



ISSN 1989 – 9572

DOI: 10.47750/jett.2021.12.02.005

Internationalization of higher education: motives, factors and problems (based on the results of sociological research)

Nina Volovskaya¹

Lydia Plyusnina²

Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers, Vol. 12 (2)

<https://jett.labosfor.com/>

Date of reception: 08 Nov 2020

Date of revision: 07 Feb 2021

Date of acceptance: 06 May 2021

Nina Volovskaya, Lydia Plyusnina (2021). Internationalization of higher education: motives, factors and problems (based on the results of sociological research). *Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers*, Vol. 12(2). 30 – 36.

¹ Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Professor, Professor of the Department of Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations, Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management "NSUEM", Novosibirsk

² Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Associate Professor, Professor of the Department of Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations, Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management " NSUEM ", Novosibirsk



Internationalization of higher education: motives, factors and problems (based on the results of sociological research)

Nina Volovskaya¹, Lydia Plyusnina²

¹ Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Professor, Professor of the Department of Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations, Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management "NSUEM", Novosibirsk

² Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Associate Professor, Professor of the Department of Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations, Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management " NSUEM ", Novosibirsk

ABSTRACT

The article presents the results of two sociological studies conducted in order to study the motivation for obtaining higher education and the factors of choosing a university by foreign students, identifying problems and developing recommendations for their solution. It was revealed that foreign students generally value higher education, and that the motivational postulates of obtaining an education contain not only commercial goals, but also cultural ones. It has been established that Russian education is highly valued by foreign students in terms of quality, and that foreign students purposefully seek to obtain Russian education. It was determined that Russia is a financially attractive country for foreign students, including attractive in obtaining jobs. The study showed the high importance of the university website and social networks for making a decision on obtaining an education at this university. The results of the study showed that the level of training in higher educational institutions of the city meets the requirements and meets the needs of foreign students as much as possible. At the same time, a number of problems related to teaching foreign students were identified: language problems; learning problems; communication problems; sociocultural and social problems, for the solution of which a number of recommendations are proposed in the article.

Keywords: foreign students, motives, factors, problems

INTRODUCTION

In connection with the internationalization and globalization of the international educational space, the export of educational services is one of the priority directions of state policy in many countries. Russia's inclusion in the international market of educational services contributes to the realization of the country's socio-economic and geopolitical interests. The competitiveness of countries in the international space, the directions and dynamics of their development depends on the intellectual and educational potential. For many countries, the export of education is used as one of the most promising areas for attracting investment.

Expanding the export of Russian education is currently part of the country's state policy. Now in Russia two developments are being implemented - the priority project "Development of the export potential of the Russian education system" and the federal project "Export of education", the key goal of which is to increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of Russian education on the international market of educational services and to increase non-resource exports of the Russian Federation [1, 2]. The implementation of these projects should have an impact on increasing the attractiveness of Russian universities for foreign citizens, improving the conditions for their stay during their studies in Russia, as well as increasing the recognition and status of the brand of Russian education in the international educational market.

The number of foreign students is the most important indicator of the quality and attractiveness of the Russian higher education system. The analysis of the dynamics of the number of foreign citizens studying in Russian universities shows that from 1990 to 2018 their number increased by 3.7 times (for comparison, in Russian universities, the growth was 1.5 times). The share of foreign citizens in the total number of students enrolled in Russian universities has grown in 2.5 times [3]. Throughout the analyzed period, there has been a steady increase in foreign citizens to Russia for higher education. At the same time, the leader among the countries is China (one fifth of all foreign citizens).

The trend towards the internationalization of higher education around the world is increasing due to the globalization of the educational space, however, the main problem of international universities is how to motivate students to study abroad and overcome the problems of student education in universities that affect the learning outcomes of foreign students. In foreign and domestic literature, there are different approaches to the study of the problems and difficulties faced by foreign students in foreign universities. For example, T. A. Adisa

explores the difficulties that greatly influence the success or failure of international students in the UK. According to the author, students experience difficulties associated with language, impaired communication and difficult adaptation to British culture and the education system [4]. D. Akiba, writes that universities in the United States are increasingly focusing on internationalization, which leads to an increase in the number of students studying at US universities. The author concludes that students tend to gravitate towards large research universities and there is a problem of attracting foreign students to regional universities [5]. In the context of internationalization, O. Fakunle considers the motivation to study abroad and names quality education and employment opportunities as the main factors [6]. Research by Y. Han showed that the problems of teaching foreign students are mainly associated with language barriers, cultural background and academic traditions in the host universities [7]. J. Ma also points out the importance of language barriers as difficulties faced by foreign students in his research [8]. While conducting a study of foreign students studying in higher educational institutions in the United States, J. Rivas came to the conclusion that they face difficulties in social and cultural integration while adapting to a new sociocultural environment [9]. Intercultural issues affecting the sustainable education of foreign students in higher education institutions in Malaysia are considered by A. A. Yassin and concludes that language, academic and research problems have a significant negative impact on the learning outcomes of foreign students [10].

The study of the motives, factors and problems that foreign students face in Russian higher educational institutions are devoted to the works of E.F. Galyamova, and G.O. Kudiman, T.T. Kapezina, V.V. Neklyudova, I.V. Salosina [11, 12, 13, 14].

However, despite numerous studies of various aspects related to the teaching of foreign students in Russian universities, in our opinion, the issues related to their education and identification of the problems they face in Russian universities require further research.

Research problem: Insufficient attractiveness of Russian education for foreign citizens and increasing its status in the international educational market.

The novelty of the research is associated with obtaining new empirical data on the motives, assessments, opinions and problems of foreign students in studying at Russian universities, which will improve the learning process of foreign students.

Research hypothesis: the choice of a university by foreign students is greatly influenced by successful employment in the homeland in the future, quick career development, and decent wages. Most students choose Russia due to the high quality of education. In addition, some of the foreign students associate their livelihoods with Russia. Studying in Russia is also attractive because in the homeland a Russian diploma is quoted quite highly. Also among the factors that stimulate foreign students to study in Russia is the high cost of studying in their homeland.

Aim of the research: study the motivation and factors of choosing a university by foreign students, identify problems and develop recommendations for solving problems. The tasks set in the study are designed to solve a number of research questions: the reasons for obtaining higher education, why Russia was chosen for education, why students did not begin to receive education in their homeland, what are the sources of information about Russian universities, the degree of satisfaction with the quality of education and what are the learning problems?

MATERIALS AND RESEARCH METHODS

To solve the set tasks, 2 sociological studies were carried out in 2019: a study of the opinion of foreign students on training on the basis of seven Novosibirsk universities and a study of the opinion of Chinese students studying at the Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management "NINH" (NSUEM), since at this university there are many students from this country.

Empirical research methods: document analysis and survey.

The object of the research is foreign students studying at the universities of Novosibirsk, the subject of the research is the motives of education, factors of choosing a university, problems.

General and sample population. The general population according to the 1st study: foreign students studying at seven universities in Novosibirsk - sample size 198 people (the sample represents the general population), according to the 2nd study: Chinese students studying at NSUEM - sample size 72 people (solid sample).

Research procedure. In the first study, the questionnaire was conducted online through the "Google Forms" program, and in the second study, a handout questionnaire was used. Venue: the city of Novosibirsk. To process the obtained empirical information, a specialized SPSS package was used.

RESULTS

The main results of the research are presented below.

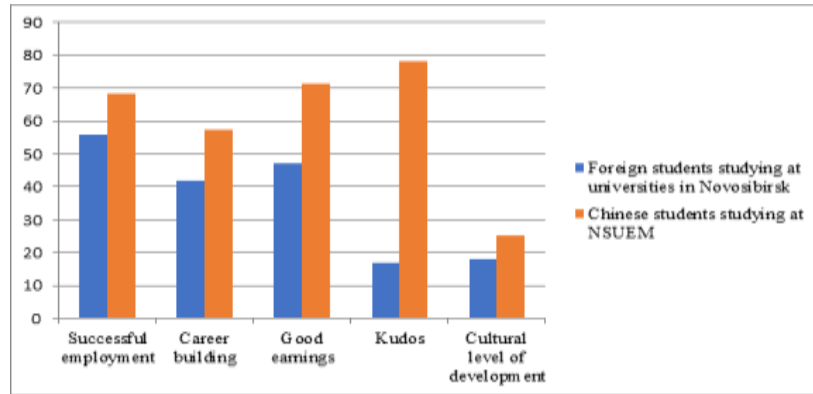


Fig.1: Motives for choosing higher education (in% of respondents)

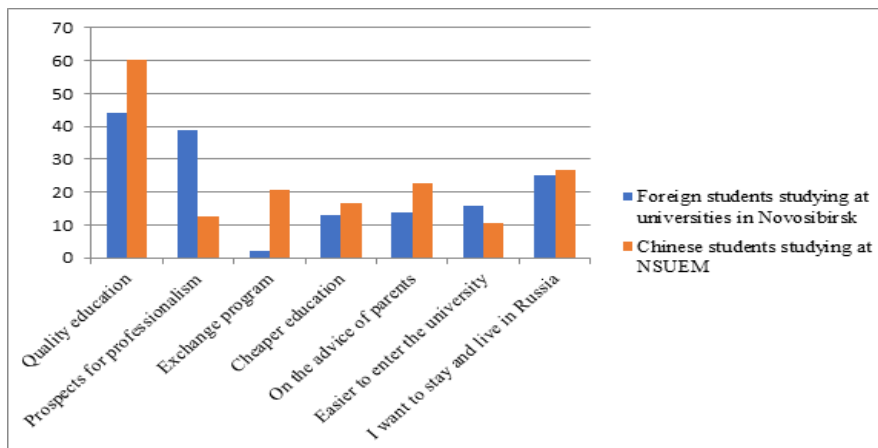


Fig.2: Factors of choosing a university in Russia (in% of respondents)

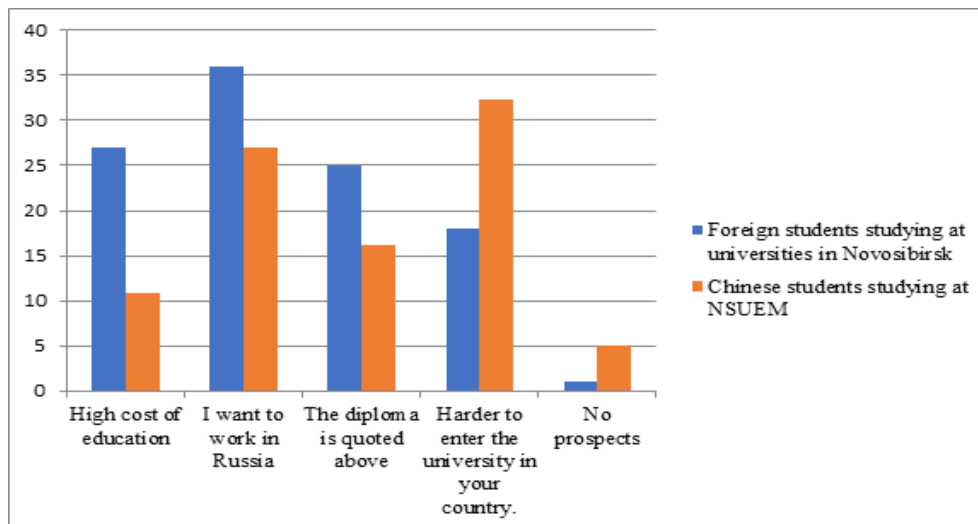


Fig.3: Distribution of answers to the question: "Why didn't you start getting an education at home?" (in% of respondents)

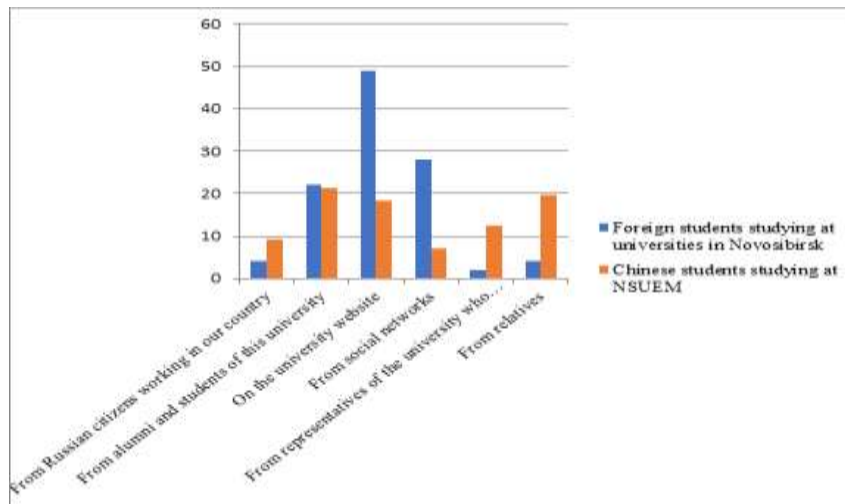


Fig.4: Sources of information about Russian universities (% of respondents)

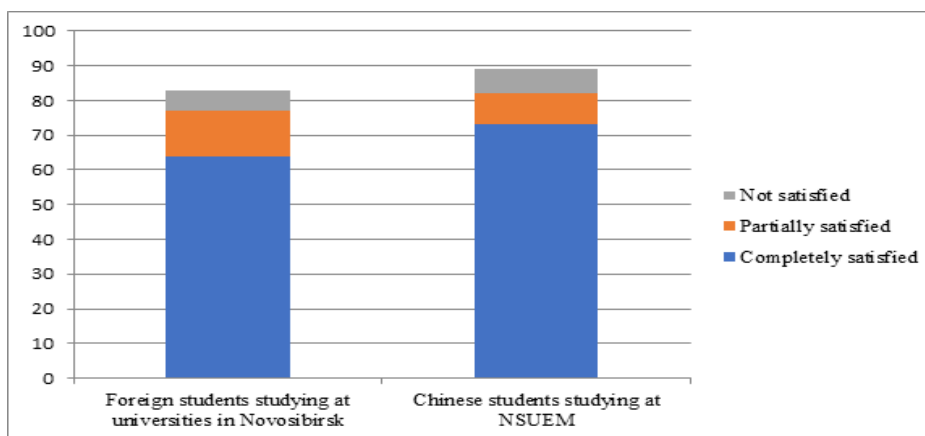


Fig.5: Satisfaction with the quality of education (in% of respondents)

DISCUSSION

The results of two studies have shown (Fig. 1) that the choice of higher education by foreign students is characterized by a motivational core that includes three main groups of motives: successful employment after graduation (56% for the group of foreign students as a whole and 64.8% for Chinese students), good earnings (47% and 71.5%) and the possibility of building a career (42% and 57.2%). Chinese students (78.3%), in addition to these motives, highlighted the prestige of higher education and put this motive in first place. Their motivational core is made up of motives: the prestige of higher education, good earnings and successful employment.

Why was Russia chosen for higher education? The responses of Novosibirsk students show (Fig. 2) that Russian higher educational institutions provide quality education (44 and 60.4% of respondents), good prospects for professional growth and development (39% and 15%), and about a quarter of all respondents would like stay to live in Russia (25, also affects 26.7%). The behavior of Chinese students is influenced to a greater extent by the factor of "parental advice" than the factor of "prospects for professional growth". I.V. Salosina highlights the factors contributing to the choice of the city of Tomsk. These are: the safety of the living and learning environment, interpersonal and intercultural relations, the ability to use the Russian language for career purposes and in everyday communication, the study of the target language and culture, etc. [14]. A study by scientists from China shows that the majority of foreign students, choosing this country, cite the absence of such learning problems as security on the campus, low tuition and living costs, and good job opportunities [15]. The Turkish researcher M. Gündüz also points out the importance of the safety of education as a factor in the choice of the country by foreign students [16].

The answers of the respondents as to why they did not begin to receive education in their homeland (Fig. 3) do not coincide between the analyzed groups. In general, foreign students studying at universities in Novosibirsk identified three reasons for studying in Russia: the desire to continue working in Russia 36%, the high cost of studying at home - 27% and the high quotation of a Russian university diploma in their homeland - 25% of the respondents. The answers of Chinese students show that the first place was taken by the reason associated with the difficulties of entering a university in their country (32.4%), followed by the reason: the desire to work in

Russia 27% and the high quotation of the diploma of a Russian university in their homeland – 16.2% of respondents.

The main source of information for the majority of students (Fig. 4) is the university website (49 and 18.2%); followed by social networks (28 and 7.1%); information from foreign university graduates (22 and 21%). For Chinese students, information from family and friends is more significant (19.6%). Significantly fewer respondents (3-5% each) mark advertisements and brochures. Studies of other universities, in particular, Penza State University, also showed the high importance of the Internet, including the website as a source of information about the university, as 70% of respondents think so (Kapezina, 2014).

The study showed a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of education: 64 and 73% of respondents noted that they are completely satisfied with the quality of education at the university, 13% and 9% are partially satisfied, and only 6 to 7% are not satisfied (Fig. 5).

The study revealed the main problems of international students. These are:

- insufficient knowledge of the Russian language (72 and 68%);
- problems associated with living in a hostel (53 and 77%);
- problems associated with the inclusion in the socio-cultural space of the university and the city (47 and 54%);
- nutritional problems (28 and 43%) and other less significant.

Comparison of the identified problems with the results of other scientists shows that for most universities the problems are common. So, T. Kapezina considers poor language skills, everyday communications and difficulties in mastering the studied disciplines as the main problems (Kapezina, 2014). V.V. Neklyudova among the main problems include unfavorable living conditions of foreign students in a hostel, difficulties with nutrition (for example, there are no special dishes from Muslim cuisine), an unfavorable climate, transport problems, poor ecology (Neklyudova, 2017)., I.V. Salosina defines the following learning problems: a dangerous living environment, difficulties in intercultural and interpersonal communication (Salosina, 2018).

CONCLUSION

The conducted research allowed us to draw the following conclusions: students in general highly value obtaining higher education in Russia, including in the city of Novosibirsk, they consider it prestigious. The current situation is beneficial to both market participants. Students believe that having received a higher education in Russia, they guarantee themselves good prospects for professional growth, building a career, and receiving a solid salary. And for Russian universities, attracting foreign students will help increase the export potential of higher education and increase the importance of the university in the educational market. No pronounced, significant differences were found between the opinion of foreign students as a general population and the opinion of Chinese students. In our opinion, the existing differences are related to the mentality of the country.

To eliminate the existing problems, enhance the attractiveness of Russian education and improve the status of the university in the market, it is necessary to constantly study the difficulties faced by foreign students, monitor their satisfaction with their studies, i.e. carry out monitoring; improve the system of teaching Russian language to foreign students; carry out information and communication activities to inform students and actively involve them both in educational and non-educational activities; in the learning process, if students have problems, provide targeted assistance.

REFERENCES

1. Priority project "Development of the export potential of the Russian education system". [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://government.ru/projects/selection/653/> (date of the application 19.09.2020).
2. Federal project "Export of education" [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://government.ru/info/27864/> (date of the application 19.09.2020).
3. Export of Russian educational services: Statistical collection. Issue 9 / Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation. - M.: Center for Sociological Research, 2019. P.29 – 39.
4. T. A. Adisa, Understanding the trajectory of the academic progress of international students in the UK / Adisa T. A., Baderin M., Gbadamosi G, Mordi C. // Education and training. – T. 61. – Vol.9. – pp.1100-1122. – doi: 10.1108/ET-08-2018-0177
5. D. Akiba, Recruitment of International Students Through a Synthesis of English as a Second Language Instruction, Social Justice, and Service Learning / Akiba, D. // Innovative Higher Education. – 2021. – doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-020-09538-2>
6. O. Fakunle, Developing a framework for international students' rationales for studying abroad, beyond economic factors / Fakunle O. // Policy Futures in Education. – 2020. – Vol. 11. – № 1478210320965066. – doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1478210320965066>

7. Y. Han, An Investigation of the Experiences of Working with Multilingual International Students among Local Students and Faculty Members in Chinese Universities / Han Y., Li W., Bao M., Cao X. // Sustainability. – T. 12, Vol.6419 № -. 16. – doi:10.3390/su12166419
8. J. Ma, Supporting practices to break chinese international students' language barriers: The first step to facilitate their social adjustment / Ma J. // Journal of International Students. – 2020. – № 10. – pp. 84-105. – doi: 10.32674/jis.v10i1.773.
9. J. Rivas, Seeking a sense of belonging: Social and cultural integration of international students with American college students / Rivas J., Hale K., Burke M. G. // Journal of International Students. – 2019. – № 9. – pp. 682-701. – doi: 10.32674/jis.v9i2.943.
10. A. A. Yassin, Intercultural Learning Challenges Affecting International Students' Sustainable Learning in Malaysian Higher Education Institutions / Yassin A. A., Razak N. A., Qasem Y. A. M., Mohammed M. // Sustainability. – T. 12. – Vol. 18. – № 7490. – doi: 10.3390/su12187490.
11. Galyamova E.F. The attractiveness of Russian challenge in the international market of educational services / E.F. Galyamova, G.O. Kudimana // Vestnik Udmurtskogo universiteta. 2017. V.27. Issue 3. P. 23
12. Kapezina T.T. Problems of teaching foreign students in a Russian university / T.T. Capezina // Nauka. Obshchestvo. Gosudarstvo. 2014. №1. URL: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/problemy-obucheniya-inostrannyh-studentov-v-rossiyskom-vuze> (date of the application: 20.09.2020).
13. V.V. Neklyudova Comfortable urban environment as a factor in choosing the place of study of a foreign student / V.V. Neklyudova // Sovremennyy gorod: vlast', upravleniye, ekonomika. 2017.V.1. P.332.
14. Salosina I.V. Research of the reasons for choosing a Russian regional university by foreign students / I.V. Salosina, Yu.O. Okhorzina// Vestnik Novosibirskogo gosudarstvennogo pedagogicheskogo universiteta. 2018. V. 8, № 3. P. 124-138. doi: 10/15293/2226-3365.1803.09.
15. China as a Global Destination for International Students / Wei G., Lin W., Jingdong Y., Yanxiong W // Journal of politics and law. – T.13, Vol. 1. – pp.135-142. – doi: <https://doi.org/10.5539/jpl.v13n1p135>.
16. M. Gündüz, Analysis of social adjustment factors of international students in Turkey / Gündüz M., Alakbarov N. // Journal of International Students. – 2019. – № 9. – pp. 1155-1171. – doi: 10.32674/jis.v9i4.917.