

# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF REMUNERATION SYSTEMS OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS (ON THE EXAMPLE OF RUSSIA, BELARUS AND KAZAKHSTAN)

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## Abstract

In modern conditions universities are forced to adapt to the challenges of the environment. This task largely depends on the degree of personnel involvement in this process. One of the mechanisms of personnel involvement is remuneration system applied in the university.

The purpose of this study is to carry out a comparative analysis of the remuneration systems of university teachers in these countries – Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

The main methods of collecting information are analysis of documents and questionnaire survey. There were interviewed 390 employees.

The study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase in each country there were chosen 3-5 universities with average performance and not having any special preferences from the state. For each country there was made an analysis of the documents defining the main directions of development of education, and the analysis of universities' strategies. In the second stage, based on the results of questionnaire survey, there was assessed relationship between the remuneration systems used by universities and strategic directions of their development.

The study identifies differences in degree of compliance between remuneration systems and objectives of universities development, involvement of teachers in the implementation of universities' strategies and response to incentives used by universities.

**Key words:** university, teachers, remuneration, strategy

**JEL Code:** I23, J31, J33

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## Introduction

The changes taking place in the world in the system of higher education lead to the fact that those universities that are wishing to be successful are forced to adapt to the challenges of the environment (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1998, Enders, 2004, Barber, Donnelly & Rizvi, 2013,

Altbach, 2014, Altbach & de Wit, 2015). One of the examples of such challenge is changes in learning technologies and wide use of massive open online courses (Shapiro, Lee, Roth, Li, Cetinkaya-Rundel & Canelas, 2017).

This forces educational organizations to determine their competitive advantages, to formulate priorities for their activities and to develop their development strategies. Successful implementation of the university's strategy largely depends on the degree of personnel involvement in this process. One of the mechanisms of personnel involvement is the system of remuneration applied in the university.

This problem is common to all countries of the former Soviet Union. This study will provide a comparative analysis of remuneration systems for university teachers in three countries – Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus. On the one hand, these countries have a common history of development and similar models of education management. Moreover, all these countries are members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Eurasian economic community, and Russia and Belarus, in addition, form a Union state. On the other hand, methods of solving problems in the field of higher education have socio-cultural specificity, what is of interest to the study.

## **1 Literature review**

Literature review shows that there are several works devoted to the analysis of remuneration systems of university teachers in studied countries. Thus, in the work of G. Andrushchak and M. Yudkevich there is a comparison of the systems of stimulating the teachers' activities applied in foreign universities (USA, European countries, India, China) and universities located in the post-Soviet space (Armenia, Kazakhstan, Latvia and Russia) (Androuschak, 2012).

Universities in these countries for many years were managed, evaluated and financed by the standards, which were developed in the Soviet Union. Despite the fact that current remuneration system is significantly different from the previous one, the employment contract of a university teacher is still mainly based on the implementation of the training load and is focused on ensuring the educational process. Since this type of activity requires a lot of time and effort, the physical resources of the teacher for scientific work, which is often poorly stimulated, almost do not remain.

Payment for academic work is the main expenditure item of the budget of Russian universities compared to the list of costs of foreign universities, where university professors

are significantly financed both for active scientific work and for the provision of consulting services to third parties (Verina, 2016).

## **2 Description of research methodology**

The purpose of this study is to carry out a comparative analysis of the remuneration systems of university teachers in these countries – Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

The comparison of remuneration systems will be carried out in two aspects: identification of priority indicators in incentive schemes and assessment of the perception of the applied incentives by university professors.

There were set several tasks of the study:

1. To identify differences in the degree of correspondence between remuneration systems and objectives of university development, in the involvement of personnel in implementation of universities' strategies, in the reaction of teachers to the incentives used by universities.
2. To assess the dependence of the key parameters of the employee's activity and labor behavior (such as performance, motivation, loyalty, involvement) and used remuneration systems.

In order to collect information there were used two methods: analysis of documents (including content analysis of materials posted on the websites of universities) and a questionnaire survey of research and teaching personnel of universities in three countries - Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and Belarus. The total number of respondents is equal to 390 people.

The study included two stages. On the first stage in each country there were selected from 3 to 5 universities meeting two criteria: implementation of training programs in various fields (humanitarian, natural science, technical, socio-economic and other) and absence of a special status of the university, involving additional funding and other types of support from the state. On the second stage of the study in each university there were randomly selected employees (scientific and pedagogical workers of the university) who were offered to fill in the questionnaire.

After collecting and processing the received information from 12 universities, there were received 390 observations (212 Russian teachers, 106 Belarusian teachers and 72 Kazakhstan teachers).

## 2 Results of research

Let us consider the main results of research.

First of all, we assessed the extent to which representatives of different universities are familiar with the development strategies of their universities (table 1). Teachers of Kazakhstan demonstrate the highest level of awareness – more than 55% of the surveyed employees in Kazakhstan are familiar with the strategy of development of their universities (compared to 34% in Belarus and 36% in Russia). The largest share of university employees who are not familiar with the development strategy is in Russia – 10.8% (compared to 5.6% in Kazakhstan and 9.4% in Belarus).

**Tab. 1: Results of the answer to the question «Are you familiar with the strategy of development of your university?»**

	Russian Federation	Kazakhstan	Belarus
Yes, I am familiar with the strategy	36,0%	55,6%	34,0%
Yes, I am familiar with the strategy in general	47,7%	38,9%	56,6%
No, I am not familiar with strategy	10,8%	5,6%	9,4%
No, our university has no strategy	5,4%	0,0%	0,0%

Source: authors' calculations

Analysis of priorities for the development of universities showed that representatives of all countries note the intensification of scientific activity (67.5% - 72.2%) and development of international cooperation (56.1% - 77.4%).

However, there are several significant differences. For example, teachers of Russian and Kazakh universities often point out the need to develop cooperation with employers in the preparation of students (62.3% - 69.4%), while in Belarus it is recorded only by 28.3% of respondents. The development of additional programs as a priority of development is noted by Russian and Belarusian teachers twice more often (38.2% - 39.6%) than by their Kazakh colleagues (16.7%).

Moreover, we assessed how the activities of teachers affect the achievement of the university's strategic indicators. The results of the responses to this question showed that more

than a half respondents (51.4%) from Kazakhstan note, that their activity largely affects achievement of strategically important university's indicators (compared to 39.3% in Russia and 35.8% in Belarus).

Then teachers in three countries were asked about activities that they had in the year preceding the survey. The results are shown in the table 2.

It can be seen that the leading positions are occupied by such activities as publication of an article in a national journal (63.9% - 75.9%), implementation of a research project (34.4% - 58.5%), development and implementation of additional educational programs (19.8% - 28.3%).

**Tab. 2: Directions of teachers' participation in the implementation of the universities' strategies**

	Russian Federation	Kazakhstan	Belarus
Publication of an article in Web of Science, Scopus	15,1	19,4	3,8
Publication of an article in a national journal	75,9	63,9	73,6
Publication of a monograph	18,9	16,7	24,5
Implementation of a research project	34,4	47,2	58,5
Participation in international projects	9,9	11,1	41,5
Development and implementation of additional educational programs	19,8	25	28,3
Participation in joint projects with employers	24,1	13,9	11,3

Source: authors' calculations

It should be noted, that implementation of university development priorities requires a shift in emphasis, and, above all, the redistribution of time in favor of scientific work, organizational work with employers and other partners. However, according to the results of the study, the work of teachers of the post-Soviet space is dominated by educational and methodological activities (from 59.8% in Belarus to 69.5% in Russia). The share of scientific work is still low and ranges from 19.0% (Russia) to 23.1% (Belarus).

In addition, one of the objectives of the study was to assess the involvement of personnel in the implementation of the university's strategy. In order to do this all respondents were asked about what might encourage them to take on additional research work, such as writing an article in the national journal recommended for publication of dissertations (this type of scientific work, as it was shown above, is most common for teachers in all three countries).

Analysis shows that employees are ready to do it in the presence of research interest and work plan (for Kazakhstan teachers these motives are more important than for their colleagues from Belarus and Russia). However, one in four employees will do it either if they receive a certain payment for the article, or if it is a necessary condition of their employment contract and (or) its extension.

Moreover, estimates showed that more than 90% of teachers do not consider their university as a place for long-term employment and are ready to leave it if it is possible.

**Tab. 3: Possible reasons for the dismissal of university professors**

	Russian Federation	Kazakhstan	Belarus
More attractive salary	55,7%	69,4%	71,7%
More stable workload	26,4%	25,0%	30,2%
Work with a lower level of bureaucracy	40,6%	52,8%	22,6%
Work with better working conditions for scientific activity	36,8%	47,2%	43,4%
Work with better working conditions for educational activities	27,4%	44,4%	32,1%
Work with fewer hours of classroom work, but at the same wage level	19,8%	13,9%	26,4%
Do not plan to change place of work	11,3%	0,0%	3,8%

Source: authors' calculations

Analysis of possible reasons for dismissal showed that the most popular reasons that will encourage teachers in these countries to change jobs are the following: a workplace with more attractive salary (from 55.7% in Russia to 71.7% in Belarus), workplace with a lower level of bureaucracy (from 22.6% in Belarus to 52.8% in Kazakhstan), workplace with better working conditions for scientific activity (from 36.8% in Russia to 47.2% in Kazakhstan) and

workplace with better working conditions for educational activities (from 27.4% in Russia to 44.4% in Kazakhstan) (table 3).

The cross-country differences in the answers to this question have proved to be insignificant.

It is interesting that among teachers from Kazakhstan who participated in the survey, none of the respondents consider their current job as long-term employment.

## **Conclusion**

Summing up the results of the study, it can be concluded that majority of university professors in Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and Belarus are aware of the development strategies of their universities and are ready to make efforts to achieve indicators that are strategically important for university. In general, teachers of Kazakhstan demonstrate the highest level of awareness – here every second respondent noted, that he (she) is familiar with university's strategy.

However, the fact that many teachers in the countries under review do not consider current employment to be a long-term option is a serious barrier to the implementation of the strategy. According to the obtained results, many respondents are more focused on salary and job security. These employees are less active in publishing and have lower quality of publications.

Comparing the situation in the three countries, it should be noted that there are significant differences in the state policy and, accordingly, its impact on the success of the implementation of priority areas of universities' development. In general, teachers of Kazakhstan universities have not only a higher awareness of the development strategy of the university, but also greater resources and higher motivation for academic activities, what increases the favorable forecast of the development of higher education in Kazakhstan compared to the other two countries.

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