THEORETICAL ANALYSIS AND POSITIONING BENCHMARKING AS A PRODUCT QUALITY MEASURING INSTRUMENT

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Abstract

The European Higher Education Area - EHEA is established on the principles and values, indicated in the Bologna declaration from 1999. During the annual conferences of ministers of higher education at countries from EHEA in the next years (Prague, Bergen, London, Leuven, Budapest, and Bucharest) these principles and values are developed and approved. One of these values is the quality of education. The highly compatible educational environment could provide such quality of education through which students acquire knowledge, skills, and competences necessary for the labor market. The aforementioned defines the relevance of the scientific problems addressed to the quality of higher education. The problem for quality has many aspects. One of them is at most significant: the quality of education science. It must solve many tasks, addressed to the quality concept, quality measurement; choice of quality criteria and indicators (according to methods of mathematical taxonomy, multi-factor and cluster analysis, multidimensional

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scaling), quality verification etc. Today, the dynamic development of IT sector and the social trend raise new problems for the higher education. Higher schools are related to both the market where quality educational services are provided and the labor market. The students are the consumers of educational services, while employers are the main consumers at the labor market. By the benchmarking approach, higher schools can define clear objectives for their development, based on the information about advantages and disadvantages of education. The main objective of the present report is to be defined and evaluated the key indicators for quality measurement and management of education at higher schools by means of benchmarking model and to be defined the competitiveness of the European educational market.

**Keywords:** benchmarking, higher education, higher schools, quality, competitiveness

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