

# The importance of educational quality management in improving student's capital

## La importancia de la gestión de calidad educativa para mejorar el capital humano estudiantil

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#### ABSTRACT:

This paper discusses the development and implementation of the educational quality management system. It mainly focuses on the role of quality management on the construction of better human capital by mobility of students, by shifting from "teaching" towards "learning" i.e. from memorizing knowledge towards understanding and implementing this knowledge into practical case problems which is said to improve students' skills and their competitiveness in the labor market. In this paper, total quality management system and Bologna Processes are discussed and analyzed by using the examples of some Western Countries as well as by comparing them with Kazakhstani experience.

**Keywords:** total quality management system, Bologna Process, traditional education, modern educational system.

#### RESUMEN:

Este documento analiza el desarrollo y la implementación del sistema de gestión de la calidad educativa. Se centra principalmente en el papel de la gestión de la calidad en la construcción de un mejor capital humano por la movilidad de los estudiantes, pasando de la "enseñanza" al "aprendizaje", es decir, de la memorización del conocimiento hacia la comprensión e implementación de este conocimiento en problemas prácticos que se dice que mejoran las habilidades de los estudiantes y su competitividad en el mercado laboral. En este documento, el sistema de gestión de calidad total y los Procesos de Bolonia se analizan y analizan utilizando los ejemplos de algunos países occidentales y comparándolos con la experiencia de Kazajstán.

**Palabras clave:** sistema de gestión de calidad total, Proceso de Bolonia, educación tradicional, sistema educativo moderno.

## 1. Introduction

All of the human activities are mainly defined and identified by the quality of its products and outcomes. This is applicable to the system of education as well. In this fast-growing and globalizing world the quality and management of education is considered to be one of the most important factors to strengthen competitiveness by playing the key role in economic growth of any given country. According to the concept of knowledge management three things are said to be vital for the effective results in any organization. Those are: workers, technologies and manufacturing processes (Buley et al., 2016). Since then the importance of quality management in education and human capital is discussed, students are taken as the "products" of the system of the quality of education and they also contribute to the development of knowledge management along with the intellectual capital as well. Quality management as any other system of management is aimed at achieving its goals by planning, monitoring and assuring; and it usually implicitly means four things: "structure, procedures, processes and necessary resources." (Vlasic, Vale & Puhar) When it comes to the development of the human capital, however, it is suggested that all of the management processes mentioned above are applied by focusing on the ability of organizational and intellectual issues from the point of view of society's goals and perspectives. Since the application of the quality management is not an easy thing to do, several problems are mentioned in different studies and this essay will first, compare the traditional and modern educational systems due to the fact that many Post-Soviet Countries struggle in-between these two (Bunnell, 2016; Chapman et al., 2016; Rogach et al., 2016). Second, it will analyze the experience of some of the western countries where total quality management was successfully implemented and third, it will go deeper in order to critically analyze the Bologna Process in Kazakhstani context and specifically, it's one of the main focuses: "strengthening the quality of assurance".

## 2. Description of traditional and modern educational systems

There are two extremes when it comes to the question of educational reforms on any of its level, especially in the post-soviet countries, like Kazakhstan. On the one hand, teaching staff of educational organizations hold to the idea that the traditional educational system and/or the so called "Soviet" one is the best in the world and new reforms are aimed to just destroy it. On the other hand, they oppose this idea and suggest that Kazakhstan cannot longer be isolated and thus, has to meet world educational standards.

The main goal of the traditional educational system is the "acquisition of information" (Vlasic, Vale & Puhar; Bondaletov, 2016). The latter usually means two basic activities of the student: to listen and to watch, which in turn have negative impact on student's satisfaction with education and thus, his/her decrease of human capital in terms of learning and memorizing unnecessary facts that cannot be stored in one's brain for the long period of time. Moreover, since we are living in the globalized world with competitive economy, students should be given the opportunity to gain knowledge skills in different fields like technical, social or technological. Furthermore, with the development of the latter, some professions are replaced by technological innovations and thus, became unneeded. Therefore, it is said that the traditional system of education in many cases does not satisfy the requirements of the modern job market. For instance, the same traditional system of education in Croatia is said to be outdated because it cannot longer provide government with sufficient number of educated and skilled workers, and in addition, even the importance of technological development is not emphasized on the appropriate level. In Kazakhstan, according to the strategic plan of Ministry of Science and Education (2017-2021) it is said that the lack of the technological innovations in many schools prevent students from acquiring high-quality education. Moreover, sociological studies show that the main factors why many young people do not want to continue their education are: non-prestigious status of some jobs, paid education as well as the weak preparation for the future labor market which can be referred to the unnecessary knowledge and skills given by the traditional educational system (Strategic plan of the Ministry...).

In comparison with traditional education, where memorizing was the main component of gaining knowledge, the modern educational system mainly focuses on the understanding of things and thus, students are given information they need (Vlasic, Vale & Puhar). For instance, by learning fewer students are able to use this knowledge and generalization to the practical case problems or in the process of comparison with their own experience. This is in turn results in the stage when students learn how to study. The latter skill is crucial in the modern world and thus, countries like Croatia are making their educational system more capable of meeting the expectations and requirements of labor market and society. The same implication can be seen in the strategic plan of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, where it is said that in order to increase academic freedom which in turn helps to recognize needed features of the labor market, high educational organizations are given the privilege to control the content of educational program on three levels: bachelor, masters and PhD. Therefore, educational management system is said to be not a social activity but rather the job market-oriented one.

## 3. Features of quality management in the West

The term "total quality" was first introduced in the 1950s by the professor W. Edwards Deming. It is "the process of shifting the focus of the organization towards a superior quality of products and services" (Vlasic, Vale & Puhar), and as it was mentioned above the "product" of the educational organizations is its students i.e. the human capital. The reason why this quality management is called "total" is that its goal is not only achieving high quality in educational system but also positively affecting all of its components: "organization, management, interpersonal relations, material and human resources etc." (Vlasic, Vale & Puhar) Since students are said to be the main product of educational institutions, vital changes are needed in the fields of interpersonal relations, communication culture, monitoring of the school/educational organization`s atmosphere.

Total quality management model consists of the following processes: planning, managing, improving, integral involvement and focusing on the user. Due to the fact that the educational system management is said to be market-oriented activity, total quality management can be considered as the effective technique which will constantly push organization to the improvement on all of its levels and will help to create a place of trust, respect and collaborative work. That being said, if any educational organization will be eager to improve their quality which in this case means "preparing" students for the labor market in the future, all of the principles described above are suggested to be applied in order to achieve the "excellence" in quality management.

The application of total quality management in educational field can be analyzed from the experience of the Republic of Croatia. The results were taken from the research which was carried in 2006/07 in ninety governmental schools (Vlasic, Vale & Puhar). Among others, one of the main goals of that study was to assess the relation between efficiency of education and total quality management system. According to the results, implementation of the total quality management system in educational institutions had positive effect on them in terms of efficiency increase and successful distribution of the knowledge. Moreover, total quality management is said to influence the entire educational organizations rather than only its management quality. Thus, based on the results from the study of schools in the Republic of Croatia, it can be concluded that the total quality management can be successfully introduced in the educational system (Diaz-Gibson et al., 2017; Cohen, Spillane & Peurach, 2017; Ingvarson & Rowley, 2017).

#### 4. The Bologna process in Kazakhstan context: Pros and Cons

Since in the example of the Republic of Croatia the implementation of the total quality management was considered only in the context of schools, in this paragraph quality management will be analyzed in the context of high educational institutions. One of the most important steps in achieving high quality education in universities was the inclusion of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Bologna Process. This in turn proves that the Kazakh national educational system is from then on, is considered to meet European standards of higher educational system. The Bologna Process, however, as any other reform in the field of education, has its pros and cons, as well as supporters and opponents. On the one hand, many academicians think that the Soviet system of higher education is "the best" possible one. On the other hand, supporters think that Kazakhstani educational system is outdated and the Bologna Process is the best option to optimize and solve all of the academic problems that we face today as a country.

One of the problems is related with the introduction of multi-level education. Furthermore, this division is beneficial due to the fact that bachelor degrees are the most demanded in the society whereas master`s and PhD will help to build strong professional elite. On the other hand, the fact that bachelor degree diploma will not be able to meet the expectations of employer because even today it is seen that in many companies and workplaces bachelor degree is considered to be "not finished" education. The same process is observable in many Western countries. In USA, for instance, the main goal of bachelor degree is to eliminate the missing points in school education. Moreover, there are not so many good qualified professionals i.e. the lack of human capital who could teach bachelor students at the appropriate level; the lack of technological and technical components. Lastly, the introduction of multilevel education sometimes can only mean the separation of one educational cycle into two mechanically (Sagintayeva).

In European countries, however, educational institutions focus on eight levels of education and their main motto is "Lifelong Learning or LLL" (Connolly, James & Fertig, 2017). The last quote of the Bologna Process means that education should become ongoing process which will not end at one period of life but rather will continue throughout the life and thus, will be renewed and improved constantly. This is applicable with the main goal of modern educational system and quality management system, which is the move from "teaching" human to "learning" one. In addition to that, there are other privileges of this process like the increase in the mobility of students and the improvement in the autonomy of higher educational institutions. All of this together: mobility, sensitivity to changes and new tendencies, the ability to meet labor market expectations in the fast growing world with market oriented economy are leading factors in the successful quality management in education (Sagintayeva).

Moreover, Bologna Process does not refuse the possibility of keeping the national traditions in the educational system, that`s why Kazakhstan is free to keep them (Sagintayeva). In addition, mobility of students according to the strategic plan of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan will continue with the help of programs like Erasmus or other exchange programs. The autonomy of universities which is also said to positively affect the rise of human capital in educational institutions is said to be implemented in every Kazakhstani university, which has international accreditation certificates, as it has been already done in Nazarbayev University.

That being said, the inclusion of Kazakhstan in Bologna Process can be considered as the positive step towards the high quality education which focuses on the skills and practical knowledge of the student rather than on memorizing only.

#### 5. Conclusion

The management of quality of educational system encompasses different aspects of education such as social, cultural, cognitive, economic and plays a crucial role in building not the whole society but each individual which means the development of human capital. As it was shown in this article there are several steps towards achieving high quality educational management system. The total quality management system was analyzed by using the example of Croatian schools and the Bologna Process was also analyzed in the context of Kazakhstani Higher Educational Institutions. In both analysis there were shown that by following all of the processes described in each of the quality management system, the results of this introduction will be positive and efficient in terms of improvement the whole educational institutions by focusing mainly on their "products" i.e. student`s capital.

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