

**QUALITY CONTROL OF EDUCATIONAL PROCESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS: INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**CONTROLE DE QUALIDADE DO PROCESSO EDUCATIVO NAS INSTITUIÇÕES DE
ENSINO SUPERIOR: EXPERIÊNCIA INTERNACIONAL**

**CONTROL DE CALIDAD DEL PROCESO EDUCATIVO EN LOS CENTROS DE
ENSEÑANZA SUPERIOR: EXPERIENCIA INTERNACIONAL**

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ABSTRACT: This article examines issues and approaches for ensuring quality teaching in universities. Incorporating the achievements of leading international figures, the article provides ideas and practical advice to help universities observe teaching quality and offers insights into how the topics raised can be directly applied. Initially, some key issues related to the topic are identified, such as: defining evidence-based teaching quality; training university, and engaging students in developing quality teaching in higher education. Ideas and initiatives to address these challenges are presented: Quality assurance – what “quality assurance” means and how it can be put into practice; defining quality – exploring what knowledge currently exists and how it can be explored further; quality development – research on the development of educators through teacher training and assessment; quality assurance examples – an overview of research on quality assurance.

KEYWORDS: Education quality. Teachers’ training. Monitoring.

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RESUMO: Este artigo examina questões e abordagens para assegurar um ensino de qualidade nas universidades. Incorporando as realizações das principais figuras internacionais, o artigo fornece ideias e conselhos práticos para ajudar as universidades a observar a qualidade do ensino e oferece uma visão sobre como os tópicos levantados podem ser diretamente aplicados. Inicialmente, são identificadas algumas questões-chave relacionadas com o tema, tais como: definição de qualidade de ensino baseada em provas; formação universitária, e envolvimento dos estudantes no desenvolvimento de um ensino de qualidade no ensino superior. São apresentadas ideias e iniciativas para enfrentar estes desafios: Garantia de qualidade - o que significa "garantia de qualidade" e como pode ser posta em prática; definição de qualidade - explorar o conhecimento atualmente existente e como pode ser mais explorado; desenvolvimento da qualidade - investigação sobre o desenvolvimento de educadores através da formação e avaliação de professores; exemplos de garantia de qualidade - uma visão geral da investigação sobre garantia de qualidade.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Qualidade da educação. Formação de professores. Monitorização.

RESUMEN: Este artículo examina cuestiones y enfoques para garantizar la calidad de la enseñanza en las universidades. Incorporando los logros de destacadas figuras internacionales, el artículo proporciona ideas y consejos prácticos para ayudar a las universidades a observar la calidad de la enseñanza y ofrece ideas sobre cómo se pueden aplicar directamente los temas planteados. Inicialmente, se identifican algunas cuestiones clave relacionadas con el tema, tales como: la definición de la calidad de la enseñanza basada en pruebas; la formación de la universidad, y la participación de los estudiantes en el desarrollo de la enseñanza de calidad en la educación superior. Se presentan ideas e iniciativas para abordar estos retos: Aseguramiento de la calidad - qué significa "aseguramiento de la calidad" y cómo puede ponerse en práctica; definición de la calidad - exploración de los conocimientos existentes en la actualidad y cómo se pueden seguir explorando; desarrollo de la calidad - investigación sobre el desarrollo de los educadores a través de la formación y la evaluación del profesorado; ejemplos de aseguramiento de la calidad - una visión general de la investigación sobre el aseguramiento de la calidad.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Calidad de la educación. Formación del profesorado. Seguimiento.

Introduction

Quality assurance is about ensuring that standards are defined and met consistently for a product or service. The term comes partly from manufacturing and services, partly from health care. Its application to education has been quick and ubiquitous. But how relevant and useful is it for teaching in universities?

Quality itself is a somewhat ambiguous term, as it has shades of both standards and excellence. Thus, talking about *education quality* can refer to high or low standards, while referring to *education quality* means teaching excellence. Associating quality assurance with

excellence can be misleading. It can also be convenient when the assurance of minimum standards is disguised as excellence.

Some standards are important for quality assurance. But standards, like beauty, are usually in the eyes or perception of observers. Who are the observers who will determine the quality of university teaching? The important idea is that consumers of a product or service should be the ultimate arbiters of quality. From this follows the idea that quality is what satisfies the consumer or buyer. In its simplest form, quality in university teaching would be satisfying the primary customer, the student. This concept is more formally formulated by the British Standards Institute: “Quality is the set of attributes and characteristics of a product or service that affect its ability to meet stated or admitted needs”. Thus, students’ needs may be stated by them or the teacher on their behalf (BOVILL, 2013).

Customers or consumers are not always easy to identify. Or there are usually too many. For example, who are the consumers of university education? In an obvious sense, students consume or have a teaching experience, but others need to be satisfied, including colleagues, department heads, financial authorities, employers, government, and society at large. All of these, in a sense, can be defined as customers of teaching at the university. Teaching is also clearly an important element of a faculty member’s identity, whether or not it is perceived enthusiastically.

Another angle is to perceive quality as fitness for purpose. Theoretically, such quality would exist even if many observers and indeed clients, at least at first, were unable to appreciate it. It is also a more useful definition of situations where there are no obvious clients or where there are multiple clients. Thus, the quality of teaching will be determined by its suitability to achieve its stated goals, probably by training and ability.

Teaching can be viewed in the short term, assessed within the program, in the medium term as it affects employment, and in the long term as it lays the foundation for lifelong learning. University knowledge can also be placed on a continuum from instrumental, fulfilling an immediately applied purpose, to liberal, encouraging criticism and dissent. This continuum reflects a constant tension in institutional education.

Other definitions include “compliance” (CROSBY, 1984) and “a predictable degree of uniformity and reliability at low cost and adapted to the marketplace” (DEMING, 1982). Key concepts here include compliance with standards and standards that are fit for purpose and satisfy the market. Deming (1982) also notes the importance of cost-effectiveness, which is satisfying the market at the low or lowest possible cost.

Out of these definitions, the concept of fit for purpose is perhaps the simplest but also complicated variety of purpose (ELLIS, 2016).

However, the idea of the customer or customers being satisfied is too important to lose. For this reason, a working definition of quality might be as follows: quality is the standards that must be adhered to achieve certain goals and customer satisfaction.

Literature review

As far back as the 1970s, European universities were aware of the need to analyze students' satisfaction with their academic programs to achieve their educational goals (MORSTAIN, 1977). So far, there is a long experience of satisfaction monitoring studies: in Europe, they are 30 years, in the UK, 20 years (ZOTOVA, 2017). Monitoring research has contributed to the current trend and set the course for new research. However, the Ukrainian experience in the field of education research is insufficient.

Satisfaction monitoring is based on the study of the students' satisfaction feedback, which is a sign of the university's success (SHAH; NAIR; RICHARDSON, 2019). Students' satisfaction feedback is defined as students' perceptions of the services they receive as students. It may include perceptions of learning and teaching, the organization of the educational process, learning support tools, and the learning environment (HARVEY, 2003). International researchers agree that students' feedback, which is carefully collected from institutions of higher education, will contribute to continuous improvement in the quality of education. Along with public data, research helps to improve education management. Public awareness also matters: it builds a new culture of student participation in governance. Students need to be assured that changes at universities are caused by the feedback they show in surveys. The criteria for measuring satisfaction depend on the profile of the university. For example, researchers from Liverpool John Moores University School of Business and Law provided 60 variables affecting student satisfaction (DOUGLAS, J.; DOUGLAS, A.; BARNES, 2016).

The opinion polls in Ukraine show that university education discourages many students and causes them to become disillusioned with their chosen profession. This fact forces large Ukrainian universities to conduct comprehensive research on factors and indicators of student satisfaction with the quality of education.

Satisfaction with the quality of education is of great importance for the preparation of a qualified innovation-oriented specialist who has the basic professional competence—the

ability to create “human-measurement” systems and apply “organizational creativity” (KONSTANTINOVSKY, 2019).

Research goals

This article aims to investigate approaches to quality assurance in universities. The main objectives are to: determine the quality of teaching based on evidence; analyze teacher training; and determine the impact of student involvement in the development of quality training in higher education institutions.

Methods and materials

The construction of the satisfaction model is based on the methodology of empirical interpretation, which involves finding empirical elements (YADOV, 2018). Objectification of the category “pleasure” means differentiation between satisfaction as a state of consciousness and satisfaction as a behavioral reaction. In addition, satisfaction is defined as a derivative of a set of factors reflecting the synthesis of the value of the object being measured and the quality of the measurer, i.e., the student.

The satisfaction model combines the results of measuring satisfaction according to various parameters of the educational process and situation, behavioral aspects that show students’ life strategies and their trajectories to fit into the labor market, as well as institutionally defined factors derived from the trend of the modern educational paradigm. Student satisfaction with higher education and the measurement of educational quality depends on student values and attitudes toward education—incentives to learn, the value of education, and knowledge. The ultimate value of education can be defined by several of the following values: developmental ability, cognitive needs, and general literacy. In addition, attitudes towards education are explained by factors: belonging to different social groups, income level, parents' education, modernization of the education system. Taken together, these factors determine the socio-situational aspect of the student's attitude towards learning (ZUBOK; CHUPROV, 2012).

Satisfaction with higher education is a parameter that characterizes the professional process of socialization of students as subjects of learning activities. The model of satisfaction with education consists of the following main elements: satisfaction with social status;

satisfaction with the profession/scope of knowledge in which students are trained; satisfaction with the learning process (SPASSKY, 2016).

In addition, satisfaction with the curriculum can be considered as an integrative indicator characterizing the degree of fulfillment of students' social expectations from the formed learning activity during their professional socialization.

The importance of satisfaction with higher education in the modern legal framework needs the regular measurement of the quality of educational services, which is possible with a combination of statistical and sociological approaches implemented in the form of monitoring. Satisfaction monitoring within the framework of sociological research in the system of education quality management allows to get a complete picture of students' attitude to education and characterize the educational environment, making a special emphasis on such aspects as satisfaction with student life and chosen institution of higher education; with educational and educational process; participation in extracurricular activities; performance of awareness-raising activities (MAKARKIN, 2017).

The practice of satisfaction surveys in engineering universities and colleges shows that satisfaction is seen as a comprehensive assessment, primarily by the motivational aspect, the positive parameters of which correspond to the satisfaction indicators (YURYEVICH, 2015).

According to the survey, first-year students of the National University of Kyiv of Mohyla Academy, quite adequately evaluate the peculiarities of university education in comparison with school, and also see the peculiarities of university education, especially in terms of greater independence. They also note the need for free creative activity both in the classroom and afterward. Freedom is the most important prerequisite for the development of a self-actualized creative personality. Thus, by providing the freedom to enjoy the educational process, society can, on the one hand, help the individual to meet their needs and, on the other hand, provide students with the opportunity for self-development and increased responsibility (ANDRIENKO, 2017).

Quality as one of the key indicators of a successful higher education institution is seen here as several characteristics of an educational service that results in the necessary skills and experience for university graduates. In this regard, the quality of educational services is the main market problem, determined by the competitiveness of the educational institution and summarized in the form of academic rankings (BONYUSHKO; SEMCHENKO, 2014).

According to Barnett (2019), three main approaches characterizing quality are now agreed upon: objectivist, relativist, and developmental. Integrating these approaches helps to describe an institution's performance as a system (its systemic measured qualities), allows us

to weigh achievement in a multitasking environment, and provides strategic direction for development to maximize customer satisfaction. While measuring quality, the main element is customer satisfaction with educational services because institutions depend on their consumers and must consider their needs and interests, and fulfill their requirements and try to exceed their expectations (KOTOVA; HASANOVA, 2016). The most important areas of consumer monitoring used to study satisfaction and quality assessment are the definition of indicators related to external consumers (school graduates, parents, employers); measuring the quality of the educational process; determining indicators reflecting the students' success.

The National University of Kyiv of Mohyla Academy often conducts both online surveys and paper questionnaires, which allows you to track student satisfaction with learning. The survey to analyze the quality of the educational programs offered at NaUKMA was conducted in May-June 2021. A comprehensive assessment was based on the concept of education satisfaction, in which satisfaction is formed as a result of system interaction between such parameters:

- Ratio between the education received and the expectations of the student;
- Students' intentions for further employment in their field of study;
- Opportunities for creativity and self-realization, which the university offers during the training, obtaining skills and knowledge relevant to the current market situation;
- Extensive and adequate information and support from faculty; staff, and other university personnel;
- Adequate facilities;
- Satisfaction with the formal procedures that accompany the learning process;
- Comfortable environment for communication.

The following important factors were also taken into account, considering the surveys: the high reputation of the university, scientific orientation of education, the opportunity to learn foreign languages, the opportunity to meet interesting people and participate in various projects, which is a priority for leading universities and is especially welcomed by young people who hope to build a successful career. The questionnaire paid much attention to the indicator of student awareness, which not only shows the degree of involvement in the educational process but also determines the quality of academic bodies and heads of educational programs. The above study was based on the main hypothesis that the assessment

of the particular educational program quality directly depends on how well informed the student is about the opportunities offered by the different academic university bodies.

The following assumptions acted as additional hypotheses:

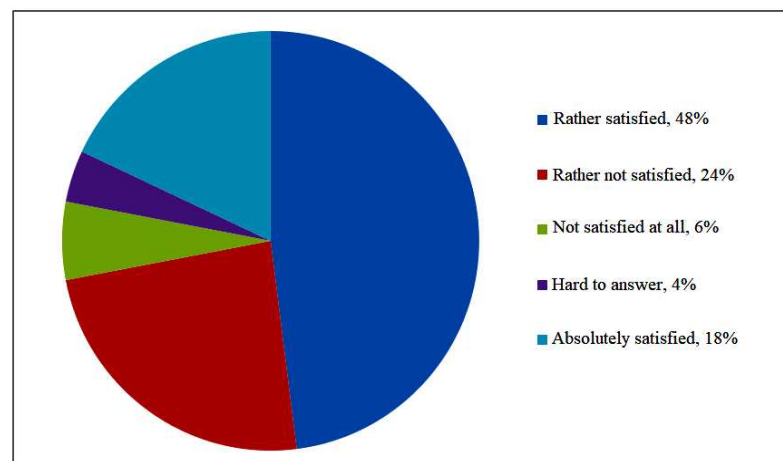
- Student satisfaction is affected by a lack of awareness in academic programs that have been recently introduced or have undergone innovative changes, such as project-based learning, distance learning, and elective courses;
- Targeted employability related to students' field of study, special emphasis on a practice-oriented approach to education.

Results

The survey involved 445 students representing various faculties, which are part of the National University of Kyiv of Mohyla Academy.

First of all, it should be noted that, in general, the survey results indicate a fairly high level of student satisfaction with learning, i.e., 66% (most likely satisfied and fully satisfied) of surveyed students (Figure 1). There is a correlation between the indicators on which the parameters of the concept of satisfaction are based. Thus, 65% of students responded that education met their expectations, 68% of students had a clear vision for their future job, 64% of respondents were going to look for a job closely related to the field of study, and 82% confirmed the fact that they made a conscious choice to study a particular field. These data indicate that more than 2/3 of students are implementing a practice-oriented learning strategy, acquiring skills and knowledge relevant to the current market situation.

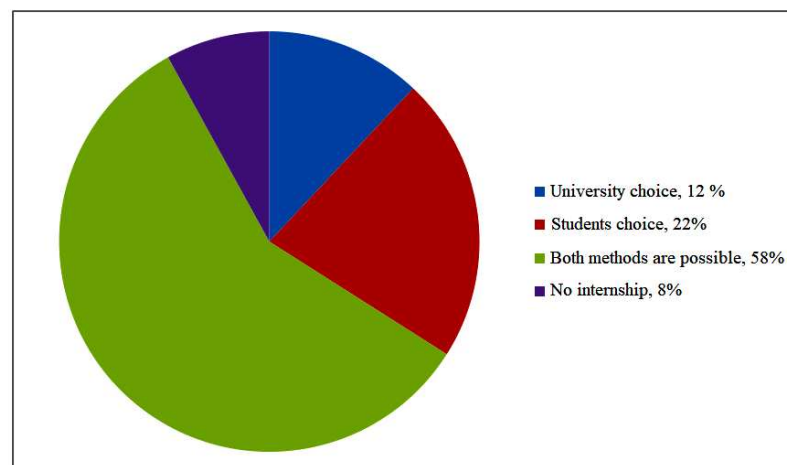
Figure 1 – Are you satisfied with the education quality at NaUKMA?



Source: Elaborated by the authors

A practice-oriented approach to learning is confirmed by the fact that students undergo various internships during their studies at the university. Thus, only 8% of students said that they did not do internships, while 92% of respondents said that the institutions where students could do internships were chosen either by the university (12%) or by the students themselves (22%), or both were possible (52%) (Figure 2).

Figure 2 – Students' internships



Source: Elaborated by the authors

The internship's effectiveness on future employment related to the current direction of the study was noted by 68% of students.

Extracurricular work is also a significant indicator of student satisfaction with learning. The survey showed that a total of 36% of students were satisfied with the organization of leisure activities (they gave a score of 4–5), 34% gave a score of 2–3, and 30% of respondents gave a score of 1 or less (Table 1). The results of the surveys indicate that, as a rule, about 1/3 of the students are actively involved in extracurricular activities, while the remaining students consider the way of organizing leisure activities not as participants but, as spectators, attending events held at the university.

Assessing the material and technical base of the university, we focused on the following indicators: the condition of classrooms, infrastructure for social and cultural events, sports facilities and equipment, the availability of various facilities and equipment (Table 1). The survey results show that students quite highly evaluate the availability of various facilities and equipment. Most of them give this parameter 4–5 points. It indicates that enjoying a good reputation among students (80% and 58% of respondents, respectively, responded that the university's reputation and the education received rated 4–5 points), NaUKMA is constantly seeking to improve.

Table 1 – Assessment of different educational activity aspects in the university

Educational activity aspects in the university	0–1 point (%)	2–3 points (%)	4–5 points (%)
Infrastructure condition for social and cultural events	2	44	54
Condition of gyms and other sports facilities	1	52	47
Ability to use gyms and other sports facilities	5	39	56
Condition of classrooms	1	48	51
Condition of various equipment	2	65	33
Students' leisure time	4	55	41

Source: Elaborated by the authors

Another area for further development could be the sphere of innovative educational technologies, including distance learning, project-based learning, and elective courses within the mobility module, as well as information support for these processes. To illustrate this assertion with the help of some survey results, we can note that 31% of respondents favor distance learning technologies, 45% do not favor them, and 24% did not specify.

Discussion

Students have always been the most responsive part of the younger generation. They are a social community capable of bringing educational innovation to the economy. Both student responsiveness and a good education led to further social engagement. Integrated into the social structure of society, the student community expresses its desire for personal and professional identity, creativity, involvement in socioeconomic and cultural reforms.

Students' voices are now important in university quality assurance procedures and have their place in all national teaching bodies. There are numerous examples of student involvement in evaluating and improving teaching abroad.

Students' organizations have noted that they expect their faculty to be prepared. But there is a widespread perception that teaching is, at best, a diversion from more meaningful activities.

Yet universities claim that their teaching is of high quality. How is this demonstrated?

The answer consists of four main ways. First, it is the results that students achieve during exams and coursework, and the implications of this in degree classifications. Second, indirect measures, such as employment or value-added ability, are calculated by linking

assessment data to consumption characteristics. Third, there is the very popular EIT system. Fourth, there is student feedback on the learning they receive (MAHONEY, 2012).

Interestingly, none of these indicators are about the learning itself. We have two of the outcomes, exam scores, and EITs, in the hands of the teachers themselves. Teachers are the stock from which examiners are selected, and teachers are responsible for assessing their students' achievement. It seems like an unreasonable system for determining the quality of instruction. If external examiners are objective and truly external, they are primarily concerned with assessment, that is, the results and pattern of the exam (MIDDLEHURST, 2014).

To put it simply, learning is what teachers are guided to do. It includes their observed behaviors and the materials they create and organize. But how are their behaviors subject to observation by the rest of the institution's faculty? How often do colleagues, including department chairs, observe lectures, seminars, tutorials, or any other form of teaching? If these observations occur, is there general agreement on the observations and their significance? In addition, is there agreement on the standards to be followed? If teachers create materials, whether they are visual aids, handouts, or more comprehensive instructional materials, then they are more amenable to observation and commentary, but how does this happen? Again, what are the standards for this, and what is its evidence basis? These questions remain open.

Conclusions

The general conclusions of this research allow us to recognize that the sociological monitoring justified the expectations, as it showed the satisfaction of students with higher education, as well as highlighted some problem areas, as well as areas for further development. Further quality improvement is connected, first of all, with the system development of material and technical equipment as an important component of the educational process, increasing flexibility and individualization of the educational process with the help of electronic and distance learning technologies, providing more opportunities for practice-oriented learning, more active information support, highlighting the benefits of introduced innovations, self-development opportunities as a result of project-based learning, extracurricular and leisure activities of students.

It should be noted that there are still many open questions about the quality control of training in higher education institutions, but this study deserves attention given the scientific

perspective of this problem, and the survey can be further applied as one of the tools for monitoring the quality of education.

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