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MANAGING QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN UNIVERSITY OF OSIJEK AND UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS

Dr.sc. Jelena Legčević, Teaching Assistant

Department of Methodology and Information Sciences, Osijek
legcevic@pravos.hr

dr. Peter Fulop, Phd-candidate

Department of Administrative Law, Pecs
peter.fulop@ajk.pte.hu

1. The social environment of the higher education

According to the changes happened in the field of higher education in the recent years - in the more developed parts of the world: in the recent decades - the ideas about the aims and tasks of education had changed. The changes have affected the whole education sphere, but we can find the biggest changes in the field of higher education. The following changes should be emphasized from the significant changes we all felt in the field of higher education: a) increasing social need of higher education, b) consequently to that, massive training and increasing number of the teaching staff, c) it is necessarily related to structural changes, d) the new directions of the higher education policy. Most common ways: the Bologna process - and all these resulted the everyday decisive psychological change of the "top trainers", which is based on the changes of the roles of the higher education.¹ The starting point of the changes lies in the expansion of the higher education. Before the Second World War less than 10% of the typical higher education age groups attended to the higher education institutions; from the sixties initially extremely fast, then decelerating rate increasing number of students was observed in Western Europe, and the rate was over 50% at the millenium in Europe.² According to Ildikó Hrubos, the growth is unstoppable, because the failure affects the individuals with serious risk. The composition of the mass of the students became more and more heterogeneous in pursuance of the social background, prior experiences, motivation and career plans. It resulted the visualization of wide range of interests and values. The central question of theoretical and practical debate about higher education nowadays, unfolding all around the world in different social groups, is: how to train intellectual professionals in these higher education institutions of the mass education, who can meet the needs of the new millenium.³

2. Transformation of the concept about the autonomy of the higher education

2.1. Cooperation between the subjects of the higher education's autonomy

The cause of the termination of the previously system-wide agreement between the subjects of the higher education's autonomy is generated from the misconception of the unlimited autonomy, and paradoxically results the minimum change of the autonomy-definition, or the erosion of that in the pessimistic opinion, which implies the following hazards: The different segments of the fragmented higher education are running independently, and do not form a system. As a result of the fragmentation, every institutions - within that all faculty, college,

¹ Kocsis Miklós: Társadalom – állam – felsőoktatás, A felsőoktatási autonómia értelmezési tartományai. Jogelméleti szemle 2010/3. szám.

² Martin Trowe: Problems in the Transition from Elite to Mass Higher Education. OECD, Paris 1974

³ Redl Károly: A fakultások vitájának előtörténetéhez. In: Az európai egyetem funkcióváltozásai (szerk. Tóth Tamás). Professzorok Háza, Budapest 2001. 57. o.

etc. - only care about its own work, and do not fit into bigger units, ultimately into the higher education as a whole, as the result of the balkanisation, all relevant stakeholders are trying to get support and gain ground in the expense of the other.⁴

2.2. The state and social environment which determines the autonomy of the higher education

In parallel with the transformation of the autonomy-definition, the higher education has undergone significant changes, and it has to face even more significant challenges. During these processes the role of the state has changed, and the expectations of the society in connection with the higher education have changed at the same time. According to these interactions, the traditional "quality" of higher education is threatened, which is also a disturbing phenomenon. According to the literature, the definition of the quality assurance shall be deemed like "those activities of an institution, organization, sector or industry which aim is to satisfy the needs of the users by their own services and products". The difficulty of the conceptual problems is that this definition is largely trivial in case of the market players, but we can identify more "users" in case of the higher education: students, parents, actors of the economic sphere, employers, scientific sphere and the society itself. Due to these interacting processes the staff of the higher education got into a new situation. Those statements - incurred by the state - became platitudinous which said that the consumption of resources by the institutions is inappropriate. The society - in particular the employers' organizations - criticized the institutions that they do not serve adequately the needs of the society and do not give "marketable" knowledge to the students. It should be also noted, that many countries was forced to fiscal constraints, and this resulted the fore of rationalization and the efficiency-enhancing of the higher education. The institutions of the higher education tried to focus on the definition of the higher education's autonomy as a response to the - often reverse - expectations of the society and the state. This attempt was not even restrained, that due to the expansion of staff of the higher education, the number of the quality "top trainers" who could maintain some kind of autonomy, due to their subjective conditions - skills - was significantly reduced. The recognition was expressed that the Magna Charta Universitatum can not be a basis for the management of these challenges, because "the labor market is fragmented all around the world, the difference between the winners and the losers is broaden and the only defense against the hopeless exclusion is the learning. Further pressure on the higher education sector is that it has to accept everyone."⁵

Such processes are permanent breeding ground for the references to the autonomy as a final resource. It was the same in the former "crisis periods" of the higher education as well: the medieval university operating in a guild form was not able to adapt to the challenges of the civilization, in the next model - from the nineteenth century - the state has funded the institutions; it was not a problem, until the decrease of the sources. Then appeared the concept of the collective autonomy opposite to the institutional autonomy. The central idea of these references was that the scientists are working free from external influences, which is financed by the state to the extent necessary. This „Myth” is not talking about the responsibility of the scientists according to the social function of the science: namely, the responsibility that the available resources should be utilized in an optimal way, to serve the benefits of the members of the society. The autonomy of the higher education can not mean absolute independence - like it did not mean absolute independence in the earlier ages neither, contrary to the public

⁴ Kocsis Miklós: Társadalom – állam – felsőoktatás, A felsőoktatási autonómia értelmezési tartományai. Jogelméleti szemle 2010/3. szám.

⁵ A kormányzatok szociális megfontolásból növekvő mértékben beavatkoznak a felsőoktatás életébe, a költségvetési finanszírozás nehézségei következtetésben megengedik a magánszektor sokszor kontrollálatlan megjelenését, térnyerését. Hrubos Ildikó: A XXI. század egyeteme 11. o. Lásd erről továbbá Stephen Lay: The Interpretation of the Magna Charta Universitatum and its Principles. Bononia University Press, Bologna 2004.

perception - it has to be consistent to the requirements of the economic, social and political environment . More forms of the responsibility of enforcing are known, but almost in all cases it is consistent with fore of the quality requirements. In the modern higher education-administration systems separated organizational systems are formed to control the quality of the higher education, where both the society and the state are present which factors formulate the expectations of the higher education. This is because the higher education system is increasingly forced to the transparency, and in this context to provide information about the quality of their work, on the other hand, the increasing competition in the higher education sector also focuses on the qualitative aspects. From the aspect of the autonomy's function it raises the question about the limited extent of the institutions and their members - for the quality - not to damage the freedom of science. The higher education institutions can not exist without the autonomy, which is "the lifeblood of every scientific work".⁶ Besides the insist to the principle of autonomy we have to ensure the autonomy for the institutions and we have to ensure that the state bodies can accomplish their control tasks. Several aspects must be considered during this work. First of all, that the accreditation models are difficult to understand without the government policies behind them: the accreditation systems are a part of the national governmental policies; and the accreditation executive bodies are between the sector of the higher education and the government.⁷ Secondly, that the outstanding "quality" can be established in that kind of areas which are permeated by the "culture of excellence". Excellence was never a permanent achievement: it has to face with more and more challenges. In rare cases, it can prevail for complete institutions too, but generally it is a characteristic of individual faculties, or units within the institutions. The nature and intensity of research (as in other activities too) is different by countries, and institutions.

The European University Association accepted a new conception about the quality of the higher education in September 2001. Within this framework, it is stated that the accreditation is the published formal recognition of the minimum requirements' compliance referring to the quality of the programs and the institutions. Therefore, the accreditation is the adequate mechanism to complete the minimum requirements of the education, and therefore it can be considered as the first step for the quality assurance. However, the accreditation can be used only together with strong internal institutional quality evaluation.

The need for autonomy - as it was shown above - was justified with the coercive force of the scientific freedom, namely that the scientific methods are inappropriate without the autonomy.⁸

The question is that what kind of function should be guaranteed for the autonomy in the middle of the situation connected to the changed social tasks to continue serving the realization of the freedom of science?

The higher education is different from other forms of educational levels. The difference is that the scientific knowledge is the essential component of the training, even if its coverage mode and rate are depending directly on the specialization and the concrete training goal . Accordingly, higher education is not primarily an institution, but an activity; we can not give sensible and regulated framework to higher education by putting that into a rigid institution system, and we can not "reform" that with apparent and spectacular organizational and administrative transformations, but we should help higher education to enforce its

⁶ Hóman Bálint: A felsőoktatás reformja. Magyar Felsőoktatás (szerk. Martonffy Károly). Az 1936. év december hó 10-től december hó 16-ig tartott országos felsőoktatási kongresszus munkálatai. Közzéteszi Hóman Bálint M. Kir. vallás- és közoktatásügyi miniszter, Budapest 1937. 10. o.

⁷ Kozma Tamás: Bevezetés. In: Kozma Tamás – Rébay Magdolna (szerk.) Felsőoktatási akkreditáció Európában. Oktatókutató Intézet, Budapest 2003. 5. o.

⁸ Vö. például Arnold Köttgen: Die Freiheit der Wissenschaft und die Selbstverwaltung der Universität. In: Neumann – Nipperdey – Scheuner: Die Grundrechte. Handbuch der Theorie und Praxis der Grundrechte. Berlin 1954. 299. o.

autonomous motion. It can be concluded, that the absolute and complete autonomy of higher education, or the fully centralized state control does not serve the interests of science: resources of rights abuses are inherent in the institutions as in the state power. The extent of the institutional autonomy interpreted as the sum of the individual and collective autonomy depends on the cooperation between the institutions, the state and the society, to finance the knowledge owned or created by them, and to utilize it for its intended purposes by the society.⁹

In accordance with the Bologna Declaration, every educational institution shall develop a system which ensures the quality of their output, in other words, the quality management system. Research conducted in this paper had two objectives; examine student perceptions of the quality of higher education at the Faculty of Law in Pécs and Faculty of Law in Osijek and deeper insight into the structure of the samples, extract those criterion variables that most influence the quality of teaching observed in the faculties.

3. Methodology

3.1 Method

The survey on the quality of higher education was conducted at the Universities of Osijek and Pécs during October and November 2011. By means of the PAPI (Paper and Pencil) method and as instructed by the surveyor, students independently filled out the survey after the completed courses. For the purpose of survey implementation, a measuring instrument called KVALIMETAR¹⁰ was utilized. The tool consists of 31 statement categorized into five areas: *administrative staff, teaching staff, reputation, rooms and equipment, curriculum and teaching plans*. The grades are based on Likert scaling¹¹ and range from 1 to 5 with 1 referring to 'complete disagreement with a statement' and 5 to 'complete agreement with a statement'. The below table presents the applied measuring tool.

Table 1 – KVALIMETAR measuring instrument

	STATEMENT	GRADE
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	1. Administrative staff is available and ready to provide students with assistance.	1 2 3 4 5
	2. Administrative staff treats students with respect and dignity.	1 2 3 4 5
	3. Administrative staff deals with students' enquiries in a prompt and professional manner.	1 2 3 4 5
	4. Administrative staff helps students with respect to providing information on the study, curriculum and majors...	1 2 3 4 5
	5. Students' applications and enquiries are timely and accurately dealt with.	1 2 3 4 5
	6. Student office keeps records of students properly and precisely.	1 2 3 4 5
	7. Students are timely informed by the faculty on current changes of course schedule, time of examination and delayed/cancelled lectures...	1 2 3 4 5

⁹ Kocsis Miklós: Társadalom – állam – felsőoktatás, A felsőoktatási autonómia értelmezési tartományai. Jogelméleti szemle 2010/3. szám.

¹⁰ J. Legčević, *The System of Managing Quality in Higher Education*, Doctoral Dissertation, Faculty of Economics University of Osijek, Doctoral dissertation, July 2011., p.134.

¹¹ J.E.Hanke, A.G.Reitsch, *Understanding Business Statistics* (Homewood, Boston 1991) p. 273.

TEACHING STAFF	8. Professors and teaching assistants give an impression of love and enthusiasm for their course.	1 2 3 4 5
	9. Professors and teaching assistants are highly motivated for doing their job and conscientiously fulfil their obligations.	1 2 3 4 5
	10. When teaching, professors and teaching assistants seem to have proper knowledge of the matter and demonstrate it in a clear and comprehensible manner.	1 2 3 4 5
	11. Using teaching tools and modern technology, professors and teaching assistants raise the level of teaching quality.	1 2 3 4 5
	12. Professors and teaching assistants hold classes, seminars and practices regularly and in time.	1 2 3 4 5
	13. Professors and teaching assistants encourage students to actively participate in classes and to take responsibility for studying.	1 2 3 4 5
	14. Professors and teaching assistants assess students' performance appropriately, objectively and fairly.	1 2 3 4 5
	15. Professors and teaching assistants are available and friendly to students.	1 2 3 4 5
	16. Professors and teaching assistants possess proper communication skills and create pleasant working atmosphere.	1 2 3 4 5
	17. Professors and teaching assistants are available and willing to receive students during office hours.	1 2 3 4 5
REPUTATION	18. Professors and teaching assistants can also be reached after classes.	1 2 3 4 5
	19. Faculty is characterized by its professional image.	1 2 3 4 5
	20. Faculty includes adequately qualified teaching staff.	1 2 3 4 5
ROOMS AND EQUIPMENT	21. After the studying, students are capable of transferring acquired knowledge and skills.	1 2 3 4 5
	22. Faculty possesses appropriate equipment necessary for organization of classes, seminars and practices...	1 2 3 4 5
	23. Faculty manages with adequate rooms for teaching and studying (libraries, workshops, laboratories, IT classrooms...)	1 2 3 4 5
	24. Illumination and cleanliness of classrooms are also adequate (halls, classrooms, laboratories...).	1 2 3 4 5
	25. Faculty owns teaching tools as well as adequate and available literature.	1 2 3 4 5
	26. Student access to faculty classrooms/rooms is at a proper level	1 2 3 4 5
CURRICULUM AND TEACHING PLANS	27. Student access to IT classrooms is at a proper level.	1 2 3 4 5
	28. Curriculum and teaching plans contain clear goals and guidelines comprehensible to both professors and students.	1 2 3 4 5
	29. Curriculum standard matches the acquired level of qualifications.	1 2 3 4 5
	30. Faculty as an entity offers various curriculums (majors) intended for advancement of students.	1 2 3 4 5
	31. Goals and guidelines of curriculums are harmonized with course contents.	1 2 3 4 5

The area *administrative staff* includes statements from 1 to 7 and refers to services of student office, reception office and faculty bookshop and to particular scientific-teaching units. These services include availability, proper treatment of students, timely dealing with students' applications and enquiries, reporting on current schedule changes and precise student record keeping.

The area *teaching staff* involves statements from 8 to 18 and relates to motivation, competence and communication of teaching staff, utilization of teaching tools and modern technology, regular schedule of classes, objective and fair assessment of students' performance, friendly attitude to students during office hours.

The area *˘reputation˘* contains statements from 19 to 21 and implies faculty reputation, qualified teaching staff, capability of transferring acquired knowledge and skills after completion of the study.

The area *˘rooms and equipment˘* comprises statements from 22 to 27 and refers to rooms and equipment necessary for studying and teaching, these include libraries, laboratories, workshops, IT classrooms, illumination and cleanliness of rooms, adequacy and availability of literature.

The area *˘curriculum and teaching plans˘* involves statements from 28 to 31. This area entails clear goals and guidelines as well as various curriculums intended for student education.

Based on the KVALIMETAR statements, an entry pattern was drawn up. This was actually a formatted SPSS database¹² which served as an entry frame and was also used for validation and data processing, deleting the papers which had remained mostly unfilled.

3.2 Samples

The survey was based on the random sample method¹³ and comprised 228 students of the Faculty of Law of Osijek and 133 students of the Faculty of Law of Pécs. The samples included students from every year of study. The students' age ranged from 18 to 29 years while the average age amounted to 21 year and the most common age to 20 years. Separate analysis of examples is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Demographic structure of students of the Faculty of Law of Pécs (PTE) and the Faculty of Law of Osijek (PRAVOS)

VARIABLES	FACULTY			
	PTE		PRAVOS	
	Absolute frequencies	Relative frequencies	Absolute frequencies	Relative frequencies
GENDER				
female	87	65.9	170	74.2
male	45	34.1	59	25.8
TOTAL	132	100	229	100
YEARS OF AGE				
18-20	11	8.3	152	66.4
21-23	79	59.8	60	26.2
24-26	19	14.4	14	6.1
27-29	23	17.5	3	1.3
TOTAL	132	100.0	229	100
STATUS				
Financed by the Ministry	86	65.2	175	76.4
Partial financing	46	34.8	54	23.6
TOTAL	132	100.0	229	100.0
YEAR OF STUDY				
First	1	0.75	68	29.68
Second	2	1.51	63	27.51
Third	49	37.13	70	30.57
Fourth	30	22.73	1	0.44
Fifth	50	37.88	27	11.8
TOTAL	132	100.0	229	100.0

¹² SPSS Base 15.0 Users Guide, SPSS Inc. [2007], pp.71-89.

¹³ T.G. Vavra, *Improving Your Measurement of Customer Satisfaction: A Guide to Creating, Conducting, Analyzing, and Reporting Customer Satisfaction Measurement Programs* (Milwaukee, ASQC 1997) pp.71-250.

ATTENDANCE OF CLASSES				
-25%	5	3.8	-	-
25-50%	24	18.2	13	5.7
50-75%	31	23.5	70	30.6
more than 75%	72	54.5	146	63.7
TOTAL	132	100	229	100
GRADES STATED IN THE STUDENT RECORD BOOK				
Good	10	7.6	16	7.0
Very good	55	41.7	65	28.4
Excellent	67	50.8	87	38.0
Not provided an answer	-	-	61	26.6
TOTAL	132	100	229	100

3.2.1 Demographic structure of samples from the Faculty of Law of Pécs (PTE)

In terms of gender, the samples included 65.9% of female students and 34.1% of male students, out of which the greatest share referred to students aged from 21 to 23 (59.8%) whose study is fully financed by the competent Ministry (65.2%). The majority of surveyed students were 3rd-year students (37.13%), followed by 4th-year students (22.73%) and 5th-year students (37.88%). Over a half of surveyed students (54.5%) actively participate in more than 75% of classes while 50.8% of examinees are excellent students.

3.2.2 Demographic structure of samples from the Faculty of Law of Osijek (PRAVOS)

As far as the sex of surveyed students is concerned, the samples were constituted of 74.2% of female students and 25.8% of male students, out of which 66.4% of students were aged from 18 to 20 whose studying is fully supported by the competent Ministry (76.4%). The surveyed students mostly represented the first year of study (29.68%). The rest of them were on the second (27.51%) and the third year of study (30.57%). Over a half of examinees (63.3%) actively participate in more than 75% of classes and are (66.4% of examinees) either very good (28.4) or excellent students (38%).

Such results, taking samples from both faculties into consideration, were expected since at both faculties students study in compliance with requirements of the highly proclaimed Bologna process which emerged as a European need for development of a knowledge-based society and economy.¹⁴ After introducing the sample characteristics, analysis of the results of the survey of the students' perception of educational service quality was conducted in order to detect improvement possibilities and provide guidelines for achieving excellence by realizing the existing conditions at the respective institutions.

4. Survey results

Most developed European countries regularly perform systematic evaluation of institutions of higher education and their programmes as to assure and improve the service quality. The evaluation procedure consists of internal and external assessment, both including a document preparation phase in which results are elaborated and integrated into a proposal for possible improvements. Internal assessment is carried out by an institution of higher education and is made up of continuous mechanisms of quality monitoring: monitoring and control of all processes of higher education, evaluation by students and periodic preparation of a standardized report with respect to a certain period of time.¹⁵ The backbone of this survey is

¹⁴ Vavra, op.cit.n.13, at p.121.

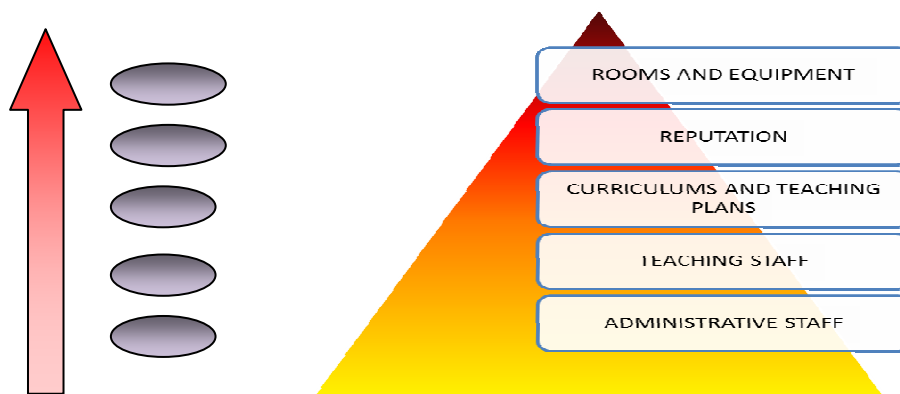
¹⁵ S.Schwarz, F.Westerheijden, Accreditation and Evaluation in the European Higher Education Area, Higher Education Dynamics, Vol 5, Springer, 2007., pp.143.

internal assessment of the current conditions at the Faculty of Law of Pécs and at the Faculty of Law of Osijek in order to identify possibilities for raising the level of educational service quality. The following chapter offers separate analysis of the conditions at the referring institutions.

4.1 Analysis of the conditions at the Faculty of Law of Pécs (PTE)

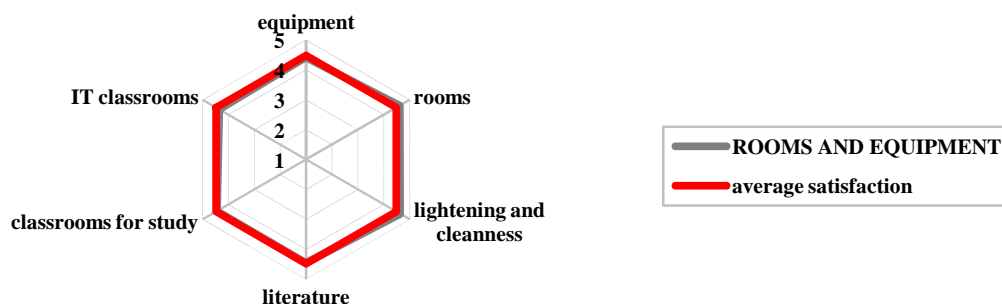
By means of a measuring tool called KVALIMETAR, the students' perception of education quality was surveyed. The survey included five precisely defined areas (*administrative staff, teaching staff, reputation, rooms and equipment, curriculum and teaching plans*). Image 1 shows the students' perception (using a 1 to 5 scale) of each area posted as an average grade. The grades range from 3.56 to 4.48, which clearly entails great satisfaction in all layers of educational service. Detailed analysis of every area will be presented by a network diagram by means of which one can detect areas requiring improvement for the purpose of achieving better results in general.

Image1 Student satisfaction with particular areas of the KVALIMETAR measuring instrument



In terms of the University of Pécs, the best grades were given to the area **equipment and rooms (4.48)**. Students were satisfied with the classrooms and teaching equipment to the greatest extent. The detailed analysis has revealed that senior students (4th and 5th-year students) have a higher GPA (<4.0) and that they attend classes more regularly (<75%). Somewhat lower grades were given to the area **administrative staff (3.56)**. It has been ascertained that these grades were given by junior students (1st-year students) who do not attend classes regularly (> 25%) and have a lower GPA (>2.5).The below diagrams show grades given to every area with respect to the overall grade

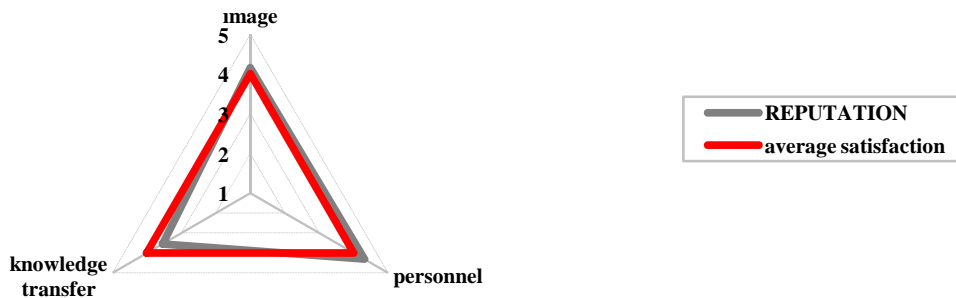
Image 2 Results of the students' perception of the area rooms and equipment



The average grade of the area **rooms and equipment** amounts to 4.48. Students were pleased with all the factors of this area: available rooms and literature needed for studying, cleanliness

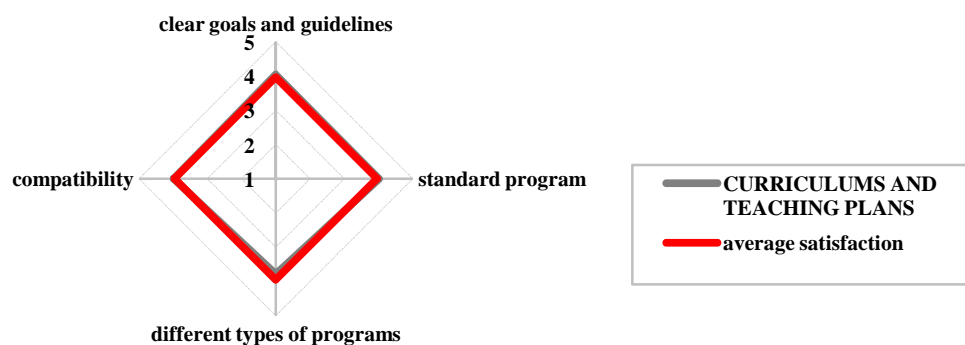
of classrooms and appropriate teaching equipment. All the factors of this area are concentrated around the area average, which means that they should all be treated with due importance.

Image 3 Results of the students' perception of the area reputation



The area 'reputation' has an average grade of 4.01. To a great extent, students were satisfied with the faculty as a whole and with the properly qualified and professional teaching staff. Their satisfaction was a little lesser with respect to transfer of acquired knowledge and skills to the labour market, which represents a field that needs improvement in order to raise the overall level of the quality of the area.

Image 4 Results of the students' perception of the area curriculums and teaching plans

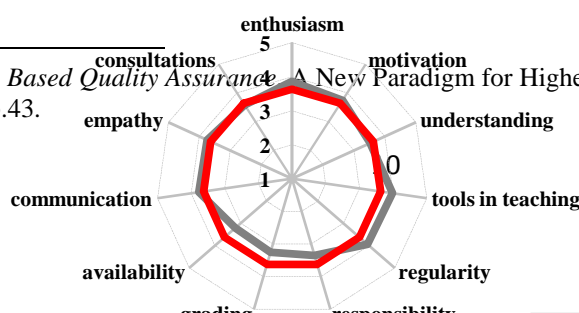


The average grade of the area 'curriculums and teaching plans' totals 3.96. Students supported the goals and guidelines harmonized with the course contents which were comprehensible to both students and teachers. All the elements in question are within the average, which implies that there are no critical points and that all the factors deserve equal attention. One of the fundamental indicators of the successfulness of an institution of higher education refers to curriculums and accompanying teaching staff.

Curriculums have the role of a frame within which students have an opportunity to accomplish a certain level of education, so it is utterly important to be in touch with student small talks and with their needs and wishes since they are the ones who are familiar with the curriculum and teaching staff.¹⁶

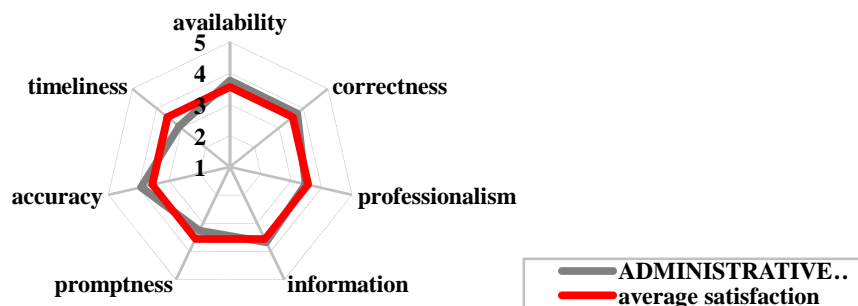
Image 5 Results of the students' perception of the area teaching staff

¹⁶ D. Rees, *Evidence Based Quality Assurance - A New Paradigm for Higher Education*, VDM Verlag Dr Muller, Saarbrucken 2011, p.43.



The area 'teaching staff' was awarded an average grade of 3.63. Concerning this area, students found the following factors the most satisfying of all: teaching enthusiasm, friendly attitude during office hours of professors, motivation of teaching staff for transferring the course contents, competence and qualifications of teaching staff, proper communication skills enabling transfer of knowledge in a clear and understandable fashion, regular schedule of classes. The grading of students' performance, availability and accountability are below the average grade and should be considered as critical points that require significant improvement in the future whereas the tendencies relating to good comprehension of knowledge transfer, utilization of teaching tools and regular schedule of classes exceed the above average and hence should be maintained.

Image 6 Results of the students' perception of the area administrative staff



The area 'administrative staff' was awarded an average grade of 3.56. Students were least satisfied with untimely dealing with their applications and requests and with the slow service-providing process. The availability, decent treatment, preciseness and competence of the administrative staff exceed the above average and represent a competitive advantage which should be maintained because these factors raise the level of the entire area. The administrative staff should work on promptness and timeliness.

4.1.1 Concluding considerations regards the Faculty of Law of Pécs

The students' perceptions of five areas have been quantified by means of a measuring tool called KVALIMETAR and accompanying analysis. It has been concluded that the Faculty of Law of Pécs manages with rooms most appropriately equipped for teaching and available literature necessary for exam preparation. One of the fundamental indicators of the successfulness of an institution of higher education refers to high quality curriculums and accompanying teaching staff. Curriculums have the role of a frame within which students have an opportunity to accomplish a certain level of education, so it is utterly important to be in touch with student small talks and with their needs and wishes since they are the ones who

are familiar with the curriculum and teaching staff.¹⁷ Since teaching staff is expected to motivate students, guide their study and encourage their educational and professional development, it is vital to evaluate the students' performance objectively and define the grading system precisely. As quality management is, among other things, aimed at education of an individual and development of a social community where at various approaches to quality reflect various approaches to education itself, which finally results in desired quality, one can say that, based on the conducted survey, students of the Faculty of Law of Pécs were impressed to the greatest extent by the extrinsic values of their faculty.

Extrinsic quality caters for requirements of the society regarding higher education, on the occasion of which these requirements are modified together with social changes occurring within a certain period of time. This quality relates to the capabilities of an institution of higher education to respond to flexible needs of the society which the institution interacts with¹⁸.

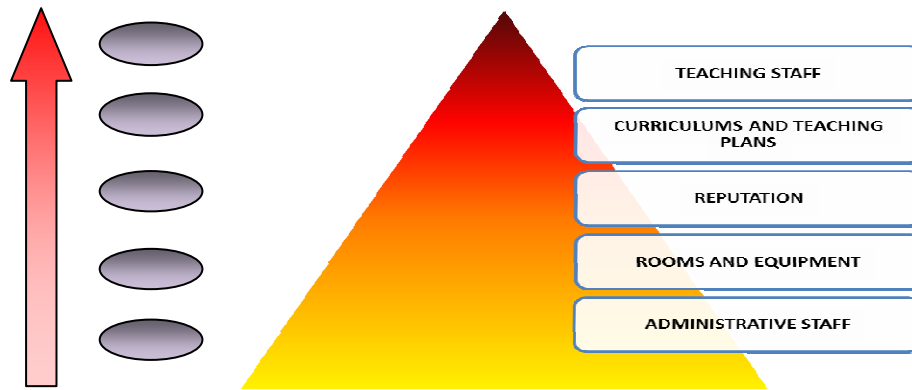
4.2 Analysis of the conditions at the Faculty of Law of Osijek

By means of a measuring tool called KVALIMETAR, the student satisfaction with education quality was surveyed. The survey included five precisely defined areas (*administrative staff, teaching staff, reputation, rooms and equipment, curriculum and teaching plans*). Image 7 shows the students' perception (using a 1 to 5 scale) of each area posted as an average grade. The grades range from 2.73 to 3.69.

¹⁷ C. Chakrapani, *How to measure Service Quality and Customer satisfaction*, American Marketing Association, Chicago, Illinois, 1998., p.59.

¹⁸ S.J.Arcaro, *Quality in Education, An implementation handbook*, Florida, 2005., str. 15.; V. Zidarić, *The European dimension in education - its origin, development and current state*, *Social Research* 21, 1996., p.168.

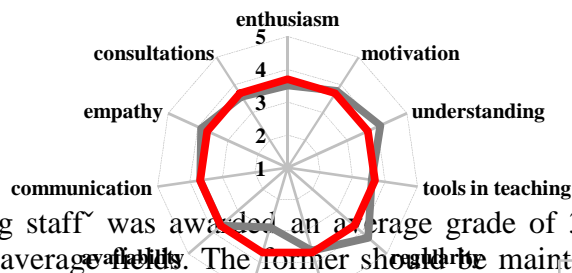
Image 7 Student satisfaction with particular areas of the KVALIMETAR measuring instrument



Students of the Faculty of Law of Osijek were most impressed with the quality of teaching staff (average=3.69), they also awarded good grades to the competence and qualifications of the teaching staff, proper communication skills enabling transfer of knowledge in a clear and understandable fashion, regular schedule of classes and availability and friendly attitude during office hours of professors. Unexpectedly, students were very satisfied with the area *scientific and teaching plans and curriculums* (average=3.60) since it is this area that represents the frame within which students have an opportunity to accomplish a certain level of education. As far as the area *reputation* is concerned (average=3.51), students seem to be pleased with the faculty as a whole and with the properly qualified and professional teaching staff as well as with appropriate rooms and equipment necessary for teaching (*rooms and equipment*; average=3.47). Students were least happy with the availability and promptness of the *administrative staff* (average=2.73).

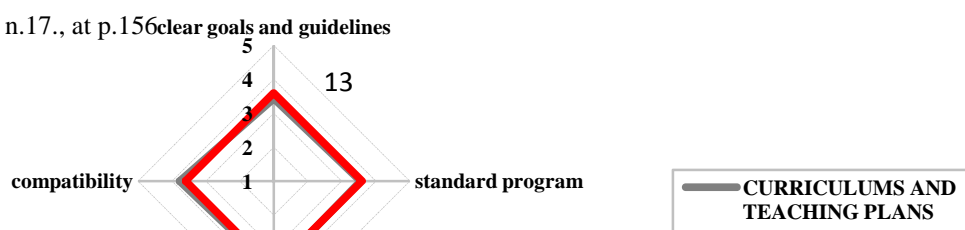
Detailed analysis of every area specified by a measuring tool called KVALIMETAR will be presented by a network diagram by means of which one can detect areas requiring improvement for the purpose of achieving better results in general.

Image 8 Results of the students' perception of the area teaching staff



The area *teaching staff* was awarded an average grade of 3.69. The results indicate both above and below average fields. The former should be maintained and supply with input in order to strengthen the image of the entire faculty, while the latter should be additionally supported. Students were satisfied with the following factors: transfer of knowledge in a clear and understandable fashion, regular schedule of classes and friendly attitude of the teaching staff. Since teaching staff is expected to motivate students, provide guidance through their study and encourage their educational and professional development, it is vital to evaluate the students' performance objectively and define the grading system precisely.¹⁹

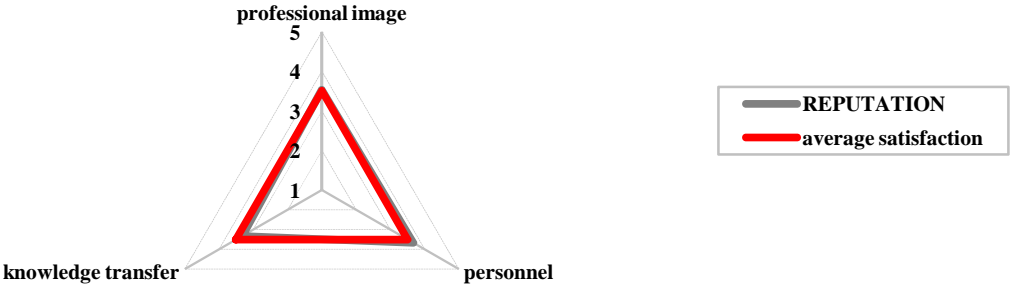
Image 9 Results of the students' perception in the area curriculums and teaching plans



¹⁹ C. Chakrapani, op.cit., n.17., at p.156 clear goals and guidelines

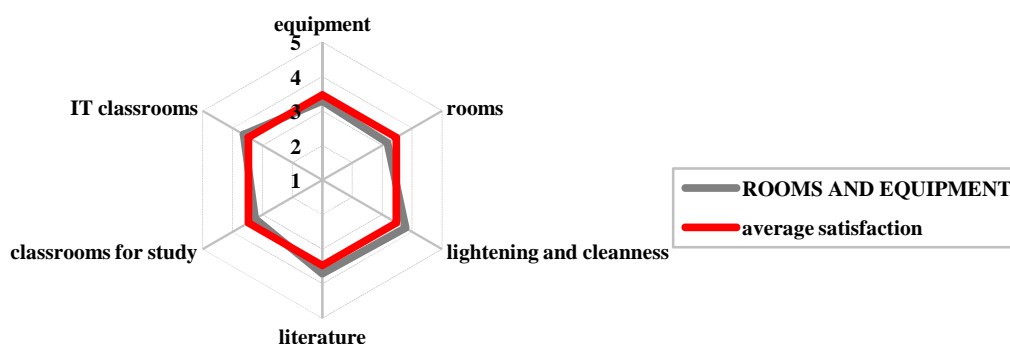
The area 'curriculums and teaching plans' has an average grade of 3.60. Student satisfaction refers to goals and guidelines harmonized with the course contents intended for advancement of students. The results are within the average, which means that the Faculty of Law of Osijek should try to maintain this level and to cater for foreseeable outcome of its programmes. It appears that the teaching staffs are willing and capable of running classes and providing appertaining assistance in studying in order to facilitate accomplishment of these goals by the students.

Image 10 Results of the students' perception of the area reputation



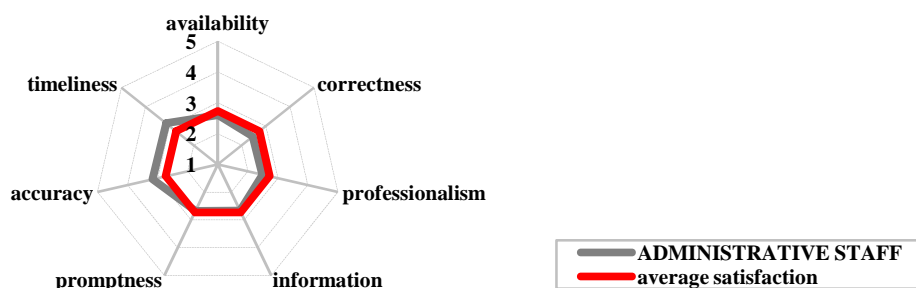
This area is characterized by an average grade of 3.51. Students were happy with all the elements of this area and their satisfaction is an average one.

Image 11 Results of the students' perception of the area rooms and equipment



The area 'rooms and equipment' was awarded an average grade of 3.47. Although the status of this area is satisfying, there is still room for improvements, particularly considering informatization of the entire administrative staff, which is rather obvious in the enrolment period, modernization of equipment necessary for high quality teaching and assurance of resources which are to provide students with assistance when studying. This area and the area 'administrative staff' should be firmly linked with the area 'reputation'. That will stimulate development of culture, which will then encourage professors to be in touch with the public and become, in a way, spokesmen of their institution announcing the latest, impartial and objective information.

Image 12 Results of the students' perception of the area administrative staff



The area 'administrative staff' was graded 2.73. Students were pleased with the timeliness and accuracy of services while they object to student treatment and to the competence of the administrative staff. Features such as availability, promptness and access to relevant information correspond to the average.

4.2.1 Concluding considerations regards the Faculty of Law of Osijek

The Bologna process has emerged as a European need for development of a knowledge-based society and economy. In Croatia, it does not represent only an inevitable consequence of harmonization with EU standards but also an appropriate framework for commencement with necessary reforms, so that the Croatian society could efficiently transform into a knowledge-based society.²⁰ The quality management system is based on the liability of integral parts (faculties) of the University for the quality of education offered to students who represent its essence, i.e. central interest of the Faculty. As assurance of quality within a higher education system is a continuous process which facilitates meeting the respective standards, every

²⁰ I. Mencer, Quality Management at Croatian universities in efforts involving the European Space of Higher Education, Proceedings of the 11th International Symposium on Quality 'QUALITY, COMPETITIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY, March 18.-19, 2010., p.135.

integral part of the University has a chance to achieve impressive results and implement high quality programmes by applying defined standards and guidelines. This survey has shown that students are very pleased with those elements and values that come from the heart of higher education and are referred to as intrinsic values.

Intrinsic quality is oriented towards studying and generation of knowledge and represents the foundation of the academic community whereat this community can be seen as the guard of intrinsic quality.²¹

5. Conclusion

Every quality assurance system reflects a national system of higher education and a local social framework within which institutions of higher education operate. Nevertheless, the emergence of the European system of higher education, European labour market, an increasing level of student and professor mobility, an increasing number of institutions and *globalization* of education²² have all made quality assurance relevant at the European level as well. Therefore, European standards of higher education have been established and these have to be applied in all the Bologna process signatories.

Many countries and interested parties consider quality assurance one of the foundations of the Bologna process. It is not only a matter of assurance but also a way of improving quality. Quality assurance has never been experienced as a process which needs to be identical in all the European countries. On the contrary, one has attempted to increase the level of cooperation within this process. Mutual trust is thus of vital importance for the process²³.

The liability and initiative for reaching and enhancement of higher education quality primarily belong to the scope of the Universities' tasks which should, based on general methodological patterns of qualitative and quantitative surveys and evaluations, develop own models accommodated to the specific needs of the achieved development. Since successful quality management in higher education implies findings on the current condition which can contribute to detection of problems at a certain moment, it came to a need for survey of the students' perception of higher education quality at the two Universities: the Faculty of Law of Pécs (n=133) and the Faculty of Law of Osijek (n=228). The survey was conducted by means of a measuring tool called KVALIMETAR. Quality management requires monitoring of quality over the time for each faculty. As the quality in paper is measured by perception of the students, main objective is not comparison between them but ensuring quality control for each faculty.

6. Recommendations for improvement

The phase of self-analysis requires inclusion of a student representative into the Quality Assurance Council as to enable students to be provided with first-hand information on the activities and goals that should be accomplished. The implementation of the analysis needs to involve particular parameters which might appear as quality indicators at a faculty and refer to the ways how the faculty intends to accomplish its goals and assure the quality of the education process. It is essential to systematically raise the level of awareness of the

²¹ S.J.Arcaro, op.cit., n.18. at p. 123.

²² S. Lelas, Rethinking science: Croatian Philosophical Society, Zagreb, 1990., str. 24.; Dew, R.J., Nearing, M.,Mc., Continuous Quality Improvement in Higher Education, American Council on Education, USA, 2004., p. 81.

²³ P. Nightingale, Oneil, M., Achiving Quality Learning in Higher Education, Kogan Page, London, Philadelphia, 2007., p. 94.

importance and role of quality assurance, accepting it as a permanent process which entails regular efforts of all the providers of the teaching and research process. One should also shape an approach in which every person would have their own active role in every activity whereas quality assurance would be their collective task. Managements of faculties within the Universities should be focused on quality policies as a management and improvement instrument. When setting out quality policies, the managements should analyze the following issues: desired and anticipated level of student satisfaction and satisfaction of other interested parties, level and type of future improvement necessary for a particular faculty. Then, one needs to prepare well-organized and regular implementation of self-analysis at all faculties within the Universities by means of KVALIMETAR as an evaluation method which will warn about positive and negative sides of the education process.

People are an inevitable segment of quality. Only highly motivated and educated employees who take advantage of the most contemporary technologies can reach the highest level of quality. If the human factor is neglected, then every effort put into improvement of quality will be doomed to fail. Taking care of employees, their knowledge, creativity and expertise are of great importance in this context. Therefore, quality management tasks are gradually becoming a regular and mandatory university activity.