

## Regional Educational Institutions With in Modern System of Education

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### ABSTRACT

Regional educational institutions have their own specificity: those safe intellectual potential and ethnic-and-cultural achievements of peoples of the territory, those increase social importance of higher education, and support social and economic development of territories. All this actualize the analysis of researches of Russian scientists dedicated to the issues of exploration of the essence and peculiarities of modern regional higher education institution. Purpose of the study: theoretical analysis of scientific literature for the purposes of definition of the role of regional higher education institutions and also of the main factors effecting its development in modern situation. Methods of the study: systemization and interpretation of the studies of scientists and pedagogues were performed on the basis of general theoretical methods. Results of the study: the role of modern regional higher education institution was revealed, its social mission was substantiated, the main factors influencing development of higher education institution in regions were defined. Practical implications: the materials presented in this article would be useful for specialists interested in the issues of higher education in Russia, for heads of educational institutions.

### KEYWORDS

Regional higher education institution; modernization of higher education system; higher education; regional actors of development of education

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## Introduction

In postindustrial society, «where the advantages of countries in competition are established not by the exuberance of natural resources or by the weight of financial capital, but by the level of education and by intellectual potential of the

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nation» (Dobrynin, Dyatlov & Tsyrenova, 1999), higher education takes exclusively important place.

It is commonly known that in Russia the processes within the sphere of higher education always take place in the certain regional context. Regional allocation of higher education institutions where the governmental state bodies and bodies of municipal administration and local self-government combine directly the trends of development of the certain region with functions of the higher education system takes leading role amongst innovation means of modernization (massive involvement, commercialization, globalization, informatization, mobility, flexibility, individualization, internationalization, innovativeness). All these define necessity of perception of higher education as the regional phenomenon.

Since 2012, the tendency of regionalization is revealed in program documents of development of higher education in Russia. Thus, «The Program of development of higher education in Russia for the period till 2025» is focused to the role of regional universities as the centers of highest professional level staff training as this staff might provide *growth of intellectual capital and of investment prospects of the territory* for the purposes of gradual continuous adjustment of living standards (Belogurov, 2007).

Regional university is deemed as *intellectual and mental, scientific and educational wealth* of regions, it performs the especial mission of universities in resolution of the problem of sustainable growth in various «dimensions» of the country. The opinion is focused also on the role of universities as «centers of communication» and on the goal if maintenance of «parity of traditional and innovations» (Chekmarev, 2002).

Highlighting the role of universities *in reproductive processes of social medium*, B.S. Gershunskiy (1998) proves that higher education has its integrating, faith-creating, and mentality-formatting mission in the society.

Deming universities as the systemically important factor of social and economic development of regions, O.V. Dolzhenko (2002) notes that «traditional common life of such educational institutions takes place in sufficiently much more difficult conditions and compared with the capital's ones. *Higher education institutions ... carry double load, and even triple burden* as those not only train specialists but play the role of integral center of culture» (Dolzhenko, 2002). N.M. Rassadin (2002) characterizes higher education institutions in regions *as the base of social and cultural heritage in regions*, that safes regional social and cultural traditions and supports whole-Russian historical, national and regional memory (Rassadin, 2002). According to the definition made by V.V. Chekmarev (2004), regional universities are *«the institutions of reserve opportunities»*.

Regional orientation of higher school education allows to each regional system of higher education to develop using its own way taking into consideration the certain situation and specificity of the region (common traditions, customs, distinctnesses of development of economy and availability of labour resources).

«In the conditions of modernization of the system of higher education because of general orientation to regional interests, it is more difficult for regional higher education institutions to meet the criteria of best world practices in distinction of large federal universities and of well-known universities

situated in the Capital, as the latter dispose more material and human resources, enjoy wide popularity, resources support from federal authorities. At that, in general, regional higher education institutions should survive relying of themselves taking proper arrangements dedicated to increasing of quality of education and to development of new educational practices and means of support» (Frolov, 2015).

Thus, in the works of Russian scientists and researchers we can see the whole spectrum of opinions on ambiguous situation and conditions in regional higher education institutions in modern social and economic situations: all of those - from high-prestige staff training centers of prime rank and to other education institutions being forced to «survive» independently relying on themselves only having minimal state support.

### **Research Objective**

The purpose of present article is in theoretical analysis of scientific literature for definition of the role and specifics of Russian regional higher education institutions and also of the main factors effecting development thereof in modern situation of higher education development.

### **Methods**

The study was performed basing on general theoretical methods (analysis, ascension from abstractness to the existential, comparison, concretization) which allowed to reveal the role and specifics of regional higher education institution, to understand federal and regional factors effecting development of higher education in regions, to systemize modern approaches of different authors to this issue in question, and to substantiate social importance of higher education institutions of development of regions.

### **Results**

«Regionalization of education in Russia, creation of regional systems of education as new subjects in educational field of Russia» is make the imperative in development of higher school in Russia (Naumov, 2004). It is stipulated by the fact that regional system of higher professional education as the significant sub-system of Russian higher professional education (HPE in Russian) and intended for performance of its specific function, should acquire the potential of realization of high level of self-sufficiency in scientific and educational service, in integration int international global educational sphere keeping at that its distinctive features of social and cultural components of regional character. We can't fail to agree that regional universities determine competitive ability of the region in national level to the same extent as the competitive ability of the country as the whole in international level is determined by high quality and quantity levels of education of its population: «...regional universities of premium quality level are of crucial necessity for the country potential of which is determined by regions» (Belotserkovsky, 2015).

Accomplished turn from centralized system of university education to formation of regional and municipal sub-systems, redistribution of resources and results of activity in favor of regions have encouraged Russian scientists to theoretical and methodological substantiation of the ways of enforcement of

regional targeting of professional staff training in examples of the certain territories.

First publication of the Report of the experts of Council of Europe on Russian cultural and educational sphere in Russian became the significant event for analysis of the issues of modern regional educational policy, as it has determined «threefold sag» in development of domestic higher education institutions:

- preference of storage function with sacrifice in creativeness;
- preference for institutions instead of innovation activity;
- preference for large cities in the prejudice of provinces.

The experts have highlighted the lack of transparency of budgets, limitation of participation of public in decision making processes, hindered search of new resources for financing of education and culture. The report has suggested to deem regional culture - and education as its significant component - not as a brunch but as opportunity of measurement of the processes of society development.

For the purposes of support and saving of developed media the regions need to maintain such focus areas of vital concernment as education, medicine and health care, power supplies, commerce, etc. Training of staff for those focus areas is the main goal of regional higher education institution. «Higher education is to be attributed to such issues. Lack of either astrophysicists or theatre directors in one or another region might be overcome with adverse consequences for regional economy. But the deficit of engineers, teachers and medics might set background for regional humanitarian catastrophe and devote the region to economical degradation and stagnation (Sergeeva, 2011).

The world's best practice testifies that one of effective conditions of delivery of the region from the situation of economical imbalance and discomfort and of provision it with impulse of development is in organization of higher education. Existence of higher education institution in the region significantly positively influences cultural, educational, economic development of the territory. High qualified staff of leading branches of vital activities, creation of the media of modern technologies and innovations, high ranks of social and cultural development, effective exploration of achievement of sustainable development are provided by regional higher education institution. If we deem the problem of education as the whole in macro level, many shortages of modern system of reforming are not obviously mentioned and visible. But in the micro level, the region represent itself as an information base revealing all the consequences of developing processes.

Population of any town, district, or region is the social and cultural entity, the certain community living in the certain territory and identifying itself with values, traditions, stereotypes and patterns of the certain region. Significant difficulty faced by the researchers is the problem of regional identification of residents.

Identification through locality - where the basis of it is stipulated by the values of home and «small motherland» - makes significant stage within the process of personal self-determination. It is noted that this identification of social and cultural and educational potential of a region represents by itself the significant resources of local development. More people connect their destinies,

the destinies of their children and their attitude towards life with common living in given territory, to a far greater extent those possess passionarity and sufficient resources for creation and realization of the programs of economic and social and cultural development of the region.

A.V. Koritskiy (2000) defines region as «the territory distinguished by commonality of natural and climatic conditions, by lifestyle pattern and husbandry, and by perception of social realms».

From the point of view of social and cultural approach, region (federal subject of RF) is characterized as social and cultural community organized in accordance with constitutional and legal status of the region and which provide the residents with conditions for their activity within the frames of regional and whole-Russian social institutions. The adepts of system approach deem region as special social and cultural system which significant element is population producing and consuming material and non-material amenities. The goal of functioning of such social and economic system is in the repletion of wants of population (including educational ones), in provision of the favorable conditions for all-round and harmonious development of the individuals.

Region represents itself as the subject of cultural life-sustaining activity having its own infrastructure characterized by historically formed common lifestyle pattern, nature, and social specificity. In the course of life-sustaining activity, education, culture in the region there is created its own regional human community having:

- specific culturally sustainable benchmarking goals defining historical missions and future thereof;
- own system of values, specific «world» having its own inherent mentality, mindset, and view of the world (Moner, 1993);
- historical traditions and achievement providing continuous growth of cultural potential of community.

Each region of Russia has its own inherent natural and geographical, political and economic, historical and social and cultural, ethnic and ecological characteristics. The essence of differences appears in alternations input into the content of higher school regional education. This tendency testifies the increase of opinion paid to the issues of regionalization of education, and it allows to define the optimal proportion federal and higher school components within the content of education.

In the level of educational media of regions there are realized two models of regional markets of education - monopoly model (domination of the only higher education institution) and oligopolistic one (dominant market position of small number of higher education institutions which are able influence market situation by their actions).

National, regional aspects of formation of personal properties, of civil qualities of future bachelor or magister play significant role. Being burned in the certain national and regional environment, person unconsciously perceps all the things surrounding - habits, traditions, culture, philosophy, etc. Further, all that being precept from the birth is enriched during the process of development of contacts at the account of acquisition of culture, language, and traditions of other peoples. Alumnus of regional higher education institution cannot rest in his/her national and regional «shell» as internationalization of higher school

education provides delivery of tolerant attitude to other ethnicities, to the achievements of other national cultures, and of formation of value-conscious attitude to integration of economic and cultural life of the universal community.

From the point of view of ethnic-and-pedagogical position, it is the most actual for regional higher education institutions to stipulate proper proportion of the ethnic and the countrywide, of the national and the international, of the regional and the federal as for resolution of organizational and pedagogical issues, so of contextual and pedagogical ones (didactic, methodical, educational) in the development of education system within the region as constituent genuine part of the federal system of education (Muskhanova, 2016).

Regional orientation of higher school education is deemed as «intake of ethnographical, historical and cultural, spiritual and religious, social and productive experience of residents of the certain territory into content and into organization of education, i.e. enrichment of pedagogical process with this specificity relying on folk traditions of education. The following components are the priority ones for regional education:

— application of ethnic pedagogy which basis is formed by native language and culture;

— familiarization of students with traditional ethnic and cultural social medium during professional practice;

— activating of national self-consciousness, understanding of the necessity of saving of traditional values of indigenous peoples living in the certain territory – their language, rituals, folklore, history, culture, etc.;

— formation and perception of ethnic mindset through social institutions;

— inclusion in educational program of the courses of regional subjects characterizing mental outlook, perception of the world, traditional style of life and activity of indigenous peoples for the purposes of enhancement of existing social and economic processes.

The researchers within the field of higher school education note the especial role of higher education institutions as the flexible complex regional educational system containing all the elements of training, advanced training, and retraining of specialists, including magistrate, postgraduate study, higher doctorate, scientific divisions, and also all information and marketing services necessary for performance of competent education policy. All this stipulate actuality of concept elaborations of regional higher education institutions which are the only and leading institutions of higher education in their territories.

Individual regional education programs appeared in Russian regional higher education institutions since 1994, those are oriented to the certain region's needs. Elaboration of educational programs containing higher school component allows to correct study plans, to introduce new subjects, to make alterations in education programs taking into account social and cultural demand of the region and its population.

Considering and summarizing of the experience acquired by Russian higher school during the reform period, inclusion of leading professionals of regional higher education institutions into education and methodical professional associations according to the specialization thereof and to specialities of the certain higher education, sustainable regional policy, close interaction with municipal bodies, continuity of professional training - all that make regional

system much flexible, strong, mobile, providing at that increased development of new types of educational institutions and innovative technologies. Diversification of educational programs, flexibility of education institutions demonstrate significant alterations in the content of higher regional education, at first. On the one hand those are connected with the opportunity to define the content of education and to perform the educational process taking into account the peculiarities of regions, on the other hand, those are connected with specific educational problems arising in modern social and cultural situation in regions.

At that, the concept of regional universities as the center of culture becomes the permanent postulate of domestic experts for estimation of «the vector» of development of higher education in Russia in XXI Century. Local regional material included into the content of the programs of higher education institutions, not making the substitution of federal component but tuning and supplementing it, makes it more comprehensible for trainees.

Development of domestic regional higher education institutions in XXI Century is led by influence of federal and regional factors. The federal factor is stipulated by turning of the state back to education as the guarantor of the quality of educational programs and services rendered by Russian higher education institutions in the field of increasing of professional level of specialists, meeting by them the demands of work providers in federal and territorial labor-markets.

Regional factor reveals itself in prompt response of higher education institutions to the demands of regional community, in manifestation of regional cultural mission and socially oriented specialities of university education, in system of values of universities forming spiritual, emotional, and moral attraction of graduates of higher education institutions to their own «land», culture, and history of region. Basing on the authors' approach, detailed explanation of federal and regional factors distinguished by us is represented in the Table 1.

**Table 1.** Impact factors influencing activity of regional higher education institutions

Federal factors	Regional factors
Globalization accompanied with strict test for competitive ability	Socioeconomic, finance, infrastructural, and demographic differentiation of the region
Bologna process as the part of formed «economy of knowledge»	Supply of the segments of regional markets of labor and educational services
Commercialization of higher education at the account of decreasing of amounts of vacancies funded from budget	Regional higher education institution as the facilitator of sociocultural potential of regions
Active informatization and computarization of the life of society	Wide range and availability of secondary vocational education for the young people of regions (basing on 9 and 11 form system)
Adaptation of higher education institutions to new political, and social and economy challenges of the country	Dependence and adaptedness of regional higher education institutions on/to sociocultural, economical and commercial, demographic realms of regions

E-learning (professionalization during labour activity including readiness of persons to study and re-study during all their life)	Existence of well-established traditions in the media of higher education institutions
Appearance of alternative forms of higher education	Peculiarities of labour behaviors and style of life in region, including cultural and ethnic preferences of population in the sphere of labour and education activities
Integration of education systems of regions, elaboration of unified concept of education development in national and regional levels, interaction of education systems of regions (Gayazov, 2003)	Creation of unified legal, organizational and managerial basis of education. Coordination of federal and regional educational interests and priorities, development of inter-regional education systems. Turn from unitary education system to multi-styled complex of education systems of regions.

Education systems in regions should be of well-balanced character. Formation of balanced system of education should become main goal of governors of the region and those of the regional education system. Balanced system of education is deemed as organization of education in region which is able to meet the educational requirements and demands of the region. In other words, balanced system of education is adequate to the certain education sphere existing in the region. The balanced state of education system is achieved by means of : at the first, by existence of all main components, stages of educations in its content (from preschool to higher, and as general compulsory so supplementary education); at the second, by functioning of all the elements of professional education, at that, for the types of training mostly demanded in the region – in mass manner, for exclusive ones – in exclusive manner; at the third, the system of education should be flexible and should have resource of durability, i.e., it should be able to response to alterations in regional education sphere (Sergeeva, 2011).

Innovative transformations in the system of higher school that take place in all the regions of RF attract attention to the problem of high quality education and focus on training of specialists of new level who are able to develop themselves as subjects of professional activity. This new quality of regional higher school network of professional education as the system is deemed and most actual as that is able to influence collection of intellectual capital of the region as of the factor of gradual leveling of economic development of the territory in the future.

## Discussions

Famous analysts (Alden & Lin, 2004; Salmi, 2009; Altbach, 2003) have proved that to the high ranks of the world class universities might be attributed competition ability of graduates, front-line scientific researches, and introduction of scientific technologies. Those might be achieved by means of the following factors: «a) high level of talents competition (as amongst teaches, so amongst students); б) abundance of the resources for creative atmosphere and for performance of advancing scientific researches; c) flexible system of



management which is interested in innovation and that encourages long-term vision, this provides possibility to make decisions and to manage resources avoiding excessive bureaucratic acrimony» (Salmi, 2009). Nowadays in Russia the pool of leading higher education institutions is defined, those either meet the requirements stipulated or have enough potentials for competition purposing to increase their ranking in vertical growth. The projects of amalgamation of universities basing of hybrid formula are realized. In his work J. Salmi (2009) offers also the third option: creation of new universities of world level from zero point (approach of «clean slate»), in Russian conditions in regions – those are “abutment” higher education institutions of federal importance.

There are various contradictory opinions about prospects of reforming of education systems of regional higher education institutions, including: «opportunity of ceasing of number of regional higher education institutions for 20-25%; increasing of benchmarking indices of educational activity of higher education institutions; guaranteed employment and high salary for graduates and also further growth of their social state; creation of new scientific schools equipped with all necessary instrumentation and scientific stuff in higher education institutions; development of education programs and of academic mobility; automatic pulling out of non-state higher education institutions from education sphere of regions; lots of ancient traditions and values saved by regional higher education institutions; growth of bureaucratic apparatus in conditions of higher education institutions amalgamation; realization of network interaction; increase of quality of education; wide-scale turn to distance learning, etc.. Which might be the strategy chosen by regional higher education institutions in the competition media of educational sphere? It is very problematic and hardly non-reflected question that arises great doubts amongst many of authors (Chernykh, 2016). Most of authors in their studies note training of future stuff for region as the main mission of Russian regional higher education institutions, others prove the necessity of horizontal structure as the feature of regional education system: «The mission of such university is in training of stuff for the region, at that, in this case we deem not vertical structure, but rather horizontal one, and even inter-regional structure.

As for the expert’s opinion, main stakeholders of higher education institutions would be regional industrial clusters, customer equities, regional authorities, regional sectoral ministries and governmental agency. Main intake of enrollees will take place for bachelor degree course; magistrate and postgraduate study should be limited by minimal amounts. The model of education program might be formed in accordance with the following principles: unification of education process in the first course with application of on-line techniques, existence of own educational standards containing increased regional component (taking into account the opinions of providers of work, employers), professional part of Project Activity Model (PAM - МОИ in Russian) realized with taking into account the peculiarities of the cluster (branch), variability of supplementary vocational education (SVE - ДПО in Russian)» (Garmonova, Sokolova & Ryakhina, 2015).

To our point of view, this opinion is of polemical character, especially in the part of the programs of magistrate and postgraduate study realization. We think that dependent of the demand for scientific researches and for high qualified stuff of different brunches of social and economic development in the region, some key figures of intake into magistrate and postgraduate study courses should be defined. At that, all the stages of higher education should be maintained seven and developed by regional higher education institutions

Taking into account active introduction of modern educational technics, regional higher education institutions might turn gradually to project-based learning in accordance with problematic of the certain sphere of the region, and further in prospect «to turn into «start-up factory», i.e. to turn into the site for innovation entrepreneurial experiments» (Belotserkovskiy, 2015).

To the authors' opinion, the basis of activity of leading regional higher education institutions is installation (combination) in unified educational standard of goals and targets of the state, of demands of regional society, of interests of the higher education institution stuff and its internal media, and its productive, intellectual, material, financial opportunities with external environment and with the factors of economic and cultural (institutional) nature which are out of direct control of the higher education institution, but those should be taken into account permanently.

## Conclusion

In modern Russia, higher education is one of key factors and resources of economic and social development, one of the most important conditions of increasing of the welfare of the society, of provision of competitive ability and sustainable growth of national and regional economies.

Analysis of works of domestic scientists dealing with the issues of pedagogy of higher school and sociology and economy of education has demonstrated existence of sufficiently wide range of opinions on the state of regional higher education institutions and on prospects of development thereof: from «the centers of saving of traditional culture» to «start-ups».

Regional higher education institutions being the part of sub-system of higher education of regions and included int the system of Russian – and further of worldwide higher education – besides professional training of demanded and competitive stuff, of integration into universal education system, of rendering of scientific and educational services, of provision with scientific and pedagogical stuff, of saving of distinctiveness of the territory and its ethno cultural traditions - acquire new quality – those become some unique «poles of growth» having ability to influence regional development.

Basing of the analysis of the concept of development o leading regional higher education institutions of RF, the essence and the specificity of regional higher education institutions were ascertained, federal and regional factors determining of the strategy of development thereof were distinguished. The authors focus on such characteristics of regional higher education institutions of Russia as: combination in common education space of the goals and targets of

the state, of regional society and business entities, and of interests of higher education institutions staff; introduction of horizontal structures of municipal (regional) and inter-municipal levels into the vertical system of management of higher education institutions; balanced state (ability to satisfy adequately educational demands and needs of the region); well-directed, operative and goal-oriented supply of all types of resources (informational, scientific and methodical, regulatory, financial and economic, material and technical, etc.).

During the study, some prospective problems have been arisen, and studying of those should be continued. Thus, the study on monitoring of quality and effectiveness of activity of main regional higher education institutions of Siberia and Russian Far East and studying of their interactions with educational, scientific, business communities, and respond thereof to expectations and demands of industry and population of the regions should be continued.

The materials represented in this article might be useful for the specialists studying the issues of development of Russian higher school and the specificity of the education system in the certain regions of RF, and also for managers and specialists of departments of innovations and strategic researches of higher education institutions.

### Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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