

Improving the Position of the University in the Educational Market in Modern Conditions

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Abstract: The key approaches to the disclosure of the terms "competition", "competitiveness", "competitiveness of the university" are determined. In the conditions of the new economy and globalization of the educational field, the factors of competitiveness of educational institutions are changing. Assessing the competitiveness of a university in the conditions of the new economy is not an easy task due to the complex nature of competition in the educational services market and new market requirements. The article examines the issues of forming competitive advantages and competitiveness of a university. The authors analyze the concept of competitiveness of a university and its relationship with the competitiveness of the national economy.

Keywords: competitiveness of a university, competitive advantages of a university, competencies of a university, educational services market



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Introduction. At present, the field of education is developing dynamically, acquiring new features, global transformations are taking place in higher education: society's demands on the quality of professional education are increasing, teaching technologies are continuously updated, the economic conditions of universities are rapidly changing, and competition in the educational services market is intensifying. All this gives rise to the problem of finding new sources of increasing the competitiveness of a university.

In recent years, views on higher education and its quality have been rapidly changing. Among the many problems that universities have faced in the 21st century, the most important and at the same time complex is the problem of quality. If in the last century the activities of the higher education system and individual universities in various countries were assessed mainly by quantitative indicators (the number of students per 10 thousand inhabitants; the share of GDP allocated to higher education; the teacher/student ratio; the volume of funding for universities, etc.), then in modern conditions the quality of education, assessment of the effectiveness of activities and competitiveness of universities are of primary importance.

Main part. The development of the higher education reform in Uzbekistan is supported by a number of documents on various aspects of the reform, including key framework documents defining the goals, objectives and priorities: the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures for the further development of the higher education system" dated April 20, 2017, "The Program for the comprehensive development of the higher education system for the period 2017-2021", "The Concept of Development of the Higher Education System of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030" dated October 8, 2019 [1]. This Concept defines the following as strategic goals for the development of the country's higher education system:

1. improving the quality of personnel training,
2. increasing the level of coverage of the population with higher education,
3. creating a competitive environment and ensuring the competitiveness of the system at the international level.

In the context of market development, the competitiveness of a university is not just an economic term, it is the philosophy of the work of an educational institution, behind which the whole variety of strategic and tactical methods of functioning and development are built. At the moment, there is no unambiguous interpretation of the concept of "competitiveness of a university" in the economic literature.

And therefore, before moving on to a detailed analysis of the concept of competitiveness in relation to the activities of a university, let us consider what researchers understand by competition. Modern economic theory considers the concept of "competition" as a contest, rivalry between producers (sellers) of goods (and in a more general form - between any economic, market entities), which takes the form of a struggle for markets for the sale of goods in order to obtain higher income, profit, and other financial and economic benefits.

Considering the competitiveness of a university, we note that the terms "competition" and "competitiveness" in modern domestic economic science are already quite clearly defined, and although there are different points of view on this matter, they do not contradict each other, but rather complement each other.

For example, M. Porter in his work "International Competition" indicates that "competition is a dynamic and developing process, a continuously changing landscape in which new goods, new marketing paths, new production processes and new market segments appear" [2, p. 24]. Often the category "competition" is considered as the achievement of a leading position by an entity through the effective use of its competitive advantages. For example, R. A. Fatkhutdinov believes that "competition is the process of a subject managing its competitive advantages to achieve victory or other goals in the fight against competitors for the satisfaction of objective or subjective needs within the framework of legislation or in natural conditions" [3, p. 9]. In turn, the concept of "competitiveness" is associated with the possibility of winning in competition, sustainability, quality, reliability, and efficiency of functioning in market conditions.

The same R. A. Fatkhutdinov understands competitiveness as "a property of an object, characterized by the degree of real or potential satisfaction of a specific need in comparison with similar objects presented in a given market" [4, p. 23].

And Michael Porter considers competitiveness as a property of a product, service, subject of market relations, capable of acting in the market on an equal basis with similar products, services or competing subjects of market relations present there [5, p. 480].

Many researchers (M. Gelvanovsky, A. Golik, M. A. Lukashenko) consider the concept of "competitiveness of a university" as associated with the term "competitiveness of a graduate". Thus, R. A. Fatkhutdinov emphasizes the ability of the university to train highly qualified

specialists who can withstand competition in the labor market, as well as the development of the university in all areas of its activities and defines the competitiveness of the university as its ability to: train specialists who can withstand competition in a specific external or internal labor market; develop competitive innovations in their field; conduct an effective reproduction policy in all areas of its activities [4, p. 37].

In turn, A. Petersons defines the competitiveness of the university as follows: "... such a state of the university as a socio-economic system that ensures: the appropriate quality of educational services provided, consumer satisfaction and public recognition of the educational institution; relevance and practical significance of the implemented research projects; integration of the educational institution into the academic community, including the international one; development of the material, technical and information base; social stability of the team, its participation in the management of the university "[6, p. 81]. As a rule, the competitiveness of a university is considered in two directions: as the training of specialists who can withstand competition in a specific external or internal labor market; as the development of competitive innovations in educational activities [8].

For example, O. P. Kovaleva in her work, analyzing the position of the university in the educational services market, also identifies two components: competitiveness of services - the ability of educational services offered by the university to be sold on the educational market in the presence of analogues (determined by the characteristics of educational services and products); competitiveness of the university - the level of potential that ensures the ability to maintain or expand the occupied market share in a competitive environment (defined as a combination of the competitiveness of educational products and services, as well as the managerial, personnel, technical and other potential of the university) [9].

The country's global competitiveness is supported by national education systems competitiveness to a great extent. Figure 1 shows a bundle of competitiveness elements interrelated with each other.

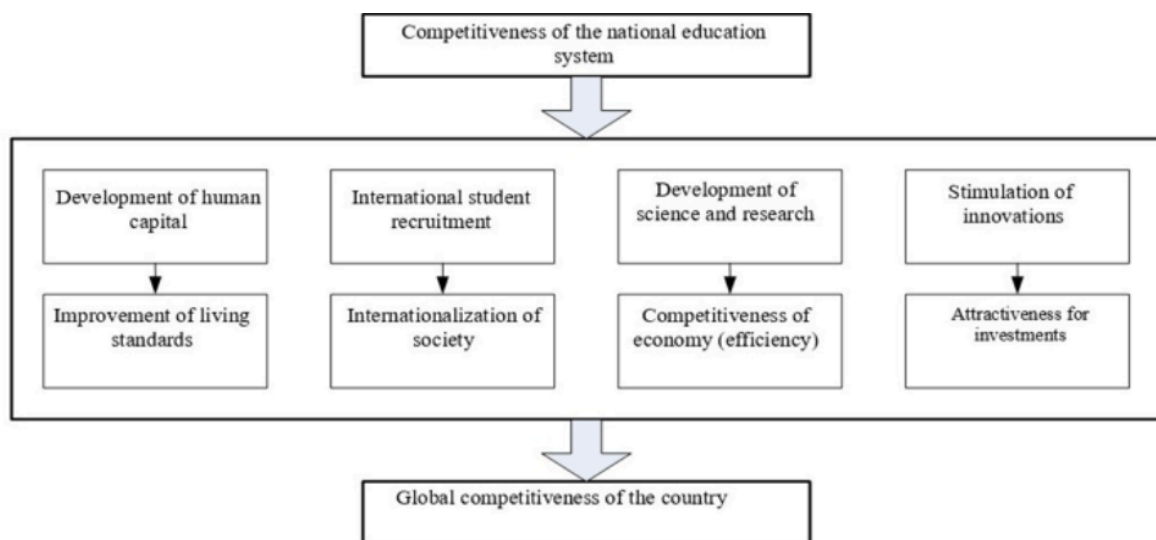


Fig. 1 Competitiveness of the national education system as a factor of global competitiveness of the country

The authors reviewed the scientific literature on the topic of the current study and competitiveness indicators included in the development programs of domestic universities. It was found that the main components of the competitiveness of universities (mainly represented by

universities) are educational programs in demand by consumers, graduates in demand, developed infrastructure and a strategic vision of development.

Conclusion. Currently, the task of ensuring the effective functioning of the university requires a constant search and identification of new factors to increase its competitiveness, the creation of conditions under which the existing competitive advantages of the university will be maximally realized, allow it to take a strong position in the educational services market, and the productive development of the system of additional professional education is able to ensure this process.

In addition, in modern conditions, the higher education system should be tuned mainly to the real sector of the economy and the business environment. In this regard, the reality of today can be considered competition at the intrastate and interstate levels, the growth of information openness of universities and the strengthening of the role of strategic planning. All this gives rise to the problem of finding ways and modern methods to increase the competitiveness of the university.

Thus, in the system of higher education there was a need for an adequate response and rapid adaptation to rapid changes in society. And this was the main reason for the increased interest in the development of fundamentally new approaches to university management and demonstrating the effectiveness of educational services, confirmed by real indicators.

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