

сандық зерттеудің нәтижелері SPSS for Windows (version 21) лицензияланған бағдарламасымен өңделіп, талданды. Зерттеуде қолданылған бағалау әдістемесі белгілі бір еңбек нарығы сегментінде бәсекеге қабілеттілікке салыстырмалы талдау жасауға, қазақстандық түлектердің бәсекеге қабілеттіліктеріне еңбек нарығы тарапынан жылдам өзгеретін талаптарын ескеруге, бағалаудың нәтижелерін оқу бағдарламаларын түзету кезінде, ЖОО-ның жұмысы барысында басты оқыту бағыттарын белгілеуде, жеке білім беру және кәсіби траекториясын құрастыруға және студенттерде бәсекеге қабілеттілікті орнатуға апаратын мотивациялық және білім беру даярлығына жол ашады. Мақаланың теориялық және тәжірибелік маңыздылығы келтірілген ғылым әлеуметтануы, білім беру әлеуметтануы, білім беру және ғылыми бағдарламалар аумағындағы деректердің толығып және ары қарай дамуға жағдай жасайтын қағидалармен негізделеді.

Түйін сөздер: білім беру, университет, жұмысқа орналастыру, біліктіліктер, түлектер.

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Усиление потенциала конкурентоспособности: университеты и сотрудничество

Поддержка развития системы высшего образования является одной из ключевых задач национальной политики страны. Ее доступность — это не только вопрос о количестве, но и ключевой элемент социального измерения высшего образования, не зависящий от социально-экономического фона и других факторов, опосредованно влияющих на ее расширение и развитие. Образование в этом контексте определяется как «политика доступа», направленная на участие в ней всех слоев населения и обеспечение эффективности их участия. Важным направлением деятельности университета, желающего обеспечить себе конкурентоспособное положение на рынке образовательных услуг, становится подготовка конкурентоспособных специалистов. И одним из знаковых показателей, определяющих рейтинг учебного заведения в условиях нарастающей конкуренции, выступает уровень востребованности выпускников. Результаты проведенного количественного исследования были обработаны и проанализированы с использованием лицензированного программного обеспечения SPSS for Windows (version 21). Используемая в исследовании методика оценки позволяет провести сравнительный анализ конкурентоспособности выпускников в определенном сегменте рынка труда, учесть динамично изменяющиеся требования рынка труда к конкурентоспособности казахстанских выпускников, использовать результаты оценок при корректировке учебных планов, целевой ориентации образовательной деятельности вуза, создании индивидуальной образовательно-профессиональной траектории, а также при мотивационно-образовательной подготовке студентов по формированию их конкурентоспособности. Теоритическая и практическая важность статьи заключается в выработанных положениях, способствующих дальнейшему развитию и обогащению данных в области социологии науки, социологии образования, образовательных и научных программ.

Ключевые слова: образование, университет, трудоустройство, компетенции, выпускники.

Introduction

In recent years, the Kazakhstan labor market has undergone significant changes, largely due to the economic crisis. The situation of university graduates in the labor market is characterized by ambiguity, which is due to the specificity of the directions of graduates' training and their relevance to the labor market. Despite certain positive changes, only about 10-12% of the total number of employed graduates in 2015 has positions according their specialties. In the situation of labor supply excess in the labor market, formed mainly by professionals with

experience, graduates who do not have experience in the profession, it is difficult to compete and qualify for high-quality jobs.

Employment is becoming a key issue in many European countries and the role of higher education in developing the competencies and personal qualities of graduates in developing their competitiveness is decisive. The «recruitment» cannot be reduced to employment and at the same time involves the development of a «combination» or «achievement system» consisting of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal qualities, which ultimately creates the opportunity for the

graduate to remain in the field of employment (Bryson, 2014; Harvey, 2003:58; Tran, 2016:62). In a more comprehensive understanding, employment should be viewed in terms of their social contributions and benefits to key and «secondary» stakeholders, independent of the student, for example, society and the economy (Bowden et al., 2000:27; Knight & Yorke, 2004:38; Cole & Tibby, 2013:6; Knight & Yorke, 2006:10).

Mason (2009:1) argues that employment is understood as a willingness to work, so it is important not only «knowledge», but also the understanding that their knowledge will contribute to «commercial» productivity and benefit to the employer.

The policy of European education is aimed at opening up the potential in the context of the globalization of the economy and introducing more effective social innovations, reorienting and developing new «advanced» programs that correspond to the rapid pace of change (Lines, 2011: 8). Universities are the basis for a successful economy and society, ready to face the challenges and threats of the 21st century. Their role as the initiator of new knowledge and keepers of existing one is undeniable. At the same time, «work capacity», «partnership», «competitiveness» are the key concepts of management in universities, whose educational and research missions are adapted and directed to meet the needs of the society and all its strata in acquiring new knowledge and experience (Healey, Flint & Harrington 2014:21).

Today, a comparative analysis of the competitiveness of graduates in a certain segment of the labor market taking into account the dynamically changing demands of the labor market, cooperation of universities and employers is the topical issue.

Theoretical and methodological review

An analysis of European employment practices for graduates shows many framework structures in universities that facilitate the implementation of successful employment strategies. Universities are aimed at fulfilling, to a certain extent, consultative, vocational guidance and teaching functions without an active intervention in the employment process (Germany, France, Poland, Czech Republic) (Potocnik and Verheugen, 2007: 12; Kleiner 2008:49, Reid, 2016).

The structure of European universities includes consulting departments that implement the functions of accompanying students in the educational process. The prerogative for building a «graduate-employer»

relationship is realized by specialists from career-oriented bureaus. A distinctive feature of the graduate employment practices in German universities is the responsibility, self-initiative and entrepreneurial initiative of the graduate him/herself in job seeking. An important stage of professional self-determination is educational practice. Students, in accordance with their inclinations, interests, independently turn to various organizations and enterprises.

In order to succeed in the labor market in Germany, graduates of German universities should have sufficient skills for employment. The necessary skills include job search skills and applied skills; as well as competences and skills of interpersonal communication, cultural sensitivity and management, an important role is played by the business qualities of the applicant. Currently, despite the fact that many initiatives are implemented to improve the success in the career of graduates, many experts note the difficulties in implementing a consistent employment policy.

Interaction of employment centers of French educational institutions is also based on consulting guidance within the educational process. In addition, the implementation of joint programs for professional and social adaptation is entrusted to the local representative offices. It is possible to give an example of the French experience of the training and employment of graduates of the educational institutions (which, rather, is not typical for all French universities) on the example of the Institut d'études politiques d'Aix-en-Provence. There is a special service for employment, whose activities are aimed at integrating new generations of graduates of the Institute into professional life and assisting former graduates who have lost their jobs. The Employment Service constantly updates the database on vacancies and internships and forms a list of labor supply proposals for a whole set of criteria: the scope of activity, the location of the organization (enterprise) offering the job, the detailed characteristics of it and etc.

The development of skills and professional competencies of specialists is important in increasing the productivity and sustainability of enterprises, in improving working conditions, as well as job opportunities (Boden and Nedeva 2010:38).

In order to ensure the orientation in the labor market, young people need functional skills to perform specific tasks, as well as the basic skills: the ability to learn (learning to learn), communication (communication), problem solving and team work. The development of basic skills is an important component in the system of lifelong learning and the

ability to adapt to changes (Hughes & Barrie 2010; Cumming, 2010, Klosters, 2014).

Acquired skills are becoming increasingly important when employing. Vocational and technical skills are necessary, but in the face of fierce competition, employers are expanding the requirements for candidates, including the personal and social qualities that graduates must possess (Liu, Salvanes & Sorensen 2012; Jones 2012; Helyer, Lee, & Evans, 2011).

Future workers need to continue their further education and adaptation, and also have the ability to communicate effectively, to creative thinking, to make their own decisions, to manage themselves at work, to work in team and to interact with employees, to process and analyze information, effectively applying the latest technologies and new ideas. These basic skills for employment are important to improve the chances of young people to get a job and participate in lifelong learning programs.

Work ability entails more than an opportunity to get a first job. It is the ability to adapt to new conditions, career mobility and the capacity to work throughout life, which requires illustration of the various ways to integrate acquired professional skills and the ability to acquire new skills, knowledge in the field of social and labor relations, including the right to safe and healthy working conditions, and overall successful adaptation to changing conditions (Riley, 2012; Savickas, 2013).

Dey and Cruzvergara (2014) studying the potential of universities in the design and implementation of employment programs, in a historical review offered a «career model», beginning with a professional orientation at the beginning of the 20th century, tracking a series of shifts («*Vocational Guidance*» (1900-1920) – «*Teachers Guidance*» (1920-1940) – «*Job Placement*» (1940-1970) – «*Career Counseling*» (1970 – 1990) – «*Professional Networking*» (1990 – 2010) – «*Connected Communities*» (2010 – 2030) in provision and expansion of career services in higher education system.

The «*Connected Communities*» paradigm is characterized by a shift in services provided after the global economic downturn of 2008, and identifies the needs and changes in services faced by university career centers. Cole, Tibby (2013) express the importance of implementing a more «flexible» structure and institutional approach to the provision of employment services, allows «to discuss, to reflect, to act and evaluate.»

In general, the ability to work is that in addition to applying technical skills in the workplace, employers look for job seekers who can communicate effectively;

can work in a team; with good interpersonal skills: can solve problems; have good skills in information and communication technology; ready and able to learn; and flexible in their work approach. In addition to these competencies, it is very important for a job applicant to have personal qualities, such as: honesty, reliability, punctuality and loyalty / flexibility (Lowden, Hall, Ellio & Lewin, 2011).

Typically, a good education increases the chances of a young person to find a better job, and contributes to its productivity and increased income. In European countries, for example, unemployment among young people (20-24 years) with secondary specialized education is reduced by 7.4 percent. Many young people face difficulties in finding a job due to the discrepancy between the education / training received and the demands of the labor market.

According to data published in the Australian Government's annual report what vocational education and training should focus on in Australia, and what skills are necessary for future professionals, «all employees are subject to the requirements of new systems and technologies. It is necessary to learn to combine new operational communication skills, teamwork skills, decision-making skills, flexibility and resilience to changes in the workplace. As a reaction to economic change, it is important for specialists, in addition to professional and technical competencies, to have the ability to adapt quickly and to lifelong learning. In general, when analyzing the necessary skills of a future specialist, employers determine that a graduate of Australian universities should be: flexible and quickly adaptable to change; able to apply skills in different contexts; to study throughout life; team-oriented and be wise, since the last attribute gives the opportunity to get more in acquiring life experience» (Australian Qualifications Framework 2013; Bradley, 2008).

Results of the research and discussion

Designing the results of education is one of the most important aspects of reforming of Kazakhstan's education. The development of the competences of educational programs is designed to be carried out in the context of institutional, national and international benchmarks, and the results of education are usually considered at three levels: local level (course, discipline, practice, module, training program); National level (qualifications frameworks, national qualifications frameworks and professional standards); International level (transparency, recognition of degrees and qualifications)

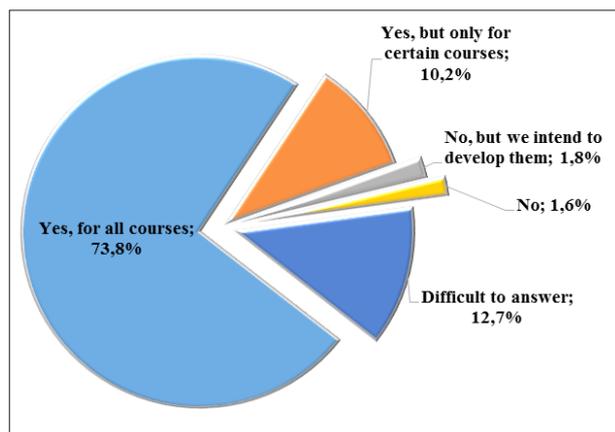


Figure 1 – Development of the competencies of educational programs, modules and academic disciplines of universities

Expectations from learning outcomes are determined by students involved in the educational process and expressed in his/her knowledge of skills and abilities. Most often, learning outcomes are considered through measurable achievements or the possession of competencies. Most of the surveyed teachers (73.8%) believe that at the present time the learning outcomes, competences are well developed both in relation to the educational programs of universities in general, and for individual modules and academic disciplines. 10.2% notes the process of developing competencies only at the very beginning, and

the learning outcomes are developed only for individual academic units – courses. Quite large percentage of teachers found it difficult to answer the question about competences – 12.7% (Figure 1). Summarizing the results obtained, it should be noted that the majority of Kazakhstani universities and institutions have advanced in the description of programs using learning outcomes.

Students who participated in the survey were asked: «Do you have an idea of the learning outcomes, the competencies that are necessary for future professional work?» (Figure 2).

Students who are fully aware of learning outcomes of their education should be and what competences they ultimately need to master, among respondents, slightly more than half – 52.5%. This is the highest frequency result.

4,8% do not know about competences at all. The remaining 43% noted that they have some limited idea about this issue, but not complete: 28.9% chose the option «I know, but not completely» and 13.8% – «I have some idea».

Reforming the education system requires, first of all, a significant revision of curricula, especially in connection with the use of the tools of the Bologna Process and a three-level structure of degrees. The overwhelming majority of respondents (81.1%) expressed the opinion that recently they had to revise the curricula to some extent in connection with the implementation of the Bologna Process (Figure 3).

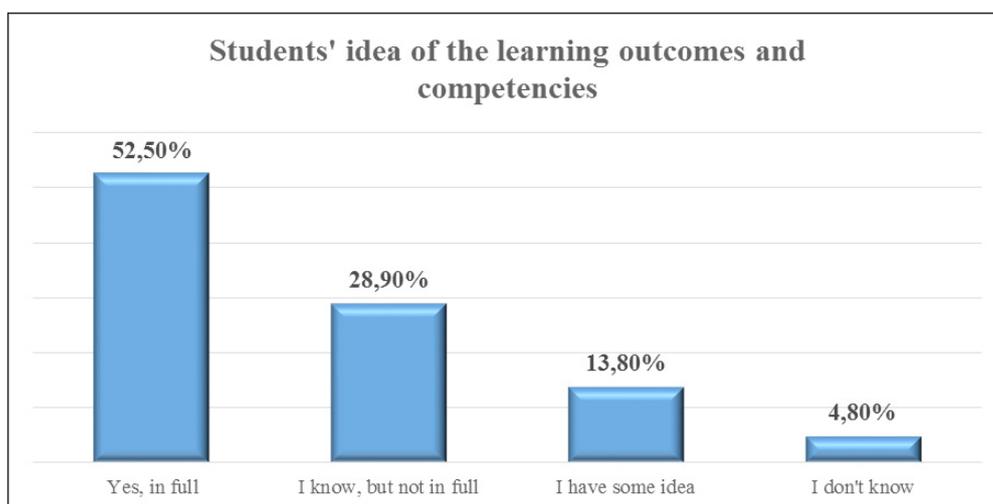


Figure 2 – «Distribution of students' answers to the question «Do you have an idea of the learning outcomes, the competencies that are necessary for future professional activity?»»

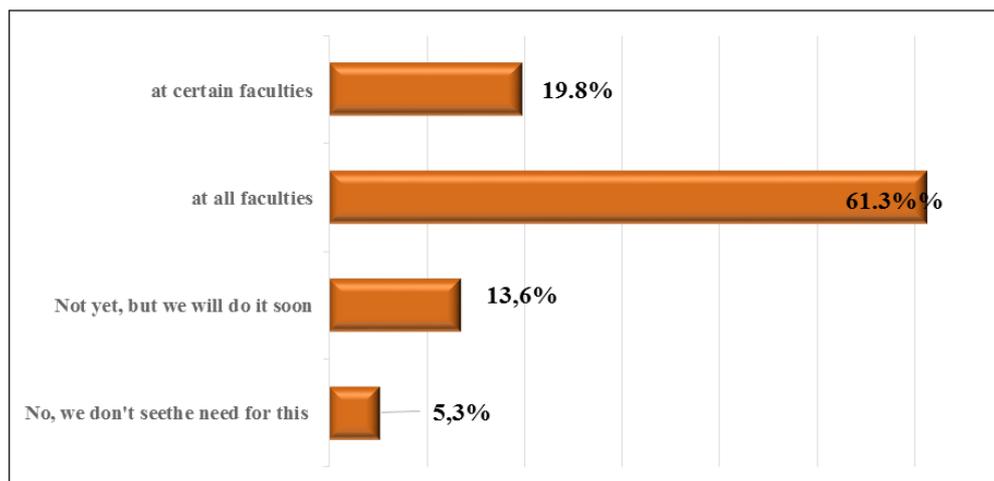


Figure 3 – Distribution of respondents' answers to the question «Has your university recently revised the curriculum in connection with the implementation of the basic principles of the Bologna Process, especially with regard to adapting programs to the new degree system?»

The respondents were asked in the course of the study what changes had the greatest effect. Faculty members were asked to assess the degree of changes in the following positions:

1. The quality of the courses was revised
2. Duplication of courses was removed
3. The teaching methods have changed
4. The program has become more flexible, academic freedom has been expanded

5. The number of practice-oriented courses has increased

6. The forms of control of knowledge, boundary controls and examinations were revised (changed)

7. Students are more aware of the objectives of their education, the choice of courses and the educational trajectories

8. The mechanism for credits or degrees of other HEIs transfer has been simplified (Table 1).

Table 1 – Analysis of the effectiveness of the introduction of learning outcomes

Changes directions	Response options			
	Greatly	Partially	Rarely	No changes
The quality of the courses was revised	67,3%	28,6%	2,8%	1,3%
Duplication of courses was removed	54,5%	36,1%	8,8%	0,6%
The teaching methods have changed	48,7%	41,5%	9,0%	0,8%
The program has become more flexible, academic freedom has been expanded	49,9%	38,5%	8,6%	3,0%
The number of practice-oriented courses has increased	42,7%	44,3%	10,0%	2,9%
The forms of control of knowledge, boundary controls and examinations were revised (changed)	43,2%	44,7%	8,9%	3,2%
Students are more aware of the objectives of their education, the choice of courses and the educational trajectories	48,2%	39,2%	8,9%	3,7%
The mechanism for credits or degrees of other HEIs transfer has been simplified	39,3%	42,7%	11,1%	6,9%

The questionnaire showed that the most significant changes were observed regarding the revision of the quality content of the courses – 67.3%.

54.7% of respondents believe that as a result of the introduction of a competence approach, the duplication of courses is removed and about half of the

respondents noted that the programs have become more flexible, and the academic freedom of students has been expanded.

The simplification of the mechanism for credit transfer is noted by 39.3% of the interviewed teachers and only 10% of the students.

In general, the ranking of positive changes in the educational process from the point of view of students looks somewhat different.

41.9% of students believe that the teaching methods have changed. The same number of respondents (41.1%) note a general improvement in the quality of education. Less than 1/3 of the students indicate a change in the content of the courses (compared to 67% of teachers). Comparison of students' and teachers' answers on some basic positions is presented in the graph in Figure 3.

The students' answers to the question whether the forms of knowledge control, boundary controls and examinations in your institution have changed as a whole show that the transformation affects various aspects. 50.9% of students noted that the change in the forms of educational control is associated, first of all, with the increase in the independent work of students.

As can be seen from Table 2, for a small percentage of students (about 1/5 of the sample population), new forms of organizing the educational process seem complicated – «It has become harder to learn and get good grades».

18.3% of students do not see any special changes, 11.2% of them say that there have been no «significant» changes, and 7% say that the changes are

external, formal. Every tenth respondent found it difficult to answer this question.

The credit system is based on the introduction of the so-called «non-linear educational scheme», which assumes the freedom of student's choice of an educational trajectory. As noted above, about half of faculty members say that new educational programs have become more flexible, which contributes to the expansion of academic freedom of students. About 1/3 of students (32.1%) agree with this statement.

Table 2 – Distribution of respondents' answers to the question «Have the forms of knowledge control, boundary controls and examinations in your institution changed?»

Response options	Percent
Yes, there is a lot of independent work of students	50,9%
Yes, it became harder to learn and get good grades	19,4%
Yes, but the changes are formal	7,1%
No, nothing has changed	11,2%
Difficult to answer, no answer	11,4%
Total	100,0%

The results of the research make it possible to assess and specify the main mechanisms for the realization of the academic freedom of students, the possibility of forming an individual educational trajectory.

The survey showed that the practice of attracting students to scientific research is most widely represented in Kazakhstan universities – 50.5% (Figure 4).

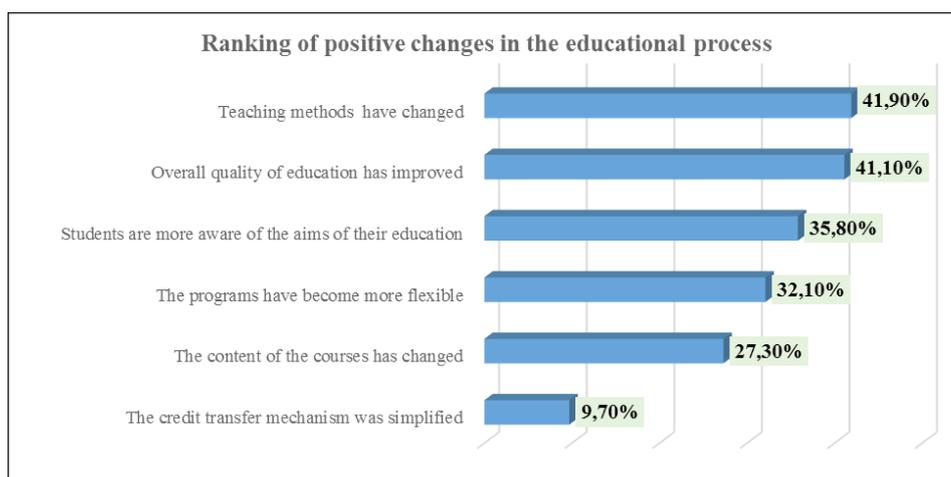


Figure 4 – Distribution of students' answers to the question «What positive changes do you feel in the process of studying at the present time?»

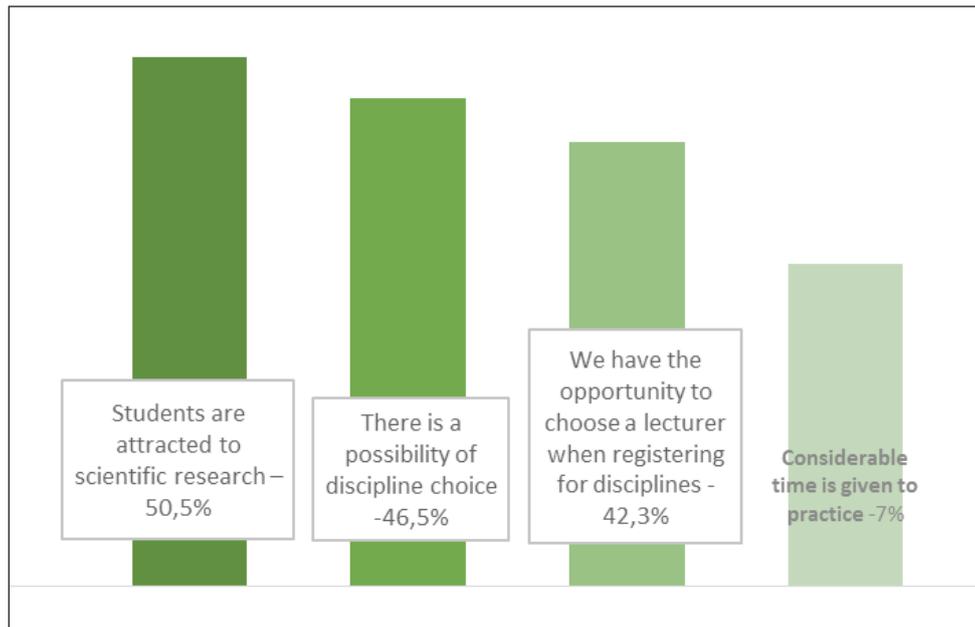


Figure 5 – Elaboration of the competencies of educational programs, modules and academic disciplines of universities

The choice of courses and teachers is realized on average by 40%. 1/3 of the students surveyed are actively involved in practices that for a significant part of the study time.

At the level of international standards, lifelong learning is considered as a common framework for the development of national education systems, inextricably linked to the strategy of economic and social development of individual countries. Respondents were asked whether the given direction of reforming the education system is being implemented? The results of the survey showed that a relatively small percentage of Kazakhstani universities have approached the principles of lifelong learning (LLL) (Quendler & Lamb, 2016).

Just over a third of faculty members (36.2%) note that the lifelong learning program is well integrated into the development strategy of their university. 19.3% of respondents say that it is still at the development stage, another 9.6% say that such program is completely absent in their university. The data are shown in Figure 5.

The given researches allow to give the general estimation of a degree of realization of programs of improvement of quality of higher education, in other words to answer a question on efficiency of reforming of education.

Students who participated in the questionnaire were asked: «Has the quality of your education increased in the next few years?»

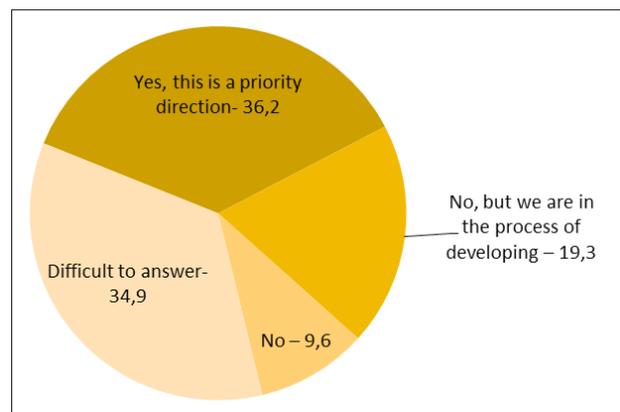


Figure 6 – Distribution of respondents' answers to the question «Are there any strategies for the development of life-long learning programs in your institution?»

The assessment of students of Kazakh universities looks quite optimistic: 77.1% believe that the quality has increased. However, this level can not yet be called sufficient to achieve the goals of education.

As shown in Figure 6, a fifth of the respondents do not see any positive changes, including 4.4% of students chose the option «Quality has decreased.»

Students who noted critical positions in assessing the quality of the educational process in the questionnaire were asked to assess the possible reasons for the decline in the level of education.

The suggested variants of answers were not noted in more than 30% of observations, which indicates the multifactority of the problem under study, the absence of any unambiguous reason that could be purposefully eliminated. The ranking of respondents' answers shows that the most significant factor is «Financial difficulties» (33.0%) and «Lack of qualified personnel among faculty and university personnel» (29.7%). A quarter of students note the slow adaptation of faculty members and students to innovation, the introduction of new forms of education (25.4%)

Further in descending order, it is possible to list the following reasons for the decrease of the quality of education in Kazakhstani universities:

- Decline in the quality of secondary education 19.3%
- Formal approach 15.1%
- Lack of information 15.1%

Faculty members and students who participated in the study were asked to assess the extent of implementation of a number of practical activities and strategies aimed at quality assurance (Table 3, Figure 7).

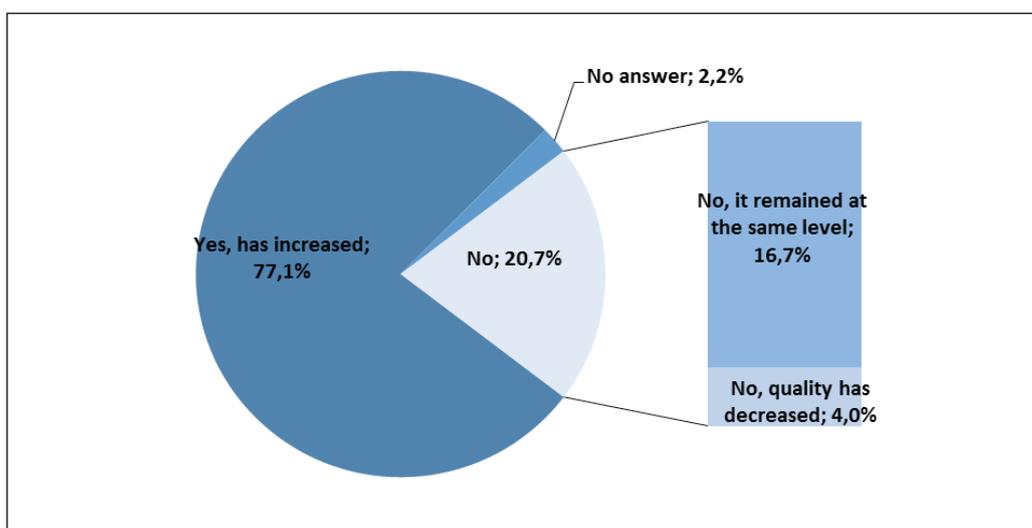


Figure 7 – Student evaluation of the quality of education in Kazakhstani universities

Table 3 – Distribution of faculty members' answers to the question «Which of the following is implemented in your institution to improve the quality of education?»

Quality improvement measures	Level of use				
	Used throughout the university	Used in some faculties / specialties	Is in the stage of preparation	No	Difficult to answer
The use of information and communication technologies (PC, multimedia, demonstration equipment) in classes	74,0%	14,9%	5,6%	0,2%	5,3%
Project and problem-oriented learning	52,7%	29,1%	6,4%	2,2%	9,6%
Training in small groups	36,9%	37,1%	7,1%	8,0%	10,9%
Practices, a practice-oriented approach to teaching	55,8%	28,7%	5,1%	1,3%	9,1%
Cooperation in the field of education and teaching with other universities	44,9%	32,9%	7,1%	5,8%	9,3%
Cooperation in the field of education and teaching with foreign universities	43,1%	38,4%	6,4%	4,0%	8,0%
Cooperation in the field of education and teaching with business partners and employers	35,8%	39,1%	9,8%	3,6%	11,8%
Internationalization	37,1%	29,6%	8,0%	4,2%	21,1%

The following positions were considered as objects of valuation:

1. The use of information and communication technologies (PC, multimedia, demonstration equipment) in classes;
2. Project and problem-oriented learning;
3. Training in small groups;
4. Practices, a practice-oriented approach to teaching;
5. Cooperation in the field of education and teaching with other universities;
6. Cooperation in the field of education and teaching with foreign universities;
7. Cooperation in the field of education and teaching with business partners and employers;
8. Internationalization.

The highest rates are observed with regard to the use of information and communication technologies (PCs, multimedia, demonstration equipment) in classes, which are noted on average by 2/3 of the respondents. The answers of faculty members and students on this issue almost completely coincided: 74% of faculty members and 70% of students.

Information and communication technologies have already profoundly affected higher education around the world and will continue to affect many aspects of higher education.

The next important direction is an increase in the number of different forms of practice, a practice-oriented approach in teaching. By estimations of 55,8% faculty members it is used in all specialties and faculties of higher education institution. When ranking the students' answers, the practitioners are also located in the second position, but in the share terms they made up only 31.7%.

Relatively high frequency result is observed in the position «Project and problem-oriented learning»: 52.7% of faculty members and 23.1% of students.

The empirical data of the research also allow us to characterize certain practices and peculiarities of the activity of Kazakhstan universities in the aspect of implementing quality assurance and maintenance strategies:

- 60.4% of faculty members indicate active introduction of innovative methods and technologies of education. This is the highest frequency result.

- 50.7% of the respondents noted active introduction of innovative methods and technologies of education and expansion of academic freedom of students.

- 49.3% of respondents believe that courses related to relevant scientific research are effectively introduced into the educational process.

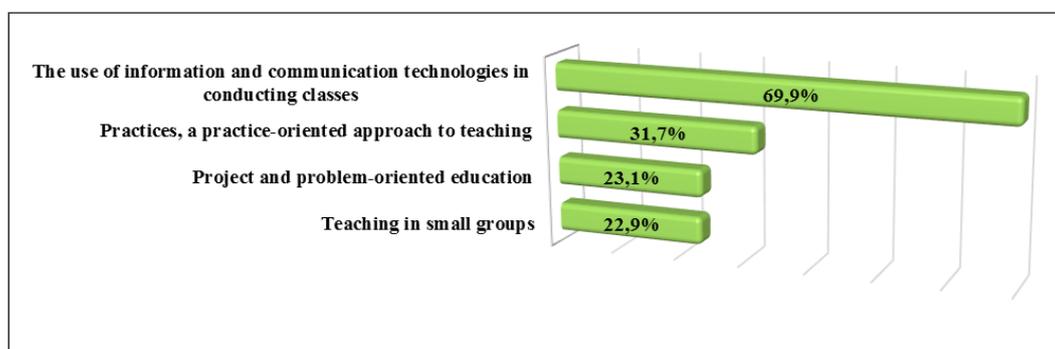


Figure 8 – Ranking of students' answers on the implementation of measures to improve the quality of education

Conclusion

The research among students and teachers of Kazakhstani universities showed the assessment of educational innovations by its direct participants. It also showed whether there are subjective and objective difficulties in implementing reforms in education system; whether modernization is achieving its main goal – raising the level of

education and forming a competitive generation of young professionals.

The main topics of analysis were:

- the implementation of a competence approach and the development of the results of educational programs in Kazakhstan universities;

- evaluation of the effectiveness of changes in the content and structure of educational programs initiated by the Bologna Process;

- introduction of «lifelong learning» models in Kazakhstan universities;
- overall assessment of the quality of teaching and organization of the educational process in Kazakhstan universities.

As a whole, the conducted researches allow to draw a conclusion that Kazakhstani universities are only on the initial path of forming professional employment strategies for graduates. Only the implementation of quality educational programs can form an effective employment policy. First, this refers to the professional function of the future specialist – preparing him for mobile behavior in the labor market. The existing system of employment does not fulfill the social functions assigned to it.

Thus, considering obtained results it can be concluded that it is necessary to organize and conduct practical courses, job fairs and other events that would contribute to the formation of professional competencies. Unfortunately,

practice proves that for most students this is a stressful situation in which they cannot fully mobilize their skills, knowledge and competently present themselves to the employer. On the other hand, universities, developing and implementing programs should focus on the needs of employers and create mechanisms to continuously monitor changes in the labor market conditions and the requirements of key consumers to the quality of education. Universities need to attract the attention of large national companies and establish a close relationship between employers and graduates.

This research may be the right point for a number of subsequent scientific studies in this area. The developed results and indicators can form the basis for decisions on managing the processes of forming and developing the competitiveness of young professionals in terms of strengthening the relationship between vocational education and the labor market.

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