

Periods of Academic Mobility Development in Russia

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ABSTRACT

Every year the number of students participating in the mobility programs grows rapidly. This is the main reason of the scientific interest to the problem of academic mobility. In spite of the fact that academic mobility has recently become the subject of study of many researchers, the phenomenon of academic mobility is not a new one. By present time some Russian and foreign researchers have devoted their studies to the problem of the academic mobility periodization. However, most of them cover mostly the XX and XXI centuries. Nevertheless, it does not mean that academic mobility had not existed before that period. Some researchers support the opinion that the beginnings of academic mobility can be found in the Medieval Times. There is a small amount of scientific works devoted to the problem of academic mobility periodization. The analysis of these works is of great importance, as there is no universal variant of academic mobility periodization.

KEYWORDS

Academic mobility; Bologna process; higher education; periodization

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Introduction

Academic mobility is one of the means of higher education internationalization (Knight, 2003). Globalization, internationalization and integration are relevant questions as they affect all spheres of our lives including higher education (Adrian, 2000; Shevalyer & Eisher, 2002). Modern universities have international departments and such indicator as academic mobility of students is considered to be the criterion of their prestige, which brings them much profit (Altbach & Knight, 2006).

In Russia millions of students take part in the mobility programs and the study of academic mobility is very topical. Most of the scholars study academic mobility in terms of the Bologna process (Baydenko, 2002) and there is a small number of researches devoted to the previous period. The main purpose of our study was to create a chronology of the main periods of students' academic mobility development in Russia.

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Literature review

Aimed at creating a chronology of academic mobility development we have studied the works of some scientists, who worked on the problem of the students' academic mobility. T. Shevalyer & J.C. Eisher (2002), G. Adrian (2000) study academic mobility in terms of internationalization. C. Kerr (1994), E.S. Kozlova (2015), V.I. Baydenko (2002) present their variants of the periods of academic mobility development. U.I. Sergeeva (2012) worked out the European academic mobility periodization covering the period from the 12th century to the present days.

Methodological Framework

During the study the following theoretical methods were used: analysis, synthesis, generalization, theoretical analysis of pedagogical, historical and scientific literature on the research problem.

The theoretical basis of the study is the conceptual ideas of the scientific researches in the study of the academic mobility. We used the analytical and comparative-historical methods to reveal the main periods of academic mobility development in Europe and Russia and to study their main features. Systematic approach allowed us to study various approaches to the academic mobility periodization and to study their common and different features. The dialectical approach helped us to trace the interconnections between economical, geopolitical, cultural peculiarities of a specific historical period and the system of Higher Education and their influence on each other.

Results

European academic mobility

Most of the researches on academic mobility study the period of the 20th century taking it in the context of internationalization, globalization or Bologna process. However studying the origin of the academic mobility concept we have found out that it can be traced to the first medieval universities in Europe in the XI century. Some scholars consider the journeys of the students and teachers in the Late Antiquity to be the prototypes of academic mobility (4th – 7th c.). E. Watts (2004) and S. Bradbury (2004) suppose that in early Byzantium those who wanted to enlarge their knowledge tried to get to Athens – the city that was the greatest intellectual centre in the Eastern Mediterranean. These journeys were not controlled by the governments and were done individually. The most outstanding schools were Neoplatonic schools of Plutarch, Proclus and Sirians (5th c.).

According to T.M. Tregubova (2009) the appearance of academic mobility in Europe is connected with the first medieval universities. The first university was founded in Bologna (11th c.). The number of European universities was increasing rapidly – by 1500 there were 65 universities. The appearance of a university meant much for the city where it was situated: social life and trade flourished there, the income grew much and also young people had some certain privileges, like not having to perform military service, having their own university's court and the right to provide a degree (Dzurinskiy, 2012). Students of one university may have covered long distances to have a chance to listen to a certain scholar's lectures: Roger Bacon (Oxford, the academic of Natural Sciences, 13th c.), Irnerius (Bologna, lawyer, 11th – 12th c.).

The Bologna University and Bologna itself was an international centre of that time with thousands of foreign students studying there. The degrees were guaranteed by the papacy and consequently were recognized in the all Christian world. They equalized the social boundaries between different classes of people and moreover they brought much profit (Sokolova, 2012).

The variant of periodization given by U. I. Sergeeva (2012) is worth being studied as it is based on the socio-political approach and distinguishes five main periods of academic mobility development starting with the XII century:

- the first period (12th – 14th c.) – first universities and first education tours of the students and teachers, the beginnings of the academic mobility;
- the second period (15th – end of the 19th c.) – intercontinental mobility in the colonial countries;
- the third period (beg. 20th c. – 1945) – decrease of academic mobility because of the revolutions, wars, repressive measures;
- the fourth period (1946 – 1991) – development of academic mobility during the “cold war”;
- the fifth period (1992 – by present time) – rapid growth of academic mobility, start of the Bologna Process.

Thus we may conclude that the main principles of academic mobility were established in Medieval Europe: international character of Higher Education, universities autonomy, recognition of degrees and diplomas.

Russian academic mobility

Having studied various variants of the academic mobility periodization, we analyzed the advantages and disadvantages of each one and created our own chronology of the students’ academic mobility in Russia which covers the period from the Medieval Times up to the present time. We took into account the geopolitical and socio-economic conditions of the time.

The first period that should be recognized is the 16th century when the first “intellectual” journeys to foreign countries took place. However they were not numerous. Higher education institutions appeared later in the 17th century. According to A. N. Dzhurinskiy, in the second half of the 16th c. Moscow made attempts to send people abroad to study Greek and Latin, but soon this practice was stopped (Dzhurinskiy, 2012).

The tsars Boris Godunov, Basil IV and Alexey Mihailovich (late 16th mid. 17th c.) failed to establish an educational institution in Moscow. As the historian S.M. Solovyev (1985) says, tradesmen had to take youngsters abroad to study foreign languages and sciences and then bring them back.

The second period is the mid. 17th – 18th c. is distinguished due to the foundation of the first higher education institution in Moscow in 1687 – the Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy (Kinelev, 1995).

Reforms of Peter I (1672-1725) had a great impact on the higher education of the time. Earlier education was controlled by the clergy. Peter the Great put the noblesse at the head. He himself knew several foreign languages (German, Dutch), studied sciences under the guidance of foreign scholars, travelled a lot around Europe adopting their experience, he believed the foundation of success to be in education. Peter I promoted study abroad: Russian students studied marine and

navigation sciences, art, engineering, dancing, shipbuilding in the best universities of London, Venice, Paris and other European countries (Kluhevskiy, 1987). Moreover, students studying abroad received scholarship and almost all of them having finished their study came back. Undoubtedly, this contributed the increase of the general education level and also development of sciences, industry and international relations (Sokolova, 2012).

The daughter of Peter I Elisabeth (1709-1761) carried on her father's politics: in 1755 Moscow State University was founded. In a very short period of time Russia managed to catch up with the leading European countries in terms of higher education, though by the time the first Russian university opened its doors to the first students there already existed more than 100 universities in Europe (Verge, 1992).

The third period – 19th century – was marked by the crisis of higher education. Alexander I (1777-1825), being afraid of the political murders and revolutions happening in Europe, toughened universities' and foreign literature's control, consequently the number of students decreased rapidly. Nicholas I (1796-1855) cancelled foreign trips of the students. Universities were struggling for their autonomy, universities' charter changed many times (Dzurinskiy, 2012).

In 1865 the National Educational Ministry Council set a goal of teaching foreign students in the Russian universities. Many students from Serbia, Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina studied at St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa universities. Alexander II (1818-1881) introduced scholarship and freed foreign students from paying for their study. Nevertheless, the number of students was not big and such practice was not widespread (Tsiguleva, 2012).

The fourth period is the beginning of the 20th c. – mid. 20th c. By 1915 a large number of students had an opportunity to study abroad. Higher education was at a high level and was improving. Student exchange was also promoted.

Political conditions (October Revolution of 1917, Civil war of 1918-1920) sapped national economy, reduced international relations and decreased the level of public literacy. Education needed substantial changes. By 1918 a number of higher education institutions were founded in Nizhny Novgorod, Irkutsk, Yekaterinburg, and Dnepropetrovsk. The number of students was increasing rapidly – in 1930 it was 400000, in 1940 – 811000 and by 1994 it reached 2.54 million students (Kinelev, 1995).

In 1921 a specialized educational institution was opened – Communist university of eastern workers, where 44 different nationalities were represented (Tsiguleva, 2012).

Up to the middle of the 20th c. collaboration between universities was performed by means of mutual agreements. Most part of the students moved between the former USSR and its allies, between Northern America and Western Europe. However in the second half of the 20th c. students from the Third World start to appear in the leading universities (Dzurinskiy, 2012).

The fifth period – 1950-1999 – is considered to be the time of active international collaboration between the USSR and foreign universities in terms of student exchange programs and diploma recognition. It is also known as the "prebologna" period.

In 1960 Russian university of peoples' friendship was founded and it became one of the biggest universities for foreign students.

In 1972 on the USSR's initiative the convention "On the mutual recognition and equivalence of documents on completion of secondary, vocational and higher education institutions, as well as documents on awarding academic degrees and titles" was signed by 9 Western European countries (Pursiainen, 2005).

During this period a number of agreements with 55 countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America were fulfilled (Kinelev, 1995).

Though this period of time is known as a "cold war", Russia managed to organize international understanding, promoting western image as a friendly one, new projects contribute to the tolerance and dialogue of cultures. Students take part in exchange programs with the USA and Western Europe. Right before the collapse of the USSR our country takes the third place in the number of foreign students after the American and French universities (10.8 % of all the world's foreign students) (Chistohvalov & Phillipov, 2008).

In the beginning of the 21st c. the term "internationalization" is often heard. The classic definition is the one J. Knight (2003), a Canadian scholar, has given it: "the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education".

In 1999 29 countries signed the Bologna Declaration (Bologna Declaration, 1999), Russia did it in 2003. The last – sixth - period started in 1999 and is called the "Bologna" period.

The main targets set by the Declaration were:

- Recognition of degrees and diplomas;
- 2 levels of higher education (bachelor and master);
- Academic mobility of students and teachers;
- Collaboration in order to build European Higher Education Area.

Discussions

The last meeting of the Bologna Process participants took place in 2015 in Yerevan. The significance of academic mobility, especially in the time of global crisis and problems of terrorism and extremism, was highlighted during the communiqué. Ministers set new targets, such as working out a more effective politics of credits and diplomas recognition.

Unfortunately, there exist some certain obstacles that prevent students from participating in the mobility programs and searching the ways to tackle them is of great importance. Analysis of different countries' experience in the mobility programs realization may be helpful in terms of these programs improvement.

In spite of the fact that the concept of academic mobility has been studied mostly during the last two centuries, it should be highlighted that there is still no ratified periodization of Russian academic mobility.

Conclusion

This research was aimed at creating a chronology of the students' academic mobility development in Russia. We studied the scientific works on the academic mobility periodization problem and presented the main periods of the students' mobility development in Russia from the 16th century till present time.

Analysis of the scientific literature on the problem showed that there exist several variants of the academic mobility periodizations based on different approaches. Most of them cover the 20th and 21st centuries. Period before the 20th century should be studied more thoroughly.

The materials of this research may present interest to the teachers of Foreign and Comparative Pedagogy and the researchers working on the academic mobility problem and realization of the Bologna agreements.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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