

## ADVANCED UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT - DETERMINANT FACTOR IN QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION

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**Abstract:** *The quality of an educational system is reflected not only in the instructive performances of the educational actors, but also in the degree in which it ensures an adequate professional integration. The motivation of this research is closely connected to the improvement of the level of communication between the two aspects –the academic one, by its finite products, and the economic one, by job offer. The study set sights on over 29 of the most important employers from the Jiu Valley, and 39 of the leading graduates of the University of Petroșani. Data were collected in 2016 year, through a survey oriented as well as for the employees and graduates. The research was a pilot study, based on the quantitative questionnaire was structured on 21 questions for the employers and other 25 questions for the graduates, of which 8 were common for the two lots of subjects, by which comparable results have been constituted between the requirements and expectations of the two parties involved in the labor market. Statistical data processing was done using SPSS program.*

**Key words:** *university management; employer; graduate; quality; labour market.*

### 1. Theoretical Framework

Contemporary society is defined as a knowledge and learning society, an information society in which real flows of goods and services are replaced by information flows through a virtual economy in which the sustainable factor of progress is generated by the continuous improvement of human capital. The emphasis is on the quality of individual life, on major transformations of a qualitative nature of living standards. All this is only possible in those societies where the educational institution actually fulfils its social mission, assuring quality education, effectively contributing to the construction and affirmation of the new society. Taking into account social development, documents drawn up by the Ministry of Education and Research, in collaboration with the European Center for Higher Education and UNESCO, highlight: "Numerous demonstrations prove that today's developed societies and especially tomorrow's are more and more knowledge and learning societies. Procedure, transmission and application of knowledge in any field of activity are courts that increase productivity. Also, without lifelong learning, personal adaptability or individual way and style are poorer in content and performance decreases the quality of life in terms of economic standards, the diversity and depth of cultural actions or experiences. Intelligence based on

knowledge and professional competence constantly upgraded by assimilating new skills and knowledge is the sign of a personal quality of life capable of contributing to the development of the national and local community "(MEN, CEPES, UNESCO, 1998 apud. <http://www.preferatele.com/docs/management/noi/managementul-perform11206231719.php>).

### **1.1. Effectiveness of knowledge management**

Given that the decentralization of the education system is becoming increasingly strong, the effectiveness of knowledge management increases substantially if the educational institution proves your concern for a careful analysis of the external environment, thus offering other information about their own activity. Decentralization of education implies involvement, responsibility, change of tactics approaching the educational process, strategies, a new management of that institution and a services offered by it. (Ciolca, 2012: 88). This, especially given that the Romanian university system is obliged to adapt its educational offer to the current demands of the labour market. Otherwise, the number of graduates leaving the country will increase each year.

Actions aimed at improving the management system of the school, as it is knowledge is integrated into this system, it mainly targets: conceiving the management system of the education unit and redesigning it on rigorous scientific bases; remodelling the school development strategies corresponding to the stage requirements the current development of the Romanian society, characterized by the transition to market economy and restructuring of the national economy; the decisive role of strategic and tactical decisions, risk and uncertainty, and those economic growth in rationalizing decision-making and accelerating profitability; training of educational managers according to the requirements of European education. (Ciungu, 2005: 114).

Management of the system and educational institutions involves activities that make use of: clear formation of finality; designing the institutional network (types, profiles and specializations, location in the territory in relation to certain criteria); developing the content of learning (the official curriculum); ensuring the legislative framework necessary for the achievement school policies and financial resources; initial and in-service training of teaching staff; establishing evaluation techniques to optimize results. (Cristea, 2004: 178). At central level there is a strategic management guiding, guiding and evaluating the entire system education, at the level of institutions is practiced one operational management to implement the strategy developed at a higher level. (Ghergat, 2007: 110).

An important indicator on the efficiency of the organization's educational management is the dynamism of the conception and realization of the actions, the entrepreneurial spirit that it is both the leaders of the institution as well as the teaching staff and the other employees. The beat accelerated changes in all areas of activity, the specific requirements of the economy market, require an increase in the response rate of all the factors that work in a learning unit. Initiation and dynamism

have an increasing influence on the effectiveness of educational decisions and actions, being decisive in achieving a education which corresponds to the quality standards during this period of adaptation of Romania to EU requirements, which is based on the construction of a competitive type of economy in Romania which fast technical progress, the multitude of international contacts and profitability will be the main goals of the economic and social development of our country.

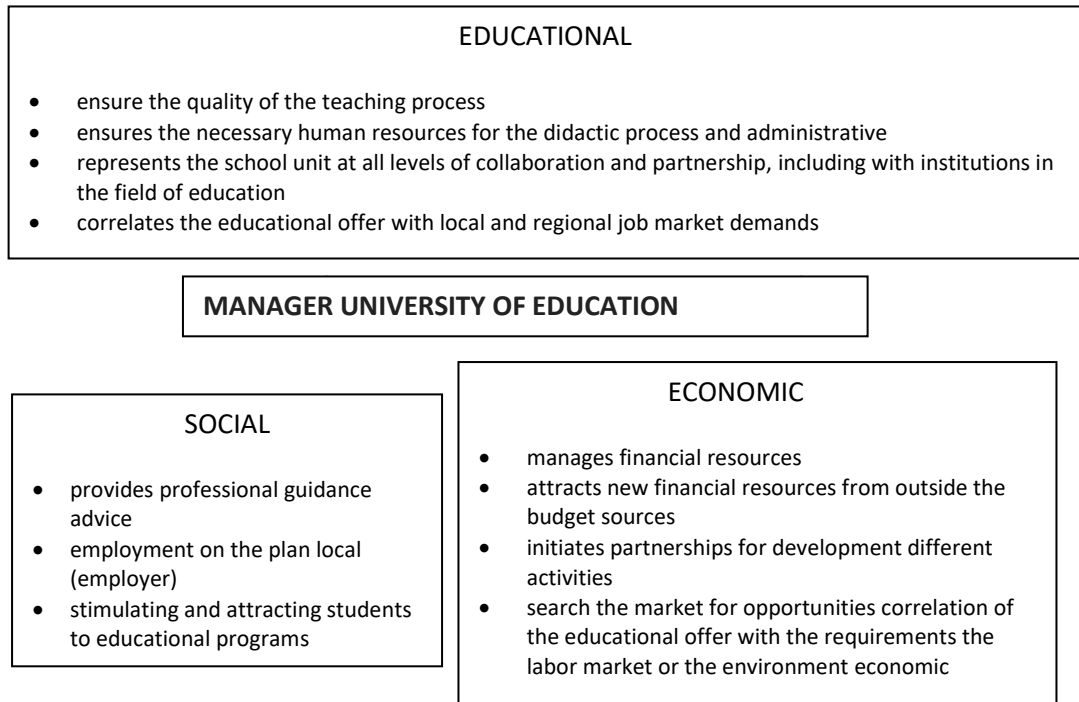
### **1.2. Managerial performance and performance management**

Peter Drucker, a contemporary personality in the field of management, performance achieved through management is actually characterized and achieved in practice two dimensions: effectiveness and efficiency. Effectiveness is the ability to choose the right and appropriate goals and reach them again efficiency is the ability to make the best use of the resources available in the process of achieving, respectively fulfilling the objectives.

(<http://steconomiceuoradea.ro/anale/volume/2006/management-si-marketing/44.pdf>). In practice, managers need to balance the need for efficiency with the need for efficacy.

Educational management is a complex process of leading education at the level of the education system considered as a whole or at its structural levels and it includes the management of the educational act manifested under its informal and non-formal aspect (Toca, 2002; Jinga, 2001).

Educational management combines the theoretical aspect (concepts, approaches) with the methodological aspect (information accumulation and processing necessary to carry out specific activities) with the appearance technologically (the concrete solution of different situations, processes, operations, stages) and managerial practice (Orțan, 2004: 76-77). Any institution or organization providing services education is included in a specific environment that condition and influence the managerial process. The three specific environments are: educational, social and economic. The activities carried out by the educational unit manager in these three listed areas need to be harmonized in a manner that ensures overall performance.

**Figure 1:** Areas of activity of an educational unit manager

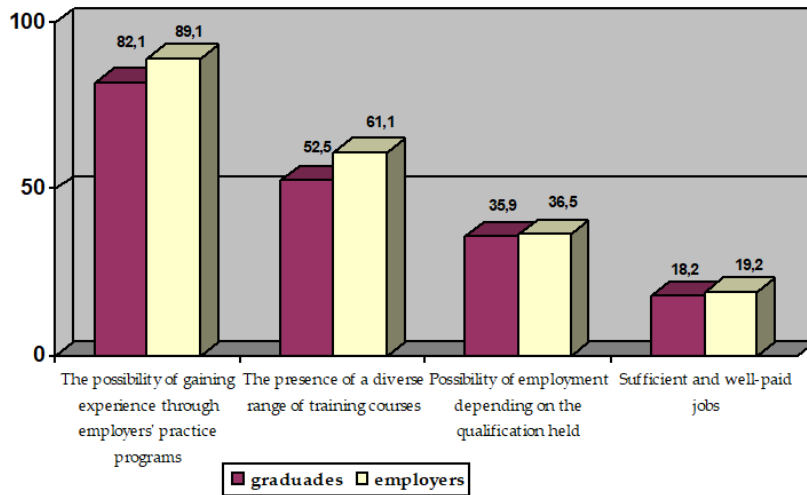
## 2. Results of the study

The socio-economic crisis that crosses the Jiu Valley in recent years, made the three important pillars in the development of this area - business, university and local government - to sit at the discussion table to determine which are business requirements in terms of human resource that provides university and how can local governments to support two media mentioned above, however the idea he wants to lay the foundations for sustainable development of the area Valley Jiu. The main question raised was that young people choose to leave this area to operate in other parts of the country. University requires from the businesses company owners, to create the conditions for young people to stay in Jiu Valley, and from the local governments the requirement was to create a conducive environment for investors that want to do business in this region.

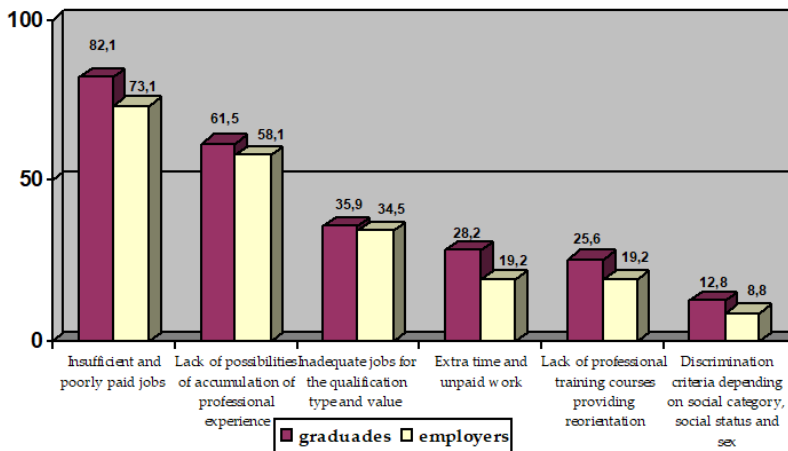
The data presented in Figure 2 show the success of the action taken by the companies involved in the study, involving students interested in long-term internships, resulting in graduates with higher education, experienced in the workplace and motivated to remain active actors in the labour market work in the native country. In order to halt the emigration of young people with higher education, not only the labour market must be flexible and adaptable, but also the

educational offer of higher education, the collaboration between the two environments being the essential condition for an adequate insertion on the labour market.

**Figure 2:** Labour market opportunities in the opinion of graduates and employers (%)



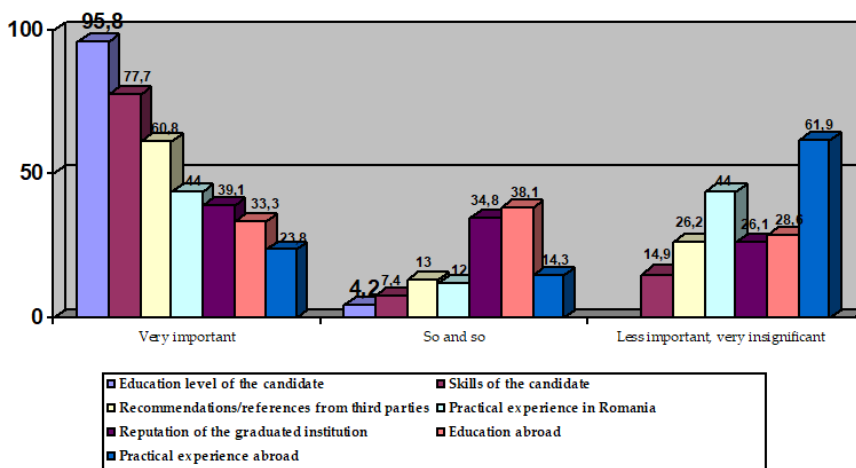
**Figure 3:** Labour market limits in the opinion of graduates and employers (%)



The comparison between the two lots of respondents points out a relative similarity of opinions regarding the limits existing in Romania’s labour market. Thus, the variant with most of the choices, both of the graduates and of the employers, is represented by the problem of insufficient and poorly paid jobs. One should mention however, that with the graduates, among the aspects mentioned as limits of the labour market, we may also find lack of possibility of accumulating professional experience, a requirement that is absolutely necessary for hiring, but also the existence of jobs that do not match the value and type of qualification, an aspect which should be in the attention of the universities.

Figure 4 shows that most of the employers participating in the study consider that the education of candidates is very important (95.8%), but also their skills (77.7%). Recommendations in favour of the candidate are appreciated by more than 60%, and the reputation of the higher education institution is appreciated by approx. 40% of the respondents.

**Figure 4:** Importance of the following aspects in the recruitment process (%)

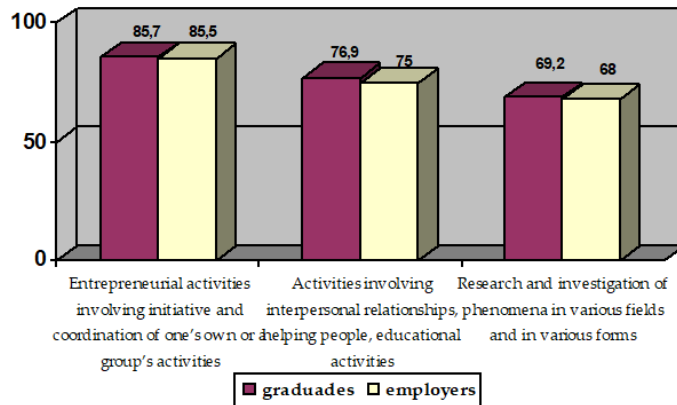


We can conclude that the level of the education of the candidate is more relevant than the practical experience, even the graduates are very afraid of the lack of practical experience.

The comparison between the two lots of subjects of the study points out a perfect match of the hierarchy of activities intended to accumulation by the graduates of professional experience. Thus, in a percentage of over 85%, both graduates and employers rate first in the process of acquiring professional experience, entrepreneurial activities, which involve initiative and coordination of one’s own activity or of a group’s, followed by activities involving interpersonal

relationships, helping the others, educational activities, appreciated by more than three quarters of the respondents.

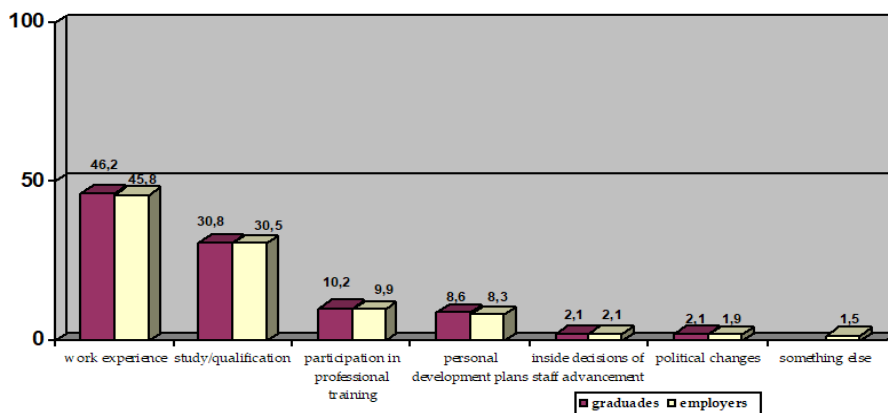
**Figure 5:** Importance of the following activities for accumulation of professional experience by graduates (%)



For the young at the beginning of their carrier, access to as much information as possible regarding the employing company, the expectations regarding the ideal candidate is important.

The same work experience is seen both by the graduates and the employers as key-element in carrier promotion and advancement, followed by the level of qualification attained, but also the existence of a personal and professional development plan, first of all by participating in training courses.

**Figure 6:** Carrier advancement possibilities, in the opinion of graduates and employers (%)



It is already known that when a university is graduated, the objectives in life are formulated generally, and the perception on the professional future is vague. Being in a continuous process of knowing their own selves, graduates will need instruments, strategies and methods that might help them discover themselves from a professional point of view, understand individual resources, but also their limits, so that they might build up medium and long term objectives, starting from these personal evaluations, being able to discover their abilities, but also their weak points in relation to a carrier they intend to develop.

Lack of self-knowledge, of exploration of employment opportunities, preponderant centring on identification of a possible employer, without putting into balance one's own interests or values, make the entire decision process unsatisfactory. To this one might add the fact that most of the graduates put the responsibility for developing professional competencies on the University instead of their own person. The fact that the support in the professional course is done by academic means is a plus for the undergraduates, since it meets the needs and expectations manifested. Meanwhile, however we should take into account the fact that there is a risk of transforming the undergraduates into simple receptors. It is necessary to maintain the responsibility and confidence attributed to the academic environment, and meanwhile to encourage the development and assuming of one's own responsibility by offering practical exercises that might be achieved outside the academic environment, by orientation toward labour market, by support offered in developing a personal brand and training in social networks that might assist them in their professional course.

The pressure exerted at university level is also highlighted by the data presented in the correlation tables 1 and 2, obtained by calculating the Spearman correlation coefficient.

**Table 1:** *Correlation between the importance given by the employer to the desire to investigate their own ideas or others and the need for higher education to improve other competencies*

			The need for higher education to improve analytical thinking	The need for higher education to improve the ability to learn quickly	The need for higher education to improve the ability to open up for new opportunities	The need for higher education to improve the desire to investigate one's own ideas or others
Spearman's rho	The importance given by the employer to the desire to investigate their own ideas or others	Correlation Coefficient	,626**	,768**	,663**	,712**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,002	,000	,001	,000
		N	19	20	19	20

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).



**Table 2:** *Correlation between the importance given by employers to analytical thinking and the need for higher education to improve other competencies*

			The need for higher education to improve analytical thinking	The need for higher education to improve the ability to learn quickly	The need for higher education to improve the ability to mobilize the capacities of others	The need for higher education to find new ideas and solutions
Spearman's rho	The importance given by employers to analytical thinking	Correlation Coefficient	,616**	,597**	,717**	,597**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,002	,002	,000	,002
		N	20	21	20	21

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## Conclusions

The hypothesis on which our entire research was based, namely “We estimate that there are no significant differences between the labour market needs and the outcome of the educational system”, has been confirmed.

University of Petroșani wants to become a bridge between business and academia, so students trained here, could find a place in the labour market, and this approach management has been declared through the official event organized on June 15, 2016 at the headquarters university. Higher education institutions that address holistic activities can be characterized as having a responsible way of action, ensuring a high level of long-term competitiveness.

It is therefore advisable for university management to understand and take into account the strategic context, impact area, and the importance of social responsibility. Then it is necessary to clarify the university objectives and implement the principle of social responsibility, taking into account the specific problems faced by the institution as well as its opportunities.

For the young at the beginning of their carrier, it is important to have access to as much information as possible regarding the employing companies, and the expectations of those on the ideal candidate, this being the main reason of maintaining an active partnership between the two media – academic and economic, its final goal being an increase of the level of employability of the university graduates.

Nowadays, more and more young people have been employed since the student years. This is due to financial problems or the desire for self-improvement. Internships or practice programs offered by business environment are a very effective way to gain experience and improve personal curriculum vitae. Most young people, once they leave school, start building a career. Each of them seeks at least one source of motivation and a professional destination.

The importance and attractiveness of such an internship is to acquire and develop applied professional skills such as teamwork or project management, the chance to gain real professional experience and ultimately to get a permanent job in the workplace chosen. There are quite a lot of employers, plenty of renowned companies that lend a hand to young people, giving them the chance to start somewhere, learn directly from specialists.

The experience gained during such an internship is very important, especially because nowadays the experience matters more than the many diplomas or courses you have attended. Most employers are looking for experienced or at least willing people to learn and accumulate as much information as possible in the shortest possible time. Young participants at a practice stage will have countless advantages: interaction with professionals in the field, the opportunity to participate in training and theoretical and practical training sessions, work within competitive teams, and result orientation.

On the other hand, through these internship programs, employers have the opportunity to attract valuable young people to their company, whom they can form, guide and then hire on a permanent basis. Selecting a student or a fresh graduate in a practice program involves earnestness, orientation towards learning and refinement, as well as openness to acquire new professional skills.

It is possible to discover with the help of the media the companies that organize such practice programs. A practice internship at a renowned company can be a big step forward towards a successful career. It is true that these programs can also be used to promote the image of the company that organizes them but at the same time it is a great opportunity for students or graduates to figure out which profession they want to pursue in the future and take the first steps in that direction.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that although the active role of youth towards unemployment is essential, it should not lead to the alleged blame of an individual because he or she is guilty if unemployment has not been adjusted. It is important to be aware of the fact that it is a multi-level phenomenon with important contextual and structural factors that the individual cannot cope with. Furthermore, it is important for governments, educational institutions, companies and other organizations to create and implement resource-friendly interventions to help young people effectively cope with and experience the experience of unemployment, to improve career development in an expanded context.

In our opinion, when it comes to reforming education, we must mainly focus on the evolution of education time of each level, from preschool to postgraduate and analysed strengths and weaknesses. Like suggestions reforming the educational system, we go on the idea of highlighting strengths and balance between practical teaching and theoretical methods, focusing on the practical side, the introduction of counselling programs to help each preschool, student or student in a direction appropriate to him, be helped to make the right decisions through clear arguments, taking into account their desires, passions and talents. Also, another point to be correlated with the above, we could talk about the efficiency and the way of

teaching, which, in our opinion, should be dynamic, based on innovation and interactive methods.

Universities have the necessary capacity to develop the intellectual framework in support of practical applications on the concept of sustainable development. Higher education institutions, as academic leaders, have the capacity to agree on academic disciplines on large and complex issues, to mobilize resources, to create incentives and programs for skills development, and most importantly to lead by example in to promote and implement sustainable development education.

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