



Management Aspects in the Higher Education Quality Assurance System

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Abstract. The conceptual model of analysis in the management of the competitiveness of the higher education system is substantiated. The scheme of the quality management system of education is offered, which covers two subsystems - quality control of educational services and evaluation of the quality of the result, and accordingly, each of them is characterized by its indicators. Theoretical approaches to the model of quality assurance of education are substantiated. The functions and experience of global, regional, and national institutions in ensuring the quality and social responsibility of the higher education system are systematized. The basic principles for the quality management system of higher education are proposed and characterized.

Keywords: Higher education · Management · Quality of education · Competitiveness · Social responsibility

1 Introduction

Significant socio-economic transformations that characterize the modern development of the population encourage the renewal and improvement of education systems. The educational systems of almost all European countries have passed the stage of reform and modernization in terms of the managerial aspects of education quality assurance. The same trends are typical for the Ukrainian higher education system. The need to reform

the higher education system in Ukraine, improve it, and improve the level of quality is both an important and complex problem, which is largely due to political processes and population manipulation. Therefore, it is obvious that the solution to this problem largely depends on the management organization of the country's higher education system: the correct choice of management strategies, the success of the management functions implementation, the timeliness and effectiveness of management decisions, and the quality assurance of educational services. Following this, improving the quality of higher education has taken a dominant place in recent years in ensuring the competitiveness of the educational system of Ukraine and training personnel with appropriate qualifications. The influence of integration processes, the growing role of globalization necessitate the use of international educational standards, and criteria for assessing quality in the field of education. At the same time, the difference in the potential and resource provision of higher education in Ukraine in comparison with developed countries does not allow us to talk about equivalent approaches to improving the education quality. The natural inertia of educational processes, which embodies the insufficient ability of the higher education system to resist external forces, has a negative impact.

Various approaches and mechanisms for monitoring student training necessitate additional research and development of a quality management model for higher education, acceptable for the national educational system. Several scientists are involved in the development and management of the educational sphere and consider it from different points of view: the training cost in the management of the higher educational institutions competitiveness in Ukraine [1], the competitiveness of the higher education system [2], models of business behaviour in education [3], the formation of pricing policy in higher educational institutions [4], marketing of educational services [5, 6], flexible management technologies and innovation [7–9], etc.

The purpose of the article is to research the development process and increase the educational management efficiency in Ukraine.

2 Methodology

Methodologically, the article bases on the use of systematic, analytical, dialectical methods. This research is based on the application of a systematic method, with the help of which the problems of improving the higher education quality have been investigated, the features of the effectiveness assessing of the educational sphere functioning have been revealed, the factors that negatively affect the quality of higher education in Ukraine have been analyzed. The educational process is an important element in state development and it increases the economic competitiveness as a whole.

3 Results and Discussion

Today Ukraine seeks to develop a modern education system that meets the 21st century needs, and has already taken a number of important steps in this direction. The reforms carried out after the Revolution of Dignity have become a source of optimism due to the decentralization and democratization of the education system, while at the same time laying the foundations for further harmonization and integration with European norms

and standards in the field of education. However, despite the impressive base formed by Ukraine in the field of education, and the history of education in the country, the education system still does not meet the needs of the economy and the population, and it is constantly changing.

Over the years of independence, the education level in Ukraine has grown significantly, especially in the field of higher education. Between 1980 and 2010, the average number of years spent on education for the population over the age of 15 almost tripled. The education level of the average resident of Ukraine exceeds citizens of other high-income countries such as the United Kingdom and Germany. In addition, Ukraine has become one of the leaders in the coverage of the population with higher education. This trend has developed rapidly since independence. One of the particular explanations for such indicators is the legislation of Ukraine, according to which colleges and technical schools, until recently, as a considered part of the higher education system. However, as of the 2017–2018 academic year, the enrolment rate in tertiary education reached 82%. The share of the population over the age of 25 with higher and incomplete higher education exceeded 40%, which is higher than the average of the OECD countries and many other countries [10].

Although the volume of systematized information on the education quality in higher education is small, according to the general opinion, curricula and pedagogical teaching methods need to be modernized, taking into account the evolution results of the society and economy needs. Ukraine, in particular, lacks applied business, financial, and managerial skills, but very few universities actively promote entrepreneurship curricula [10]. Globally, there is a trend in higher education towards the introduction of multi-disciplinary programs based on experiential learning and project-based approaches to solving complex problems. In this case, one cannot do without a clear system of education quality management, which will help to raise it to a qualitatively new level and make it competitive in the domestic and foreign markets.

In today's conditions, one can single out the basic principles that the quality management system of higher education must comply with, namely [11]:

- objectivity – use of relevant and reliable initial information, which is based on indicators that comprehensively characterize the learning process and the performance of higher education for the managerial decisions' adoption;
- efficiency – provision of effective mechanisms that allow, by improving the education quality, to ensure that the graduates qualifications meet the expectations of employers and increase the competitiveness of higher education in the international market of educational services;
- realism – development of practical recommendations and the sequence of implementation stages of educational policy in the field of improving the training quality;
- adaptability – ability of the higher education quality management system to respond flexibly to changes in external conditions, labour market requirements, thereby levelling the negative impact of the educational processes inertia;
- universality – formation of a system based on international quality standards, providing for an increase in the leadership role, the involvement of scientific and pedagogical personnel in the functioning of the system, focus on consumers of educational services;

– productivity – obtaining data for analytical work on monitoring the process of education and graduate’s employment, planning activities in the field of education, drawing up forecast indicators for adjusting educational programs, assessing the effectiveness of the higher education functioning.

The quality management system of higher education today covers two subsystems – quality control of the educational services provision and assessment of the resulting quality. Its indicators characterize each of them. The structure of the quality management system is shown in Fig. 1.

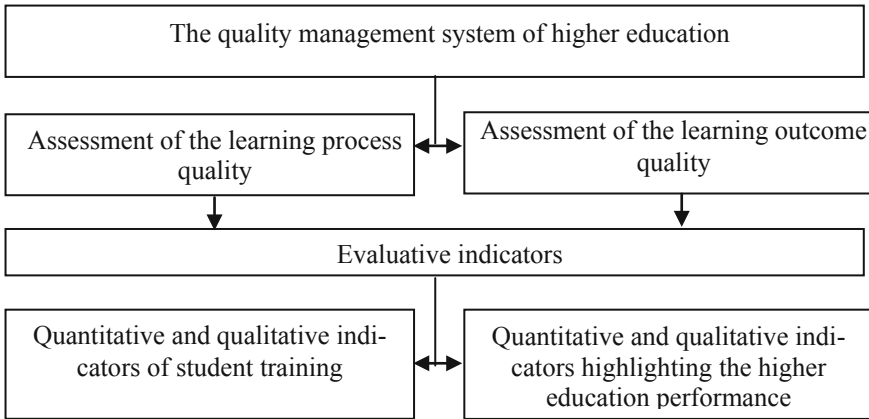


Fig. 1. Scheme of the quality management system of education. Source: compiled by the author

It should be noted that increasing the higher education competitiveness involves the use of market mechanisms for managing the educational sphere and the quality of higher education, adopted in international practice. Separately, to successfully confront the competition in the educational services market, it is necessary to implement international standards ISO 9000 and ISO 14000.

In addition to international standards of the ISO series, the most common models of quality management systems are models based on the principles of the business excellence model EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) and overall quality management TQM (Total Quality Management). TQM method can be viewed as a quality-based approach to managing an organization. At the same time, the fundamental principles are customer orientation, which determines the quality criteria for the goods, services he needs, and the attraction of personnel to achieve the set goal [12]. Unlike the approaches used in ISO and TQM standards, the EFQM business excellence model allows for comparative analysis between different institutions. So, I. Musienko draws attention to the fact that the application of this model is based on the criteria used for the CBO results and capabilities, which imply the improvement of educational activities and increasing the efficiency of the education system management [13].

Comparing these models, it is worth noting that the concept of TQM and ISO 9000 standards complement each other. However, if the ISO standard intends to regulate the relationship between the manufacturer and the consumer, then the TQM concept intends

for the internal manufacturer needs. The ISO concept answers the question of what needs to be done to ensure quality and the TQM concept – how to do it. While the ISO 9000 standards proclaim quality achievement as the ultimate goal, then the TQM concept considers the achievement of quality as an ongoing process, where movement is important, as is the ultimate goal. It is the TQM concept that maximizes the satisfaction of the requirements and requests of all stakeholder groups in an organization acting as a manufacturer or service provider.

The quality management model of higher education, which bases on the ISO 9000 standard, involves the establishment of stakeholder requirements for the quality of services provided, the creation of effective tools for improving activities and control.

It is also worth paying attention to the principles laid down in the international standards used in the development of the education quality management system, in particular [14]:

- focus on consumers (students and listeners) – increasing the role of leadership in the education quality management system;
- involvement of teachers in the functioning of the quality management system with increasing their responsibility and interest in the results of their activities;
- process approach, providing for the educational structure's management of business processes;
- systematic approach that takes into account the interconnection and mutual influence of the higher education subsystems to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness;
- continuous improvement with the introduction of progressive methods and technologies as the institution goal;
- making decisions based on reliable facts and information.

Such a quality management system, in addition to assessing the educational services provision, that is, the learning process itself focuses on the effectiveness of the higher education functioning. It assesses the professional training of a specialist, possibly in the context of using an institutional approach.

The practical significance of the institutional approach in the analysis of the higher education system competitiveness is to expand the capabilities of traditional types of complex objects analysis (system-structural, functional, strategic). It could be done by identifying the interests of various groups of the higher education system stakeholders as well as recognizing the competitiveness of the higher education system products and its providers are the determining conditions for the competitiveness of regional and national higher education systems. In this case, it is worth focusing on using the conceptual model of the institutional analysis of the competitiveness of the higher education system at different levels (Fig. 2) [2].

The main purpose and subject of institutional analysis in managing the higher education system competitiveness is to determine the reserves of its improvement, taking into account the interests of various stakeholders' groups, the potential and performance of the higher education system providers as well as the levels of a system functioning namely: local/institutional, regional and national. Given the variety of influencing factors that the higher education system experiences in its transformation, it is important to research its competitiveness in constant relationship with the competitiveness of the



Fig. 2. Conceptual analysis model in managing of the higher education system competitiveness. Source: [2]

country's national economy, as well as the competitiveness of higher education providers and their products as the main institutional components of the educational system.

Thus, we see that the higher education quality assurance system requires a certain construction algorithm. In particular, this concerns the information collection based on monitoring and self-assessment of higher education institutions. First, qualitative and quantitative indicators show the education process in an institution. Other data can be information from external sources, in particular, statistical data, reports of carved analytical centres, expert assessments, and sociological research, etc.

After collecting information, it needs to be processed and compared with the plans and policies of higher education institutions, including in terms of qualitative components – scientific research, steps for their implementation, and implementation methods. Such a data comparison shows the real role of the educational institutions' leadership in determining the priority tasks of improving quality, formulating purposes, and strategic directions for the educational institution development. At the same time, scientific and pedagogical personnel are attracted using motivation mechanisms to achieve the purpose: to ensure effective quality management.

The final stage is the quality audit implementation, carried out by independent experts (interested organizations and potential employers). The essence of the audit is to determine the efficiency of the education quality management system, its compliance with the set goals for training specialists. All subsystems of higher education audit in relation to the efficiency and effectiveness criteria. Based on the audit, an objective assessment should be formed, and measures should be proposed to improve educational programs in terms of raising their quality in relation to the learning and vocational training process.

4 Conclusions

Stating the above, we see that the proposed model of quality management in higher education contains a subsystem for assessing the provision quality of educational services (training) and the result, which allows us to neutralize the negative impact of inertia in the educational sphere development. In addition, implementing the functions of the quality management system is carried out in three stages: internal self-assessment, quality monitoring and marketing research; analysis and processing of the results obtained with the definition of quality goals and steps for their implementation; audit of the education quality to determine the education quality system effectiveness and adjustments to educational policy. The advantage of the proposed model is the shift in focus to the net result of the higher education institution functioning and the customers' attraction for educational services (potential employers) to quality control and management of the training process.

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