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An extended abstract of the paper on the subject of:  
“Higher education reform in Ukraine: the latest challenges and prospects”

**Problem setting.** *The domestic system of higher education is faced with numerous challenges of the common socio-cultural level one of which is Ukraine's entry into the European scientific and educational community. In addition, in terms of post-industrial society formation, there poses a problem of not only continuing, but of anticipating self psychologically determined and purposefully organized process. So socialization in today's global information era cannot follow extensive models and needs radical reform.*

**Recent research and publications analysis.** *In Ukraine improvement and modernization of higher education is the responsibility of many governmental establishments, organizations and agencies, among which the main ones are the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the Department of Higher Education of MES of Ukraine, the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Science and Education, National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the National Agency on Quality Education Assurance and others. The basic scientific achievements on issues of reform of higher education in Ukraine are the works by Ya.Bolyubash, M. Zhurovskiy, V. Andrushchenko, M. Evtukh, M. Stepko, K. Levkivskiy, V. Kremen, V. Ohneviuk, Yu. Sukharnikova, V. Yablonskiy and other leading domestic scientists.*

**Paper objective.** *The focus of the research is conduct a critical analysis of reforming higher efficiency ratings system in Ukraine revealed through focused group interview participants in the educational process.*

**Paper main body.** *Commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, we organized and held focus group discussions between students of four universities on "Reform of higher education in Ukraine in estimates of participants in the educational process" on 22 December 2015. Focus group participants were 12 students of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years of study of the four Ternopil city universities. Also we present the results of the focused group interviews with academic staff on identical themes.*

*Describing the current state of higher education in Ukraine, students admit that the remaining post-Soviet educational system does not provide enough practical skills. Therefore, assessing the state of the domestic higher education students set high generalized grade – 2.25. The most acute problems of higher education students in Ukraine include: lack of inter-est mechanism of public universities in high-quality training, corruption, poor students' motivation caused by an imbalance of theory and practice and outdated "dry" lectures.*

*Most students felt a slight positive change after the new law adoption, but they consider these steps to be minimal and insufficient. The most valuable provisions of the law is to increase funding and empowerment of the student governance and reduce the weekly classroom load. Students noted that it is of utmost importance to change the scope and content of educational material in humanities. Thus successors rated the quality of education that they receive in 3 points.*

*In assessing the overall state of higher education in Ukraine, most teachers estimated it as critically low. However, both positive and negative trends can be observed in education. Attendees named a number of acute problems: unsuccessful introduction of credit-modular system, insufficient institutional support by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the lack of uniform standards of education, financial and economic difficulties and a lack of logistical support. Overall, most participants rated the state of the domestic higher education in 3 points.*

*However, among positive gains they mentioned Ukraine's higher education entry into the European educational community, intensification of academic mobility of students and teachers. Most participants appreciated the implementation of the External Independent Test-ing, and among other qualitative changes in higher school achievements there were named Ukrainian students with high academic preparation and recognition during their studies in foreign universities.*

*The participants assessed the implementation of the new law "On education" into the practice of university life as "almost successful" because most teachers have experienced positive changes personally. However, all recognized the need for further reform of national higher education.*

**Conclusions of the research.** *Focus group discussions allowed to make the following conclusions:*

*1. Young people require strengthening the relationship of the educational process with the realities of the labor market, the introduction of an effective system of motivation to learn-ing and setup of academic mobility.*

*2. University professors and lecturers believe that Ukrainian educational system needs significant improvement. Reforms are hindered by lack of comprehensive vision of the final results, strategy and tactics change and some shortcomings in the law "On education". The most important prerequisite for successful transformation of higher education is the institutional arrangements relations and all stakeholders of the educational process: the Ministry of Education, universities, students, employers and public authorities.*

*3. Obtained contradictory results are indicators that reflect the severity of the problems in higher education in Ukraine and require careful analysis of successful innovations at the level of higher education, efficient implementation of complex solutions in order to enhance the competitiveness of Ukrainian higher education in the world educational community.*

*4. We consider it appropriate to recommend the study of the problems of cross application questioning method. An anonymous survey not only allows to reach a wider audience of respondents, but to avoid opinions interference, attitudes as previously voiced statements of the colleagues and also reduce the effect of self-mirroring on the level of the answers openness.*