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## GUIDELINES ON UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATION MODERNISATION THROUGH EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF SOUTH KOREA

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### ABSTRACT

*Within the article, the author delves into an examination of higher education within the context of South Korea. This examination is grounded in an assessment of its legislative, organizational, and substantial dimensions of operation. The author proceeds to delineate the pivotal elements that have underpinned South Korea's accomplishments in the realm of higher education, encompassing governmental strategies, educational investment, advances in scientific research, and the interplay of societal and cultural facets within the national framework. Through a comprehensive scrutiny of the South Korean model, the author accentuates pertinent issues that hold relevance for Ukrainian higher education during the backdrop of wartime conditions and the ensuing phase of post-war reconstruction.*

*Furthermore, the article elucidates the potentialities inherent in assimilating the constructive lessons drawn from South Korea's educational achievements and translating them into practical applications within the Ukrainian context. This endeavour takes into careful consideration the distinctive national attributes and the exigencies that society will encounter during the post-war epoch. The matter of adapting specific methodologies for the administration of higher education, notably pertaining to the collaboration between institutions of higher learning, the governmental apparatus, and industry stakeholders, is also unveiled. These approaches hold promise for Ukraine's higher education modernisation, fostering a substantial enhancement of its research capabilities. By way of a comparative lens, the author brings to light the potential of harnessing South Korea's higher education experience as a catalyst for the nation's resurgence post-conflict and proffers corresponding recommendations.*

**Keywords:** *higher education; South Korea; Ukraine; modernisation.*

## INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the existence of independent Ukraine, the country has been actively expanding the system of higher education according to the best world standards. The strategic documents on the development of higher education in Ukraine for the period from 2022 to 2032 highlight the role of higher education in the formation of intellectual, cultural and professional components of personality, the development of high-quality human capital and the unity of society to support Ukraine as an equal participant in the European and world community. The international integration of higher education of Ukraine is defined as one of the key components of the state policy in the field of higher education according to the Law of Ukraine “On Higher Education”.

This process includes an analysis of the experience of leading countries, in particular the Republic of Korea, which ranks the 13th among world economies. The rapid development of higher education in Korea is confirmed by the high performance of national universities in world rankings and is aimed at building intellectual potential. Korea is one of 14 OECD countries where more than half of people aged 25 to 34 have a university degree. This has been achieved thanks to innovative government policies that involve large expenditures on education (6.4% of GDP in 2020), of which approximately one-third (about ₩ 84.1 trillion) is directed towards the development of higher education. It is important to mention the constant appreciation of the fundamental concepts of Confucianism, which in synthesis form an effective model of higher education, which arouses considerable interest in the world scientific community.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Serving as the intellectual and cultural foundation of society, higher education holds a vital role in nurturing an enlightened and well-rounded individual. It also stands as a pivotal factor in driving national economic advancement and enhancing people’s overall quality of life. In the midst of Ukraine’s confrontation with a full-scale war and the escalation of socio-economic challenges, the nation requires a robust, nation-focused, and competitive educational system. Such a system is not only essential for triumphing over external adversaries, but also for propelling the country towards a significantly elevated stage of progress. Strengthening Ukrainian higher education can stem in part from examining the approaches adopted by global leaders in the field, notably South Korea. This involves studying their higher education reform strategies and adapting beneficial methodologies, while carefully considering our nation’s unique cultural and national traits.

Scholars have made significant contributions to the study of higher education reform within the context of legislation (Byun, 2008; Choi, 2021; Chou & Ravinet, 2015; Hultberg & Calonge, 2017; Isozaki, 2019; Jon & Yoo,

2021; Kim & Eom, 2017; Lee & Kim, 2019; Lee, 2017; Mospan, 2016; So, 2020, and Son (손승남), 2021). National scholars pay much attention to legislative support of Ukrainian higher education modernisation (Luhovyi et al., 2020; Sysoieva & Mospan, 2015; Topuzov et al., 2022; Zayachuk, 2015); legal regulation of higher education interaction with the labour market (Mospan, 2022); the issues of the quality assurance in higher education (Luhovyi et al., 2021; Sbrueva, 2015).

## METHODOLOGY

This is a comparative study in the field of higher education. For the most part, we used empirical research methods, such as: comparison by general features; case studies and analysis of regulatory and statutory documents, educational programs, reports and official websites. Empirically collected data are structured at the organizational, legislative and content levels, which made it possible to propose ways of introducing the best South Korean experience into higher education in Ukraine.

## RESULTS

Ukraine's European integration efforts and its global economic orientation underscored the imperative for globally competitive higher education. This led to the necessity of aligning the regulatory framework with European Higher Education Area standards. It also entailed enhancing the linkage between higher education and societal, economic, scientific, industrial, and business needs by modernizing its curriculum. Other requirements encompassed increased state investment in the higher education sector, refining the resources available to educational institutions, bolstering institutional autonomy through updated oversight approaches, elevating the esteem for the role of higher education specialist, intensifying the internationalization of Ukrainian higher education through participation in international projects and academic mobility, thereby facilitating integration into the worldwide and European academic and scientific landscape. Addressing the demand-supply imbalance for higher education, while considering actual economic and societal needs, was another crucial aspect.

In recent national research, it is affirmed that between 1990 and 2019, national higher education exhibited a dual trend of expanding in quantity while experiencing a decline in quality and competitiveness. This phenomenon resulted in an excessive proliferation of higher educational institutions that struggle to foster fresh scientific accomplishments (Luhovyi et al., 2021). Based on the 2021 Shanghai ranking data, it's evident that Ukraine is progressively falling behind global advancements, as it hasn't secured a position on any of the lists featuring the world's top universities (Luhovyi et al., 2021). Hence, in order to address the aforementioned challenges, the Cabinet of Ministers

of Ukraine, in its decision No. 286-r dated February 23, 2022, endorsed the Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in Ukraine for 2022-2023. This Strategy considers prevailing global economic trends and sets as its primary objective the establishment of a contemporary and efficient higher education system aligning with the demands of citizens, the economy, and society. The Strategy's implementation is directed toward establishing a reputable and competitive higher education landscape, both within the country and on the global educational stage (Rozporiadzheniya, 2022).

However, the Russian Federation's full-scale war against Ukraine exacerbated existing problems and added new ones. Based on information from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, by the conclusion of 2022, a total of 31 higher education institutions had been temporarily relocated. A considerable portion of higher education students and academic staff underwent distressing experiences and are in need of psychological aid and support. Moreover, a majority of institutions located in territories subjected to temporary occupation encountered equipment destruction, damage, or theft (MON, 2023).

It is evident that the modernization of Ukraine's national higher education in contemporary circumstances is an essential prerequisite for the country's victory and innovative resurgence. Given the foregoing, the endeavour to reform higher education in South Korea takes on special significance. We regard the trajectories of higher education advancement amidst global, regional, and domestic challenges, as illuminated by our research, to hold substantial relevance for Ukraine. We classify these trends as overarching, as they outline the paths for higher education evolution on a national scale. They are the following:

- *modernization of the legislative framework of South Korean higher education.* The functioning of higher education is governed by the Law "On Higher Education" which outlines the key parameters of the field. Establishing a coherent mechanism for the operation of higher education within the legal framework, formulating regulatory legal documents, and safeguarding the rights and liberties of all stakeholders within the educational process serve as the bedrock for the prosperous advancement of higher education institutions.
- *intensification of funding.* Consistently, the South Korean government raises its funding allocation for education, specifically targeting higher education. This funding encompasses not only financial backing for scientific research and initiatives, the inception of novel products and innovations that elevate the standards of higher education, science, and technology, but also addresses the expenses associated with establishing new technological centres, modernizing the physical infrastructure of universities, and providing material support to the student populace.
- *enhancing the link between higher education and the national economy through the education of professionals for the industrial sector.* The nation's

government has established a well-structured and systematic synergy among the economy, education, and industrial sectors, constituting a pivotal instrument in securing enduring economic progress within South Korea. This framework enables higher education students to amass knowledge and effectively apply it within enterprises and technology hubs, fostering the inception of commercially viable projects of their own. Consequently, this dynamic encourages collaboration across diverse economic sectors, nurturing the country's innovative and technological capabilities.

- *streamlining the administration of higher education institutions.* Over an extended period, diverse governmental bodies and institutions assumed responsibility for higher education; however, today, the primary role has been delegated to the Ministry of Education.
- *establishment of a comprehensive higher education system comprising diverse categories of higher education institutions.* A crucial aspect of modernizing higher education in South Korea on an organizational level involves the advancement of private higher education institutions. The country's government offers substantial financial backing to private higher education institutions, enabling them to contend with public institutions and offer broader access to tertiary education. This affords Korean citizens the chance to select an educational institution that aligns with their objectives and passions, while also implementing competitive principles in the university admissions process for higher education applicants.
- *digitization of higher education: amplification of the integration of online technologies within the educational procedure.* The advanced technological landscape in South Korea has expedited the progress of online education. Numerous higher education institutions have crafted online educational courses and embraced distance and blended learning approaches. This shift has yielded favourable outcomes in terms of accessibility, enabling students to opt for courses and programs that align with their individual requirements and preferences.
- *improvement of higher education quality.* Ensuring the quality of higher education, which is achieved through a well-established national accreditation system for evaluating higher education institutions, remains a foremost objective for the country's government. An additional facet of quality pertains to the criteria for selecting educators and academic personnel engaged in the teaching process within universities.
- *expansion of higher education access.* The pivotal focus of modernizing the legislative structure for higher education lies in broadening access to higher education across all segments of the population, especially individuals with special educational requirements and limited financial resources. The government of the country is endeavouring to harmonize the legislative framework with global norms and practices, aiming

to shape a multi-tiered system of lifelong education, with higher education serving as a pivotal component. This effort has led to a surge in student enrolment. The expansion of access to higher education in South Korea commenced in the 1990s, when the government initiated substantial funding for higher education and permitted the establishment of private higher education institutions.

- *globalization and internationalization of higher education.* The nation actively encourages the recruitment of foreign scientists and fosters the academic mobility of students, thereby advancing the global exchange of knowledge and expertise, broadening international relationships, and fostering collaboration with other countries in the realms of education and science. Virtually all universities have established international partnerships and engage in collaborative educational and scientific initiatives aimed at enhancing international higher education standards. Moreover, the country's top-tier higher education institutions have consistently secured prominent positions in world university rankings, such as the QS World University Rankings and The World University Rankings, over several consecutive years. South Korea engages proactively with international universities and organizations within the sphere of higher education, facilitating student and faculty exchanges, collaborative research endeavours, and academic partnerships. This international cooperation broadens opportunities for students and educators to acquire novel knowledge, engage with diverse cultures, and foster a global perspective.
- *regionalization of higher education.* One crucial aspect of regionalization is South Korea's engagement in multidimensional collaboration within higher education, science, and innovation. This involves the participation of the countries of the Far East in diverse international projects and programs across various domains. Additionally, Far Eastern countries within ASEAN forge bilateral agreements and initiatives to foster cooperation in higher education and science. They also organize conferences and seminars where experts and researchers deliberate on innovative advancements in education.
- *increasing competitiveness.* The paramount objective of the country's government is to cultivate highly skilled and competitive professionals, thereby ensuring global competitiveness. This objective is achieved through the modernization of educational content and reinforcing its alignment with the national economy and job market demands. At the heart of any education system, particularly within higher education, lies the knowledge that is generated and conveyed to students throughout the learning process. We observe a broadening array of educational and educational-scientific programs. Universities actively collaborate with international educational institutions and businesses to devise pertinent and inventive programs tailored to labour market

requirements. The development of interdisciplinary programs that integrate a comprehensive range of educational elements is also taking place. Higher education institutions present students with opportunities to amass knowledge in diverse fields of science and technology, thereby enhancing their competitiveness within the job market.

Emphasizing students' attainment of practical experience through the competency-based approach, aimed at nurturing essential skills and life proficiencies, has also been acknowledged. Higher education institutions actively motivate students to engage in research initiatives and take part in international and regional internship programs, facilitating the acquisition of essential experience for their future careers. Concurrently, the adoption of assessment methodologies aligned with European and global benchmarks, designed to gauge the extent of competency attainment, is gaining traction.

In conclusion, it's noteworthy that Ukrainian comparative scholars presently view the identification of developmental patterns in the realm of education as an efficient method for consolidating and organizing valuable foreign insights, subsequently offering recommendations for national education. Throughout our research, we have highlighted overarching trends that we consider as promising guidelines for the advancement of higher education in Ukraine during the context of war and reconstruction. Despite the substantial variances in politics, economics, culture, and education between South Korea and Ukraine, it's these overarching trends that serve as pathways for incorporating beneficial practices and progressive concepts into the evolution of the national higher education system.

## CONCLUSIONS

The analysis conducted has yielded a set of recommendations for the enhancement of the national higher education system, rooted in the promising reform practices observed in South Korea. Notably, it's suggested to ensure consistent funding for higher education, thereby guaranteeing ample financial support for educational institutions, and to establish a comprehensive system of scholarships and grants for financially disadvantaged students. In the context of Ukraine, this could involve fortifying partnerships between higher education and the private business sector, establishing scholarship and grant programs for students from low-income backgrounds, and facilitating low-interest loans for pursuing higher education. Moreover, it's recommended to bolster quality control mechanisms for higher education, upholding elevated standards. Achieving equitable access to higher education for all demographic segments, particularly young individuals from low-income families and people with disabilities, is pivotal. Furthermore, fostering international collaboration with foreign universities and scientific centres is vital, enabling higher education students, postgraduates, and academic staff to gain valuable experience in foreign educational institutions, labs, and research centres. Strengthening

the nexus between higher education and the industrial realm is also crucial. Fostering research in the realm of education and facilitating collaboration among universities, scholars, and the private sector is a crucial endeavour. Additionally, drafting and executing programs grounded in a competency-based educational model, enabling the practical application of acquired knowledge across diverse professional scenarios and industry domains, along with addressing issues using critical thinking, are imperative. Transitioning from conventional learning paradigms to innovative ones is also pivotal. Ukraine has the potential to champion an innovative educational approach, notably through the integration of cutting-edge technologies and the creation of novel teaching methodologies.

Considering the aforementioned factors and the context within which the higher educational institutions function — especially in light of military endeavours and the efforts to surmount the aftermath stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic — it is our contention that a number of recommendations ought to be put forth. These recommendations are aimed at expediting the transformation of higher education in Ukraine.

1. Conducting a systematic and comprehensive analysis to determine the real needs of the national labour market in order to correlate the obtained results with the available list of educational programs offered by Ukrainian higher educational institutions.
2. Establishing a three-tier model of managerial interaction within higher education: industry — government — higher educational institutions. This model is poised to leverage the higher education resources primarily to address the requisites of the national industrial complex, thereby bridging the gap for highly skilled personnel in critical economic sectors and propelling the nation towards an elevated economic paradigm.
3. Implementing a nation-focused approach in the realm of higher education in Ukraine, coupled with a rejuvenation of its content, grounded in cutting-edge technologies and the most recent accomplishments of scientific inquiry.

We believe that research of innovative pathways are key points for modernising higher education content in the post-war era, drawing from the lessons of South Korea, as promising avenues for further scientific research.

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## **РЕКОМЕНДАЦІЇ ЩОДО МОДЕРНІЗАЦІЇ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ ЧЕРЕЗ ПРИЗМУ ОСВІТНІХ ЗДОБУТКІВ ПІВДЕННОЇ КОРЕЇ**

Олександра Назаренко, доктор філософії, відділ досліджень та міжнародного співробітництва Академії фінансового моніторингу, вул. Білоруська, 24, 04050, Київ, Україна, [nsasha10.04@gmail.com](mailto:nsasha10.04@gmail.com)

У статті автор аналізує вищу освіту у Південній Кореї, спираючись на законодавчий, організаційний та змістовий рівні її функціонування. Окреслюючи ключові фактори, які сприяли успіху Південної Кореї в галузі вищої освіти, зокрема урядову політику, інвестиції в освіту та розвиток наукових дослідження, а також соціальний і культурний аспекти у середині держави. Шляхом аналізу південнокорейської моделі, автор акцентує увагу

*на питаннях, які є актуальними для української вищої школи в умовах війни та подальшого післявоєнного відновлення. Крім того, у статті окреслено можливості застосування позитивного досвіду Південної Кореї в освітній галузі та імплементації його в українські реалії, враховуючи національні особливості та потреби з якими зіштовхнеться суспільство у післявоєнний період. Розкрито питання адаптації певних підходів до управління вищою освітою, зокрема співпраці закладів вищої освіти, Урядом та промисловістю, що може бути корисним Україні у процесі модернізації вищої освіти та сприятиме покращенню свої дослідницьких можливостей. Крізь компаративну призму автор розкриває перспективи використання південнокорейського досвіду вищої освіти як каталізатора для відродження країни після війни та надає свої рекомендації.*

**Ключові слова:** вища освіта; модернізація; Південна Корея; Україна.

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