

Innovation in higher education and skills for the labor market in Kazakhstan
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Инновации в высшем образовании и необходимые навыки и знания,
востребованные на рынке труда в Казахстане
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Abstract: *the article investigates the current trends in the development of Kazakhstan's society, indicate a growing importance of innovation in education as a tool for the creation of intellectual potential of the state and as a resource providing a real welfare of the citizens as well as a competitiveness factor of the individual companies and the state in general. The innovated education system is turned into a priority of social and economic policy and also becomes the indicator and a catalyst for country's development.*

Аннотация: *в статье исследуются современные тенденции в развитии казахстанского общества, указывается увеличивающееся значение инноваций в области образования как инструмента для создания интеллектуального потенциала государства и в качестве ресурса, обеспечивающего реальное благосостояние граждан, а также фактор конкурентоспособности отдельных компании и государства в целом. Инновационная система образования приобрела статус одного из главных приоритетов социально-экономической политики, а также постепенно становится индикатором и катализатором для развития страны.*

Keywords: *Kazakhstan, education, innovation, labor market, economic policy, employment.*

Ключевые слова: *Казахстан, образование, инновации, рынок труда, экономическая политика, трудоустройство.*

According to the documents of UNESCO there is a certain significance of high school's pedagogical process where knowledge should be got by the methods of its research and the practical application. And the only solution of the problem is a continuous development of innovation in education and integration of high school with science and business [1].

«The main criterion for evaluation of higher education institutions is the employment of the graduates» [2].

For the present time in the Republic of Kazakhstan very often there is a lack of interaction between the universities and labor market as well as the absence of regulation mechanisms for graduates' employment and flexible response of innovated educational programs to country's labor market needs.

The level of youth unemployment in Kazakhstan during the period from 2000 to 2015 decreased by 3.8 times [3].

The problem of youth employment in the country remains relevant despite the youth unemployment rate in Kazakhstan is significantly lower in comparison with the countries which are in the first 55 countries according to the Global Competitiveness Index, for instance Switzerland (6.4%) [4], France (24.0%) [5] and the United Kingdom (13.4%) [5].

It should be noted the majority of students who have completed education have got a real problem concerning their employment. And part of the problem starts at the time of their study in order to get a qualitative and practically applicable education. Often graduates lack the practical skills and knowledge of the current situation in the study area which complicate young specialists' employment issue.

In the mass media of Kazakhstan and scientific discussions periodically raises such questions as why there is an absence of close cooperation between the universities and the enterprises as well as why the practice in high schools is so poorly organized and students are compelled to get it themselves.

What are the difficulties faced by "yesterday's" graduates looking for work?

One of the main criteria for employment is an experience. It's a real challenge to get a job without possessing the necessary experience. The advertisements placed on the professional websites (as of 20.05.2016), such as HeadHunter.kz [6], moomkin.com [7], hipo.kz [8] indicate the preferences of the employers in work experience of the potential applicants.

Considering a high competition in the labor market the employers do not intend to have a specialist without a certain work experience as well as they are not going to spend their time and finances for young professionals' trainings. They need to have experienced specialists possessing ability to apply the theoretical knowledge in

practice as well as a capacity to make decisions and focus on the final results. Thus, having a good higher education in Kazakhstan does not guarantee the successful employment.

It's not seldom when the graduates find a job not on their studied major. And there is a perception in society that the system of higher education is poorly focused on the "real needs" of the economy. There should be introduced some innovations in the management of education which precisely determine the prospect of an imbalance between the real labor market needs and the existed system of education, thus, for instance increase the number of professional engineers in the country and decrease the number of lawyers and economists.

The theoretical orientation of study process at the university creates some certain difficulties in employment of graduates. The joint study program between the universities and the potential employers should function in order to carry out the professional practice of the students and satisfy the real needs of country's economy. In accordance with "Education Law of Kazakhstan" (2016) [9] there is a certain concept of "corporate training" based on the shared responsibility of the state, employers and the educational institutions in the training of young specialists.

The possibility to get some experience and further employment at the place of practice would greatly reduce the level of unemployment among the university graduates. The graduate employment index is one of higher educations' evaluation criteria in the world. According to the Global Employability University Ranking-2015 [10] the most effective universities became Harvard University (USA), Cambridge and Oxford (UK).

And the real breakthrough in the ranking is due to the National University of Singapore which rose from 49 position in 2013 and 39 in 2014 to 17 position in 2015 ranking.

The success of the National University of Singapore is explained by the presence of annual internships for 200 best students in Silicon Valley, New York, Stockholm, Beijing, Shanghai and Israel. During the internship students work in small start-up companies for 6 months and also take classes on entrepreneurship in the evenings. Upon finishing the internship, students are required to share their experiences and build their own business product. Since the start of implementation of the program in 2001 there were created 350 companies [11].

For instance, by the official data in Kazakhstan the indicator of employment of college graduates in 2014 in the first year after graduation was 75% [12].

In order to have a successful socialization by the young professionals and the acquisition of the professional experience as well as gaining further job the state also offers some innovation in management of education as introducing to the graduates such program as «Youth practice" in Kazakhstan. For 6 months the wages for the participants is made at the state budget (18 MCI or KZT 35 676 in 2015). Thus, during this time, the employer has a chance to determine the ability of a potential employee and adapt to the requirements of the organization [13]. On July 1, 2015, 4.8 thousand graduates acquired the experience due to participation in the youth practice [14].

By the support of the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan and such political party as "Nur Otan" functioning the project aimed at the identification, selection, preparation and training of the managerial staff of the country among young and talented people of Kazakhstan. During 6 years more than 10 thousands of young specialists have applied to participation in this project. 372 people have passed the open competitive selection, testing and training in the various organizations. And as a result of participation in the project more than 40% of participants changed their jobs, more than half went by rotation from the regional district to the national level [15].

In addition to ongoing projects and programs that provide the significant support to the young Kazakh professionals it should be considered the international practice addressing the issue. One of the most effective tools is the tax incentive or financial assistance to employers recruiting the graduates. This measure is widely used in France.

So each year the employer is provided by the financial assistance in France and it is available for 5 years after the establishment of an appropriate workplace. In Poland the tax benefits are available throughout the year and not only for the employer but also for the graduate as well. In the Czech Republic the tax incentives are provided to employers creating the new jobs for the college graduates [16].

Summarizing the above mentioned facts, it should be noted only a very small part of employers in Kazakhstan are ready to accept candidates without any experience and one of the most effective measures in addressing the issue of employment of graduates is the innovation practice of the tax incentives or financial assistance to employers as well as the updating the educational programs increasing the practical relevance of acquired knowledge and skills with the participation of employers and adapted to the real labor market needs.

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