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## HIGHER EDUCATION OF SOUTH KOREA: INNOVATIVE GUIDELINES FOR UKRAINE

*In the article, the author opens the peculiarities of the functioning of higher education in South Korea at the organizational level. The latest data of authoritative rankings of higher education are analyzed, according to the results of which South Korean universities are among the top hundred best higher education institutions in the world. The strategy of higher education development of the Government of South Korea through the prism of economic and social guidelines is described. The types of institutions that provide training for specialists in various fields at the first, second and third levels of higher education are described, their role and functions are outlined. The basic terms of training are defined and features of the introductory campaign are outlined.*

*The organization of the educational process is described, in particular the division of the educational period into semesters and the peculiarities of the credit-examination session. It is concluded that the experience of South Korea in terms of the organization of higher education for Ukraine is promising.*

**Key words:** *higher education, universities, South Korea, education abroad, education system, education economics, higher education development, management, organizational structure of higher education institutions.*

**Introduction.** While deciding the issue of the functioning of educational systems of foreign countries, one cannot but consider the organizational aspects of their existence, because not only the quality of educational services depends on an effectively organized environment, but also the final result in the form of a highly qualified specialist who will work for the benefit of the whole country.

Today it can be stated that nowadays education system of South Korea is one of the most effectively organized and balanced. This is evidenced, in particular, by the stable rapid growth and rapid development of the country's economy, a key factor in the impact of which is high-quality education. Based on economic indicators, the South Korean government significantly increases spending on education, effectively investing in the future of the country. However, only 50-60 years ago the majority of the country's population was below the poverty line and, accordingly, had no prospects of receiving any education. At the same time, the organizational structure of higher education institutions has changed, the model of which was taken from the Americans

and transformed in accordance with the mental and cultural characteristics of South Korean society.

Based on the above mentioned, in the context of reforming national higher education, the experience of South Korea in the organization and management of the higher education system is relevant and promising for Ukraine.

**Analysis of relevant study.** Studies of higher education in South Korea and other East countries have been conducted mainly by Korean and American scholars, in particular, Jeong-Kyu Lee has studied the influence of Japanese nationalist thought on the development of South Korean higher education; Sunwoong Kim and Ju Ho Lee in “Changing Aspects of Higher Education in Korea: Market Competition and the Role of the State” scholar work (Kim, Lee, 2006) explored the economic component of the issue, emphasizing that the government should reform higher education and integrate it into the labor market to improve the quality of educational services.

In fact, in the field of Ukrainian pedagogical comparative studies there are no thesis on this problem. Tangible research can be considered the work of such comparative scientists as: I.A. Hrebenyk, S.O. Lystiuk, N.V. Paziura, O.V. Prysvitla, L.A. Savranchuk, T.H. Sverdlova, S.V. Stoiko, O.P. Shatska, K.V. Shevchenko.

Leading Ukrainian comparativist A.A. Sbruieva deals with the issues of internationalization of higher education, innovative aspects of the development of a modern university. In particular, the paper “Global and Regional Trends in the Development of Higher Education in the Context of Knowledge Society” focuses on the internationalization of higher education, outlines its forms, manifestations, strategic directions and dimensions (Sbruieva, 2008).

A significant contribution to the study of this topic was made by scientists from post-Soviet countries, in particular, A. N. Husiev highlighted the major reforms in the higher education system of South Korea; E.H. Lim studied the development trends of South Korean higher education; S. I. Luniev studied the development of higher education in Asia; O. V. Zinevych outlined the peculiarities of the process of modernization of South Korean universities on the basis of reorientation of education to entrepreneurial principles; I. A. Tovstokulakov directed his search to identify the main problems and areas of modernization of higher education in South Korea.

**Aim of the study** is to reveal the internal and external organizational and managerial aspects of the functioning of higher education institutions in South Korea, outlining innovation guidelines for Ukraine.

**Research methods.** To achieve this goal, the following theoretical research methods were used: studying the works of foreign researchers and experts in the

field of higher education, laws, statistics with analysis, synthesis and generalization of facts to determine the features of the higher education system of South Korea; comparative-historical method, which was used to analyze scientific sources and documents on the research topic, which made it possible to trace the development of higher education in South Korea; generalizations and concretizations, which revealed the current state of the problem.

**Results.** For the past 30 years, the South Korean government has been building a national education policy that focuses on the standards of the world's leading countries. Such a policy quickly showed high results in the process of conducting various tests and international programs to assess students' knowledge. In 2012, South Korea ranked highest in the Global Index of Cognitive Skills and Educational Achievement (Lau, 2012), and also received high results in the PISA Program – International Assessment of Students (OECD, 2018). However, these results have led to certain social problems in society. On the one hand, showing high results at the level of secondary education, we can say that this significantly affects the contingent of applicants who will go to higher education after graduation. On the other hand, with such a large number of students with a high level of knowledge, there is quite a lot of competition in the South Korean labor market for employment. As a result, over-skilled labor cannot find a job that matches their level of qualification, given the structure of the domestic labor market. The lack of demand for such employable workers is striking, since only a few prestigious 재벌 (chaebols)<sup>1</sup> or large family corporations will be able to employ them (Lee, 2019). This situation leads to fierce competition between graduate students.

However, taking into account various factors, the overall unemployment rate still remains at 3 %, among recent university graduates this figure was over 6.5 % (Isozaki, 2019).

With the development of the economic potential of South Korea, the status of the institution of higher education as a leading element in receiving quality educational services has increased. This can be explained by the formation of a new trend based on the knowledge economy. It is in a country like South Korea that one can clearly trace the direct connection between industry and universities.

The knowledge economy began to take shape in Korea as a result of the new configuration, which also put the university at the center of innovative growth. According to Cho Myung-Hwan, the corporate spiral model of the

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<sup>1</sup> South Korean form of financial and industrial firms forming a conglomerate

Institution of higher education industry – government relationship is likely to be a key component of national or multinational innovation strategies in economies where private or public corporations play a key role in the emergence of higher education institutions focused on enterprise (Cho, 2014).

According to the World Bank, the country's GDP is \$ 1.6 trillion (*GDP, 2020*). According to the OECD, real GDP growth forecasts for South Korea for 2021 and 2022 are 3.8 %, and this figure would be higher, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the country has lost economic stability. However, South Korea remains in 10<sup>th</sup> place among the OECD countries in terms of GDP (OECD, 2021).

Thus, in the World ranking of universities for 2021 서울대학교 (Seoul National University) took 60<sup>th</sup> place among thousands of other higher education institutions in foreign countries (*World University rankings, 2020*).

According to the Shanghai Ranking of the best universities in the world for 2020, Seoul National University is in the top 100, and the top 300 includes five more universities, including: 한양대 (Hanyang University), 한국과학기술원 (Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology), 고려대학교 (Koryo University), 성균관대학교 (Sungkyunkwan University) and 영세대학교 (Yonsei) (ShanghaiRanking, 2020).

Since 1947, private schools, better known as vocational schools, became the higher education system. The total number of higher education institutions at that time increased to 20. It included eight public and twelve private universities. Since then, university education in Korea has expanded significantly: in 1965 there were 70 universities, and by the end of 2016 their number had increased almost 6 times and amounted to 432 universities (*Ministry of education, 2016*).

In South Korea, as in most countries, the following higher education institutions are distinguished by the form of ownership: public; private; municipal (국가법령정보센터, 1998). These universities have little in common. Thus, private universities, such as Koryo University, occupy leading positions among other South Korean higher education institutions on a par with public ones. Among them, depending on the variety of areas of training are multidisciplinary universities that train specialists in various fields of knowledge.

Typical public universities, which include 서울대학교 (Seoul National University), 부산대학 (Pusan National University), 제주대학교 (Jeju National University) and others, can be described as multidisciplinary research and

development complexes which include a large number of colleges and schools, libraries, research centers and laboratories, the concept of a faculty in the university education system is rare. For example, internal structure of 서울대학교 (Seoul National University) includes: College and Schools of Humanities, Social Sciences, Education Sciences, Life Sciences, Agriculture, Business Administration, Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy, and Engineering and Applied Arts (*Organization SNU*).

The South Korean education system is clearly regulated by the basic South Korean Law “On Education”, and consists of the following links:

- pre-school education;
- primary education;
- secondary education;
- vocational secondary education;
- higher education (국가법령정보센터, 1998).

Conditional division into steps - 6-3-3-4 can be named as a feature of the modern education system of South Korea, which in its turn is an inseparable path to education, starting with primary school and ending with higher education. The first step begins in elementary school, where students study for six years. Then they go to high school, which is the second step, where education lasts three years. The next three years students spend in the senior profile school, where education is aimed at preparing for final exams and entering a university or other institution of higher or special education. And the last fourth step completes the educational cycle – an institution of higher education, in which the basic course lasts no more than four years (MOE, 2020).

It should be noted that all citizens have equal access to education, regardless of their abilities, social or financial status. Nine years of primary and secondary school are compulsory, however, starting from secondary school, students choose their own educational path according to their own professional choice.

According to the South Korea Law “On Higher Education” (국가법령정보센터, 1998), higher education institutions are divided into categories including: universities, industrial, educational, vocational, technical colleges and other higher education institutions. Universities have bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral programs and, accordingly, have the right to award bachelor’s, master’s or doctoral degrees to those who have completed an academic course defined by a higher education institution.

In general, the period of study in bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs lasts from 4 to 6 years, according to the characteristics of the educational program and specialization.

It should be noted that among the higher education institutions of South Korea there is a certain social hierarchy, so the diploma of a particular university, obtained after graduation, significantly affects the further employment. The most prestigious South Korean universities are: 서울대학교 (Seoul National University), 고려대학교 (Koryo University) and 영세대학교 (Yonsei University). Thus, if a candidate for a certain position has a diploma from one of the three above-mentioned universities, the employer will not take into account the total number of points received by the graduate or his or her rating at the university.

The fact of entering these universities is a guarantee that the candidate for the position simply could not be a bad student. This is due to the stable high reputation of universities, and the fact that to enter them, graduates are rigorously selected, making the final school certificate. The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea annually develops a general national exam in the form of a test “수능” (suneung) (Krechetnikov, 2015). The test is very complex because it covers the entire program of the vocational school, consists of three parts and includes the following disciplines: Korean, mathematics and English. Applicants are also given the right to choose another subject required for admission to the vocational college from the list recommended by the Ministry of Education.

Higher education is important in Korean society. This is the key to a successful future, the opportunity to grow professionally and self-realization, while receiving a decent salary, and most importantly, a thorough knowledge provided by higher education in South Korea. They form the basis of healthy social competition – the competitiveness of university education is equated to the competitiveness of the nation. Thus, education, science, and economics in the Korean worldview system are an indivisible whole.

The organization of the educational process in higher education institutions is governed by the Law “On Higher Education” (국가법령정보센터, 1998), other legal acts and internal documents of higher education institutions within their autonomy. South Korean higher education has its own national characteristics, however, it is generally built on the principle of the American system, where each student can independently choose the disciplines to study. This is due to the great American influence that has grown since the end of

World War II. When the country needed a total recovery, it was the United States that invested heavily in building South Korea and set a positive example for its own educational model. Therefore, formally we can assume that the country's higher education system is built on the American principle.

If we consider the vertical functioning of a separate institution of higher education, then rector or president will be almost at the top management. One step below are the vice-rectors responsible for various areas of the institution's activities the vice-rector for human resources management, the vice-rector for scientific work, the vice-rector for administrative affairs (Michalski, 2012).

Internal management at the university usually consists of three levels: the decision-making body at the university level, the decision-making body at the college level, and departmental units. With such a structure, teachers can influence decision-making and have played a powerful role in the management of national higher education institutions. However, the recent emergence of collective student organizations, such as student councils or trade unions, has called into question the broad rights of teachers. In some universities, the participation of students and staff in management is a cautious internal rule; in others the faculty expands its powers by allowing other groups to participate only in limited issues directly related to students' problems (Park, 2000).

The structure of South Korean higher education institutions includes various colleges or faculties, departments, research laboratories and research centers. Practice bases may not be located on campus, but may be located, for example, outside the city. Training centers or research laboratories can also be separated in the system of institutions.

The term of study at the universities of South Korea is 3-4 years for a bachelor's degree (for medical specialties this term increases and reaches 6 years), 2 for a master's degree and 3-4 years for a doctorate (PhD). Today, South Korea's higher education system is built in such a way that there is almost no possibility of cross-admission, so in most cases students continue to study for a master's degree in the field chosen in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of bachelor's degree, one has the opportunity to enroll in related educational programs.

The system of transferring from one higher education institution to another and transferring loans in South Korea used to be quite strict. Junior colleges in the country award a bachelor's degree, so students do not have the opportunity to transfer the degree to a full bachelor's degree (basic higher education), so students wishing to transfer from a junior college to a university must start as freshmen. Even a bachelor's degree in a related specialization is very problematic (Usher, 2014).

The peculiarity of Korean universities is that they can offer their students a large number of disciplines that are assigned to a variable component. It is worth noting that today Ukrainian higher education institutions are beginning to introduce a variable component into their programs, but it remains quite limited. Based on the fact that higher education in South Korea is focused not only on the consumer and global trends, but also on their own need for professional staff, there are two lists of general and specialized disciplines, some of which are mandatory and determined by the institution itself.

The organization of the educational process in South Korean universities is based on a course credit system. Such education has long been a leader in the organization of higher education abroad. This made it possible to democratize educational processes, individualize the training of future professionals, systematize the work of students, increase their educational and cognitive activity (Vasiuk, 2009).

In South Korea universities, one academic credit counts for about 15-16 class hours, however, if the discipline has a practical component or training in laboratories, one credit of such a discipline will be equal to 30 hours. The total number of credits per semester is determined by each higher education institution separately. All educational components are divided into 2 semester credit grids equally, in order not only to ensure a balance in the distribution of study time for students, but also to create optimal pedagogical conditions for the teaching staff (SNU Credit acquisition). Professors of research universities, as a rule, have an official pedagogical workload, which is 6 hours of lectures and 4 hours of practical or laboratory classes.

Based on own experience of studying at Wonkwang University, most of the three credit courses have 3 lectures and 1 seminar per week, the study semester usually lasts for 16 weeks.

Criteria for assessing academic achievement do not differ significantly from the global practice of student assessment. Based on own observations while studying in South Korea, points are awarded for the following activities:

- attendance of classes;
- practical component;
- homework and additional assignments;
- writing 2 intermediate exams (midterm).

At the end of any course, the student is exposed to the total number of points he or she received during the semester. Due to the fact that in the South Korean system of quality assurance in higher education there is no final exam or test, which, for example, is held in most post-Soviet countries, students

usually have 2 midterm tests, which significantly affect their final results. To be allowed to write these tests, as well as to get at least a minimum passing score, a Korean student must have at least 70 % attendance, but this rule is developed by each higher education institution separately. Any student's work is usually evaluated on a 100-point scale, then these points are added and divided by the total number of works.

When studying the functioning of higher education in the country, it is necessary to mention the state body, which at the same time monitors the quality of the functioning of the system, as well as regulates its in legal manner.

In South Korea, education is managed at two levels – the Central Authority, i.e. the President and the Prime Minister in the context of the National Education Council and the Ministry of Education.

National Education Council is an advisory body dealing with education policy issues, reporting directly to the President, but global issues belong to the responsibility of the Ministry (KEDI, 2019).

The Ministry of Education is the state body responsible for developing and implementing policies related to the functioning of national education. It plans and implements educational policy that governs education at all levels, provides administrative and financial support to all levels of the school system, supports local education departments and national higher education institutions, participates in teacher training, promotes lifelong learning and is responsible for for developing human resources policy (*Ministry of education*, 2016).

Since the Ministry of Education is the central governing body of educational policy, the municipal, provincial and regional education boards are the other governing bodies that control the local education system. Since 1991, the country has a local law "On Autonomy", which states that decentralization and democratization are main directions of education management (KEDI, 2019).

**Conclusions.** Thus, in view of the above mentioned, we can say that the organizational system of higher education, and in particular the internal management of higher education institutions in South Korea is governed by leading laws in this area, reports directly to the Ministry of Education and works effectively to develop education and science.

It is studied that the key elements of South Korean education were taken from the American model and in some way synchronized with it, but there are some differences including the distribution of teaching hours, the formation of the contingent of higher education, the division of study time into semesters and more. This can be explained by the clear position of the Government, which aims

to provide the country with highly qualified personnel as well as to guide the younger generation to meet their own economic, social and cultural needs.

We can state that the country has a system of management of higher education institutions and a hierarchical vertical of accountability, which shows its effectiveness. Such effectiveness lies in the Confucian tradition and a special attitude to education, as well as a constant return to the cultural realities of the past, when education was worth its weight in gold, and only privileged sections of the population could receive it. However, this philosophy has led, in our opinion, to not very healthy competition between higher education institutions, when most young people want to enter a university not because of high quality educational services, but because of stereotypical thinking of society about the best degree. However, the South Korean higher education system focuses on the end consumer, quickly adapts to the realities dictated by the fleeting world, responds and meets its own and the world's economic challenges and needs.

The further direction of our research will be aimed at studying the content of university education in South Korea in the context of studying educational programs and plans.

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## РЕЗЮМЕ

**Назаренко Александра.** Высшее образование Южной Кореи: инновационные рекомендации для Украины.

В статье автор раскрывает вопросы особенностей функционирования высшего образования Южной Кореи на организационном уровне. Проанализированы последние данные авторитетных рейтингов высшего образования, по результатам которых южнокорейские университеты входят в первую сотню лучших высших учебных заведений мира. Особое внимание уделено внутренней структуре типичных высших учебных заведений в Южной Корее. Охарактеризованы уровни внутреннего управления университетами и четко определена их иерархическая вертикаль. Определены функциональные обязанности и права руководителей подразделений. А также описаны стратегии развития высшего образования Правительства Южной Кореи через призму экономических и социальных ориентиров.

**Ключевые слова:** высшее образование, университеты, Южная Корея, образование за рубежом, система образования, экономика образования, развитие высшего образования, управление, организационная структура учреждений высшего образования.

## АНОТАЦІЯ

**Назаренко Олександра.** Вища освіта Південної Кореї: інноваційні рекомендації для України.

*У статті автор розкриває питання особливостей функціонування вищої освіти Південної Кореї на організаційному рівні. Проаналізовано останні дані авторитетних рейтингів вищої освіти, за результатами яких південнокорейські університети входять у першу сотню найкращих закладів вищої освіти світу. Охарактеризовано стратегію розвитку вищої освіти Уряду Південної Кореї через призму економічних та соціальних орієнтирів. Проаналізовано основні документи, які забезпечують функціонування системи вищої освіти країни. Охарактеризовано типи закладів, які забезпечують підготовку фахівців різних напрямів на першому, другому і третьому рівнях вищої освіти, окреслено їх роль і функції. Визначено основні терміни навчання й окреслено особливості вступної кампанії.*

*Окрема увага приділена внутрішній структурі типових закладів вищої освіти в Південній Кореї. Схарактеризовано рівні внутрішнього управління університетами та чітко визначено їх ієрархічну вертикаль. Обґрунтовано функціональні обов'язки та права керівників підрозділів.*

*Охарактеризовано організацію навчального процесу, зокрема поділу навчального періоду на семестри та особливості проведення заліково-екзаменаційної сесії. Описано систему розподілу академічних кредитів, а також визначено критерії оцінювання навчальних досягнень здобувачів вищої освіти. Виокремлено види діяльності, за які можуть нараховуватися бали, впливаючи на успішність кожного окремого студента та формуючи його власний рейтинг успішності. Зроблено висновок про перспективність досвіду Південної Кореї в аспекті організації вищої освіти для України.*

**Ключові слова:** вища освіта, університети, Південна Корея, освіта за кордоном, система освіти, економіка освіти, розвиток вищої освіти, управління, організаційна структура закладів вищої освіти.

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## ТЕХНОЛОГІЯ САМООРГАНІЗАЦІЇ: ЗАСТОСУВАННЯ ДОСВІДУ УНІВЕРСИТЕТІВ ТРЕТЬОГО ВІКУ ВЕЛИКОБРИТАНІЇ

*Представлена модель технології самоорганізації в освіті дорослих, що базується на принципах та досвіді університетів третього віку Великої Британії, зокрема принципах довіри, самонавчання та взаємної допомоги, концепціях навчання від експерта, від любителя, використання різних режимів навчання, кооперативного навчання. Пропонується мету технології – задоволення освітніх потреб дорослих – реалізовувати через залучення їх не лише в якості тих, хто навчається, але й у якості тих, хто планує та реалізує освітні заходи. За підсумками реалізації технології зазначається, що результатом є створення ініціативної групи і поступове залучення до навчання людей із різними освітніми рівнями.*