

Higher education system in the republic of Kazakhstan in the context of the credit system of education

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Abstract. This article discusses the urgent problems of the credit system implementation in higher education institutions of Kazakhstan as the most important tendency for joining the Republic of Kazakhstan to the world educational environment. The role of the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) of the Republic of Kazakhstan (RK) on the development of the legal framework for implementation of the credit system of education in higher education institutions of the country is shown. The authors carried out the conceptual and terminological analysis, revealing similarities and differences in the used terminology that unfold the nature of the credit system of education, its objectives and features, as well as implementation guidelines. The authors justify the effect of the credit system of education on the quality of the educational process organization in higher education. The article emphasizes the importance of implementation of the credit system of education in the training of future specialists, geared toward the international labor market.

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Introduction

The education system in Kazakhstan is becoming a dynamic and able to respond adequately to accelerating world processes of globalization and information technology development.

Republic of Kazakhstan was one of the first countries in Central Asia, which became a member of the Bologna Declaration and a full member of the European educational environment. The credit system of education was introduced in Kazakhstan since 2002 to insure the international recognition of national educational programs, to enhance academic mobility of students and lecturers, as well as to improve the quality of education and ensure the continuity of all levels and stages of undergraduate and postgraduate education in the country.

Methodology

In accordance with the State Program of Education Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2005-2010, the conditions are created in higher and postgraduate education for the introduction of the credit system of education instead of the traditional system of education that promotes an active and independent student work, provides eligibility of individual educational path, mobility, a greater degree of academic freedom for bachelors,

masters and doctoral students, contributes to the recognition of education certificates in the world educational environment [1].

Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan carried out some work on the development of the legal framework of the credit system of education, which regulates the basic requirements for the organization and management of the educational process within the credit system. This legal framework includes "The rules of the credit system of education", "The rules of the educational process based on credit system", "Instructive letter on the educational process in higher educational institutions based on the credit system of education", "Model rules for conducting the ongoing monitoring of academic progress, interim and final evaluation of the students in higher education institutions", etc. [2].

"The system of higher and postgraduate education of the Republic of Kazakhstan adequately responds to the accelerating processes of globalization and internationalization through upgrading the technology base, use a competency model in the state general education standards; increasing mobility of students and the role of information technology, as well as improving academic base in accordance with international educational trends" [2, 3].

Main part

Analysis of the methodological framework of the investigated problem has enabled researchers to identify great benefits of the credit system. These include: promotion of students' active independent work, ability of each student to build their own educational program (due to studying elective courses that complement and deepen the main subject); assimilation of alternative courses according to their inclinations and needs; and the possibility of accelerated assimilation of educational programs due to pre-schedule successful examination of the credits [4, 5, 6, 7].

The credit system of education is a way of organizing the learning process, where students have the opportunity to plan a sequence of individual educational path. The essence of the credit system of education is that the complexity of the educational work is accounted in the credits, which characterize the volume of the material taught. One of the main tasks of the credit system of education is to increase the role of the students' independent work (SIW) [8].

The objectives of introducing the credit system into the training process of higher education institutions are as follows:

- integration of the national education system into the international educational environment;
- ensuring academic mobility of educational process;
- unification of students' scope of knowledge;
- maximal customization of education;
- increasing the role of independent work.

At the credit system of education, teaching at the institute is based on the principles of education democratization, which assumes the following:

- broad opportunity to select the courses;
- development of an individual educational path by each student;
- development of students' critical thinking;
- extensive use of interactive teaching methods.

According to scientists, the credit system of education, as educational technology, which increases the level of self-education and creative assimilation of knowledge, based on individual approach, selection of educational path under the regulation of the educational process and the account of knowledge in the form of credits, is a kind of nonlinear system. It allows one to be more flexible about the education process since the student can choose more courses for self-study [5, 6].

At the present stage of education in connection with the transition to credit system, the universities in Kazakhstan have developed a Kazakhstan model of credit transfer system, similar to ECTS, which allows the gradual accumulation and

transfer of credits. It is based on the transparency of learning outcomes and the educational process, facilitates the planning, evaluation, recognition and justification of qualifications and learning credits. ECTS is widely used in formal higher education and can be used in "Learning throughout life".

"Based on the experience of the higher school in developed countries, domestic education builds a system to ensure the relevance of graduates in the labor market, - notes Professor Magauova A.S.; - in this regard, higher education brings curricula in line with international requirements, creates continuity of educational programs at various levels of education, and adapts educational programs to the labor market" [8].

Final part

Conceptual and terminological analysis revealed similarities and differences in the used terminology that disclose the nature of the credit system of education. In Russia, the terms "credit-modular system" or "system of credits" are used officially. These terms define "a model of the educational process based on the unity of modular learning technologies and ECTS credits, as the units of student's academic workload" [9].

In Kazakhstan a concept of the "credit system of education" is used more commonly; it assumes the "learning based on selection and self-planning of study subjects sequence using credits as a unified unit to account the academic workload of the student and the teacher" [1, 10].

In our view, the concept of "credit-modular system" most accurately reflects the essence of the new educational system, as the basis of curriculum in Kazakhstan is the module being a "comprehensive, logically complete unit", which has its purposes, methods, learning tools and result [10].

In Kazakh official sources the term "credit" is defined as "a unified unit to measure the volume of schoolwork done by student or teacher". One credit equals one academic hour of classroom work of a student studying on a weekly basis throughout the academic period. Each academic hour of lectures, practical studies (seminars) and studio sessions is necessarily followed by two contact hours (100 minutes) of undergraduate student's independent work (SIW), four contact hours (200 minutes) of master student's independent work (MSIW) in the magistracy. Indispensable condition of completion of a bachelor degree course is accumulation by the student at least 128 credits of theoretical training, of which 42-60 credits should be of compulsory component and 68-86 credits must relate to the selected component [1, 11].

The most important feature of the credit system is the freedom to choose the number of

studying disciplines out of elective subjects. It should be noted that the universities of Kazakhstan offer a developed catalog of elective courses, which represents a "systematic annotated list of all the courses included in the component of choice, where it provides a brief description indicating the purpose of the study, a brief content (of the main sections) and the expected results of the study (knowledge, skills and competences acquired by the students" [12, 13].

Conclusions

Thus, the international educational practice has developed an effective education system, which is called the credit system of education [14]. Analysis of implementation of the credit system of education in the high schools of Kazakhstan reflects a continuation of the achievements and priorities of the country in the national education system. However, features of the credit system of education, such as individual curriculum plan that is developed by the students, choice of elective courses, the increase in self-study, selection of lecturers, the importance of partnership trusting relations between the constituents of education, the opportunity to continue education and to accumulate the necessary number of credits in other universities, are common [15]. In our view, this allows to consider the credit system of education as a prerequisite condition for integration of higher education in Kazakhstan into the international educational environment.

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