Psychology and Inclusive Education of the Humanitarian and Pedagogical Academy (branch) of FSAEI "Crimean Federal University named after S. I. Vernadsky " in Yalta city) and formulate the suggestions to increase the quality and efficacy of professional training, considering the modern development trends of the educational system.

To achieve this, it is required to introduce certain relevant indicators which allow to make qualitative and (or) quantitative evaluations of the phenomenon described (Pevzner, Sheraizina, Donina, Petryakov, & Aleksandrova, 2017).

To study the expectations of future consumers of educational services, we developed a diagnostic program "HPA of CFU Applicant". Implementation of this program included the survey of applicants entering the Institute of Pedagogy, Psychology and Inclusive Education of Humanitarian and Pedagogical Academy (branch) of FSAEI "Crimean Federal University named after S. I. Vernadsky" in Yalta city.

The survey was to reveal the expectations of the applicants concerning the occupation choice, the quality of professional training, training conditions. 76 respondents took part in the investigation.

While implementing the program (2018, July-August), it was revealed that, for the moment of entering the University, the most important aspects for future specialists were:

- prestige of the profession (73 %);
- training conditions (material and technical base, dormitories) (97 %);
- quality of education (the qualification level of teaching staff, compliance of educational programs with the modern labor market demands) (52 %).

While surveying, three main components of the applicants' expectations were revealed, along the descending line:

- education access;
- comfortable conditions of training;
- education quality.

To obtain the objective picture and define the degree of compliance of the applicants' expectations with the graduates' satisfaction with the education quality, we developed and implemented a program "HPA of CFU Graduate". While implementing the program (2019, May), 56 students completing the undergraduate training programs in the Institute of Pedagogy, Psychology and Inclusive Education of the Humanitarian and Pedagogical Academy (branch) of FSAEI "Crimean Federal University named after S. I. Vernadsky" in Yalta city were questioned. The questionnaire was aimed at revealing the level of satisfaction of the graduates with the education quality and the educational services obtained.

According to the researches of Ermakova and Nikulina (2017), the main criterion of the satisfaction of the consumers of educational services is the quality of education as the degree of compliance of character, content, conditions and results of activities of educational institutions with the expectations and needs of the society, various social groups.

So, while developing the questionnaire, the following criteria were considered:

- professionalism of teaching staff;
- information support of the training process;
- material and technical equipment of the training process;
- contents of academic disciplines.

While questioning, we revealed that, on the whole, the quality of education had become the leading and the most evaluated aspect for the graduates. Thus, the majority of respondents noted the high level of the education quality which had been achieved thanks to:

- high professionalism of the teaching staff of the Academy (67 %);
- material and technical support of the educational process (51 %);
- informative and meaningful academic disciplines (32 %).

## 6. Findings

The results of two studies were correlated and analyzed. Based on the results, we can conclude the following: the expectations of the applicants and those criteria by which the graduates assess the level of the quality of their professional training do not correlate. Based on this information, we developed recommendations for representatives of administration of general secondary education institutions which are students under the master's program in the specialty "Education Management" at the Humanitarian and Pedagogical Academy. Essence of the recommendations was to increase the volume and application of technologies of implementing the career guidance, and forming the objective ideas about the components of education quality among high school students. These recommendations are also directed to the education departments of the cities of Crimea with the aim of disseminating them as part of the continuing education of teachers and the formation of the concept of the educational policy of the region, taking into account the expectations of consumers of educational services and the level of satisfaction of graduates with the quality of professional training.

## 7. Conclusion

So, the implementation of the marketing approach in the education field allows considering opinions and expectations of consumers of educational services, when making contents and technologies of educational programs, as well as organizing the interaction between consumers and producers of educational services, this influencing directly their loyalty to the leading educational institutions and the general policy of the region.

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