

## **Socio-economic conditions of the internationalization of higher education**

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**Abstract.** In recent decades, the role of socio-economic conditions for the development of the internationalization of higher education has grown rapidly. In the article, the authors analyzed the definition of the concept of "internationalization of higher education", identified socio-economic prerequisites and factors that influence the process of internationalization in the field of education. Based on a comparative analysis of the features of internationalization of higher education in the West, in Russia and China, it is concluded that in the studied countries there are differences in socio-economic conditions for the development of internationalization of higher education.

**Keywords:** internationalization, higher education, socio-economic conditions, educational space

The internationalization of higher education against the background of rapidly developing processes of globalization and integration in the world in recent decades has become an irreversible trend in the global educational space.

Since any process for its development requires the formation of certain prerequisites, the success of the development of internationalization cannot be achieved without a number of conditions, to which researchers include political, social, economic and cultural factors [1]. The authors of the article agree with the opinion of scientists who believe that the political conditions for the internationalization of higher education, despite the fact that they played an important role in the 80s of the XX century, have changed their purpose in this century. The political factor manifests itself primarily in the support of internationalization on the part of state structures that regulate this process, orienting educational organizations to export and import of educational services and the return of specialists after receiving education. The social and economic conditions for the internationalization of higher education, on the contrary, increase their importance [2, 3, 4, 5]. In this regard, within the framework of this article, special attention was paid to the socio-economic conditions for the development of the internationalization of higher

education and an attempt was made to identify the differences in the prerequisites of the socio-economic nature of this process in Western countries, Russia and China.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the scientific interest of authors from different countries in the study of the internationalization of higher education. Many of them have attempted to define this concept. For example, A.Yu. Pleshakova proposed a definition of the internationalization of education as an integrative process, during which the implementation of "international educational standards in the educational process of universities takes place on the basis of an activity approach (the use of active and interactive technologies in order to improve the quality of teaching and research), a competency-based approach (the result of higher professional education represented by a set of competencies), an ethical approach (implementation of intercultural communication based on traditions and innovations, creation of adaptation conditions that reduce the risks of internationalization), a strategic approach (development of internationalization in the field of management and education management, implementation of international standards for measuring its quality)"[6]. E.S. Tokareva highlights the strategic essence of internationalization, defining it as an innovative strategy of a university to transform and raise the status of an educational institution to international [7]. Many authors, including Wang Weiwei, write about the need for internationalization to improve the quality of higher education, emphasizing that internationalization acts as a driving force for the development of education. Consequently, scholars are aware of the important role of the internationalization of higher education.

Known are the works of researchers in which an attempt is made to identify the prerequisites and factors influencing the internationalization of higher education. Among them, the key theoretical concept is the concept of a four-dimensional theory of motivation for the internationalization of higher education, proposed by J. Knight, according to which internationalization develops in the context of political (security, technical assistance, peace and understanding, national identity, regional identity), economic (economic growth and competition, labor market, financial motivation), socio-cultural (national cultural identity, intercultural understanding, development of citizenship, development of society and social groups), scientific (expanding academic horizons, creating institutions, image and status, improving quality, international academic standards, international aspect research and teaching) conditions [8]. In the work of Li Shengbin and Liu Donglian, researchers studied the approaches of Western and Chinese authors, concluding that all over the world, political motives for the development of internationalization of higher education have become less important [4]. In the context of identifying higher education with an export product rather than a cultural project, it has become market-oriented, which has led to the development of economic incentives for the

internationalization of higher education. The significant role of social factors in the development of internationalization is also absolutely obvious.

The socio-economic conditions highlighted by J. Knight are most characteristic of the situation of internationalization of higher education in the United States and European countries. It is also worth noting that in recent years there have been changes in the socio-economic conditions of the internationalization of higher education in these countries. The emphasis on the investment benefits from the internationalization of education, which is possible by attracting financial resources from foreign students, becomes more obvious. Countries are cutting their own funding for scholarships and benefits for international students, which is taking place in the face of an unfavorable inhospitable atmosphere in these countries. In Europe, there is an active debate about limiting internationalization in the higher education sector [9].

An analysis of the works of Russian authors made it possible to single out the following socio-economic factors of the internationalization of higher education, which are relevant in the conditions of the Russian education system [6, 7, 9, 10, 11]:

- deepening social and economic ties between countries;
- strengthening the role of knowledge in society;
- the need to train specialists for successful interaction at the international level;
- the desire of states for equality in opportunities and information development of society through competitiveness;
- development of socio-pedagogical conditions, including reliance on the cultural, historical and social traditions of Russian education based on the idea of spirituality, increasing the level of academic mobility of students and teachers, the readiness of the system for organizing international activities in universities to interact with foreign universities, methodological support of successful social and cultural adaptation of students and teachers in the context of academic exchange and their readiness to work in educational programs.

In the Russian educational environment, universities are aware of the need to develop internationalization. However, due to the peculiarities of national development, the processes of internationalization of higher education in Russia have not yet reached the European level. With their development, the emphasis is on the formation of favorable social conditions for attracting foreign students.

Based on the study of the works of Chinese authors, various approaches to determining the socio-economic conditions for the internationalization of higher education have been identified. According to Zhao Zhe et al. [12], in China, the internationalization of higher education is designed to revitalize the knowledge industry and achieve economic benefits, promote the country's political views and mass awareness, and serve as a country's diplomatic

strategy, promote the characteristics of a country's civilization, and emphasize its historical and cultural charm, strengthen cross-border scientific, technical and academic exchange to enhance the country's productivity, respond to demographic trends, and meet the diverse educational needs of the population. Li Shengbin and Liu Donglian note that social trends such as the pursuit of human resource development, cultural development and social openness contribute to the internationalization of higher education. Among the economic conditions for the internationalization of higher education, researchers note an increase in the number of economic unions of countries, the state's interest in investing in higher education and receiving income from training foreign students [4].

It should be noted that in the works of Russian, Western and Chinese authors there are differences in the identification of socio-economic conditions for the internationalization of higher education. Having studied the scientific works of these authors, a comparative analysis was carried out and the following results were obtained, presented in table 1.

Table 1 – Comparative analysis of the socio-economic conditions for the internationalization of higher education in the West, Russia and China

Countries	Brief description of the state of internationalization of higher education	Socio-economic conditions for the internationalization of higher education
Europe and the USA	The processes of internationalization are taking place most intensively, the emphasis is shifting to obtaining financial benefits through the training of foreign students. Countries are interested in reducing the flow of foreign students and at the same time increasing their tuition fees. Thus, the emphasis is mainly on the export of educational services.	Economic growth, competitiveness of universities, financial motivation, the development of intercultural understanding, the fight against the "brain drain"
Russia	The priority of internationalization is placed on the export of educational services by attracting foreign students, the emphasis is on acquainting foreign students with Russian culture	Economic growth, cooperation between countries, massification of higher education, competitiveness, informatization of society, demographic situation, stimulation of research activities

China	Development of bilateral processes of internationalization of higher education: the simultaneous growth of exports and imports of educational services	Economic growth, development of economic cooperation, increased competitiveness, the formation of cultural diversity, stimulation of research activities
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Based on the results presented in Table 1, we can conclude that in different countries there are differences in the state of internationalization of higher education, which are manifested at the level of development priorities of this process. For example, in Europe and the United States in recent years, there has been a downward trend in the intensity of the internationalization of education, which was formed against the background of adverse social impacts, which led to an increase in tuition fees for foreign students in these countries. In Russia, the priority is attracting foreign students, therefore the emphasis is exclusively on the export of educational services, while in China, in addition to the export of educational services, their imports are also highly intensive. In all countries, among the main socio-economic conditions for the internationalization of higher education, economic growth or the level of economic development of the country stands out, as well as the competitiveness of universities as participants in the educational services market. In Europe and the United States, a condition for the development of internationalization of higher education is financial motivation, which manifests itself in the interest in increasing the country's income from the export of educational services. In Russia and China, the condition for the development of the internationalization of education is the economic cooperation of countries.

Thus, in many countries, the main condition for the development of internationalization of higher education is the country's economic growth, which allows us to conclude that economic conditions are highly important. However, based on the differences in the priorities of the internationalization of higher education, different social conditions have formed in different countries for the development of the internationalization of higher education.

In recent years, in the context of the development of the COVID-2019 pandemic and the reduction in the intensity of educational exchange processes, the socio-economic conditions for the internationalization of higher education have been transforming. Traditional classroom activities have been replaced by online courses, creating new opportunities and threats to the development of internationalization. Nevertheless, internationalization is no longer reversible and without it, it is impossible to achieve the high quality of the national educational system. In this regard, there is a need for an empirical study of the current socio-economic conditions, as well as the identification of factors that will continue to develop the internationalization of higher education.

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