

**BUSINESS EDUCATION AS AN OBJECT OF STATE REGULATION
IN KAZAKHSTAN**

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Аннотация

В статье рассматривается вопрос совершенствования государственного регулирования системы образования с акцентом на бизнес-образование. Предлагается использовать модель ГЧП, как эффективного инструмента государственного регулирования. Автор, на основании результатов собственного исследования, а также имеющихся данных, подчеркивает необходимость развития партнерства между государством, бизнесом и учреждениями образования. Делается вывод, что эффективное трехстороннее партнерство сможет устранить имеющиеся недостатки в развитии человеческих ресурсов и ускорить экономический рост.

Abstract

The article discusses the importance of state regulation of educational sector with the focus on business education. The use of public-private partnership mechanisms in educational system as an effective instrument of state regulation has been suggested. Based on research findings as well as previous studies, the author highlights the need to develop partnership between the government, business and educational providers. It is emphasized that effective tripartite partnerships can eliminate the existing gaps in human development and accelerate an economic growth in Kazakhstan.

Ключевые слова: государственное регулирование; бизнес-образование; государственно-частное партнерство.

Key words: state regulation; business education; public-private partnership.

Introduction

For any modern economy to function effectively and competitively, government needs to ensure that there is strong educational system enable to produce highly skilled and entrepreneurial workforce. State regulation of the educational sector in Kazakhstan is of great importance today for the following reasons: (1) education is the key to developing human capital, especially higher and postgraduate education. Universities have triple roles as providers of the high level skills, advanced research and path-breaking innovation; (2) there is a lack of entrepreneurial and managerial skills that constrain economic development; (3) higher education providers still face difficulties because of corruption and other challenges. Apart from this, in the context of modernization of public administration system, state regulation of educational reforms becomes crucial since education is strategically important economic sector along with the industry.

In many advanced economies government and business along with education system see joint responsibility in the development of human resources. Universities and business schools have close relationship with industry and government. Cooperation of higher education institutions with business and government enhances the relationship between these three critical segments of society and leads to innovations and development. In Kazakhstan, such a close relationship is absent, although some initiatives and attempts have been undertaken to connect education and business with public policy.

This paper focuses on the development of business education and the importance of state regulation in tripartite partnerships in Kazakhstan. Although many publications addressed challenges in business education and social partnerships (Mordovin, 2001; Steinberg, 2003; Lambert, 2003; Isobel van der Kuip, Ingrid Verheul, 2003; Zhang, Yevenko, 2004; Mintsberg, 2004; Varnavsky, 2005; Mao, 2007; Deryabina, 2008; Silvestrov, 2008; Kozhakhmetov, 2011; Wilson DL, 2012; Esposito, 2012, Svyatov, 2013), relatively little research has addressed mechanisms of partnerships between business education providers, government and business sector, particularly with respect to Kazakhstan. Although the present article builds its analysis on the findings of previous studies, it emphasizes the importance of not only examining the current problems in business education sector and its compliance with the need of the labour market, but also considering the possible ways to improve the situation by attracting all stakeholders into the education development strategies. Therefore, this paper focuses on the need of active interaction between government, business and academia in order to produce highly skilled professionals to meet job market needs.

This paper primarily seeks to address the following set of questions. First, to what extent the business education outcomes meet the labour market needs in Kazakhstan? What is the current state of education – business partnership? Second, what are the main challenges in formation partnerships? What is the role of government in such partnerships? Third, why many partnerships have disappointed results? Within the framework of the questions mentioned above, this study will investigate the possibilities of creation a platform for policy makers, academia and business to join their efforts in order to eliminate the existing discrepancy between education outcomes and job market needs.

The primary message of this paper is that proper state regulation is needed to consolidate the efforts of government, business and education in the development of human capital. Proper state regulation of educational sector is crucial to accelerate economic growth and competitiveness. It is extremely important for each side to realize their responsibility in achieving the common socially significant goal. Methodologically, this paper builds on previously published studies on partnerships and higher education in Kazakhstan, and utilizes the results of survey (questionnaires) of 100 students and 100 university graduates, as well as the results of the extensive interviews (involving semi-structured questions) with directors of the career development offices (of 5 Kazakhstani universities) and 5 CEOs of local companies.

Overview of the current situation in business-education

Nowadays, the role of business education has been steadily increasing along with the growing influence of human capital. Review of international economic studies suggests that there is a close link between the economic growth, quality of human capital and education, wherein professional business education serves as a basis for human capital and a key factor of economic growth. Educational approaches in western countries have been strongly influenced by New Public Management (Bologna process as an example).

Kazakhstan government has focused considerable efforts on education reform. Quality education and integration into the world educational environment is a strategic goal of Kazakhstan's system of education. By joining the Bologna process, accepting its standards and requirements, Kazakhstan has made significant steps toward modernization of its higher and postgraduate education. However, despite significant achievements, education is still not aligned with the job market needs. International reports on economy competitiveness and Kazakhstan investment attractiveness note the significant gaps in personnel training. Thus, according to the Kazakhstan investment attractiveness survey conducted by "Ernst & Young", only 25% of respondents (investors) are satisfied with the local labour skills level while 35% believe that further improvement is needed [1]. This survey found that there is an insufficient number of potential employees with practical skills and knowledge of modern technologies. It is also noted that a shortage of human capital with the industry-specific knowledge and skills may challenge the growth potential of technology-intensive manufacturing and business services. In accordance with the study "Status and level of human capital development in Kazakhstan" conducted by the local research group, almost half respondents rated the existing education system in the country as ineffective. Most respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the ongoing reforms in higher education. Among the main reasons of dissatisfaction they indicated inability to calculate the need for professional personnel, the weak relationship between educational institutions and employers, absence of professional standards, etc. [2]. The OECD report on competitiveness of the Central Asia economies suggests that development of human capital is the main priority in improving the investment attractiveness of the region. It is recommended to improve training quality and to involve the private sector in education development strategies [3]. In addition, Innovation Performance Review of Kazakhstan held by the UN Economic Commission for Europe notes that the shortage of qualified personnel across a range of sectors remains a constraining factor in economic activity [4].

According to the Global Competitiveness Report 2013-2014, Kazakhstan improves by one position to rank 50th this year (out of 148 countries). On the category "quality of educational system", the country is on 88th position (for comparison: in 2005, the index was 49). In terms of the quality of management schools (business schools), Kazakhstan holds 98th position out of 148. Compared with other post-soviet countries, Kazakhstan in this category leaves behind Russia (113), Ukraine (115), Armenia (120), Moldova (133), Azerbaijan (134), Kyrgyzstan (139), skipping ahead the Baltic countries [5].

Significant backlog of business schools in post-Soviet countries from Western counterparts is due to the fact that for the CIS countries business education is a relatively new trend in higher and postgraduate education. While in the United States and Western Europe, the first business schools appeared in the late 19th - early 20th century, in the former Soviet Union first business education programs appeared only in the 90s of the XX century. That was due to the collapse of Soviet Union and transition from the planned to the market economy. Currently, within the framework of the Bologna process, the educational system of the former USSR countries reoriented to Western, mostly European, education standards. However, the effects and the presence of the elements of the old Soviet education system and lack of managerial skills in educational management constrain the development of business education.

Today, the business education sector is still in the formation process. Among the most recognized local business education providers one can note KIMEP, International Academy of Business (IAB), International Business School at Ryskulov Kazakh Economic University (IBS), University of International Business (UIB). There are also more than 200 training and consulting companies that offer short-term business courses and seminars. Many training programs for small and medium enterprises are provided by Entrepreneurship Development Fund “Damu”.

In spite of the fact that substantial efforts have been made by the government to modernize the higher and postgraduate education system and to improve its quality, universities still face challenges. The problems of business schools, in many ways, are related to the lack of legislation support. There are no state standards for MBA and DBA programs; the approach to refer MBA to the specialized Master’s degree, and DBA to PhD degree did not prove its effectiveness. In addition, business (employers) is not sufficiently involved into the education process. The existing partnerships between universities and business community are often fragmented and not systemic. To address the existing gaps in education, the new approaches and effective measures have to be undertaken. First of all, there should be a clear understanding that it is a responsibility not only of academia, but also business sector and government to improve situation in higher education in order to meet the labour market needs. Therefore, universities, business and government must consolidate their efforts in producing highly skilled manpower.

Research findings

With the purpose to study the satisfaction with the quality of training in institutions of higher learning in Kazakhstan, and to learn the situation with partnerships between universities and companies, the author carried out the research. As a part of the study, five universities’ representatives (100 students, 100 graduates and 5 directors of career development offices) as well as senior and top managers of five local companies have been surveyed and interviewed. Questions to university students and graduates have been related to the extent of their satisfaction with the acquired knowledge and skills as well as the practical training (internships). University representatives have been asked about graduates’ employment and the existence of partnership relations with companies. Questions to company executives have been concerned primarily with the extent of satisfaction with the skills and knowledge of university graduates as well as with the readiness to cooperate with universities in the partnership framework.

Results of the study revealed the existence of some contradictions and discrepancy. Thus, the data on the one hand positively characterize the training system in universities: 70% of the students and graduates surveyed positively assessed the educational process in universities. According to the data given by university officials, 85% of graduates find jobs after graduation. However, only 45% of employed graduates confirmed that the knowledge and skills gained in university came useful at work. Almost half of the students surveyed expressed doubt regarding the finding job in the field of study after graduation. Concerning student practical work, only 20% of respondents positively assessed internships; most of students left this question without any answer.

The results of interviews with company executives showed that employers are often not satisfied with the skills of university graduates, so they prefer to hire persons who have the practical work experience after graduation. Cooperation of the companies with universities is mostly provided through student internships. None of the executives surveyed were not members in any University Council or Board (Academic council, Board of Trustee, etc.). Only one respondent (vice-president of the company) supervised Master's thesis and conducted master-class for the graduate students; other respondents were not involved in any projects with universities. At the same time, the results of interviews revealed that CEOs have an understanding of the need for serious cooperation of employers with universities. All of the executives surveyed

agreed that the programs and curricular should be communicated and assessed by the experts - practitioners in order to comply with the job market needs. Regarding participation in advisory councils for quality assessment in higher education and the development of professional standards and competencies, corporate executives expressed their interest in participation subject to the certain motivation conditions.

Thus, results of the study (1) revealed the existence of gaps in training, (2) identified the need for a motivational mechanisms and incentives for business organizations and private entrepreneurship to participate in organization and management processes of educational system. (3) identified the need in bringing together government, business and educational institutions to ensure that the education content and student learning outcomes meet the requirements of labor market.

The results suggest the need to consolidate efforts of all stakeholders (universities, business and government) to achieve the common socially significant goals.

Challenges

A major challenge in the development of business education and formation of partnership between the government, universities and business is inadequate legislative framework as well as a lack of the holistic concept of business – education. There is no systematic planning and forecasting the market needs in professional personnel and there is a lack of mechanisms to forecast future labor market demand for new professions and new competencies. The country also experiences a lack of the national qualifications framework, as well as professional standards for higher and postgraduate education. Universities and business schools have weak and fragmented links with companies. Therefore, education is not aligned with the job market needs. Government should encourage the partnerships between education and business, create a relevant environment and provide all necessary conditions for that.

Findings of the researches on local labour market confirm a shortage of human resources with the industry-specific knowledge and skills. This is mostly because of the weak links between academia and employers. Universities and companies have different values and goals; they operate in different cultures. In other words, the two partners often speak “different languages”. In Kazakhstan, there is a lack of motivation incentives for employers to interact and cooperate with universities. Professional associations of employers should take initiatives on the strengthening links and establishing partnerships with educational institutions. Education outcomes are not aligned with the job market needs. It is known from the employers’ feedback that they are not satisfied with the student learning outcomes; many employers note a lack of the so-called “soft” skills (communication and leadership). There is also insufficient attention to interdisciplinary communication. In business schools students conduct mostly theoretical researches. There is a low degree of implementation of research findings into the real business. This is a result of weak links between academia and business. There should be a clear recognition of the importance to create partnerships between academia, business and the government in the field of higher and postgraduate education.

Model of Public Private Partnership (PPP)

Today, public and private sectors have become more interdependent than ever, especially in a key area such as education and skills training. However, to improve relations between public and private sectors the mindset of leaders on both sides has to be changed. The 16th Annual Global CEO Survey of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) “A new contract between business and the state: Government and the Global CEO” highlights the lack of skills as a barrier to success. It suggests changing relationship between government, business and society. It is emphasized that government should help to eliminate uncertainty, enhance the flexibility and stability of companies and interact with the business and society. “It's time for a new social contract between business and state that requires a

shift the mindset and engagement of public sector and business leaders from co-existence to mutual collaboration” [6]. Undoubtedly, such collaboration will strongly influence all social spheres including education.

Kazakhstan is facing significant shortage of qualified skills. To address the existing gaps, PPP mechanisms can be used in the educational system, especially in the implementation of large-scale projects aimed at solving the social and economic problems. PPPs enable educational institutions to involve employers in educational decision-making and to interact more efficiently with the state and local governments as well as non-government organizations. The use of PPP principles enables each party to effectively use the available resources, and to strengthen positions of all stakeholders. The relevance of this issue to the national economy is caused by such factors as limited budgetary funds for implementation of social projects and programs, the need to attract extra-budgetary sources of funding, and to provide motivational incentives for private sector. *PPPs can provide* effective ways to deliver economic support to educational institutions, to further research and developments, and to involvement of employers into education process.

In accordance with the Programme for the development of public-private partnership in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011 - 2015 years, the PPP is defined as "a system of interrelations between the state and private businesses on conditions of the balanced distribution of rights, responsibilities, risks, costs and benefits to achieve results in the traditional area of state responsibility, indicated in the relevant agreements [7]. As for the PPP in the education sector, it can be described as "alliance between government and business to implement educational projects on the basis of special legislation and agreements" [8]. The Russian researcher Elena Dmitrieva defines public-private partnership in education as “a system of mutually beneficial long-term relationships between government and business with the purpose of the efficient allocation of roles between the partners in the field of higher education to improve the competitiveness of higher and postgraduate education [9].

The characteristics of PPP suggest that government (public sector authority) is not a dominant party but an equal partner in achieving common socially significant goals. Usually government and business are considered the main two parties in PPP. However, taking into account the key role of universities as the main instrument of government policy in the field of education, and society as the major consumer of education services, it is reasonable to include these categories into the major parties in public-private partnerships in education (Figure 1).

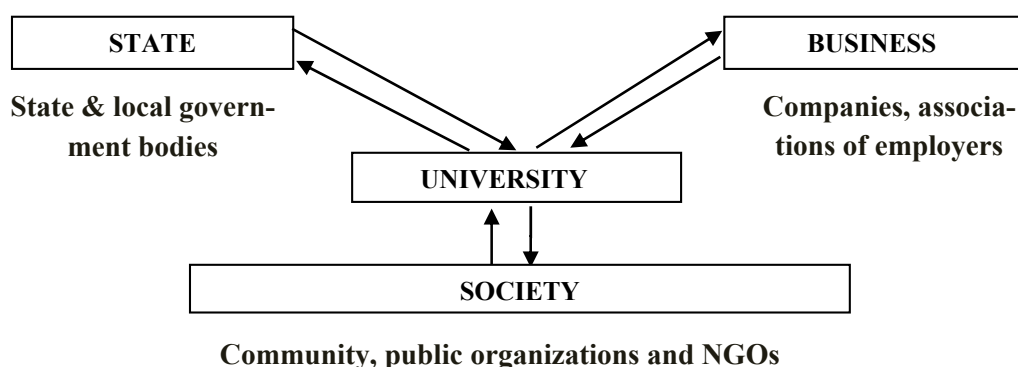


Figure1. Entities of PPP in higher education

Currently, some forms of PPP are successfully used in the country. The joint project of the National Bank of Kazakhstan (Central Bank) and Ryskulov Kazakh Economic University (former Almaty Institute of National Economy) on realization of Master’s degree program in Finance is a good evidence of PPP. Some universities have Boards of trustees with participation of representatives from government and business (in few universities). Activity of industrial parks and business incubators are another evidences of existing partnerships. However, many

partnerships have disappointed results; in most cases, partnerships of universities with business structures are formal, fragmented and not systemic. Parties do not fully recognize their responsibilities and do not envisage the risks. To be successful, it is critical to develop a regulatory framework with clear allocation of all stakeholders' rights and responsibilities.

Implementation of the principles of public-private-partnership in the field of higher and postgraduate education is intended to bring together all stakeholders to create an effective partnership to quality training of highly skilled personnel, the development of fundamental and applied sciences and, ultimately, to the human capital development and improvement of the investment climate in Kazakhstan.

Recommendations

Recommendations for the government:

to improve the legislative framework of business education; to provide legislation support to the initiatives on creation sustainable partnerships (University-Business-Government); to create the national qualification framework, professional standards in accordance with the current international trends; to provide support to initiatives aiming at creation the public management of business education and evaluation of its effectiveness; to ensure a stable and predictable environment of funding and regulation for long-term strategic partnerships to thrive; to launch reward system (introduce economic incentives) for companies investing in the development of business education. Government policy should reward companies and universities that form strong partnerships; to use win-win approach in partnership; to ensure equity in partnerships.

Recommendations for business:

to develop a strategy for the knowledge transfer partnerships; to create a dialogue with education on R&D collaboration; to share strategic plans and provide education institutions with the confidence to invest; to provide students with well-developed work experience and internship opportunities; to get involved into the educational development strategy; to participate in the curricular development (planning and evaluation of learning outcomes); to mentor and coach Business students, to supervise student diploma projects and dissertations; to encourage educational leaders (scholars) to serve as non-executives directors in companies, and to participate in company strategy development. Professional associations of employers need to form the national team of experts to engage with the professional business education.

Recommendations for universities/business schools:

to create a taskforce to examine the key issues of business education development, and to create the sustainable partnership with the government and business; to update the content of business education programs on a regular basis, and to adapt them to the constantly changing conditions in the labor market; to be more customer focused; to embed University-Business cooperation in institutional strategies; to ensure the relevance of student learning outcomes and competences to the needs of job market; to practice team-teaching with industry experts (practitioners); to widely adopt the latest research findings and achievements into the learning process; to work closely with the National Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Entrepreneurs, Associations of employers to involve employers into the educational projects; to focus efforts on assessing the quality of business education, to improve the system of public accreditation of business programs; to consolidate efforts of business schools to create a professional association for business education to jointly solve the existing problems.

Conclusions

Kazakhstan strategy - 2050 suggests entering the 30 advanced economies. To achieve this goal, it is critical to have advanced education system and highly skilled human resources. Despite substantial efforts have been undertaken by the government, education is still not aligned with the job market needs. The shortage of qualified personnel across a range of sectors remains

a constraining factor in economic activity. In this context, it is extremely important to improve the state regulation in terms of consolidating efforts of the government, industry and education sector in achieving the common socially significant goals. Public-Private Partnerships could be an opportunity to improve the quality of education system and increase funding possibilities in order to allow the government to offer a better educational system. *Partnerships* enable educational institutions to involve employers in educational decision-making and to interact more efficiently with the state and local governments as well as non-government organizations. State role is crucial because it is a responsibility of the government to design policies and regulatory frameworks for partnerships.

The further development of Kazakhstan, its prosperity and economic growth, depends on a healthy knowledge-based economy. To eliminate the existing gaps in human development and to accelerate economic growth, business, education and government should consolidate their efforts to form effective partnerships. There should be a clear understanding that education by itself cannot produce talented and skilled workforce. Only in collaboration with business and with the support of government, the Kazakhstan education system will be able to respond the market needs.

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THE ROLE OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN NORWAY

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Keywords: Academic libraries, Norway, education, research

The library at Telemark University College is at present engaged in a project with the libraries of 4 institutions in Kyrgyzstan: BAFE, Manas University, KEU and Issyk-Kul State University. This is our 2nd visit to Kyrgyzstan and we are looking forward to our meeting with the library directors tomorrow.

A little about Telemark University College (TUC), Norway.

- 6500 students
- 4 Faculties
- 4 campuses
- 650 staff – 60% academic faculty
- State funded – no tuition
- 5th largest of 23 university colleges
- 31 bachelor degree programmes
- 10 master degree programmes
- 3 PhD programmes
- Negotiations on fusion with the University of Agder

The role of the library

The topic for this conference “Interaction and development” could quite easily be used to describe the relationship between the academic library and its parent institution. The academic library plays an important role in supporting the aims and goals of its parent institution in teaching, research and the dissemination of knowledge.

In fact, in Norway, a good library is one of the criteria for the accreditation of bachelor, master and PhD studies by NOKUT, the controlling authority for educational activity at all Norwegian higher education institutions.

Studies in economics and business administration can be found at many universities and colleges in Norway, including TUC. The main institutions dedicated to these studies are the Norwegian School of Economics, Bergen and BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo. The Norwegian Business School has a particularly fine library.

Education

The quality reform in higher education in Norway in 2001 has led to the implementation of the Bologna process, with a new grade system and a strong focus on the quality of the learning environment. The focus has been moved from teaching to learning. New teaching methods are used including group work and problem-based learning. These methods activate the students.

According to the Norwegian Qualifications Framework [1], one of the skills of bachelor students is that they “can find, evaluate and refer to information and scholarly subject matter and present it in a manner that sheds light on the problem.”

The library as a learning arena:

- Provides relevant book and journal collections for its users
- The electronic library – access to e-books and e-journals 24/7 both on and off campus
- Flexible library facilities with attractive study areas for both quiet work and for group activities, group rooms, modern equipment, easy access to print and electronic resources both within the physical library and off campus
- Information literacy – teaching and guiding students in how to find information: search strategies, searching techniques and the evaluation of sources
- Academic honesty – correct citing and referencing, avoiding plagiarism, and the use of the reference management program EndNote.

Cooperation with the teaching and academic staff is essential if the library is to play its full role in improving student performance. Here I quote Lykke Friis, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Copenhagen, Denmark:

There are walls around the library but they are about to disappear, and they must too, because what the library can deliver is in the heart of our studies. Libraries don't function if there are too many walls around.

The library can contribute to improving the quality of student assignments. Searching techniques and reference management are areas where libraries have great expertise. Students who have these competences have a greater chance of completing their studies. [Translated from Danish] [2].

Research

The library also plays an important role in supporting the academic staff and researchers.

- Providing access to relevant scientific journal databases on their desktops and off campus
- Guidance on the use of databases and the reference management systems, e.g. EndNote
- Guidance on where to publish (approved journals and publishers)
- Creating and maintaining institutional repositories, e.g. TEORA: Telemark Open Research Archive – a repository of the scientific publications the staff of TUC
- Registering the scientific publications of the institutions in the Scientific Index of CRISTin: Documentation of scientific publishing in Norway

Future roles and challenges

- Open access publishing
- Supporting and financing publishing in open access journals
- Managing in-house open access journals
- Storage and retrieval of research data
- Example: The Norwegian Business School Library has initiated a pilot project BIRD: BI Repository of Research Data

Library cooperation

National and international library networks are essential for document delivery and the development of services. In Norway we have a joint library system for all universities, colleges and research institutions called BIBSYS.

One of the functions of CRISTin – (Current Research Information System In Norway) is to negotiate licensing and consortium agreements for access to electronic resources on behalf of all scientific libraries in Norway.

At a political level, the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions has its own library committee.

The National Library is responsible for planning and development of all library activities. It is also a national depository and lending library. It is in the process of digitalizing the entire Norwegian collection.

Conclusion

Academic libraries play an important part in education and research in Norway both as a physical room for work and study and as a virtual space with access to vast amounts of information. They also play an active role in student learning and in research support. They are flexible and willing to take on new roles and activities in order to further the goals of their parent institutions.

Thank you for your attention.

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КУРС ЭЛЕКТРОННОЙ КОММЕРЦИИ С ФОКУСОМ НА УПРАВЛЕНИИ РАЗВИТИЯ И ЭКСПЛУАТАЦИИ ВЕБ-САЙТА ДЛЯ МАЛЫХ И СРЕДНИХ ПРЕДПРИЯТИЙ

A GRADUATE COURSE IN E-COMMERCE THAT FOCUSES ON THE MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATION OF A WEBSITE FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SME)

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Аннотация

Эта статья описывает курс, предназначенный для оснащения и расширения прав и возможностей руководителей малого и среднего бизнеса, для осуществления управления развитием и деятельностью сайта электронной коммерции. Курс дает практический опыт в разработке веб-сервиса, который включает в себя маркетинг, списки продуктов, интернет-покупку и оплаты, отслеживание выполнения заказов и послепродажное обслуживание. Курс также охватывает темы, связанные с управлением веб-проектами, обработкой данных, безопасностью и развитием сообщества пользователей. Благодаря этому менеджеры будут получать практический опыт в ведении бизнеса через Интернет.

Annotation

This paper describes a graduate course designed to equip and empower managers of SME to be able to manage the development and operations of an e-commerce website. The course provides hands on experience in developing a web-based service that includes marketing, product listings, online shopping and payment, order fulfillment tracking, and after sales service. The course also covers related topics such as web project management, data handling and security and user community development in order that managers will gain practical experience doing business online.

Ключевые слова: практическое обучение управлению электронной коммерцией для малого и среднего бизнеса, управление разработкой веб-сайта, управление деятельностью бизнеса на web-основе

Keywords: practical e-commerce management training for SME, management of website development, management of web-based business operations.

Introduction

The nature of electronic commerce or e-commerce has been evolving ever since the explosion of web development during in the mid 1990's made doing business on the Internet both possible and popular. The early years were like a gold rush as small teams of developers and entrepreneurs rushed to develop web-based applications that exploited new global market opportunities made possible by the Internet. The prevailing objectives and goals for e-commerce of that time were recorded in popular books with titles like *Unleashing the Killer App*[1] and *Business @ The Speed of thought*[2]. The emphasis was on creating online applications that would quickly dominate the market and alter the way business is conducted. However, many early investments in dot-com companies were based more on speculation in the technology than on

the robustness of the proposed business. In March 2000, the American stock market crashed as many online companies were unable to deliver and went bankrupt. However, companies like Amazon weathered the recession and went on to generate unprecedented record high revenues.[5]

At the same time, the numbers of both customers and businesses online grew exponentially, making the World Wide Web (WWW) a new and indispensable channel to global markets. E-commerce continued to evolve as an instrument for augmenting businesses of all sizes, providing business communication links to partners, clients and investors. By 2000, significant improvements in bandwidth, capabilities of graphic displays and expectations of internet users made Web 2.0 providing a higher level of interaction between consumers and vendors. Consumer behavior shifted to a tendency to purchase from websites that posted reviews by other consumers. This integration of consumer feedback into the online marketing of products and services has taken branding and customer loyalty to new heights. With the release of the iPhone in 2007 followed quickly by the iPad and an assortment of smart mobile devices, tech savvy businesses currently have access to a global online market of over 2.5 billion people, a number which is expected to double in the next 2 years.[3]

The teaching of e-commerce within business schools world-wide has also undergone an evolution of its own. In the early days the emphasis was on wealth creation by removing the dependence on brick and mortar business locations. Then in an era of business integration and optimization, the focus switched to leveraging the web as a means to support distant partnerships which led to downsizing of traditional industries. This was followed by recognition of the web as a tool for supporting both globalization and glocalization. Today, modern e-commerce courses also include discussion of the value of social networks, the support of social enterprises, and the impact of smart mobile devices on consumer behavior.[7] Because mobile social networks make it convenient for consumers world-wide to use brick and mortar shops as mere showrooms to help them decide what to buy online, managers of the future will need to learn new strategies to keep SMEs cost-effective.[6]

The impact of E-Commerce is also felt in business schools within developing countries.[4] At the International College (IC) at Payap University, our mission is to equip individuals to become brokers and developers who link communities and markets within and to the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). To this end, the IC conducts research, development, and academic programs under the 3 main pillars shown in Figure 1. In each pillar, the Internet plays a key supporting role.

A 3 credit elective course in electronic commerce is offered as part of the Masters degree in

this course is to provide skills and experience needed to manage e-commerce activities of local SMEs. Like other MBA graduates world-wide, our graduates need to understand e-commerce enough to be able to harness its potential for linking organizations and firms to markets both

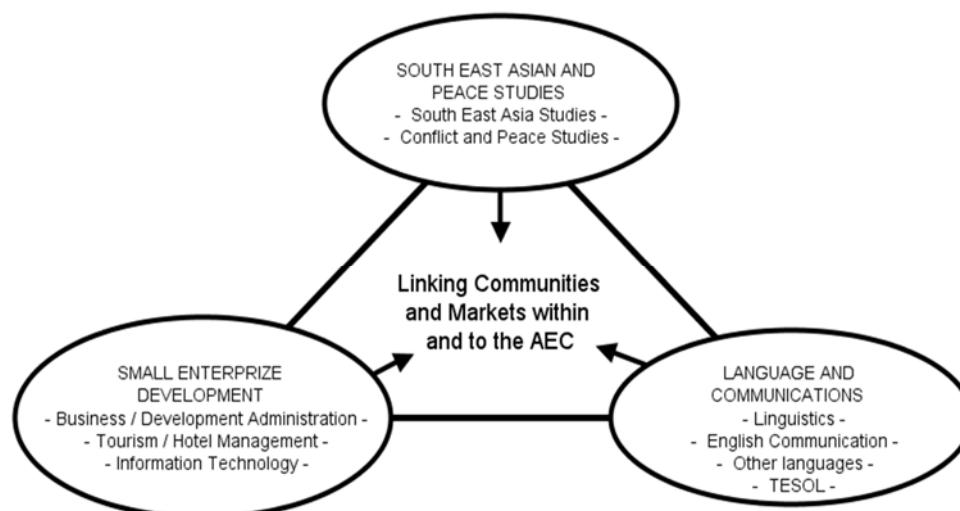


Figure 1The structure and mission of the International College at Payap University in Chiang Mai

local and world-wide. However, unlike MBA graduates working in the States or Europe, they will need to build their online business activities with little venture capital investment, limited options for delivering goods, lack of legal support for online business, and highly restricted online payment systems. The limitations imposed by these constraints require different strategies for developing e-commerce and impacts the contents of instruction accordingly. This paper describes our attempt to meet this challenge with a new graduate course in e-commerce with the hope of stimulating an exchange of ideas between business schools in developing countries to better equip local managers of e-commerce.

Course Description and Objectives

The graduate E-Commerce course offered by Payap University IC is part of a syllabus accredited by the Ministry of University Affairs of Thailand. This course is designated BA742 E-Commerce and has a course description and aims which are common to e-commerce courses found in many graduate business schools around the world:

Description: *Role and importance of electronic commerce on business operations, types, design process, development of electronic commerce, analysis of management problems, the impact of information technology on business and society, ethics of electronic commerce.*

Aims of this Course: On completion of this course the students will be able to:

- 1) *define the key concepts and strategies of Electronic Commerce,*
- 2) *recognize the role of Electronic Commerce in business operations*
- 3) *develop a practical working knowledge of the technology so as to effectively manage the development of electronic commerce solutions.*
- 4) *articulate the goals, needs and interactions appropriate to effective e-commerce web-sites*
- 5) *integrate web-based operations together with other business processes.*

While this description provides a good basis for developing familiarity with e-commerce, students who took this course in previous terms have commented that they felt inadequate to manage e-commerce activities. In addition, it was apparent that the case studies, examples and

exercises used to teach this course needed to be changed to better address issues and trends relevant to SMEs in Thailand. The resulting course meets the basic requirements for accreditation while equipping our students to meet the needs of SMEs. In particular, this course teaches e-commerce from a SME managerial perspective and explores management of web operations given the constraints of working in a developing country. The goal of these changes is to better equip and empower future managers of e-commerce.

The course is taught by a Computer Science instructor with over 2 decades of experience in assisting various organizations to use web technology. The motivation and inspiration for this teacher comes from discovering that the majority of his web projects that involved SMEs had managers who lacked 3 key qualities for managing a web project, namely: 1) the ability to articulate their needs and business processes, 2) the organizational skill to manage a development project, and 3) the confidence to manage personnel with technical skills. As a result, he added a new dimension to the course by dividing the students into teams of 2 or 3 to undertake the design and implementation of a prototype website for a non-profit social enterprise. The goal is not to train them as webmasters but to give them experience to be able to effectively manage webmasters. Through guided exercises, students are led through the process of design, development, operation and maintenance of an electronic commerce solution, acquiring valuable and practical, hands-on experience along the way.

The course content is taught in 7 modules. Each module is 6 hours of classroom instruction which progressively builds vocabulary and familiarity with the nature and potential of various aspects of e-commerce. The theme of each module is listed below:

- 1. Introduction to E-commerce: an overview of the subject.*
- 2. The anatomy of a website: a role and function of the basic components within an e-commerce solution.*
- 3. Managing web projects: Avoiding dangerous trends and exploiting on golden opportunities.*
- 4. Business integration: Integration of web-based services into the overall SME business model.*
- 5. Sustainable development of e-commerce: Balancing and managing expectations of customers, technologists, investors, and managers during development:*
- 6. Customer loyalty: Building sustainable branding and online community.*
- 7. Measure the impact of e-commerce: Evaluating the value and impact of an online service.*

Each week students are assigned a series of video clips and readings to provide background for the lecture. Students are tested at the beginning of class on the materials they have reviewed. This is followed by discussion of the material and aspects of these topics that effect the practice of e-commerce in Thailand. After a break, teams of students work through a series of guided exercises to develop a prototype of an e-commerce solution for local social enterprise. All course materials are distributed online using Moodle as the learning management system.

The key themes of the weekly exercises are listed below:

- 1. Who are all the users of a website? Identifying stakeholders of a project and the requirements for their website.*
- 2. How does a website work? The basic anatomy and operations of a website.*
- 3. How to implement the web service? Exploring the options.*
- 4. How do we best use web technology to enhance business operations? Harnessing the technology for the business.*
- 5. How should we organize and schedule the work to be done? Planning the development.*
- 6. How can we encourage visitors become regular users of the online service? Building a community.*

7. *How do we grow the online business? Achieving sustainable growth.*

Summary

A mini version of this course was attempted in the form of a seminar. Participants of the seminar evaluated this seminar a very favorably and a few of them even registered for this course to learn more. Some colleagues have found the principles and technique shared in the seminar immediately useful for their own development projects. Since then, students and colleagues have shown interest in this course because it covers e-commerce not as a series of academic lectures but as a series of issues to be developed and managed. The skill set developed by this course is in high demand among local SMEs and NGOs, but this is the first term that the new version of this course is being taught. We look forward to tracking how students of this course to determine how they use these skills when they return to the work force as managers after graduation. Those interested in obtaining the course materials for this course are welcome to direct their inquiries to the author.

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**ПРОБЛЕМЫ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКОГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ В ВУЗАХ
О ВНЕДРЕНИИ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТНОГО ПОДХОДА В
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Аннотация

В статье рассмотрены предпосылки повышения качества высшего экономического образования, компетентностный подход, методы и формы контроля требуемых компетенций у обучающихся и выпускников, а также внутреннее содержание программ обучения.

Annotation

The article describes the background to improve the quality of higher economic education, competence approach methods and forms of control required competencies among students and alumni and the inner content of the programs.

Ключевые слова: *Экономическое образование; компетенции; компетентностный подход в образовании; методы и формы контроля компетенций, программы образования.*

Key words: *Economic education; competencies; Competence-based approach in education; competence approach methods and forms of control; education programs.*

В любые времена, а сейчас тем более, уровень экономического развития страны зависел от экономической и финансовой грамотности населения. В особенности огромное влияние на национальную экономику оказывают специалисты в данной отрасли. Поэтому весьма актуальными становятся проблемы в системе экономического образования.

Экономическое образование является одним из самых динамичных и быстро развивающихся. С каждым годом экономика становится все сложнее, накладываются новые уровни и слои на фундаментальные знания, а некоторые становятся не актуальными и устаревают.

Экономическое образование отличается от других пластичностью и прикладным характером. Поэтому наиболее важным в подготовке специалистов в экономической области, является научить их применять полученные в стенах учебного заведения знания на практике.

Как показывает опыт ведущих индустриальных стран, «прорыв» в темпах экономического развития, в значительной мере, обуславливается изменением экономической роли инноваций, темпов, направлений и механизмов реализации инновационных процессов. Изменившиеся взаимосвязи между наукой, технологиями и экономическим ростом являются одной из основных характеристик современной «новой экономики» [2].

В современных условиях весьма актуальным является экономическое образование формирующее необходимые компетенции у обучающихся. Большую роль играет методика преподавания. Важно научить будущих управленцев, экономистов, маркетологов и других специалистов научиться принимать решения различной степени структурированности и неопределенности.

Введение компетенций в нормативную и практическую составляющую образования позволяет решать проблему, когда ученики могут хорошо овладеть набором теоретических знаний, но испытывают значительные трудности в деятельности, требующей использования этих знаний для решения конкретных жизненных задач или проблемных ситуаций.

Компетентностный подход предполагает не усвоение обучающимися отдельных друг от друга знаний и умений, а овладение ими в комплексе. В связи с этим меняется, точнее, по-иному определяется система методов обучения. В основе отбора и конструирования методов обучения лежит структура соответствующих компетенций и функций, которые они выполняют в образовании [4].

Наиболее важными отличиями этого подхода являются следующие:

1) Компетентностный подход рассматривается как диалектическая альтернатива более традиционному кредитному подходу, ориентированному на нормирование содержательных единиц, аналогичных российским представлениям об образовательном стандарте. Соответственно, оценка компетенций, в отличие от экзаменационных испытаний, ориентированных на выявление объема и качества усвоенных знаний, предполагает приоритетное использование объективных методов диагностики деятельности (наблюдения,

экспертиза продуктов профессиональной деятельности, защита учебных портфелей и др.).

2) Сама компетентность рассматривается как «способность к решению задач и готовность к своей профессиональной роли в той или иной области деятельности». Соответственно, компетенция предъявляется, в первую очередь, работодателями и обществом в виде некоторых специфических ожиданий, связанных с профессиональной деятельностью выпускника. Более того, именно уровень соответствия индивидуальных показателей - ожиданиям работодателя и общества и полагается в качестве основного показателя компетентности.

3) Ведущим понятием компетентностного подхода является «образовательные домены», при этом итоговая компетентность представляется совокупностью таких доменов, а каждый домен формируется как специфическая функция (аспект) будущей профессиональной деятельности. Например, при подготовке учителей, используются следующие домены:

- домен разработки учебных программ и методов обучения;
- домен оценок и измерений;
- домен информационной интеграции (связанный с использованием современных информационных технологий);
- домен менеджмента и инновационной деятельности;
- домен исследовательской деятельности.

В дальнейшем, каждый из доменов конкретизируется на двух или более уровнях. В частности, на следующем уровне выделяются виды деятельности и проблемы, к решению которых должны быть подготовлены выпускники (создание систем, оценка достижений, планирование результатов и др.). На последующем уровне четко фиксируются отдельные действия и свойства, требующиеся для успешной деятельности: *определять, интерпретировать, сравнивать, разрабатывать, осуществлять, интегрировать, контролировать* и др.

В заключение описания компетенций, как правило, приводятся шкалы, на которых отмечаются стандартные уровни профессиональной компетентности (*новичок, пользователь, опытный пользователь, профессионал, эксперт* и др.).

4) Описание компетенций обязательно включает нормативную модель диагностических процедур, позволяющих практически организовать аттестационные процедуры. В рамках модели, определяются статус и условия применения всех методов контроля, в том числе:

- тестирование;
- написания эссе и представления учебных портфелей;
- экспертизы практической деятельности;
- порядок написания и защиты аттестационных работ.

5) Наконец, наиболее значимой и примечательной особенностью компетентностного подхода является авторство соответствующих моделей: оно принадлежит негосударственным ассоциациям (федерациям, комитетам), осуществляющим координацию профессионалов в соответствующих сферах профессиональной деятельности. Соответственно, сама проблема компетентностного подхода обретает иное институциональное выражение: речь идет о системе, позволяющей достаточно объективно оценить пригодность каждого индивидуального соискателя - будущей деятельности, а также - выработать четкие критерии качества этой деятельности, позволяющие будущим работникам осуществлять целенаправленную подготовку для получения необходимого сертификата и получения признания в этой области. В рамках этой же проблемы, компетентностная

модель содержит ясные указания относительно политики ассоциации, а также - требования к уровню подготовки экспертов для участия в аттестационных процедурах[1].

Исходя из вышеперечисленного, самым актуальным вопросом является методика и форма контроля компетенций обучающихся и, в особенности, выпускников, так как, высока доля субъективизма экспертов (экзаменаторов) при оценивании компетенции обучающихся и выпускников. Для повышения объективности, а также наиболее правильного выявления приобретенных в процессе обучения, необходимо использовать формы контроля способствующие реализации обучаемых и выпускников требуемых компетенций. В этой связи мы предлагаем применение форм контроля и аттестации в виде презентации творческих моделей, проектов и решений деловых игр и кейсов (в случае с деловыми играми, необходимо заранее определить какого результата нужно достичь при решении).

Далее рассмотрим преимущества этих методов в применении на практике:

1. Модели или проекты позволяют выявить практически все требуемые компетенции у обучающихся и выпускников в виду того, что требуют креативности, обладания необходимыми знаниями и навыками их применения, а также коммуникативности и проведения исследовательской и опытно-конструкторской деятельности, что является особенно важным в век инновационных технологий и НТР.

2. Деловые игры или кейсы. Этот метод также позволяет выявлять компетенции обучающихся, а также способствует развитию личности.

Предложенные методы также удобны тем, что позволят наиболее объективно оценивать уровень знаний и компетенций обучающихся, при условии, что заранее определяется конечные требуемые результаты и политика оценки.

Кроме форм и методов важным является внутреннее содержание программ экономического образования. Модернизация экономики, перестроение ее в индустриальную, а в последующем постиндустриальную, во многом зависит от уровня подготовки специалистов-экономистов. Именно этому необходимо уделить должное внимание процессам составления образовательных программ.

Образовательные программы должны соответствовать по содержанию требованиям, предъявляемым современными реалиями рынка труда. Тем самым, нам необходимо знать заранее какой результат мы получим после окончания образовательной программы, так как, предъявляемые требования рынка труда к специалистам с экономическим образованием очень высоки. Это означает, что при составлении образовательных программ в ВУЗах Кыргызской Республики необходимо учесть эти требования работодателей.

Для того, чтобы экономическое образование в ВУЗах страны было эффективным, нужно определить показатели эффективности программ обучения. Поэтому предложенные нами формы контроля знаний вполне адекватно могут отвечать реалиям рынка труда, и позволят выпускникам обрести навыки принятия решения в сложных ситуациях. Главным показателем эффективности деятельности учебного заведения является качество знаний выпускников. Эти знания и навыки должны быть в первую очередь потребны на рынке труда. Во-вторых, как уже было выше упомянуто, выпускник должен обладать этими знаниями не в отрыве друг от друга, а комплексно. Именно комплексное освоение дисциплин позволяет компетентностный подход обучения.

Подтверждением всему выше сказанному является видение системы образования в Кыргызской Республике к 2020 году согласно «Концепции развития образования в Кыргызской Республике до 2020 года», в которой указывается следующее: «Главным критерием продуктивности системы образования будет являться выпускник, способный

адекватно реагировать на вызовы, которые стоят перед ним, и обладающий компетентностями, соответствующими экономическим, социокультурным и политическим потребностям страны»[3].

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