ISSN 2029-9575
QUALITY ISSUES
AND INSIGHTS
IN THE 21st CENTURY
Vol. 4, No. 1, 2015

REQUIREMENTS FOR TODAY'S UNIVERSITIES: HOW TO MEASURE ACTIVITY RESULTS?

Renata Bilbokaitė

Šiauliai University, Lithuania E-mail: renata.bilbokaite@inbox.lt

For today's University higher and higher requirements are raised and certain criteria are thought of, by which activity results are measured. In many cases, quantitative, homogenies criteria are necessary indeed - because they show a concrete position among other higher schools. However, making efforts to conform to equal criteria, it becomes more and more difficult to find one's distinctiveness among thousands of universities in the world and to guarantee the graduates that the representatives of Z generation will be prepared to be leaders.

Homogeneous quality criteria – are the aspects, according to which from one starting point all higher education quality parameters are measured. The idea is worth, because it helps to rate institutions – they themselves and society members can get acquainted with activity results. However, within certain limits. A great number of features, thus remain unmeasured, unaccentuated, even not announced publicly. For mases, it is very convenient to open a popular rating page and in a second to get the necessary information - the number of a place of a higher school among the other similar schools – the reader very often even does not go deep in analysing, according to which criteria the evaluation was performed.

The society became more educated, therefore one more parameter appeared, distinguishing higher standard features from the crowd of already educated - this is leadership. Namely the need of leadership encourages the universities to search for their vision distinctiveness, through unique study programmes, close relationship with social partners. However, the distinctiveness of accent strategy becomes more and more complex, because universities compete among themselves for the conformity of common, equal quality criteria, only some of them can manoeuvre between quantity and quality balance, determining a superior quality dimension.

Increasing technological progress determines the need of a constantly improving leader in a labour market: the employee needs not only skills to quickly master modern and periodically renewable devices, but he has to be able to constantly learn, for the knowledge and competencies to be constantly generating ideas and not only adapting them. Information age reduced time expenses performing works, however enhanced service quality indicators – this inspires to constantly improve, analogically, to increase the requirements for quality. Leadership in nowadays context is also unified, because it is influenced by consumer needs - all learning and studying in one way or another, try to find a leader in himself, to model him, because it can be the biggest reason for the future success. This challenges the classification of leadership traits, of those having mastered it, having distinguished themselves having it criteria need.

It is obvious, that in general there wouldn't be a problem, if together with homogeneous higher education quality criteria, the criteria block, measuring university uniqueness, guaranteeing future graduate leadership competencies, was also confirmed. Many would like this, because higher schools competing among themselves – who will prepare the leaders, would be possible to thoroughly measure everything to the end. However, leadership and

ISSN 2029-9575
QUALITY ISSUES
AND INSIGHTS
IN THE 21st CENTURY
Vol. 4, No. 1, 2015

Ľ

distinctiveness traits most often are of qualitative character, therefore their measurements remain the agreement matter of the institutions themselves. Then, the results created by marketing dominate – the image of a higher school, which is created throughout the long years of work, graduate feedback, learning results, study programme content and other parameters.

Equal quality evaluation criteria limit the institution possibilities to seek distinctiveness and, without doubt, to measure in the form and ways equally understandable for all the others, because the biggest forces are allocated to universally acknowledged criteria conformity fulfilment, for the school to keep itself in a high position - e.g. the number of students, maccenate finance, the number of Nobel Prize laureates, the graduate salary. Homogeneous criteria, according to which higher school rating is set, do not always show, that the rating number is identical to future graduate certain status in society. Free market selects by itself almost according to nature laws – only suitable workers, therefore, to hope always to be competent in the space of constantly changing conditions, would be unreasonable. Thus, any higher school cannot and does not seek to the end to prepare such an absolute specialist, who would get a job in any space of the world, irrespective of external factors – language, nationality, acquired education, property status, mental abilities and so on. The essential thing is - leadership traits - namely they determine entrenchment in the labour market: the ability to think freely, to apply the acquired skills in different environments, to learn and by creative solutions seek personal success. Therefore, namely, the wholeness of university distinctiveness and leadership formation traits remains in every institution unique, conventional, very often named as latent, qualitative, imaginative and so on, representing not the main facts, but vision, namely, this is - what can be hardly measured by universally accepted evaluation criteria.

Quality management improving, undoubtedly it will be tried radically to insert all university activity into mathematically calculated formula – quantitative indicator system, in order it would be possible to more fiercely compete preparing competent specialists for the world. However, qualitative feature wholeness, which anatomically would be equal to the subject distinctiveness in population (this is what we differ from one another, this is what is most important for us, what is our essence) should stay sovereignly determined by each higher education institution. Qualitative university distinctiveness indicator recognition as equal to quantitative one are the features of mature and free society thinking, which show the ability to choose, measuring by holistic evaluation measures, and selecting what is the most suitable for the future student, according to - what is sought.

Received: December 02, 2015 Accepted: December 15, 2015

Renata Bilbokaitė

PhD., Lecturer, Šiauliai University, 88 Vilniaus Street, LT-76285

Šiauliai, Lithuania.

E-mail: renata.bilbokaite@inbox.lt