Academic Mobility of High School Students: Concept, Principles, Structural Components and Stages of Implementation

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Abstract

At the end of XX - XXI century globalization processes taking place in various fields of economy, science, culture and other spheres of human activity also affected the system of education. In the era of globalization one of the important components of higher education is the academic mobility of students, which is recognized and accepted by both universities and employers. In the article the concept of academic mobility of students in the narrow and broad senses of the word, the principles of organization of academic mobility of higher educational institutions students are revealed. It presents and justifies the structural components of academic mobility, the main stages of the implementation of students’ academic mobility and identifies a phased activity of all entities in educational process during the implementation of these stages. The article is addressed to higher educational institutions teachers, representatives of universities’ international departments and centers of academic mobility in higher education institutions aimed at the development of high school students’ academic mobility.

Keywords: globalization of higher education, academic mobility of students, the principles of academic mobility organization, structural components of academic mobility, stages of students’ academic mobility, long life learning

1. Introduction

Revealing the concept of "globalization", N. M. Rimashevskaya, V. F. Galetsky & A. A. Ovsyannikov (2002) emphasize that globalization is the interaction of states, nations, ethnic groups, social communities in a single system of relations on a planetary level. In the process of education globalization there are specific connections and relations between states and their educational systems aimed at opportunities’ enhancing of personal development in a dynamic fast-changing world.

Globalization of higher education means the growth of students’ academic mobility and the academic cooperation development between teachers of higher educational institutions from different countries, which will contribute to the improvement of quality in bachelors’ and masters’ training, its adequacy to current requirements of the labor market and these countries’ status improvement in the field of education.

Academic mobility plays an important role in the personal development and professional formation, in skills’ formation to build independently his educational, professional and life trajectory of development that is the basis of a new paradigm for the education development "learning throughout life". It involves the inclusion of every person in a continuous process of knowledge acquiring, values, attitudes and competencies forming (Oleinikova, 2002).

The main factors determining academic mobility can be divided into four main groups: economic, political, cultural and educational. Economic factors are closely related to direct financial benefits, for example, due to
tuition fees of international students the financial situation of the host higher education institution is strengthened. Even the indirect economic benefits are more important, as qualitatively different qualification of higher education graduates is one of the conditions of economic progress of the country and its competitiveness in the international arena. Political factors are generated by the geopolitical interests of each country. Cultural factors are derived primarily from the intentions to promote the national culture and to adopt foreign cultures. And finally educational factors are associated with the needs to improve the quality of education, ensure its consistency with current and prospective needs of the individual, society and the state.

2. Literature Review


The officially accepted interpretation of the concept of "academic mobility" does not currently exist. In the documents of the Europe Council, namely in the recommendations of the Ministers Committee of the Europe Council 1996 academic mobility is defined as the period of study, teaching and/or research in a country other than the country of student’s or the academic staff member’s residence, and it is emphasizes that this period should be of limited duration, provided that the student or the employee returns to his or her home country after the completion of the designated period (Documents of International Law on Education, 2003).

B. I. Bogoslovsky, S. A. Pisareva & A. P. Trjapitlina (2007) determine academic mobility as an opportunity for students (primarily), teachers, administrative staff of universities to move from one University to another with the aim of experiences’ sharing, getting those opportunities which for some reason are not available in their own University, the overcoming of national isolation and the acquisition of common European perspectives.

N. K. Dmitrieva (2013) understands under the concept of University students’ academic mobility their holistic quality of persons, which is formed in the educational space and represented as a dynamic state of its components, characterizing their ability and willingness to adapt, to change and transform themselves and the environment. Academic mobility is an essential form of intellectual potential existence, reflecting the implementation of the internal needs of that potential in motion in the space of social, economic, cultural, political relationships and linkages (Chistokhvalov & Filippov, 2008).

Academic mobility is a form of modern international trends’ reflection of globalization, internationalization and Europeanization, forcing to have a new look at diversity and pluralism in education (Stavruck, 2011).

3. Methodological Framework

The original understanding of the determined concept "student’s academic mobility" in the context of humanistic and individual-activity approaches means focus on educational activity to the student's personality, the creation of conditions for his individuality expression and development, maximum satisfaction guaranty and accounting of his needs and interests in the learning process. The student acts as the entity of the educational process based on the principles of conscious partnership and collaboration with teachers that is directly related to the student's independence development, his or her creative activity and personal responsibility for the effectiveness of the educational and self-educational activities (Sakhieva et al., 2015).

The principles of the organization of high school students’ academic mobility are:

- the principle of scientific character, consisting in the need to implement research-based approach using integrated knowledge in the process of students’ academic mobility organization;

- the principle of consistency which explains the process of academic mobility not as an isolated process, but as a holistic process taking into account the interaction of various structural components in unity with the socio-cultural environment;
- the principle of sequence, which determines the orientation and logic of higher school students’ academic mobility process, and consisting in a support on key regulatory and legal documents on academic mobility organization, consistent adherence of all stages of the process;
- the principle of continuity that defines the relationship of all educational levels, consistency of basic educational programs of higher education institutions, giving the opportunity for training throughout life;
- the principle of humanization, which consists in creation of conditions for individual development and self-development, the possibility for creating an individual educational trajectory of the student by means of academic mobility;
- the principle of cultural conformity, consisting of students’ training and up-bringing in reasoning by the level of world and national culture development.

4. Results and Discussions

Basing on research in the field of high school students’ academic mobility, we define students’ academic mobility in narrow and broad senses of its notion. In the narrow sense the academic mobility of students is the limited period of students learning in foreign educational institution. In the broadest sense of the word, we define academic mobility of students as an integrative quality of the student describing the dynamic state of his or her personality, able to adapt and respond to changing educational space and conditions of educational activities, aware of the need to develop their educational, research, sociocultural potential in the context of educational globalization.

Based on the definition of academic mobility in narrow and broad senses of the word we revealed substantial characteristics of students’ academic mobility, namely:
- in the first case the essential characteristic of students’ academic mobility are concrete actions, technology, and mechanisms associated with the system of students’ academic exchange from different countries;
- in the second case, the intrinsic characteristic of the academic mobility is the combination of personal qualities of the student – the entity of the educational activity, allowing him or her to implement a comprehensive, targeted and multi-faceted process of intellectual advancement in academic and scientific fields, to develop his or her educational, scientific, socio-cultural, creative potential, relevant tools, technologies, methods and means of this process implementation.

Students’ academic mobility contributes to the development of the following qualities: the ability to choose the ways of interaction with the environment; the ability to think in a comparative perspective; the ability to intercultural communication; the ability to recognize the insufficiency of knowledge, i.e. knowledge about lack of knowledge, which defines the motivation for learning; the ability to change the self-perception; the ability to consider his or her country in cross-cultural perspective; the knowledge of other cultures, studied from the inside, etc. (Chistokhvalov & Filippov, 2008; Levina et al., 2015)).

The main objectives of students’ academic mobility are: education quality improving, ensuring its compliance with current and future requirements of the individual, society and the state; development of the students’ skills and the formation of new ones.

The following components can be distinguished in the structure of students’ academic mobility: motivational-task, cognitive, activity, and result-reflexive.

The selection of motivational and target component in the structure of academic mobility reasoned by the fact that the goals’ and participation objectives’ realization in the programs of academic mobility, the presence of motives and needs in this type of activity is the basis for motivated, conscious and active activity which promotes the development of academic mobility as an integrative quality of the individual. The cognitive component selection is explained by the fact that participation in the programs of academic mobility and the formation of academic mobility as an integrative quality of the individual requires certain knowledge in this field. The selection of the activity component is connected with the fact that, on the one hand, the activity itself reflects active, dynamic and changeable human condition, and thus it is a mechanism by which all the qualities of the individual are formed, including academic mobility, on the other hand, the activity is a form of interaction between the individual and the surrounding world and other people. The selection of the effective-reflexive component in the structure of academic mobility is due to the fact that achieving of a certain result and its reflection is the activity or the process condition of personality quality formation, in addition to it, reflection contributes to personality development and self-actualization. L.Y. Sirotkin (1999) stresses that the reflection acts as a balancing mechanism in the structure of
personality that allows him or her to be able to react flexibly to the changing situation of macro- and micro-environment that, in turn, is an important sign of mobility.

Table 1. Structural components of students’ academic mobility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The name of the component</th>
<th>The content</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivational-target</td>
<td>Goals, objectives, needs and motivations of participation in the programs of academic mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>Combination of knowledge, ideas, concepts, judgments about academic mobility and the various programs of academic mobility, obtained from many sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Sophisticated, purposeful and multi-faceted process of intellectual advancement of the student in academic and scientific fields, the development of its educational, scientific, sociocultural, creative potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective-reflective</td>
<td>self-Esteem that outcomes of participation in a particular program of academic mobility</td>
</tr>
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</table>

In modern conditions the basic form of students’ academic mobility realization are academic mobility programs (Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Fulbright, etc.). Academic mobility is also being developed through the participation of higher education institutions in international projects, grants, establishing direct contacts with foreign universities.

The main stages of students’ academic mobility realization are preparatory, adaptation, active learning, assessment and reflective. Table 2 presents the main stages of the students’ academic mobility implementation and identifies a phased activity content of all entities in educational process of these stages’ implementation.

Table 2. The main stages of students’ academic mobility implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>The name of the step</th>
<th>Phased content of teacher’s activity</th>
<th>Phased content of tutor’s activities</th>
<th>Phased content of student's performance</th>
<th>Phased content of activities of international departments in universities and centers of academic mobility in higher education institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Preparatory</td>
<td>Realizing of goals, objectives and the importance of students’ academic mobility; inclusion of an international component in the content of vocational training; development of integrated modular programs; the selection of appropriate technologies for their implementation</td>
<td>Assistance in choosing a specific program of academic mobility and the registration of the relevant documents</td>
<td>Realizing of the goals, objectives and motives of participation in the process of academic mobility; participation in presentations of the various programs; the collection of information from Internet sources; correlation of needs, interests and capabilities with a particular program; choosing the right program; actions and activities associated with the processing of relevant documents</td>
<td>Collection and continuous updating of information on existing programs of academic mobility and conditions of participation in them; presentations of the various programs; the establishment of bilateral and multilateral mutually beneficial agreements and contracts with foreign educational institutions</td>
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</table>
In the process of academic mobility priority is given to the formation of free and responsible person, capable to carry out educational and self-educational activity in the modern multicultural world, combining academic and intercultural competence with civil liability and moral consciousness.

5. Conclusion

Thus, academic mobility is not only a process of students participation in the programs of academic mobility and education in a foreign University, but also integrative personal quality, characterizing the dynamic state of the individual, able to adapt and respond to changing educational environment and conditions of educational activities, who are aware of the need to develop the educational, scientific, social and cultural potential in the context of education globalization. Academic mobility is a means of competent bachelors and masters training; the country competitiveness’s enhance in the field of educational services; improvement of the effectiveness of higher educational institutions graduates’ employment.

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References


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