THE ROLE OF ACCREDITATION IN ENSURING THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN UKRAINE

O PAPEL DA ACREDITAÇÃO NA GARANTIA DA QUALIDADE DO ENSINO SUPERIOR NA UCRÂNIA

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the problems and prospects of the accreditation system as a tool for ensuring the quality of higher education in Ukraine. The state and peculiarities of integration of the Ukrainian accreditation system into the European context are investigated. The purpose of this study is to analyse the accreditation system of higher education in Ukraine and to study its impact on ensuring the quality of education in accordance with European standards. The emphasis is placed on analysing the theoretical and practical aspects of accreditation in Ukraine, identifying problems and opportunities for further improvement. The study uses general scientific methods. The method of documentary analysis was also used. The article examines topical issues related to the accreditation system of higher education in Ukraine, in particular the factors that affect its effectiveness and

compliance with European standards. The analysis of the state of integration of the Ukrainian accreditation system into the European dimension has revealed key challenges and prospects. The theoretical aspect of the study highlights the conceptual foundations of accreditation, its goals, and impact on the quality of education. The practical analysis revealed problems such as the lack of a unified assessment methodology and insufficient coordination between accreditation bodies. The results of the study can serve as a basis for developing specific strategies and recommendations to improve the effectiveness of accreditation and maintain higher quality standards in Ukrainian higher education. The article emphasises that accreditation is an important tool for monitoring and ensuring the quality of higher education in Ukraine. It serves not only as a mechanism for determining the compliance of higher education institutions with the established standards but also guarantees a high standard of education and compliance with academic standards. Recommendations for improving the quality of higher education in Ukraine are proposed, taking into account the European experience in the field of accreditation. The study emphasises the importance of affinity with European models and the need for active cooperation to ensure a high standard of quality of higher education in Ukraine.

Keywords: education, higher education, European integration, educational environment.

RESUMO

O artigo examina os problemas e as perspectivas do sistema de acreditação como instrumento para garantir a qualidade do ensino superior na Ucrânia. São investigados o estado e as particularidades da integração do sistema de acreditação ucraniano no contexto europeu. O objetivo deste estudo é analisar o sistema de acreditação do ensino superior na Ucrânia e estudar o seu impacto na garantia da qualidade do ensino de acordo com as normas europeias. A ênfase é colocada na análise dos aspectos teóricos e práticos da acreditação na Ucrânia, identificando problemas e oportunidades de melhoria. O estudo utiliza métodos científicos gerais. Foi também utilizado o método de análise documental. O artigo examina questões actuais relacionadas com o sistema de acreditação do ensino superior na Ucrânia, em particular os factores que afectam a sua eficácia e conformidade com as normas europeias. A análise do estado de integração do sistema de acreditação ucraniano na dimensão europeia revelou os principais desafios e perspectivas. O aspeto teórico do estudo destaca os fundamentos conceptuais da acreditação, os seus objectivos e o seu impacto na qualidade do ensino. A análise prática revelou problemas como a falta de uma metodologia de avaliação unificada e uma coordenação insuficiente entre os organismos de acreditação. Os resultados do estudo podem servir de base para o desenvolvimento de estratégias e recomendações específicas para melhorar a eficácia da acreditação e manter padrões de qualidade mais elevados no ensino superior ucraniano. O artigo sublinha que a acreditação é um instrumento importante para monitorizar e garantir a qualidade do ensino superior na Ucrânia. Serve não só como mecanismo para determinar a conformidade das instituições de ensino superior com as normas estabelecidas, mas também garante um elevado nível de ensino e o cumprimento das normas académicas. São propostas recomendações para melhorar a qualidade do ensino superior na Ucrânia, tendo em conta a experiência europeia no domínio da acreditação. O estudo sublinha a importância da afinidade com os modelos europeus e a necessidade de uma cooperação ativa para garantir um elevado nível de qualidade do ensino superior na Ucrânia.

Palavras-chave: educação, ensino superior, integração europeia, ambiente educativo

Introduction

Establishing a system of quality assurance in higher education in accordance with the pan-European approach, in which there is no single system of evaluation of educational institutions, and each country has its own methods, procedures for accreditation and quality assurance of higher education, in particular to create a single European educational space, is an important direction of development of the national education system. The pan-European approach is characterised by the following main features:

1. Accreditation with the involvement of competent authorities. The process of accreditation of higher education institutions is marked by the participation of competent authorities or specialised organisations. These entities play a key role in determining the compliance of educational institutions with established standards and quality criteria.

2. Transparency of accreditation. The accreditation procedure establishes the need for a special standard for each specific discipline, study programme, or the educational institution itself. This indicates the importance of transparent and specific requirements that contribute to an accurate assessment of the quality of educational processes.

3. Standardised definition of minimum and maximum. Setting standards is a key element in the accreditation process. These standards set both minimum and maximum requirements that must be met by educational institutions. This approach helps to avoid quality deviations and ensures a stable level of educational services.

4. Standards as a guide for educational organisations. Educational organizations use established standards as a basis for their development and improvement. Standards act as a guide that allows institutions to identify areas for improvement and enhancement of their educational activities.

5. Guaranteeing the quality of education as a result of accreditation. The main criterion for making accreditation decisions is quality indicators. Expert assessments and various aspects defined by the standards are the basis for making

informed and objective decisions about the level of quality of education in a particular institution (Vorontsova et al., 2020).

Currently, several main factors complicate the development of quality assurance systems in higher education, whether they are internal or external systems. Among them are:

1. Limited resources of educational organisations. One of the key obstacles is the limited resources available to educational institutions. Insufficient financial and technical capacity limits their ability to effectively implement and maintain quality assurance systems (Poperechna, 2022).

2. Lack of autonomy in choosing approaches and accreditation bodies. The lack of autonomy of higher education institutions in the selection and implementation of specific approaches, as well as the choice of external accreditation bodies, is another significant problem. Limitations in this regard affect the ability of institutions to effectively adapt and improve their approaches to quality assurance (Dluhopolskyi et al., 2021).

Taking into account the above problems, governing bodies in the field of educational services are turning to international experience and considering an important aspect of quality control in higher and vocational education. Based on this approach, it was decided to include the main consumers in the market of educational services - employers and their associations, authorised organisations that have the ability to objectively assess the level of training and demand for graduates.

In recent years, growing competition in the educational services market has led to a new demand for improving the quality of education and the quality assessment system. This puts the criteria of objectivity and independence under active focus, which are becoming crucial in solving problems related to the improvement of quality assurance systems in education.

Problem Statement

The central problem of the study is to define and analyse the role of accreditation as an effective tool in ensuring higher quality education in Ukraine. The main focus is to consider the internal and external impacts of accreditation

processes on educational institutions and their ability to guarantee a high standard of education. The research seeks to determine how accreditation interacts with educational institutions, whether it is an incentive to improve the quality of curricula and the level of student learning. The study also examines the impact of accreditation standards on the internal processes of universities, their strategic orientation, and the system of learning outcomes assessment. The challenges and prospects of accreditation processes are analysed, as well as their impact on the preparation of a qualified personnel reserve in the country.

Research Aim and research Questions

The purpose of the study is to analyse the system of accreditation of higher education in Ukraine and its impact on the quality of education in the context of European standards. The objectives of the study include:

1.   An analysis of the current state of the accreditation system in Ukraine.

2.   Analysis of theoretical aspects of accreditation and its role in ensuring the quality of higher education.

3.   Study of the peculiarities of integration of the Ukrainian accreditation system into the European context.

Literature review

The analytical approach helps to reveal the effectiveness and impact of accreditation processes on the development of higher education in the country. The study allows for a thorough examination of how well the accreditation institution meets the needs of the education sector and whether it encourages universities to continuously improve the quality of education. It is important to determine which aspects of accreditation are effective and which may require improvement in order to optimise the system. It also provides an opportunity to identify the interaction between accreditation standards and different types of HEIs. This can be an important step towards understanding how accreditation requirements can affect the quality of education in different contexts.

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution (2019) defines key aspects of budget allocation to higher education institutions, focusing in particular on indicators related to educational, research, and international activities. This indicates an attempt by the state to define effective criteria for funding higher education institutions to support their educational and research initiatives. The source cited is an official document issued by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine that regulates the distribution of public funds among higher education institutions based on certain performance indicators.

The article by Oseredchuk et al. (2022) addresses the issue of the quality of higher education in Ukraine. The study focuses on ensuring the quality of education in high-tech industries. The authors consider accreditation issues as they study the quality of higher education. However, a more detailed definition of accreditation issues and their role in quality assurance may be useful for a more complete understanding of the study.

Velychko et al. (2022) discuss the importance of quality issues in higher education. The authors note that the presence or absence of accreditation can affect the reliability and significance of results. The study highlights a system of self-regulation aimed at continuously improving the quality and effectiveness of higher education. The authors identify the key aspects of self-regulation and consider them on the example of higher education in Ukraine.

The study by Andreou et al. (2023) focuses on graduates' perspectives on the skills they have acquired after participating in the Erasmus+ programme. The article assesses the extent to which participation in the programme contributed to the development of graduates' skills. The authors approach the study from a practical point of view, analysing the contribution of Erasmus+ to the development of professional skills.

The article by Sapiński and Ciupka (2021) examines the pedagogical discourse in higher vocational education of the future. The authors draw attention to future-oriented trends in higher education. The work can be an important source for understanding how pedagogical discourse is adapting to the current challenges in higher vocational education. Its content is structured, and the study covers

aspects that may have practical implications for the creation of quality educational programmes of the future.

The study by Chrásková and Chráska (2021) focuses on the implementation of digital competence standards for secondary school teachers. The authors draw attention to the importance of digital competence among teachers and the requirements for its implementation. The study helps to understand the severity of current challenges in introducing digital technologies into the educational process and ways to use them optimally.

Oseredchuk et al. (2022) addresses the issue of quality assurance in higher education in Ukraine. The authors provide well-founded arguments and examples to support their theses. An important element of the study is the focus on the qualitative aspects of higher education, which can be valuable for understanding current challenges in this area. The article makes a contribution to research and analysis of the quality assurance system in Ukrainian higher education.

The authors Stukalo and Lytvyn (2021) focus their research on the quality of higher education and its impact on sustainable development. The authors consider the relationship between the quality of education and sustainable development using a reasoned approach and concepts. The authors propose a new perspective on the role of higher education in achieving sustainable development, which may be of interest to those studying these two key aspects.

Despite the great interest of the scientific community in ensuring the quality of higher education, there are still gaps that need to be addressed. One of these unresolved issues is the effectiveness of the accreditation system and its impact on improving the quality of educational programmes. Existing research focuses on the accreditation process itself but overlooks the analysis of the effectiveness of this system in terms of improving the learning process and graduates. How quality standards are transformed into real improvements in the teaching process and how this affects the quality of educational services remains an issue that requires detailed study.

An important issue is the role of employers and their interaction with the quality assurance system. Previous studies point to the importance of employers'

involvement in the accreditation process, but questions remain about the specific mechanisms of this involvement and its impact on graduate training. Attention should also be paid to the support and development of internal quality assurance systems within the university itself. How internal systems facilitate or hinder quality assurance, and how they are integrated into the overall quality assurance system of higher education are aspects that require detailed consideration in further research.

Methods and Materials

The study used the method of documentary analysis, which is a widely used and key tool in the field of humanities and social sciences. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, an analysis of the documents defining the peculiarities of accreditation of higher education institutions was carried out. This method made it possible to collect and systematise a significant amount of information necessary to answer the research questions. The use of documentary analysis served as the basis for reasonable conclusions and the development of analytical statements in the article.

The review of previous studies and the legal framework was aimed at taking into account the various approaches, methods, and results related to the chosen topic. This approach contributed to solving the following tasks: (1) Consideration of the peculiarities of accreditation of higher education institutions. (2) Justification of the need for accreditation to control the quality of higher education. (3) Research of opportunities and strategies aimed at improving the quality of higher education through the implementation of international principles of accreditation of higher education institutions.

The material for this study was the Report on the quality of higher education in Ukraine and its alignment with the goals of sustainable and innovative societal development in 2022 (Butenko et al., 2023). This document was published by the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance. The report provides an assessment of the quality of higher education in Ukraine and its relevance to the objectives of sustainable and innovative societal development. The second

important source for this study was the legislative framework of Ukraine, namely the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (2017) and the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" (2014).

Results

The essence of higher education accreditation

Due to the growing competition in the education market, awareness of the importance of improving the quality of education and continuous improvement of the quality assessment system has become a necessity. This pressure increases the need for the development of objective and independent criteria that will determine a high standard of education.

In this context, accreditation is a key tool for assessing the quality of educational institutions and programmes. This procedure, which is carried out by both governmental and non-governmental bodies, is aimed at recognising the compliance of educational organisations with certain criteria and standards. Accreditation has gained particular relevance in connection with the signing of the Bologna Declaration, which promotes the recognition of national and international standards in higher education (Shavel et al., 2021).

In the practical solution of the tasks of improving the quality of education, the criteria of objectivity and independence become important. These aspects play a key role in the accreditation process, providing a fair and reliable assessment of the compliance of educational organisations with the established standards. This approach contributes not only to improving the level of education but also supports the competitiveness of higher education in the international market

Accreditation of educational organisations is defined by a dual purpose that covers various aspects of improving the quality of educational services and assessing the effectiveness of these organisations. First of all, accreditation seeks to create a comprehensive assessment of the quality of services provided by educational institutions. This includes a systematic analysis that considers all aspects of educational activities, from curricula to organisational and administrative

issues. Based on the data obtained, an objective assessment is formed to determine the effectiveness of a particular educational organisation.

Secondly, this assessment not only becomes a tool for determining efficiency but also acts as a catalyst for improving the quality of services provided by educational organisations. By implementing the recommendations and corrections received during accreditation, educational institutions can improve their operations and meet the highest standards. Such a cyclical process not only ensures a high standard of quality but also has a positive impact on the satisfaction of consumers of educational services (Maciej, 2023).

Indicators of the quality of education are determined through objective assessment, including elements such as university rankings, audits of educational organisations, the percentage of graduates employed in the labour market, and student test results. These criteria are key indicators of the effectiveness of the education system.

The purpose of accreditation systems is twofold. It is a guarantee of quality as a condition for the implementation of the country's domestic objectives. This is due to the need to maintain a high level of education and to introduce a single minimum standard that ensures compliance with social norms in the field of education.

Quality recognition is becoming a necessity to address external challenges, such as demonstrating the competitiveness and attractiveness of education at the international level. It also helps to increase student mobility. In addition, quality management is defined as a condition for the development of the education system, directing it to a new quality level in addressing internal and external challenges (Maciej, 2023).

Taking this position into account, the next assessment of the quality of educational services is defined as an extremely important task that requires the specification of criteria for assessing the quality of learning outcomes and the effectiveness of conditions and guarantees of the quality of programme implementation. The analysis conducted in this context has identified two key

groups of criteria. The first group focuses on determining the quality of learning outcomes and includes such indicators as:

employment of programme graduates in the federal and regional labour markets;

the level of development of graduates' final competencies;

the degree of satisfaction with the learning outcomes.

The second group of criteria is aimed at assessing the effectiveness of the conditions and quality assurance of the programme and includes such aspects as:

programme (strategy, goals, content, structure, management);

educational and methodological materials;

technologies and methods of educational activities;

material and technical resources of the programme;

financial resources of the programme;

information resources of the programme (Bukliv et al., 2023).

This comprehensive approach to evaluation criteria contributes to an objective and comprehensive assessment of educational activities, contributing to the improvement of the overall quality of education. Given the fact that professional and public accreditation of higher and vocational education programmes is a permanent system of public recognition of the compliance of the level of education with the established criteria and requirements of accreditation standards, this process can be carried out both independently and based on the results of the professional (independent) assessment of the quality of a vocational education programme by specialised education quality assessment organisations.

Based on the principles of effectiveness and objectivity, professional and public accreditation determines the level of higher and vocational education in accordance with the norms and standards established by the accreditation organisation. The main idea is that professional and public accreditation can be conducted both independently by the accreditation organisation and based on the results of the programme quality assessment carried out by independent experts in the field of education (Skakun, 2021).

This approach is similar to the practices already successfully used by foreign educational systems supported by the professional expert community. These systems implement different national models of accreditation, which are diverse and take into account the specifics of educational standards in each country.

Integration of the Ukrainian higher education accreditation system into the European one

The integration of the Ukrainian higher education accreditation system into the European one has its own peculiarities, which are determined not only by the difference in internal approaches but also by common goals of improving the quality of education and creating a single European educational space. One of the main features is the need to adapt the national system to European standards and requirements. This should include the introduction of tools that are recognised in Europe as effective methods for assessing the quality of higher education.

It is also important to consider cooperation with other EU member states and participation in European initiatives and programmes. This allows the Ukrainian accreditation system to gain experience, share best practices, and work together to develop standards.

The difference in the model of quality assessment of educational organisations in Europe is that each country has its own unique methodology and procedures to ensure the quality of higher education. In particular, countries use their own approaches to accreditation, defining quality standards and criteria. Among a number of models, the most widespread and popular is the "external evaluation". This approach implies that the body that accredits an educational programme and an educational institution is external to the institution itself and is represented by professional associations and agencies competent in the relevant field. The model promotes objectivity and a higher standard of assessment, as it involves independent experts (Zahorodna et al., 2022).

Each country implements its own accreditation system, taking into account the specifics of its educational system and national standards. This allows each country to maintain control over the quality of education, taking into account its

own needs and defining its own performance criteria. The main characteristics that define the European model are:

1. Availability of a qualified body and competent organisation responsible for accreditation. This implies the availability of specialists and specialised structures that have sufficient knowledge and experience to objectively assess the quality of educational programmes and educational institutions.

2. Application of special standards that cover both individual disciplines and study programmes and organisational standards that define the accreditation procedure. This ensures standardisation and clarity in defining the quality parameters of higher education.

3. Clear definition of minimum and maximum quality requirements in the standards. The standards set out specific criteria that allow for an objective assessment of how well higher education meets the standards.

4. Use of standards as a tool for benchmarking by educational organisations. This allows them to compare their achievements with the established standards and improve the quality of educational services.

5. Decision-making based on qualitative indicators, which provides an objective and reasonable assessment of the quality of higher education. This ensures transparency and trust in the accreditation results (Kozlova & Polezhaev, 2022).

The European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education, founded in 2003 as part of the implementation of the Bologna Process, is the key regulatory body that interacts with educational institutions on the European continent in assessing the quality of higher education. This consortium unites 15 accreditation agencies representing 9 European countries. The main tasks of the Consortium include:

Creation and continuous improvement of universal principles for a single accreditation system covering all members of the European education area.

Organising the exchange of experience in education, promoting and disseminating best practices in the field of accreditation.

Supporting internationalisation processes in higher education based on the Bologna Declaration (Seis, 2023).

One of the defining features of the Consortium's activities is that the assessment of an educational institution is carried out in general, covering both the curricula and the level of qualification of the teaching and research staff who implement these programmes, and comparing the results with the established requirements. This allows for a comprehensive and objective assessment of the quality of higher education, as well as determining compliance with its standards and requirements.

Ensuring the quality of higher education in Ukraine

In Ukraine, the issue of quality assurance in higher education is coming to the fore, especially in the context of accreditation. One of the main difficulties is the lack of regulation and non-transparency of accreditation processes, which affect the overall quality standard of education in the country. First, there is a lack of consistency in the criteria and standards for assessing the quality of higher education institutions. Different accreditation bodies may use different approaches and metrics to assess the effectiveness of study programmes, making it difficult to objectively compare and determine the overall level of quality. Second, there are problems with the stability and reliability of accreditation bodies. Some of them may be less competent or face corruption, which undermines the credibility of the accreditation process itself. The lack of a clear mechanism of interaction between government agencies, educational institutions, and the public in determining and monitoring the quality of education makes it difficult for the accreditation system to work effectively (Agnes, 2020). The peculiarities of ensuring the quality of higher education in Ukraine through accreditation are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – Peculiarities of ensuring the quality of higher education in Ukraine through accreditation

Features	Description
Legal justification	Accreditation of higher education in Ukraine is regulated by the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" (2014). The law defines accreditation as a procedure for assessing the quality of educational activities of higher education institutions and educational programmes.
Types of accreditations	In Ukraine, there are two types of accreditation: institutional and programme. Institutional accreditation is aimed at assessing the quality of educational activities of a higher education institution as a whole. Programme accreditation is aimed at assessing the quality of an educational programme.
Organisation of accreditation	Accreditation in Ukraine is carried out by the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance (NAQA). The NAQA is an independent body that is not subordinated to any ministry or agency.
Accreditation criteria	The accreditation criteria are determined by NAAQA. The criteria shall be objective, transparent, and fair.
Decision of the accreditation commission	The decision of the accreditation commission may be positive, negative, or conditional. A positive decision means that the educational activities of a higher education institution or an educational programme meet the established criteria. A negative decision means that the educational activities of a higher education institution or an educational programme do not meet the established criteria. A conditional decision means that the educational activities of a higher education institution or an educational programme need to be amended to meet the established criteria.
Consequences of accreditation	A positive decision of the accreditation commission means that the higher education institution or study programme receives an accreditation certificate. An accreditation certificate is an official document that confirms the compliance of the educational activities of a higher education institution or study programme with the established criteria. A negative decision of the accreditation commission means that the higher education institution or study programme does not receive an accreditation certificate. This may lead to restrictions or termination of the activities of the higher education institution or study programme. A conditional decision of the accreditation commission means that the higher education institution or study programme must make certain changes to meet the established criteria. In case of failure to take appropriate measures, the higher education institution or study programme may receive a negative decision of the accreditation commission.

Source: created by the authors, based on Liuta et al. (2021).

Accreditation in Ukraine is defined as a mandatory stage for all higher education institutions, which contributes to the implementation of objective and transparent standards. Thanks to the effectiveness of an independent accreditation body, the process becomes more objective and open to all stakeholders. Accreditation criteria are carefully selected and aimed at guaranteeing the quality of educational activities. This contributes to the definition of high standards and requirements that determine the quality of education and its compliance with established norms. The decision made by the accreditation commission has serious consequences for the higher education institution or study programme. This may include maintaining or losing accreditation, which affects the reputation and status of the institution (Kravchenko et al., 2020).

It is important to note that accreditation is not only a control mechanism but also an effective tool for improving the level of educational activities of higher education institutions. It helps not only to maintain standards but also to protect the rights of higher education students, contributing to the creation of a quality educational environment. Accreditation in Ukraine is proving to be a key tool for ensuring the quality of higher education and its further development.

Discussion

The accreditation of higher education institutions in Ukraine is a key instrument aimed at maintaining and ensuring a high level of quality education. According to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution, 2015, this process is a mandatory step for all higher education institutions in the country and determines their ability to teach students and provide them with competencies and knowledge in accordance with established standards.

One of the main roles of accreditation, according to Kozinchuk et al. (2022), is to ensure the quality of curricula. Accreditation bodies examine curricula and programmes to ensure that they meet current labour market requirements and take into account innovations in science and technology. This ensures that graduates receive up-to-date and relevant knowledge.

According to Fernandes and Singh (2022) and Romanowski (2022), accreditation also affects the quality of teaching and research. It assesses the qualifications and experience of the teaching staff, the availability of the necessary resources for teaching and research, and the use of modern teaching methods and technologies. However, in the work of Vasylieva et al. (2022), accreditation is not an exhaustive indicator of education quality. According to the authors, the old approaches to controlling the quality of education should be revised and more independent and progressive ones should be developed.

In addition, according to Bakhmat et al. (2022) and Lovakov et al. (2022), accreditation determines the effectiveness of an institution's management, its financial sustainability, and its ability to ensure stability and development. This is important to ensure the long-term and stable operation of higher education institutions.

In the context of higher education in Ukraine, accreditation also performs an important function of ensuring compliance with the norms and standards set by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. This contributes to the creation of a unified education system in the country and strengthens its international prestige. Accreditation in Ukraine is not only a means of control but also a strategic tool for ensuring the quality of higher education that meets modern requirements and contributes to the further development of the educational system.

The theoretical significance of this study is to reveal and analyse the role of accreditation in ensuring the quality of higher education in Ukraine. The study allows to systematise theoretical approaches to understanding accreditation, identify key concepts and principles underlying the process of quality assurance in higher education. In particular, the study can reveal and substantiate the role of accreditation as a tool for determining, monitoring, and maintaining the quality of study programmes and higher education institutions. The theoretical significance is to provide insights into the best practices of accreditation and their impact on the quality of education.

The practical significance of the study is that its results can be used to improve the accreditation system in Ukraine. The analysis of the data and

conclusions obtained can serve as a basis for developing recommendations for improving accreditation processes, ensuring their greater efficiency and compliance with the requirements of the modern educational environment.

The methodological limitations of the study include a number of factors that may affect the objectivity and universality of the results. Firstly, limitations may arise from the chosen research methodology, as the methods and approaches used may have limitations in terms of adaptation to different contexts or the specifics of the Ukrainian higher education system. Secondly, limitations may arise from the chosen scope and scale of the study. As the research topic is broad, there may be limitations in considering all aspects of the role of accreditation in ensuring the quality of higher education in Ukraine. This may limit the completeness and depth of analysis of certain aspects of the topic.

Limitations may arise from the time period of the study. Changes in the higher education system in Ukraine may occur over time, and the chosen study may not take into account all current trends or changes that have occurred after a certain period. They may also arise from the chosen source of information. Depending on the availability and representativeness of the data, there may be limitations in generalising the results to the entire higher education system in Ukraine.

Conclusion

The article considers the role of accreditation in ensuring the quality of higher education in Ukraine. The main focus of the study was to identify the features and importance of the accreditation procedure for higher education institutions in the context of the Ukrainian educational system. Accreditation of higher education institutions in Ukraine is not only a mandatory stage for all higher education institutions but also a key tool for ensuring the quality of the educational process. The objectivity and transparency of the accreditation procedure is ensured by the effectiveness of the independent body responsible for its implementation. Accreditation criteria are aimed at defining high standards and requirements that guarantee the quality of the educational process. The decision made by the

accreditation commission has important consequences for the higher education institution or a particular study programme. Improving the quality of education in Ukraine is closely linked to accreditation, which is an effective tool not only to ensure compliance with standards but also to protect the rights of higher education students. Accreditation in Ukraine is defined as a system that promotes the quality and development of education and reflects the importance of implementing objective and effective practices to maintain standards in higher education. Future research could be aimed at improving the quality of higher education in Ukraine by integrating methods and tools from the European educational environment.

Recommendations

To improve the quality of higher education in Ukraine, it is recommended to improve the accreditation process, in particular, focusing on the development of more rigorous and realistic criteria that reflect current labour market requirements. It is also important to support initiatives to improve the quality of teacher training, introduce innovative teaching methods, and promote research in education.

It is recommended to strengthen cooperation between universities and enterprises to adapt educational programmes to the real needs of the economy. Ensuring accessibility and developing support mechanisms for students from different social groups is also identified as an important aspect for improving higher education. Involving stakeholders, such as employers and civil society representatives, in decision-making processes and strategies for higher education development can significantly improve the relevance of curricula to the real needs of society.

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