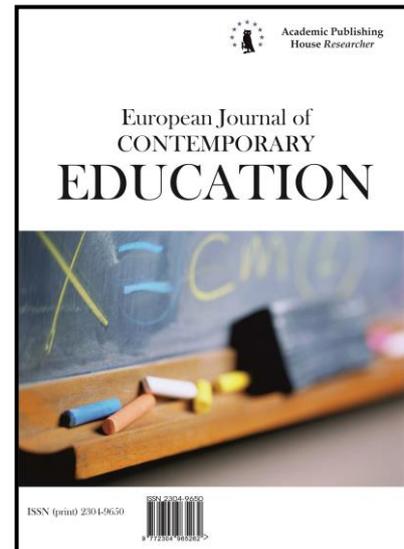




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The Problems of Contemporary Education

Development of Effective Education and Training System in the Context of the Transition to International Accreditation

Mikhail N. Dudin ^{a, b}, Yulia S. Shishalova ^{b, *}

^a Market Economy Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences (MEI RAS), Russian Federation

^b Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA), Russian Federation

Abstract

The article examines the trends in the development of higher education in Russia (in general, and in particular – higher management education). Based on the data obtained, it was concluded that the Russian system of higher education (including higher management or business education) does not have adequate competitiveness in the global market. To increase the competitiveness of Russian higher business education, it was proposed to use the Triple Crown international accreditation system (within this system, accreditation is implemented in three formats: AMBA, EQUIS and AACSB, described in this article).

Keywords: higher education, business education, business schools MBA, DBA, AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB, accreditation, Triple Crown, triple crown, competitiveness of education.

1. Introduction

We live in a unique time, when there is a change not only of the calendar cycle (one millennium ended and another began), but also a change of historical eras happens. Modern society is no longer utilitarian-consumer, and the economy is in the process of transformation from industrial to post-industrial, which naturally affects not only sociopolitical, economic and technological processes, but also processes that take place in education. At the same time, of course, in the new millennium, the quality of education, its completeness and its relevance will largely be determined by global trends in the economic and social and household sector (Dudin et al., 2015, Medvedev, 2015, Mytelka, 2018, Tapscott, 1996).

* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: dudinmn@mail.ru (M.N. Dudin), shyshalova@gmail.com (Y.S. Shishalova)

In each nation-state, in each country, its own education system has been developed, adapted to the needs and requirements of the labor market, which determines the level and specificity of the demand for human (labor) resources (Figueiró et al., 2016; Jansen, 2017; Jones, 2016). The Russian education system went through several key stages in its development (from the formation of the scientific, and methodological basis in the first quarter of the last century to the structural transformations of the first one and a half decades of the 21st century). And each stage of the development of the Russian education system was characterized by qualitative changes that are not always and still favorably perceived by the general public.

The process of reforming the Russian educational sector is not similar to the experience of the most developed countries, and sometimes contradicts it on some issues. Transformation and modernization of higher education and science, on the one hand, are aimed at creating a new institutional space, and on the other, they are designed to change the attitude of society towards understanding the essence and purpose of the scientific and educational sphere. However, for the sake of objectivity, it is worth noting that the research and educational sphere of Russia itself is not always open to change and is practically not ready for them.

That is why the instrumental and methodological support used for the implementation of educational programs in many organizations of higher education is often not effective for the formation of professional competencies of graduates designated in federal educational standards.

2. Materials and methods

In this article, on the basis of statistical analysis of data on the global and Russian education sphere, open source content analysis and comparative analysis of scientific and journalistic works, a study has been carried out on the consistency of the hypothesis that higher education should be open to changes and largely reflect public and economic and technological trends to ensure that specialists on the labor market have broad and relevant competencies, as well as a stock of knowledge for the implementation of professional activities in modern conditions. The general methodical idea of the article is that it is impossible to increase the level of mastering of competences by graduates of higher educational institutions without changing the educational paradigm.

3. Results

The Soviet Higher School has given the world many famous scientists who, among other things, became Nobel laureates. Of course, Soviet higher education was one of the most qualitative, but at the same time the whole system of Soviet education was built in such a way as to meet the needs of military production and replenish the stock of personnel involved in the state security system, ensuring military order and working capacity of the country. In general, the entire architecture of the Soviet socio-economic system was militaristic oriented (Dudin et al., 2015, Medvedev, 2015). That is why with the beginning of market reforms in the 1990s, the entire education system was also transformed, which led to certain structural imbalances, including those related to the reduction of educational expenses (Figure 1).

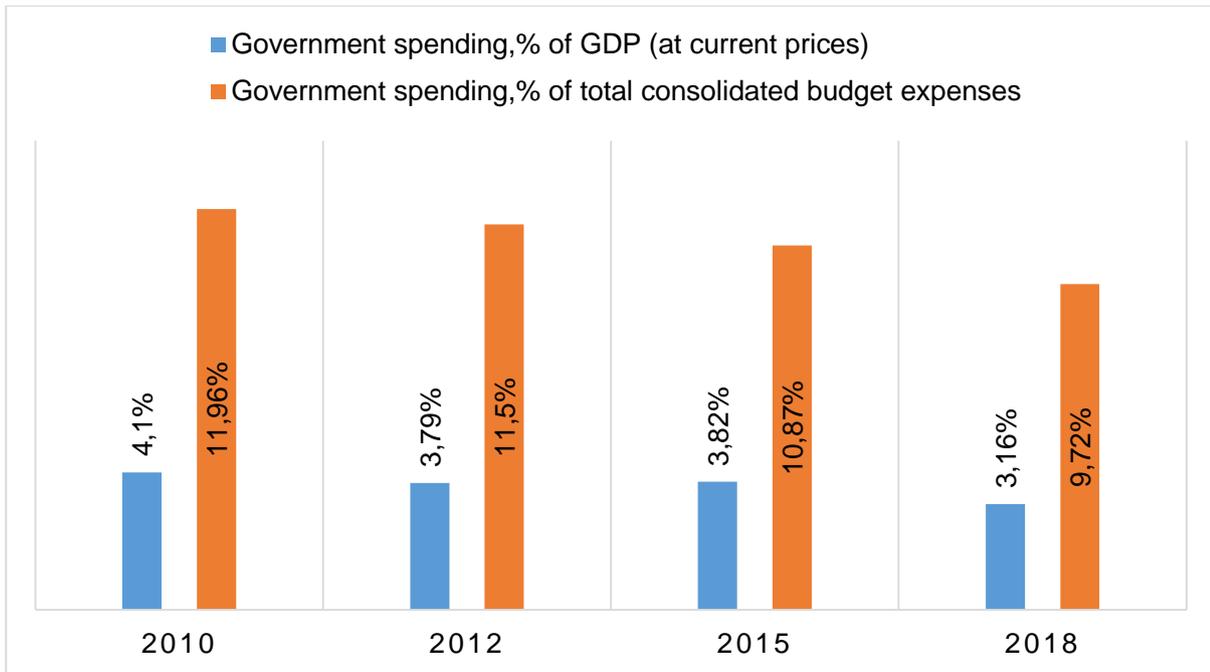


Fig. 1. Dynamics of government spending on education in Russia ([Education and Literacy](#))

However, it should be noted that government expenditures in the field of higher education per student (by PPP at current prices) increased significantly from 2.8 thousand US dollars in 2008-2010 up to 4.7 thousand US dollars in 2017 – 2018 ([Education and Literacy](#)).

But the Russian education system (both general secondary and higher) is largely unable to cope with the implementation of the functions assigned to it. Russia as of 2018 is in 49th place in the ranking of countries in the world according to the efficiency index of national education systems developed by Pearson, and 33rd in the ranking of national education systems ([Figure 2](#)).

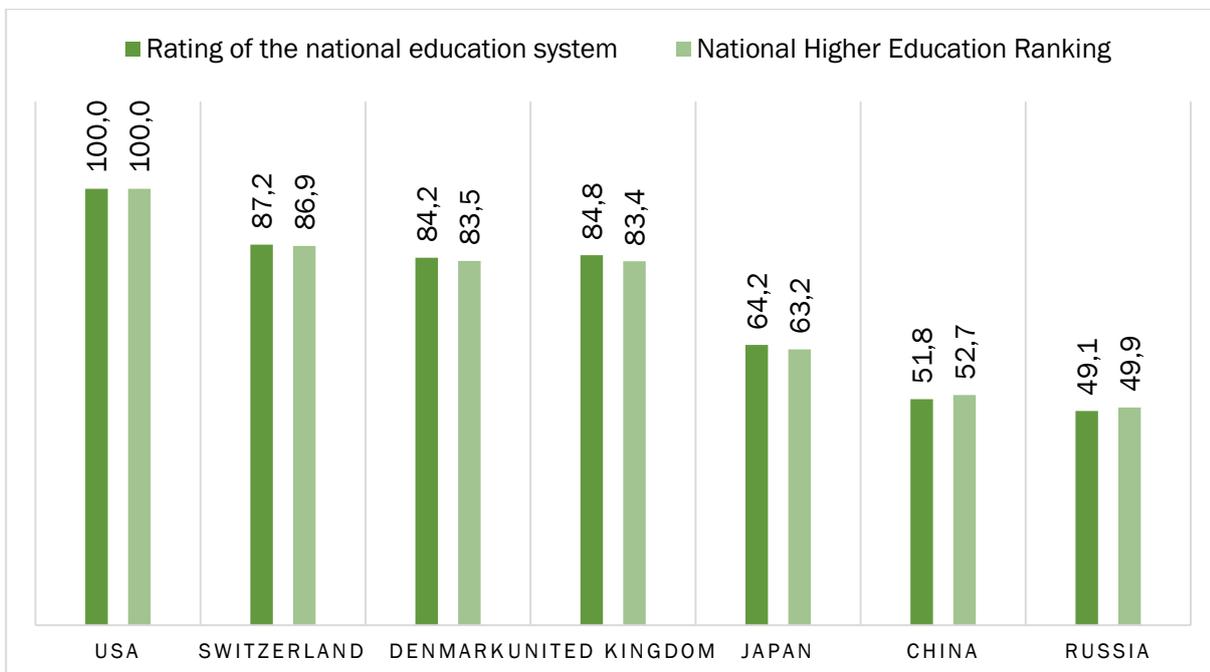


Fig. 2. Selective rating (2017) of the effectiveness of national education systems and national higher education systems ([Global Index...](#); [Ranking of Higher Education...](#)).

It is worth looking more closely at the evaluation components of the rating; There are only four of these components, and they are structured as follows:

- resources (investment in private and public sector education, component weight 25 %);
- results (research and publications, the relevance of education to the needs of the labor market, the weight of the component is 40 %);
- communication (degree of openness of the higher education system, weight 10 %);
- environment (state policy, accessibility of education, weight 25 %)

The reasons for the low rating of the Russian higher education system are obvious: private and public sector investments in the higher education system are declining. This affects both the results and the links with other higher education systems. And this indicates that the Russian higher education system is not fully integrated into the global scientific environment. Obviously, with such a level of efficiency in the functioning of the educational sphere, the personnel shortage in the real sector can persist for quite a long time.

If we look at the world ranking of universities (QS) over the past three or five years, it can be noted that the positions of universities in China are much more advanced than those of Russian universities: Peking University occupies 30 position, Fudan University, respectively, 49 position, Nanjing University occupies 122 position

Among the Russian universities of the first hundred of the leading universities in the world are Moscow State University of Lomonosov takes 90 position, the second leading university in the country, St. Petersburg State University takes only 235 place ([QS Rankings](#)). In addition, Russia has a very low influence in the global scientific environment, which does not allow for the implementation of effective and relevant research projects.

In the 21st century, the importance of higher education quality increases as the demands of the labor market in connection with the development of technology and society become more complex, while the importance of international recognition of the quality of national educational systems or individual components of these systems is growing. In the last decade, new subjects and objects, conditions and factors, programs, norms, standards, criteria for evaluating the results of the functioning and development of the world and national education systems have appeared ([Jansen, 2017](#); [Jones, 2016](#); [Mytelka, 2018](#); [Tapscott, 1996](#)). Globalization, integration, standardization and internationalization are the driving force of these changes, causing the formation of various national models of higher education in search of the most effective way to build them in order to improve the quality of the education system or its individual components. This ultimately affects the pace and quality of a country's economic growth. For Russia, this issue is most relevant, since the realities in the national economy are such that without attracting new progressive managerial personnel, it will be impossible to solve the accumulated problems.

According to the portal MVA.SU in Russia today there are about 100 business schools ([MBA.su](#)). Recently, competition between them has only intensified, each business school is trying to declare that its programs are better and more internationally recognized than others, and therefore all sorts of rankings and ratings are becoming more and more popular, allowing future students and students to make a choice in favor of one or another educational organization. Business schools are evaluated on the basis of market parameters, the growth of graduates' incomes, the availability of accreditations and criteria determining international recognition.

But almost the only and most objective criterion for business schools to be international is international accreditation ([Myasoedov, 2018](#)). Accreditation is a quality assurance process in which an independent organization assesses the quality of instruction in a particular educational program or business school as a whole. When a business school is accredited, this means that it meets the list of standards confirming that students enrolled in its MBA programs receive high-quality education ([Study. EU](#)).

4. Discussion

There are many international accrediting organizations in the world, but the most prestigious and recognized are three: AMBA, EQUIS and AACSB ([Figure 3](#)).

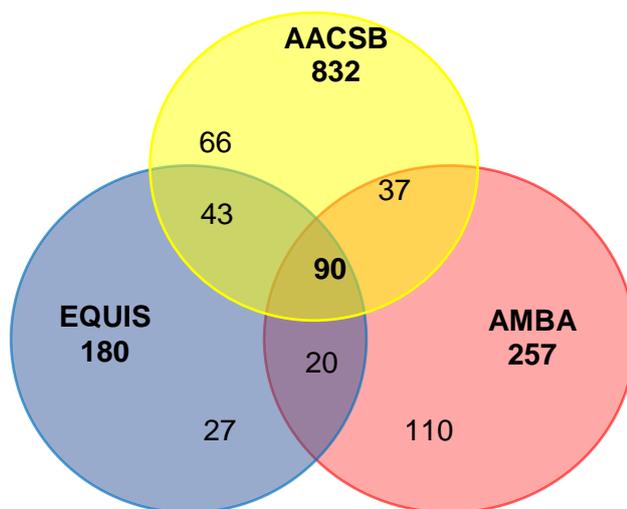


Fig. 3. Number of business schools accredited by international accrediting agencies (AMBA, EFMD Global, AACSB).

The Association of MBA (AMBA), founded in 1967 in the UK, specializes mainly in MBA programs. Today, the association has accredited over 250 business schools in 70 countries of the world (AMBA). AMBA differs from AACSB and EQUIS primarily because it does not accredit the programs of the first higher education. AMBA supports a global network of students and graduates of accredited MBA programs, as well as MBA employers. It also means that graduates and students of AMBA-accredited programs have access to a number of services and privileges, including international workshops, unique networking and access to a global knowledge base and talent.

AMBA requirements include some criteria that are not typical of generalistic institutional accreditations. For example, AMBA implies a strong interaction between the teaching staff and the group being trained, this requirement puts in front of unequal conditions full-time and distance MBA programs. AMBA accredits MBA programs older than three years, the process of obtaining accreditation takes, on average, 2 years.

The EFMD quality improvement system (EQUIS) is a European quality improvement system established by the European Foundation for Management Development in 1997. To date, 180 business schools in 44 countries around the world have been accredited [19]. Accreditation EQUIS is the most comprehensive institutional accreditation system for business and management schools. It is recognized worldwide by students, teachers, employers, corporate clients and the media, and is often the preparatory and necessary stage for getting into international rankings. EQUIS Accreditation is based on four main points (Table 1).

Table 1. The main principles of business schools accreditation in the EQUIS system (EFMD Global).

Principle	Content of the principle
Verification of quality criteria in ten directions	management system, educational programs, students, teachers, research work, internationalization, ethics, responsibility and sustainable development, corporate engagement
Broad base for evaluation	accreditation covers all areas of business school activity, including knowledge generation and contribution to the development of the business community.
Continuous improvement process	accreditation helps to make the process of continuous improvement part of the life of a business school, motivating it to continually develop at each accreditation and reaccreditation visit

Respect for diversity	EQUIS takes into account the huge diversity of national cultures and educational systems around the world. Also aware of the need to take into account the peculiarities of the local context in the process of accreditation assessment of each specific business school.
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The main feature of EQUIS is the emphasis on internationalization. EQUIS assumes an international variety of both the managing board and the supervisory board of the business school being accredited. EQUIS also assumes that the school has an international development and promotion strategy and the necessary resources to implement this strategy. The process of obtaining EQUIS accreditation takes 2-3 years.

Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) is an association for the development of university business schools that unites educators, students, and business representatives to achieve a common goal – creating the next generation of outstanding leaders. AACSB is the oldest institutional accrediting organization founded in 1916 in the United States, and today has more than 1,600 member organizations and more than 800 accredited business schools worldwide (AACSB). AACSB's mission is to encourage engagement, accelerate innovation, and expand influence in business education. The global organization has offices in Tampa (Florida, USA), Amsterdam (Netherlands) and Singapore. When an educational, professional, or business organization becomes a member of the AACSB Alliance, it joins the movement of improvement the quality of business education around the world. AACSB allows you to access a global network of high-quality business schools and leaders. AACSB integrates, disseminates and stimulates innovation and quality throughout the entire network of members, and across the business community.

AACSB accreditation is based on “15 standards” that cover everything that concerns a program: from strategic management and innovation to academic and professional interaction. Most of the leading business schools in the most prestigious rankings are accredited by AACSB. The process of obtaining accreditation AACSB takes from 5 to 7 years. Some of the world's best business schools, including Harvard Business School, the Wharton School and Stanford Graduate School of Business, have built global brands with the findings of only one accrediting organization, AACSB.

But most schools strive for the “Triple Crown”, i.e. obtaining all three of the above accreditations. Obtaining one accreditation is, of course, optimal for financial expenses, but the advantage of obtaining three accreditations allows the school to understand how to “improve your game”, to a new level of quality.

The value of different accreditations is that each of them focuses on various aspects of the business school and, therefore, schools that have the Triple Crown passed the toughest assessment on the market. Competition for the best students and listeners determines the accreditation market.

In addition, many international rankings do not consider business schools that are not accredited. For example, schools cannot participate in the Financial Times 'MBA ranking if they are not accredited by AACSB or EQUIS. As of January 1, 2019, out of more than 17,000 business schools (MBA.su) worldwide, 90 (about 0.5 %) are holders of the Triple Crown accreditation.

Almost 64 % of AACSB-accredited business schools are residents of the United States of America. It should also be taking into account that, for example, AMBA considers the MBA as a postgraduate degree, where students must have at least three years of work experience. Most educational organizations in the United States accept students with a bachelor's degree and little or no work experience and, therefore, do not meet the AMBA criteria. Moreover, AACSB accreditation is widely known in North America and a very small number of American institutions consider that it is necessary to obtain other international accreditations.

Only three US business schools have EQUIS accreditation: Babson College, Bentley University and Hult International Business School. Hult is also the only Triple crown accredited business school in America.

About 2/3 of business schools with Triple Crown are located in Europe. At the same time, among European countries, the leader in the number of accredited schools with a large margin is the United Kingdom (20 business schools), in second place is France (15 business schools), in third

place is Germany (4 business schools). In Holland and Spain 3 business schools are accredited, in Denmark, Finland and Portugal – 2, in Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland - one . The distribution of business schools with Triple Crown is presented on Figure 4.

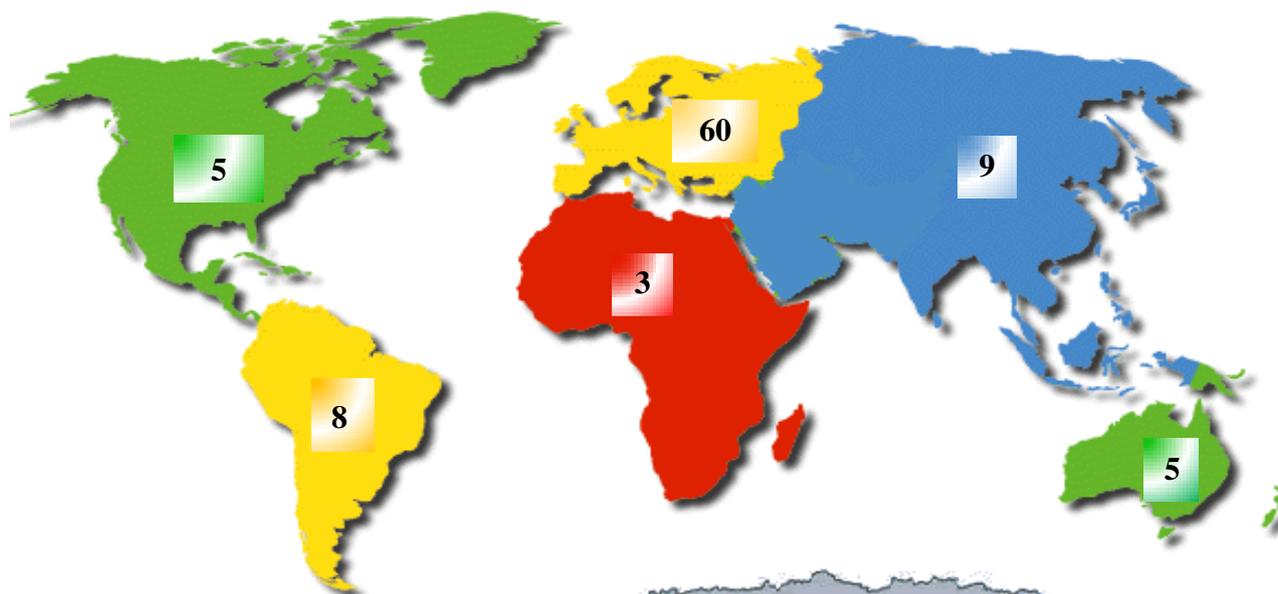


Fig. 4. Distribution of the number of business schools with “Triple Crown” by the world regions (AMBA, EFMD Global, AACSB).

Obtaining multiple accreditations entails significant financial costs, the process of obtaining accreditations of the Triple Crown will cost the business school at least \$ 300,000. The size of the main contributions for the initial international accreditation is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The cost of obtaining primary international accreditation (AMBA, EFMD Global, AACSB).

	AACSB	AMBA	EQUIS
Accreditation process	Application fee: \$ 2,000 Fee for acceptance in the accreditation process \$6,500 Annual accreditation fee: \$29,750 – \$ 41,650 *	Registration Fee: £2,000 Advance Assessment Fee: £ 5000	Application fee: €10,200 Fee for eligibility check: € 10,200
Visit of the accreditation commission	\$15 000	£15 000	€17 000
Accreditation fees after accreditation**	\$29750	£22 500	€17 000
TOTAL	\$83 000 – \$94 900	£44 500 (\$56 600)	€54 400 (\$62 300)
*the amount of the fee depends on the number of years spent on the accreditation (from 5 to 7 years)			
** calculation for accreditation for 5 years			

The base cost of all the procedures and processes associated with obtaining an AMBA accreditation for one MBA program is £ 22,000 (AMBA), and increases in the case of evaluating

programs that are implemented in other campuses or in the case of evaluating additional programs such as DBA. Also, an institution that has submitted an application for accreditation will have to pay the expenses for the arrival of members of the assessment committee (flight, accommodation and other expenses). After receiving accreditation, a new accredited member will also pay annual organizational fees.

Although all three top accrediting organizations have a common goal – to assess the quality of education, they all use different methods and focus on various aspects of management education. At the same time, all international accreditations have one common focus – faculty. Faculty are the main driver of the business school. The requirements of each international accreditation presuppose that the training organization has a policy of hiring, developing and evaluating teaching staff, as well as documents regulating research and innovation.

The most succinctly described requirements for faculty in AMBA standards. At least 75 % of faculty members should have a postgraduate education that corresponds to the profile of the subject taught. It is also assumed that most teachers have a PhD degree. In addition, faculty members must take part in one of the following activities within the business school: management research, internships and consulting. The result of participation in the activities described above is the publications in relevant journals.

The description of the requirements for teaching staff in the EQUIS accreditation standards is also interesting. Requirements are strictly prescribed only for the volume of workload that regular faculty members have. Thus, the minimum number of full-time teachers must, according to their workload, comply with 25 FTE (full-time equivalents). Also, in the case of a teacher combining teaching, administrative and research functions, the last should be a priority.

All other requirements are described in the form of listing quality criteria and a list of questions, answering which the business school describes how it organizes certain processes related to the teaching staff, and what are their features.

The most detailed requirements for faculty members in the framework of AACSB accreditation. All faculty members of the business school are divided into 5 qualification categories, depending on the field of research, practical experience, involvement in the professional environment and the mission of the business school. For the number of faculty in each of the qualification categories, AACSB establishes a certain range in percent of the total, so, for example, there should be at least 40 % of research faculty, both in the school as a whole and in each program.

At the same time, the faculty is subdivided within the framework of the AACSB into the business school by supporting and participating in the realization of the mission, the last must be at least 75 % (AACSB).

Taking into account the differences in standards of “Triple Crown” accreditation, the creation of a system combining the requirements of international accrediting organizations to the faculty and its management system will allow Russian educational organizations to reduce resources and time for international accreditations and re-accreditations significantly, as well as over the long term, it will simplify the process of entering international rankings and make them more competitive in the global market.

5. Conclusion

The materials presented in this article allow to draw the following main conclusions:

- The coming decades are the completion of the transition to a post-industrial platform, within which knowledge and human resources will be key factors ensuring the sustainable socio-economic development of countries and states. The Russian economy and the Russian higher education system are stagnant due to the lack of effectiveness of the reforms being conducted, as well as the incomplete integration of the scientific and educational community into the global environment;

- Russian higher education, including higher business education, is not competitive enough in the global market, largely due to the fact that most business schools do not have international accreditations on any of the generally accepted systems (AMBA – British, EQUIS – European, AACSB – American). European business schools seek to obtain all three accreditations, the so-called “Triple Crown” (about 2/3 of the business schools that have “Triple Crown” are located in Europe);

- The expenses of business schools for obtaining the Triple Crown accreditation is very substantial (at least 300 thousand US dollars), but these costs are repaid due to the fact that an accredited business school has the right to participate in world rankings and rankings. This in turn increases the level of competitiveness of a business school in the global market for educational services.

- for Russian business schools, obtaining international accreditations should be esteemed as an opportunity to reach a new level of development, which will encourage schools to improve the quality of management training for the real and financial sector of the economy.

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