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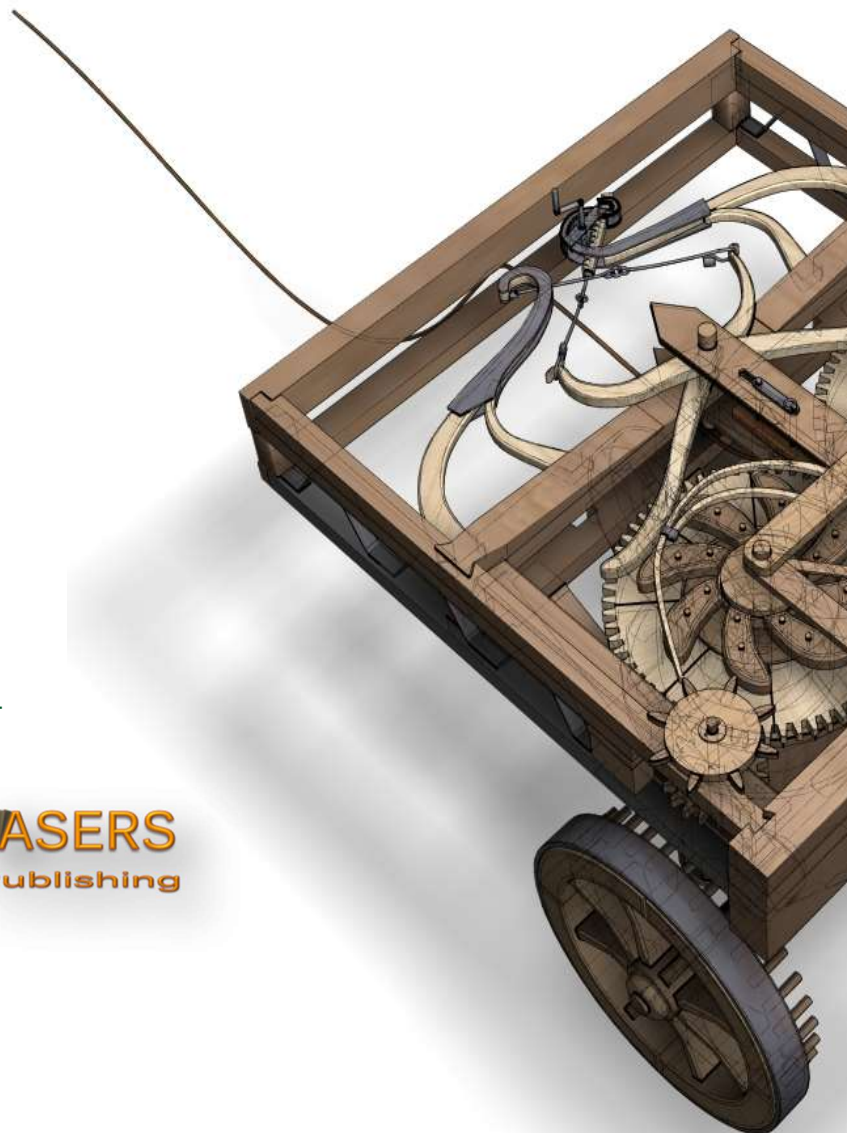
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The Establishment of International University Campuses as a Key Factor in the Development of Local Tourism in the Turkestan Region in Kazakhstan: Economic and Legal Aspects

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Abstract:

This article discusses legal and economic issues in the higher education and tourism industry in the context of Kazakhstan. The study revealed that the creation of international university campuses in the Turkestan region can enable to develop a local tourism and become an attractive tourist destination and international educational hub in Central Asia. It is suggested to establish these campuses in partnership with the world's leading universities based on the experience of Nazarbayev University. There is a great chance to attract international students and tourists as well as establish Kazakhstan's Silicon Valley. To create endowment funds and ensure the financial independence of universities, it is proposed to pass a special land granting law enabling regions to allocate land plots to universities on a gratuitous basis, as seen in practice in the USA. Additionally, it was concluded that this region in geographical, territorial, climatic terms as well as the historical role of Turkestan are very favourable for the development of international tourism. The research was conducted based on the documentary analysis method and secondary data analysis. Legal acts and state programs and acts launched by the

government in higher education, tourism, and hospitality industries were collected from the official websites of state bodies and analyzed.

Keywords: higher education; local tourism; student mobility; international university campus; legislation.

JEL Classification: I23; I28; K15; L30; L33; Z32.

Introduction

Currently, Kazakhstan sets very ambitious tasks in the development of higher education, which implies integration into the global educational space (State Program 2019). In addition, the Government has targeted the goal of developing tourism in Kazakhstan and the Turkestan region (South Kazakhstan) is identified as one of the important tourist destinations for international visitors. In order to implement these aims, in 2018, the city of Turkestan was approved as the center of the South Kazakhstan region and it was granted a special economic and legal status (Decree 2018). The government and local authorities have begun to fund the construction of infrastructure and the restoration of the ancient city of Turkestan. The city was revived and took on a new appearance in a short time. However, in order to realize the goals set by the State Program in relation to the tourist attractiveness of this region and the cultural significance of Turkestan, it is necessary to look for additional strategic opportunities. In our opinion, this is the creation of international university campuses in partnership with the world's leading universities in the Turkestan region. Moreover, it is essential to grant these universities financial autonomy and encourage the creation of modern high-tech parks and attract industrial companies and businesses to this region similar to the US Silicon Valley. These measures will increase the economic and cultural attractiveness of the region, which will ultimately have a positive impact on the development of local tourism and hospitality. Consequently, this article will consider the legal framework and economic opportunities of the Turkestan region in becoming an international educational hub and an attractive tourist destination in Central Asia.

1. Literature Review

Universities have long ceased to be just centres of knowledge and are increasingly playing an important role in the development of urban infrastructure and local tourism (den Heijer and Curvelo Magdaniel 2018; Hebbert 2018). The cities where the world-class universities are located attract thousands of tourists every year. The relevance of establishing world-class universities has been widely examined by prominent researchers (Altbach and Salmi 2011; Hazelkorn 2009; Shattock 2017).

Peacock and Ladkin (2002) highlight a number of benefits of interactions between universities and the tourism industry. First, businesses will have the chance to hire a better-trained workforce. For the dynamic development of the tourism industry, the issues of providing enterprises in the tourism and hospitality industry with qualified personnel are becoming important. Arutyunova (2020) states that universities can generate qualified human capital for the labor market in the modern economy by establishing a mutual partnership with local companies. One of the important ways of fostering the development of the tourism industry is volunteering (Baimbetova *et al.* 2021). Secondly, favourable tourist conditions will attract a large number of students to universities (Gheorghe *et al.* 2017). In fact, several studies have shown that the location of the university is essential for students in choosing where to study. For example, the study by Milian and Rizk (2018) shows that over 41% of students referred to the geographical location of the university as a primary factor in choosing a university. Rungfamai (2018) also argues that the university's location, favourable climate conditions, and a peaceful environment in the workplace are vital for international academics and students. Similarly, Shattock (2017) points out that the location of the university is one of the crucial facts in building a world-class university and states "the most successful universities are located in leading centers of the professions, growing centers of economic activity, larger centers rather than smaller towns, rich communities, areas with effective and committed political leadership, and areas of great natural beauty and a good climate" (p.10).

Increasing academic mobility is an important factor in the development of tourism in cities (Gheorghe *et al.* 2017; Menin 2017). International academic mobility is one of the most significant manifestations of the internationalization of higher education. In 2020 there were around 7 million international students in the world and this number is expected to increase at an even faster pace, which is facilitated by the globalization and internationalization of higher education (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020). The growth in the number of international students will directly affect the development of tourism in the cities where the universities are located (Menin 2017). In particular, educational tourism as one of the dynamic types of tourism is gaining popularity when the traveler's primary or secondary aim is associated with learning (Tomasi *et al.* 2020).

It is worth noting that there are many stakeholders involved in the tourism industry. Since they have different goals and motivations, sometimes this can lead to conflicts of interest (Hermawan & Hutagalung 2020). Therefore, the development of local universities should take into account the interests of various parties. In addition, it is important to note that the development of local tourism primarily depends on the level of development of the national economy (Zaitseva *et al.* 2016). Meanwhile, many authors stress the role of the knowledge-based economy in enhancing the national economy. In particular, the role of regional universities in the development of the local economy and tourism is essential. Thus, modern universities that integrate the interrelationships of research, culture, and education, can greatly contribute to the development of regional tourism and hospitality by expanding the export of educational services. In turn, local tourism contributes to the development of the local community (Cejas Martínez *et al.* 2020). In addition to the economic impact on society, the social consequences of tourism are great which include improving the living standards of the population.

Studies aimed at analyzing the relationship between universities and the development of tourism carried out in different countries, highlight the special role of universities in branding cities as tourist destinations. The study by Rinaldi *et al.* (2020) indicates how one local university in Italy played an important role in transforming the local city into a gastronomic and food tourism destination. The results of the study show that the university, carrying out the “third mission”, has developed joint projects with local stakeholders, which have a positive impact on the development of sustainable tourism in the city. In a similar vein, Arionesei *et al.* (2015) examined the relationship between universities and business tourism in Romania and concluded that universities striving to become entrepreneurial universities, adapt their missions to the needs of the tourism market, and bring mutually beneficial perspectives. Thus, universities can offer new opportunities for the development of tourism and hospitality in cities by providing leisure and sports activities, creating open lecture halls and exhibition spaces (Peacock and Ladkin 2002; Rinaldi *et al.* 2020). In turn, the presence of representatives from the tourism industry on academic advisory boards at universities will help improve the tourism and hospitality curriculum (Walters *et al.* 2015). Consequently, the interaction of universities and the tourism market makes it possible to better meet the needs of various age and social groups of the population.

2. Methodology

The research was conducted based on the documentary analysis method. The analysis of state programs and acts launched by the government in the tourism and hospitality industries in the Turkestan region, as well as approved documents of the state strategy aimed at the development of higher education. Legal acts and information in the field of tourism and higher education were taken from the official websites of state bodies and analyzed. For additional information, data were obtained from various official documents and information sources using the secondary data analysis. In addition, a range of research papers on this topic were analyzed by methods of historical and logical analysis.

To analyze the current state of the art in the tourism and hospitality industry and determine the impact of higher education on its development, it is beneficial to examine the research topic in historical, political, economic, social, and other contexts (Phillips & Schweisfurth 2014). Through research in different contexts, we have been able to obtain a deeper understanding and discussion of educational issues. For example, the analysis in the historical context revealed the importance of Turkestan city as a cultural and historical heritage for the Kazakh and Turkic nations. Economic analysis shows that the region has great opportunities to develop tourism and education, as well as to become a globally recognized and major economic center in the future.

3. Research Results

Within this work, the current state of higher education was briefly analyzed and the major issues that hinder further development were highlighted such as corruption, funding deficits, the problems of training researchers, etc. As a result, it was revealed that financial appropriations to higher education in Kazakhstan are significantly lower than in foreign counterparts, and the tuition fees in postgraduate research programs studies are unreasonably overstated. In addition, there are some legal contradictions and gaps in the legislation, which impede the modernization of the governance system in universities.

The study revealed that the creation of international university campuses in the Turkestan region can significantly improve the quality of education and research and it can give the region a real chance to become an international educational hub in Central Asia. With this aim, it is proposed to create international universities based on the experience of Nazarbayev University with modern high-tech parks, where there exists a real chance to conduct high-level research and set up new startups. To implement this project, it is proposed to pass a special land granting law enabling regions to allocate land plots to universities on a gratuitous basis similar to the Morrill

Federal Land Grant Act of 1862 in the USA. This would be real economic support in creating endowment funds and ensuring their financial independence. In this case, there is a great chance to build Kazakhstan's Silicon Valley on the basis of these university campuses. Studies by a number of scholars have shown that universities are one of the main drivers for the development of the local tourism and service industry, which is planned to be implemented in the Turkestan region. Additionally, it was concluded that this region in geographical, territorial, and climatic terms is very favourable for the development of international tourism. The densely populated region, the existing cultural and historical heritage, as well as the historical role of Turkestan, are identified as important factors contributing to the achievement of targeted goals.

4. Discussion

For a more detailed understanding of the strategic policy in the field of higher education and tourism, we will briefly consider the main acts of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. In order to implement the Plan of the Nation - "100 Concrete Steps" on the implementation of five institutional reforms, as well as the main indicators of the State Program, the Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan issued a number of legislative and by-laws, thus creating the legal basis for solving the tasks ... It should be noted that the local authorized bodies in higher education and science have also adopted the relevant regulatory legal acts in this direction (Amandykova *et al.* 2016)

On July 4, 2019, at the 32nd plenary meeting of the Council of Foreign Investors, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan K-Z. Tokayev announced new prospects for the development of higher and professional education in the Republic of Kazakhstan. He noted the following: "Time dictates new imperatives. Therefore, in the next three years, 180 new colleges and 20 advanced universities will be established. For this, we allocate 58 billion tenge from the republican budget only at the first stage. The main thing is to significantly update and modernize educational programs, with the active involvement of our foreign partners ... It is necessary to actively develop strategic partnerships with the world's leading universities, training must meet advanced standards ... I invite our foreign council members to actively participate in this work. I instruct the government, together with a foreign party, to make specific proposals on this important area of cooperation" (Tokayev 2019). Thus, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan plans to complete the construction of two world universities like Nazarbayev University in the south and north of Kazakhstan by 2022.

As we can see, the policy of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan is consistent with the main tasks set in the Strategic Development Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2025, in which it states: "Kazakhstan will strive to become an educational hub in Central Asia. It will be carried out certain events to attract International students to Kazakhstani universities. For this, universities will create all the conditions for achieving an international level with its inherent modern infrastructure that meets international standards..." (State program, 2019). Also, in the State Program for the Development of the Tourism Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2025, Turkestan is included in the TOP-10 priority tourist destinations in Kazakhstan, and the most promising areas of which is the development of historical and cultural tourism in Turkestan - with a potential of 1,500,000 tourists per year (current flow - 500,000) (State program, 2019).

Furthermore, the transfer of the regional center of the South Kazakhstan region from Shymkent to Turkestan was an important event for higher education. As we know, on June 19, 2018, by the decree of the President of Kazakhstan, the South Kazakhstan region was renamed the Turkestan region (Decree, 2018). This became a significant reason for the transfer of the main administrative and authorized bodies to the city of Turkestan, and subsequently, huge sums from the budget and private investors began to be allocated for the construction and development of the city's infrastructure. For example, over the past two years, in the center of the city of Turkestan, a historical town in the ancient style like the Little Venice has been built, which has become a favourite place for tourists. For the construction of such a structure, private investments in the amount of \$ 200 million have been attracted (Official Information Source, 2021).

4.1 Why Exactly Turkestan Region?

As noted above, within this article, it is proposed to create international university campuses similar to Nazarbayev University in the Turkestan region. The government announced to open one university there by 2022, but we propose to open a number of such universities with the help of foreign and domestic investors. Subsequently, it would become a place for the further establishment of the Silicon Valley of Kazakhstan.

From a historical and cultural perspective, it should be noted that Turkestan was the capital city of the Kazakh Khanate (1599-1729), as well as the capital of the Kazakh Autonomous Republic of Alash Orda at the beginning of the 20th century. Since 2018, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan has endowed a special status with a new region in order to strengthen this region economically, culturally, and educationally. The transfer

of the administrative center of the South Kazakhstan region from Shymkent to Turkestan opened up new opportunities for the cultural and socio-economic development of Turkestan as a tourist center of the country. According to experts, "this ancient city was multifaceted and multilingual at all times of its evolution. It experienced periods of prosperity, decline, and rebirth. Historically, the population of Turkestan is multinational, but most of it is made up of the Turkic-speaking peoples united by the unity of culture, language, and religion - Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Turkmens, Tajiks. Today, Muslims of Central Asia rightfully call Turkestan the second Mecca. The main city landscape, the mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. The region of South Kazakhstan has always been rich in monuments of archeology and culture" (Askarov 2018).

The geographical and climatic conditions of the Turkestan region are favourable for the implementation of this project. Turkestan region is located in an area of 117.249 km² with a population of more than 2 million. It is located in the south of the country and borders the Republic of Uzbekistan with a population of 33 million and Kyrgyzstan with a population of over 6 million. The climate is very mild and very different from the capital Nur-Sultan, which has picturesque mountains, lakes, rivers, and numerous ruins of ancient cities, which is favourable for tourism and attractive for foreign visitors. In terms of higher education, there are several HE institutions, namely M. Auezov South Kazastan University with about 17,000 students, Khoja Ahmed Yasavi International Kazakh-Turkish University with about 10,000 students, South Kazakhstan Medical Academy with 4,610 students, and other 10 more private universities with a number of enrolled less than 5,000 students. As you can see, in total, less than 100,000 students study in the Turkestan region (MES 2020).

For comparison, let's take England, which has almost the same area of 130.279 km² with a population of 55.98 million people (Population estimates - Office for National Statistics, 2021). Climatic and weather conditions are the same, even sometimes cloudy and rainy, which is not always comfortable for international students and tourists. However, the higher education system in England consists of 132 universities, among which there are world-class universities that include the Russell Group, such as Oxford University, Cambridge University, UCL, etc. There are about 2 million students in England, and about 2.5 million in the UK (Student numbers in UK higher education, 2021). It should be noted that there are 24 universities in the UK that make up the Russell Group, which has world recognition, a unique corporate governance system, and a rich experience in social partnership with stakeholders. Four of the top ten universities in the world are members of the Russell Group, 15 are in the top 100, and all 24 are in the top 250 in the 2018 QS World University Rankings (QS WUR, 2018). Each of these institutions has an average income of £ 688 million and a total output of over £ 32 billion (Russell Group, 2019). Given that there are more than a hundred such universities in England, then one can easily guess about the economic profitability of its higher education system.

Undoubtedly, English universities have almost a thousand-year history with a rich library fund and have also generated great thinkers of the world, presidents of countries, famous billionaires, and artists. It should not be forgotten that Oxford and Cambridge Universities were founded in small villages far from the capital, and with the expansion of these universities, they gradually turned into big cities. Moreover, it should be noted that King Henry VIII even confiscated the lands of the church in order to donate them to Oxford and Cambridge universities to strengthen their material base (Prenatt 1995). He also initiated the construction and improvement of some historical heritages, namely Nonsuch Palace, King's College Chapel, Cambridge, and Westminster Abbey in London. In history, this is the first sign of endowment funds FOR universities. However, the United States is widely recognized as the birthplace of contemporary world-class universities. One of the important acts of the US Congress is the Morrill Federal Land Grant Act of 1862, according to which the federal government authorized the state governments to sell local land and at the expense of it create state universities. According to this law, the establishment of at least one college in each state was required to develop engineering, natural and agricultural sciences. However, these initiatives were implemented only after the adoption of the second law – the Morrill Act in 1890. Therefore, thanks to the Morrill Federal Land Grant Acts a range of public and private universities, such as Kansas State University (1863), Cornell University (1865), University of California (1868), North Georgia Agricultural College (1873) and others were founded in all states of the USA at the end of 19 century (Morrill Act 1890).

4.2 Higher Education in Kazakhstan

At present, Kazakhstani universities are doing everything necessary to implement the tasks set by the state and have notable achievements in this regard. In particular, universities have done a lot in terms of developing international cooperation, having managed to establish stable partnerships with leading universities and research centers of the world. For example, the newly founded Nazarbayev University has established

partnerships with the University of Pennsylvania (USA), the University of Cambridge (UK), and other leading universities around the world. The main policy of Nazarbayev University is the creation of the world-class university model aimed at establishing an innovation and knowledge hub in Astana (Sabzalieva 2017). This governance model provides Nazarbayev University with the opportunity to be completely autonomous in organisational, financial, and academic activities and HAS a special legal status. The university has its own Board of Trustees and a fund, as well as executive governing bodies, which provide independence and autonomy. The members of the Board of Trustees are high-level officials of the Government and central state bodies, and the chairman is the former President N. Nazarbayev. The university is not accountable to the Ministry of Education and Science. The language of instruction is English, which ensures a high level of mobility of students and academics. In addition, it awards the graduates with international diplomas (Altynbassov *et al.* 2020). That is why the experience of Nazarbayev University is being proliferated across the country.

However, as practice shows, this was not enough to achieve the main indicators of the State Program. For objective reasons, a number of important issues in the field of higher education and science in Kazakhstan need new approaches and comprehensive rational solutions. The problem of funding public universities, which is much lower than in foreign countries, is especially felt. Given the current level of government funding for the higher education system, which is well below the world level, it is difficult to hope for a quick improvement in the current situation. For example, the annual expenditure of one Chinese university is three times larger than the budget of the entire education system in Kazakhstan. According to the State Program of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2016-2019, the expenditures on the entire education system of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2019 is 349.8 billion tenge (slightly less than \$1 billion) (State Program, 2016), and the annual budget of only one leading university in China is US \$3.5 billion. Thus, currently, all universities in Kazakhstan, with the exception of Nazarbayev University, which receives a large share of budgetary funding in higher education (Reviews, 2017), suffer from underfunding. For example, in 2016, Tsinghua University spent 13.7 billion yuan (US \$3.57 billion), while Peking University – about US \$2.45 billion (Usher 2017). Comparative analysis showed that the costs of leading Chinese universities in the C9 League and leading universities in the United States, including those in the Ivy League, are almost the same. At the present, the Endowment fund of Stanford University is \$27.7 billion (SU Endowment, 2020), and the Endowment fund of Harvard University is about \$40 billion (HU Endowment, 2020).

In addition, it should be noted that Kazakhstan's universities do not have sufficient financial transparency, and this leads to the corruption of the university leadership. The existing system of corporate governance in universities has its own flaws (Altynbassov *et al.* 2017). As official websites of public universities show, the composition of supervisory boards did not include business and industry representatives. It means that both business and local government bodies are not ready to cooperate with the higher education sector and are not obliged to do this by law. The current legislation in the field of higher education has many gaps that do not allow the ministry and the university leadership to create partnerships with the various stakeholders. As the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan does not have the necessary powers to involve other ministries and departments in the implementation of the tasks assigned to it, it is necessary to specifically describe the mechanisms for the implementation of legal norms at the level of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Altynbassov *et al.* 2020).

To attract funds from the private sector, the donation system (donation, philanthropy), which is widespread and is one of the main sources of funding in Western countries, can be applied as a model. For example, Stanford University was founded with the private money of the parents of the deceased young man Leland Stanford Jr. in 1891, and a number of Cambridge University buildings were built by professors at their own expense in honor of their close relatives (Stanford University website, 2021). Similarly, the University of Bristol's main building was built in memory of Professor William Wills by his sons. This is a wonderful practice in relation to the perpetuation of family and friends, as well as significant support for universities in the current budget deficit. Definitely, there will be many people in Kazakhstan who want to build buildings and campuses named after their parents and loved ones. In Kazakh's tradition, people honor their parents and try to perpetuate the memory of their deceased relatives. There is a high probability that philanthropy can actually work in the context of Kazakhstan. This gesture can have both a spiritual, moral and educational character for the future generation. The experience of foreign universities shows that there are other mechanisms for attracting funds, such as creating endowment funds, establishing partnerships with business companies and industry, inviting alumni to new university projects, etc. However, for this it is necessary to create a modern corporate governance system and a transparent financing system.

As for the prospects of cooperation with the world's leading universities and the opening of their branch campuses in Kazakhstan, it is worth noting that the Western system of higher education is going through another economic crisis, and government funding for higher education is declining every year (Robertson et al., 2007). This began in the 1980s with the neoliberal policies of Thatcher and Reagan (Robertson et al., 2007). However, neoliberal policies with a market-based management model are still preserved and have even intensified in some places. Consequently, universities in the USA and UK feel significant underfunding from the state, and they are forced to attract foreign students and look for new regions to open their branches. In these countries, higher education is governed by market methods and educational services have long been one of the main sources of income for universities and the state as a whole. Meanwhile, THE United States is the main exporter of the global education market and is famous for its world-class universities such as Harvard, Stanford, MIT, and other Ivy League universities with their achievements in research and the quality of education. However, territorial, geographic, and climatic conditions, population density, rich historical heritage of the southern region of Kazakhstan are more similar to the UK than the United States. This region has great potential to prove itself as an international regional educational hub in Central Asia than other regions of Kazakhstan. From this perspective, the higher education system of the UK deserves more attention. Today, universities that are part of the Russell Group in the UK are interested in expanding an educational market and flexible forms of cooperation and training. The experience of Nazarbayev University has shown that the partnership with leading universities in the world can give a sharp impetus to improving the quality of education and research (Sabzalieva 2017). Thus, by opening joint universities and branches of Western universities, it is a realistic opportunity to create equal, mutually beneficial cooperation with the world-class universities, which was mentioned by president K. Tokayev.

Given the political situation and economic opportunities of Kazakhstan in the field of higher education and research, as well as the need to develop education on the principle of "education-science-innovation-economy", we propose to concentrate university research in a systemic holistic education and create real mechanisms of partnership and cooperation of universities with interested stakeholders (business and commercial entities, industrial companies, local executive and representative bodies, students' parents and other members of civil society) and, ultimately, create the Kazakhstani model of "Silicon Valley".

4.3 Recommendations

First, it is necessary to adopt a special law "On the Turkestan University Campus" (this is a conditional name) on the territory of the Turkestan region, regulating the creation and operation of a special economic zone with fiscal benefits. Subsequently, to create a large university campus, which will become a platform for the further construction of "Silicon Valley" in this region. From the history of the emergence of Silicon Valley in the USA, we know that it was founded on the territory of Stanford University, and one of the key moments of its development was the creation of Stanford Industrial Park, here the offices of world-famous companies such as Eastman Kodak, General Electric, Hewlett-Packard and others are located. Moreover, we noted above that the Government has already approved a plan for the creation of two regional research universities based on the model of Nazarbayev University, and one of which is planned to be built in the Turkestan region.

The experience of the USA and UK shows that huge land plots were transferred to the ownership of universities as a gift or on a gratuitous basis by acts of the rulers and the legislature of the state (Morill Acts, 1890; Prenatt 1995). This lesson can be useful in the case of Kazakhstan. For example, in the Tulkibas district and near the city of Turkestan, there are wonderful places with picturesque nature, where university campuses can be built. The territorial opportunity of the Turkestan region can easily accommodate 150 universities and two million students, as the experience of England shows.

Secondly, as the international experience of higher education shows, it is the countries and cities located in the southern regions that are more suitable places for the further inflow of foreign students (Milian and Rizk 2018; Rungfamai 2018). An example of this is Asian countries and cities such as Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and the United Arab Emirates, which have managed to become an educational hub for all neighbouring countries in a short time. The geographic location of the campus is critical to the new ambitious plan. This university city can become a center of attraction not only for Kazakh students but also for students from neighbouring countries such as Uzbekistan with a population of over 33 million, Kyrgyzstan with a population of over 6 million, and other CIS countries. Taking into account the 19 million population of Kazakhstan, in general, more than 50 million of the population can be involved in this project. Even now, more than 1000 students from Uzbekistan study at the M. Auezov South Kazakhstan University (Auezov University website, 2020). It is an ordinary regional university where classes are conducted in the Kazakh and Russian languages and there are no international joint programs there like there are at Nazarbayev University. If world-class universities with English

language instruction are opened in the Turkestan region at an affordable price for neighbouring countries, for example, tuition fees are equal to those in national universities of Kazakhstan, then certainly thousands of applicants will flow from neighbouring countries. Now prices in national universities in Kazakhstan have exceeded 1 million tenges for a bachelor's programs, more than 1.5 million tenges for master's degrees, and more than 2.3 million tenges for doctoral studies (MES, 2020). This price is equal to the price of tuition at the leading universities in Eastern Europe. Even in THE University of Bristol (UK), a year of study in a doctorate program for its citizens costs about 2.5 million tenges, for example, in Law PhD the price is £ 4368 for full-time students and £ 2138 for part-time students (University of Bristol, 2021), the same cost of tuition at the L. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (2.3 million tenges) and the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (2.2 million tenges) (MES, 2020).

According to the results of many social surveys of foreign students, it was revealed that one of the main criteria when choosing a country of study, students prefer universities located in warm regions with minimal living costs (Milian and Rizk 2018; Rungfamai 2018). Especially, it is essential for students who will be studying for a fee. Even in small Great Britain (243 809 km²), which is slightly larger than the Turkestan region, students try to live in southern cities like Brighton and Exeter, rather than in northern cities. In this regard, the Turkestan region with excellent weather conditions has every chance of becoming an international student center. In addition, factors such as cultural heritage, historical sites, and sights of the city where the university is located play an important role for international students. This is evidenced by the experience of countries such as Italy, Greece, Cyprus, etc. Moreover, this project will give a sharp impetus to the restoration of many historical and archaeological sites and ruins of ancient cities, which are abundant in the region. It is important that nearby there are located ancient cities such as Tashkent, Bukhara, Samarkand that were famous cities on the Great Silk Road. Thus, having restored the cultural heritage, Turkestan will truly become the capital of the Turkic world.

Thirdly, the language of instruction in the future university campus should be predominantly English. It is a key tool for achieving the above objective. A number of questions may arise here: why not in the Kazakh language, and even more so when we already have Nazarbayev University, where classes are taught in English. It should be noted that Turkestan universities will be built mainly for foreign students and graduates of our country who want to study on a paid basis. Only by attracting foreign students and professors can a university become an international educational hub in the Central Asian region (Altbach and Salmi 2011). Undoubtedly, Nazarbayev University is the flagship of the Kazakhstani higher education system, as it has managed to create partnerships with world-class universities such as the University of Cambridge, the University of Pennsylvania, etc. Meanwhile, the location of Astana is geographically poorly acceptable for foreign students in terms of cold climatic conditions and the cost of living in it.

As for the role of the English language in international education, A famous expert in the field of international higher education Philip Altbach notes that today English has become the lingua franca of the 21st century (Altbach and Salmi 2011). In recent years, in many leading universities in Germany, France, Holland, and other European countries (which are the former colonizers and disseminators of their language), teaching is conducted in English. Thus, the new realities of the global higher education and competition in the educational market favor the development of English as a more acceptable language for consumers of services and the research community.

Fourth, regardless of private or public funding, the new university campus must be formed in the form of a non-profit joint-stock company. The experience of leading universities in Western countries shows that only this form of university can ensure a stable, centuries-old existence and prosperity. According to experts, non-profit universities ensure high-quality conditions for teaching and research staff and provide various scholarships and social assistance to students (Levy 2015). From a legal perspective, this form of a legal entity can ensure sustainable development and protect the future from illegal privatization and various corruption schemes of rectors of universities and officials.

Fifth, with the creation of an international university campus, a real corporate form of governance will be formed in universities, where interested stakeholders will participate. This requires government support and an appropriate legal framework to attract businesses into partnership with universities. The world's leading universities cooperate together with business enterprises in order to achieve the same goals (Altbach and Salmi 2011). It is necessary to create appropriate conditions for Western foreign investors for their further funding of universities in the Republic of Kazakhstan. In doing so, it is necessary to open branches of large industrial companies and new companies focused on the application of the achievements of new research technologies. This practice will contribute to the implementation of the original idea of the creation of "Silicon Valley" in Turkestan.

4.4 Development of Tourism and Hospitality Industries

World practice shows that tourism develops mainly where there is a sea and a beach, historical sites, the remains of ancient cities, museums, entertainment centers where tourists can relax and spend a pleasant time. In this regard, as noted above, the Turkestan region has great potential. The opening of world-class university campuses can become a center of attraction for talented young people from neighbouring countries and even from far abroad. The influx of international professors and student mobility will increase the region's visibility (Gheorghe *et al.* 2017; Menin 2017). Alumni of the new university can stay there to work in industrial and technoparks, IT companies and gradually form high-quality human capital in the region.

Rinaldi *et al.* (2020) conclude that regional universities have become a major driver in improving the local service industry and sustainable tourism development in Italy. Undoubtedly, the influx of a huge number of students will increase the level of quality of service in restaurants, grocery stores, hotels, and other organizations interested in consumers. Tax and other incentives for startups and private entrepreneurs can really motivate them to invest in new projects. Arionesei *et al.* (2015) also note the importance of mutually beneficial partnerships between universities and the local tourism industry. Universities need to be entrepreneurial and act in the best interests of the local economy and in the uplifting the service industry. If the state transfers large land plots to universities, they should lease them to industrial and techno parks and other business companies in order to further form their endowment fund, as is done in the United States.

Currently, the government of Kazakhstan allocates a large number of grants for applicants to study tourism, archeology, regional studies, cultural studies, etc. (MES, 2021). Archeology and cultural studies, teachers and students are actively conducting fieldwork to restore the remains of ancient cities and historically important sites. Research and restoration work of such university staff and students can significantly accelerate the restoration of historical and cultural heritage, which are one of the main drivers in tourism activities.

Conclusion

The study revealed that the development of local tourism contributes to regional and national economy. In this regard, the establishment of international university campuses can enhance the sustainability of local tourism and increase the touristic attractiveness of a region. However, Kazakhstan's higher education system has a number of unresolved issues and has undergone a transitional period. It is suggested that international cooperation and the borrowing of experience from the world's leading universities can attract thousands of students and tourists as well as give additional impetus to improving the local tourism industry. The government should put education at the forefront and proclaim a new mantra similar to that of the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who announced Education, Education, and Education in his 1996 election campaign.

As mentioned above, President K-Zh. Tokayev recognized the need to create 20 advanced universities in the next 3 years. Many developed countries highlight the best universities as the main drivers of promoting education and research, economic development, and progress. This is evidenced by university associations such as the Ivy League in the USA, the Russell Group in the UK, the Group-8 universities in Australia, the C9 League in China, etc. That is why this study suggests the creation of a constellation of leading universities in Kazakhstan.

The paper examines some of the features of higher education in Western countries, which can be borrowed by Kazakhstani universities. In particular, the American financial policy for the creation of universities was noted. The achievements of higher education in England are described and it is proposed to introduce the best experience of the university system of Western countries in the university campuses of the Turkestan region. We suggest that these campuses will become the basis for further construction of Kazakhstan's Silicon Valley in that region. We believe that the development of higher education will have a positive impact on the accelerated development of tourism in the region.

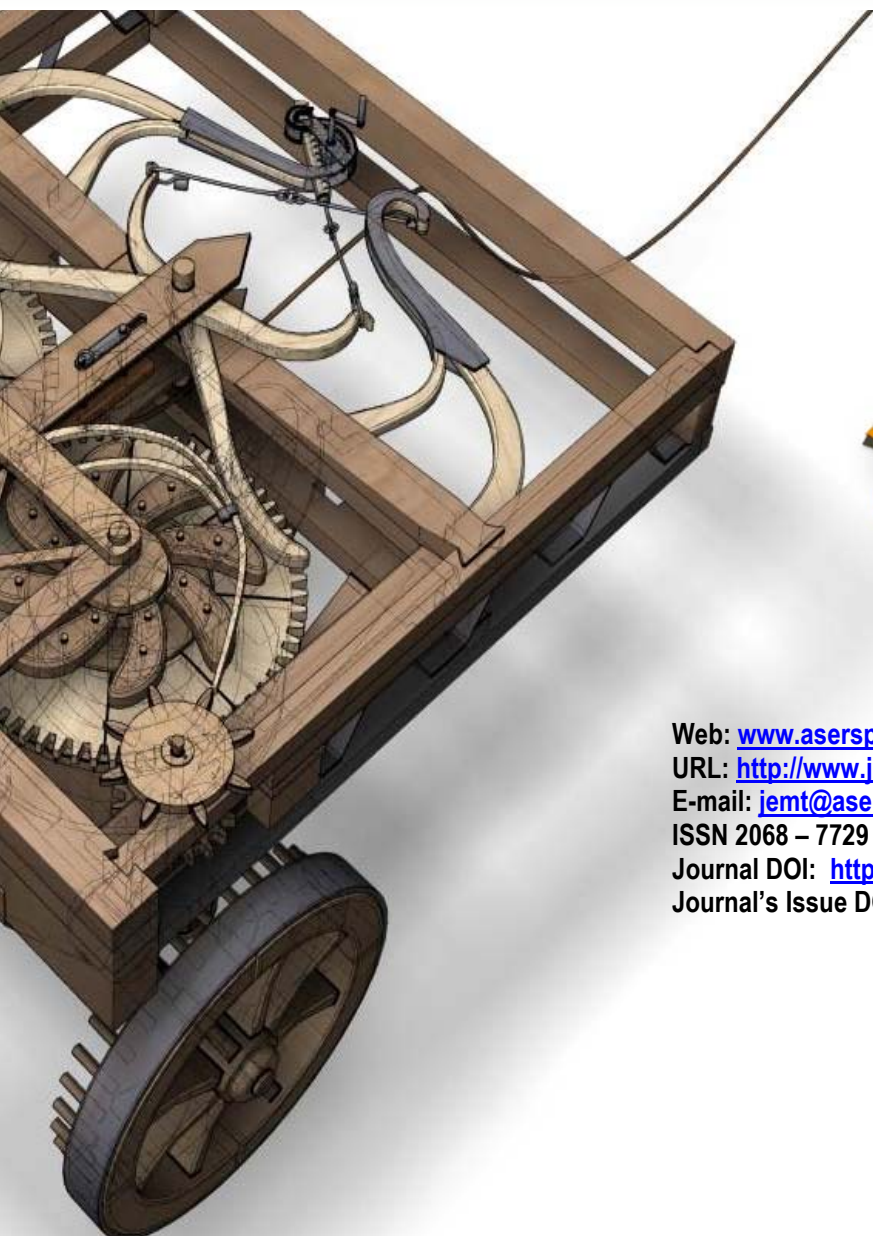
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