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EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS OF THE JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY IN CRACOW AND CRACOW UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS ABOUT THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

1. The quality of education

The Dictionary of the Polish Language defines the word *"to educate"* (somebody) as:

- "to pass on a certain amount of knowledge, competence or knowledge in a certain discipline, to teach somebody, to send to school to learn".
- "to develop something (usually a personal characteristic, virtue, etc.) to perfect, to shape (e.g. the mind, will, character)"[1].

In the course of educating (somebody) we cannot forget that the process has two sides: while educating, we do not narrow it down to passing on knowledge, but we also shape one's personality. Unfortunately, this fact is so often forgotten by those who educate professionally and are responsible for the process. The quality of education must be, therefore, assessed through the prism of both parts of the notion *"to educate"* (somebody), and the idea of quality must take into account the multiple effects of education.

The notion "*to educate oneself*" (a reflexive verb) is connected with another notion: - self-education. The Dictionary of the Polish Language provides the following definition:

- "to be educated, developed, perfected (His artistic taste has been shaped on two models)";
- "obtains education: where? (at university, in music school), what in? (in law, in dance), in what field? (to become a doctor, an engineer, etc.)"[2]

At the same time, both the professor and the student are influenced by the environment as well as their own inner experiences, which may produce a significant impact on the quality and effectiveness of education. The process of education is, therefore, a complex interaction between humans, where both the master and his disciple get educated by each other .Educating (somebody, as well as self-educating) comes down to a process of social communication between those who take part in it and which becomes a subject to quality assessment. The effects of this process are a direct consequence of the quality of communication, which takes place in the process of education, that is of the quality of education under discussion.

We can make a list of the following subjects involved in the process:

- academic teachers
- students
- close environment (students' family and friends)

[1] The Dictionary of the Polish Languare, vol. 1, PWN, Warsaw 1978, p. 1075.
[2] Ibid., p. 1075.

- distant environment (neighbours, family background, moral authorities, celebrities, etc.).

At the same time, it is a university duty to educate the future graduates; that is to provide them with formal education, and also - to help them obtain a certain amount of knowledge and complete their studies, but foremost: [3]

- to stimulate appropriate, effective action, to train in good manners, to mould fortitude, to develop talent and competence, e.g. to form one's good taste, intuition or powers of observation,
- to shape one's behaviour, the ability to think, to analyse, to synthesize, to draw conclusions, to create a worthy individual open to cooperation, who will value honesty and the truth, a compassionate personality ready for a sacrifice for the sake of common welfare, but at the same time soberly thinking, stepping firmly on the ground, but not devoid of dreams which motivate action.

The quality of education does not come down to the amount of the absorbed knowledge by a student; it also refers to how well a graduate is able to improve the quality of their work which should be, in turn, well correlated with team work. Apart from knowledge, education comprises the acquired skills and social competences. Education becomes, therefore, the consequence of the quality of education; the effect of social communication. (Figure 3.1).
The process of education comprises the following elements:

- the process of self-education (S);
- interaction with the environment:
  - close envirinment, mainly family and friends (R),
  - teachers (professors, lecturers, etc.) (N),
  - distant environment, that is where we live, study and work (O),
  - the effect of the way we perceive the impact of the environment and the related reflections, considerations and expectations (P),
  - other reasons (I).

The above mentioned elements determine the level of the quality of education (Qk), whose aim is providing a university graduate with full comprehensive education at a specified level (higher, secondary). The quality of education can be thus represented as the function of the level of the above mentioned elements:

$$Qk = f (S, R, N, O, P, I)$$

Thus the quality of education (Ok) is the sum of all the levels of quality of the individual elements enlarged by the effect of synergy (Es).

$$Qk = Qs + Qr + Qn + Qo + Qp + Qi + Es$$

2. Determinants of the quality of education

It is the aim of education to equip the new generation with knowledge, general and professional competence, the system of values, attitudes, beliefs, interests as well as with the powers of self-education and self-development.[4] As a result of education, all students should

[3] Ibid., p. 1075.
[4] Okoń W., New Dictionary of Pedagogics, publised by Żak, Warsaw 1986, p. 207.

achieve the same level of general and professional qualifications, and they should be able to take active part in social and cultural life.[5]

The results of research reveal that some universities, on issuing a diploma, narrow down all their activity to checking whether a given student has obtained all due credits, passed his exams and submitted a bachelor's or master's thesis. These universities are not concerned with their graduates' ethical, intellectual or general standards, nor with their abilities to make use of their knowledge in practice. The assesment of education these universities carry out is purely selective and quantitative; not qualitative. That is why they so often produce graduates with high grades, but badly prepared for life and future professional career. The causes of such situation are rooted in[6]:

- the current system of higher education in Poland;
- the flawed model of education addressed to managers, economists, commodity traders, IT specialists, etc.;
- unsuitable curricula and programmes;
- factual and ethical preparation of lecturers;
- university managerial and educational style, both in state and private schools;
- the quantitative approach to the assessment of both scientific research and didactic activity of academic staff;
- the quantitative approach to student assessment;
- the influence of close and distant environment upon the future graduate, e.g. in Economics;
- students' system of values and habits brought from primary and secondary school as well as from home.

The quality of education at a university level is the result of the synergy of participating in it subjects; that is the university itself, and the students. As far as the university is concerned, the quality of education is affected by the following factors listed in the order of importance:

- scientific researchers and academic teachers;
- teaching programmes and curricula;
- university management;
- methods and organization of studies;
- university facilities; in particular: libraries, lecture rooms and laboratories;
- the environment, including, e.g. the law and competition.

As far as the students are concerned, the quality of education is affected first of all by:

- the level of determination
- abilities and natural talent
- family situation
- economic conditions
- health
- the environment, the law and competition.

[5] Ibid., p. 812.
[6] Wawak T., Wawak S., *Polemical voice on the quality of education in Poland in the example of Economics*, [in] "The problems of quality" 2001, No 10, p. 26.

The decision which factors determine the quality of education is raised in numerous doctoral dissertations, scientific papers and at conferences. The author's long-standing, hands-on experience from both the state and private sector, together with a deep study of the existing specialist literature[7] on the subject, allow the statement that the human factor is of ultimate importance here including:

- scientific researchers and academic teachers as well as students' abilities and talents;
- curricula and educational programmes prepared by professors and their level of determination to teach;
- university management and family situation of the student.

Other factors affecting the quality of education include: material and non-material university resources, e.g. economic and legal factors.

3. Research into students' expectations about the quality of education

What actions should a university take so as not to disappoint talented students and how to give them a chance to fulfil their expectations?The answer to this question was partly given in the project; and at present we have an ammended law standardizing the institutions of higher education What were students' opinions in the course of project development? To find the answer to this pending question, a decision was taken to draw up a questionnaire, together with the participation of students, based on an earlier questionnaire devised in the 2008-2009 academic year.[8] There were four questions included in the questionnaire (discussed in chapter three). The task of the respondent was to chose from six to eight variants of action plan that the university should undertake, out of twelve provided answers so as to:

- question A – spot talent from among candidates and students;
- question B – attract talented students;
- question C – educate at a high level;
- question D – ensure the students full and fast development in the course of studies.

The questionnaire examining the opinion of students was elaborated under the auspices of the author, with active participation of the following students from the Department of Management and Social Communication of the Jagiellonian University : Nicole Hampel, Bartosz Kęcik, Joanna Kobylańska and Paulina Kopińska. The contribution of the above mentioned students into the preparation of the project should be highly praised. The students analysed the author's questionnaire, which had been used in earlier research, and they arrived at the following conclusions:

- twelve answer variants to each question far exceed students' capabilities to provide answers;
- every question should be split into two; each of them containing five variants of answers;
- the list of questions should be expanded and include new ones concerning vertical and horizontal mobility so important to students.

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[7] Among others: Woźnicki J., Systematic principles of state higher education institutions, [in] Management model of state universities, ed. by J. Woźnicki, Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw 1999; Jóźwiak J., Entrepreunerial versus traditional university model - the Polish experience, [in] Higher education – controversies and problems. "Science and Higher Education", no 1 (12), 2003;

[8] Management in Higher Education institution. A report on research carried out under the auspices of T. Wawak within the framework of a project financed by the Faculty's own research reserve (WBPW), Department of Management and Social Communication, the Jagiellonian University, Cracow 2008-2009.

Following a discussion, students' proposals were unanimously accepted and the students recommended a list of twelve questions; each of them containing five variants of viable action divided in the questionnaire into six parts. After a consecutive consultation with students, the following action points have been adopted:

- to conduct a pilot project amont students of Management and Economics;
- to accept the content of the suggested questions;
- to replace the closed questions by the open ones.

After the students had conducted a pilot study in the paper version, they made up a list of suggested changes to variants of viable action for individual questions. The final shape of the questionnaire was devised by the author, among others on the basis of students' suggestions included in the pilot study.

The questionnaire contained the following questions:

- To what extent should the factors given below be decisive in the recruitment of talented students to the First Degree Studies?
- To what extent should the factors given below be decisive in searching for talented students (to the Second Degree Studies)?
- To what extent do the internal factors in a Higher Education institution given below attract talented students?
- To what extent do the factors concerning academic teachers given below determine the quality of education?
- To what extent do the factors given below determine the improvement of students'social conditions?
- To what extent do the factors given below determine students' development in the academic sphere?
- What is the significance of the factors given below for students who make the choice of the field of study or specialization in the Second Degree Studies?
- To what extent do the factors given below influence Masters' Degree holders in their decision to take up the Third Degree Studies?
- To what extent do the factors of the university policy given below influence students' decisions to take part in the international students' exchange ?

To fill in the questionnaire form, students had to define the importance of the individual seven variants and they had to answer each substantive question by filling in a box provided on the left with a number (1-5) bearing the weight of importance of the chosen variant on the effect of the question: from very low (1 point) to very high (5 points).

The author assumed that the degree of influence of the chosen answer variant upon the question addressed in the questionnaire is defined by the average degree variant importance index and the standard deviation from the calculated average. This index belongs to a defined category of impact which defines the strength of the impact of the analyzed variants (for the individual value ranges that the index can take):

- very high – range: 4.32 – 5.00 point, 5^{th} category of impact;
- high - range: 3.64 – 4.31 point, 4^{th} category of impact;
- average - range: 2.96 – 3.63 point 3^{rd} category of impact;
- low -range: 2.28 – 2.95 point 2^{nd} category of impact
- very low -range: 1.00 – 2.27 point 1^{st} category of impact.

The study among the students of the Jagiellonian University and Cracow University of Economics was carried out online. 5, 623 students who volunteered in the project entered the questionnaire website and read the content thoroughly. Later, as many as 29.65 % of them gave up the task, filled in the form partially, or incorrectly from the technical point of view. Only those forms which had been corectly filled in and fulfilled the imposed requirements, were considered in the study. As a result, only 3, 956 students were included in the statistical analysis; 1, 874 Jagiellonian University underdraduates and 1, 963 students from Cracow University of Economics as well as 119 students from other universities. Altogether, 4, 899 correct answers - that is forms fulfilling formal requirements - were included in the statistical analysis. 6, 524 students took part in the research project in all. Not all of them - however – for formal reasons could be taken into account in the calculations.

Additionally, some technical staff members of the Jagiellonian University took active part in the project (all of them Master's Degree holders): Wiesław Bracha, Edyta Grzyb, Katarzyna Leśkiewicz, and Marta Pawliszyn. The study carried out at Cracow University of Economics was supervised by Joanna Piękoś, a PhD student of the Management Department.

4. Expectations of students from Cracow University of Economics

A research study among the students of Cracow University of Economics was carried out online. From the formal point of view, not all the students filled in the questionnaire correctly. That is why only 1963 students, who fulfilled the imposed requirements, were covered in the statistical analysis. The research findings at Cracow University of Economics will cover only these students. They will, to a certain degree, be representative of all the students of this university.

According to the respondents, the recruitment of talented students to the First Degree Studies is determined by factors enlisted in the following order (in the degree defined by the average degree of variant importance, with standard deviation given in brackets):

- candidate's knowledge and skills – 4.17 point, (0.92);
- entrance examination results – 3.48 points, (1.16);
- candidate's manners and personality – 3.28 point, (1.21);
- candidate's language skills – 2.96 point, (1.04);
- workshops and competence tests preceeding the recruitment – 2.78 points, (1.21);
- candidate's participation in school contests, scientific circles and similar activities – 2.65 point, (1.15);
- candidate's professional experience -2.05 point, (1.19).

Only one of the above mentioned factors achieved a high degree of importance – "candidate's knowledge and skills" - and was visibly favoured by students. The role of the two following determinants in the recruitment of talented candidates to the First Degree Studies was less significant, and the role of the remaining determinants - especially "candidate's professional experience" - of little importance. The respondents did not explicitly point out to any dominant factors which should be taken into consideration when looking for talent for the Second Degree Studies. In their opinion, university authorities should take into account the following determinants in the course of the recruitment process to Master's Degree Studies (in the degree defined by the average degree of variant importance, at standard deviation given in brackets):

- examination results in the First Degree Studies – 3.76 point, (1.04);
- the assessment of candidate's personal achievement (projects, case studies, etc.) – 3.76 point, (1.04);
- entrance examination results to the Second Degree Studies – 3.29 point, (1.13);

- spotting talent by means of professional methods – 3.20 point, (1.10);
- articulacy – 3.10 point, (1.06);
- teachers' opinion about students – 2.70 point, (1.20).

The studentswho were ranked highest, assessed the importance of the first two factors – examination results in the the First Degree Studies and the assesment of candidate's personal achievement. The respondents estimated the role of the remaining determinants in the recruitment process to the Second Degree Studies as of lesser importance, whilst teachers' opinion about students - as non- significant - which means, in the eyes of students, that the recommendation od an academic teacher, in this case, should not be taken into account.

The following question on the list covered the external factors existing in institutions of higher education which can help draw in students' talent. The students who took part in the study put these determinants in the following order of importance (in the degree defined by the average degree of variant importance, at standard deviation given in brackets):

- good educational offer – 4.60 point, (0.65);
- university reputation reflected in both national and international rankings – 4.42 point, (0.82);
- integrated educational offer – 4.42 point, (0.82);
- university staff of high academic and moral standard – 4. 25 point, (0.88);
- prospects of university development – 4.07 point, (0.97);
- unconventional style of teaching – 3.97 point, (1.01);
- individual teaching programmes for outstanding students – 3.56 point, (1.16).

The students felt more competent to give the answer to this question than to the previous one, which is proved by the the level of the allocated indices of the average degree of importance of variant answers . It is considerably higher for this question than for the previous one. The students assessed very highly the impact of a good educational offer, its integrated character and the university's position in the European and international ranking upon the university's power to attract talented undergraduates. In this case, the students allocated high degree of importance to to the role played by the university staff with high academic and moral standards, as well as to the university prospects for the future. The respondents judged the remaining determinants as less relevant.

The students responding to the questions established a list of the following external factors existing in institutions of higher education which attract undergraduate talent (in the degree defined by the average degree of variant importance at standard deviation given in brackets):

- ensuring students the appropriate correlation between theory and practice – 4.38 point, (0.79);
- participation of practitioners (entrepreneurs) in the teaching process – 4.24 point, (0.88);
- intergrated internship offer as well as domestic and foreign placements – 4.18 point, (0.89);
- providing students with perfect conditions for studying (lecture rooms, laboratories) – 4.16 point, (0.86);
- the teaching system and the application of foreign languages in the process of teaching – 4.04 point, (0.91);
- full-fledged co-operation with reputed foreign universities – 4.0 point, (0.93);
- a guaranteed minimum of one- semester foreign exchange – 3.69 point, (1.07).

The respondents attach great importance to the appropriate correlation between theory and practice in attracting talented students to universities. That is why they they find the role of internship of utmost significance in the process of education. In the second (but still very high) place they put: the conditions of education, the application of foreign languages in the process of teaching and co-operation with foreign universities. The question arises: Why did the students put the possibility to do one semester of studies abroad in the lowest position as far as the effectiveness to attract young talent to a university is concerned. The reason may lie in the fact that this possibility is a relatively new thing in Polish universities, and also that students are not prepared to study abroad yet.

It is unquestionable that the quality of education is considerably influenced by factors involving academic teachers. According to the respondents, these factors comprise (in the degree defined by the average degree of variant importance, at standard deviation given in brackets) determinants of the quality of teaching appearing in the following order:

- direct co-operation between students and academic teachers working in small groups – 4.25 point, (0.87);
- employing the best lecturers from all over the country – 3.89 point, (0.87);
- raising academic and teaching competence of the teaching staff – 3.89 point, (0.87);
- hiring eminent foreign academic teachers - 3.72 point, (1.02);
- monitoring the quality of education through the ranking system in which students assess their teachers – 3.69 point, (1.12);
- introducing class inspections by a special unit created by the Dean – 3.69 point, (1.12);
- obliging formally academic staff to deliver minimum one lecture in a foreign language – 3. 06 point, (1.26).

From among the factors mentioned above which affect the quality of teaching, direct co-operation between students and academic teachers working in small groups was ranked highest by the students. The process of teaching at universities takes place as a rule in large lecture rooms and with large groups of students in the same class, language group or laboratory class. For economic reasons, no classes are run in small groups which enable personal contact between the master and his desciple. Such approach lowers the costs but at the same time it lowers the quality of teaching. The respondents decided that employing the best specialists from our national resources and from abroad, together with teachers' continuous improvement of academic competence, have high impact upon the quality of teaching.

One fact is particularly imteresting: a far position among the determinants of the quality of education allocated to monitoring the quality through the ranking system of academic teachers conducted by students, and class inspections by a special unit created by the Dean. The students aptly observed that these standard methods to improve the quality of education in the Polish universities do not matter a lot; they mean a mere imitation of a correct, effective pro-quality course of action in the area of education.

The ability to lecture in a foreign language was ranked last by the students. The respondents do not see such need; still this factor is indispensable for the sake of the development of the teaching process and the improvement of the quality of education; and yet it is generally neglected at Polish universities.

The second group of determinants of the quality of education comprises factors that refer to the manner of educating. The following factors were allocated by the respondents (in the degree defined by the average degree of variant importance at standard deviation given in brackets):

- integrating theory with practice and its application in lectures – 4.51 points, (0.73);

- strengthening the co-operation between a university and an employer, e.g. when establishing new fields of study in line with their needs - 4.20 point, (0.89);
- developing creative forms of education – 4.00 point, (0.91);
- introducing innovative and experimental forms of education – 3.88 point, (0.91);
- developing creative forms of education – 3.78 point, (0.90);
- making "case studies" obligatory – 3.58 point, (1.02);
- monitoring the quality of education via questionnaires filled in by students to assess the quality of lectures and classes – 3.51 point (1.07).

The most crucial factor guaranteeing the rise in the quality of education at universities is integrating theory with practice and its application in lectures. Lectures, unfortunately, are often too theoretical, descriptive and historical in their character and not compatible with the reality, whereas the lecturer's competence outdated or not sufficient to explain the complexity of issues under discussion. The second factor which is crucial for determining the quality of education is strengthening of co-operation between a university and an employer (which exists in a vestigal form) and imposes a demand to change the current relation between them into a more creative form. The respondents attribute high impact on the quality of education to the development of creative forms of education. However, they attribute minor significance to the remaining factors headed by the idea of a monitoring system to check the quality of lectures and classes by students in the form of a questionnaire. This form is a relict from the previous epoch, revamped and presented in a new way.

The quality of education depends on students' social conditions. That is why the next question is concentrated on these determinants. According to the respondents, students' development on the social plane depends (in the degree defined by the average degree of the variant importance, at standard deviation given in brackets) on factors coming in the following order of importance:

- easy access to a scholarship – 4.38 point, (0.86);
- ensuring students acceptable living conditions - 4.32 point, (0.83);
- ensuring students appropriate conditions for developing their personal interests (music, sports) – 4. 10 point, (0.97);
- ensuring optimal recreational conditions – 3.89 point, (1.01);
- easy access to students' loans (in the degree defined by the average degree of the variant importance, at standard deviation given in brackets) – 3.83 point, (1.03);
- students' sports teams – 3.69 point (1.07);
- students' clubs – 3.62 point, (1.10).

The most important thing for students as regards social conditions are scholarships and their living conditions. The possibility to develop interests and make use of recreation came second in the ranking. The interesting fact is, students attributed little importance to students' teams and recreation. It is the outcome of the drop in students' engagement in active sport, but also of the crisis in the activity of students' clubs. We can take "Grota", the club belonging to College of Economics as an example, whose past cultural activity took place at an unprecedented scale; incomparable with its present humble condition. The club used to own its own music band, which went on foreign tours, as well as a cabaret. The club integrated students. Meetings in "Grota" club gave rise to the so-called "March Events" at the College in Cracow in 1968. The students associated with the activity of "Grota" Club later rose to the position of professors of Cracow University of Economics and other universities because they could perfectly reconcile their activity in the Club with academic achievements in the form of high examination grades. They could neatly combine their students' duties with

the pursuit of personal interests in the sphere of music, culture and entertainment. The club played a very important role in the life of students. Later, students' clubs got transformed into cafes and pubs and lost their academic character. That is why the respondents ranked their importance lowest and treated this answer variant as the least important.

The quality of education is directly connected with students' development in the academic sphere. This development is caused by many factors. The responding students devised a list of the developmental determinants and put them in the following order (in the degree defined by the average degree of variant importance, at standard deviation given in brackets):

- the prospect of becoming an intern in the final year of studies – 4.40 point, (0.84);
- facilitating the continuation of studies of the Third Degree – 4.19 point, (0.88);
- participation in the activities of the university scientific research teams – 4.11 point, (0.86);
- participation in devising university curriculum and university regulations – 3.91 point, (0.98);
- active participation of students in conferences and scientific circles – 3.83 point, (0.95);
- participation of students in scientific conferences organized by universities – 3.78 point, (0.95).

It should be noted, that the respondents stated that only one factor is highly significant for the students'development in the scientific sphere: the prospect of employment as an intern in the final year of studies. The problem is, students used to have such a possibility in the past, but not any more. Perhaps it would be worthwile to restore it. In the second position in terms of importance, the respondents placed the possibility to continue education in the form of doctoral studies and students' participation in the activity of university research projects. The illusory participation of students in the preparation of university curricula and university regulations turned out to be less attractive for students. At the end of the list, but in the bottom sphere of high impact, the respondents placed participation in the activities of scientific circles and scientific conferences organized by universities, to which they are never invited.

At the present time, university faculty boards ponder over which new fields of study and specializations should be introduced into the Second Degree Studies. In this case, the opinion of the questioned students should be taken into consideration. In their opinion, the decisions about the chosen field of study or specialization in the Second Degree Studies are influenced (to a different degree) by the factors below coming in the following order (in the degree defined by the average degree of variant importance, at standard deviation given in brackets):

- personal predispositions and skills – 4.35 point, (0.75);
- continuation of studies in the same field – 4.01 point, (1.01);
- the quality of education measured by the effects – 3.81 point, (1.00);
- the recruitment rules in a given faculty - 3.67 point, (1.04);
- change of faculty – 3.51 point, (1.07);
- the opinion of other students – 3.43 point, (1.13);
- the opinion of academic teachers – 3.04 point, (1.13).

The research results show that the respondents have very reasonable expectations about which new field of study or specialization in the Second Degree Studies should be opened. In the students' view, in the choice of their studies they are guided in the first place by their own predispositions and by the desire to continue the chosen field of study. The following factor which they take into consideration is the quality of education offered by

the university measured by the effects, and the recruitment rules. The opinion of academic teachers and other students plays the weakest role. In fact, the opinion of the former is even weaker than that of the latter. The prestige of academic teachers is very low, indeed. It means, that according to the surveyed students the decisions of faculty boards taken entirely on the basis of the opinion of academics on issues such as what new faculties and specializations should be opened in the Second Degree Studies, may be incorrect. It is hard not to accept such an opinion.

The Ministers responsible for higher education in the signatory states of the Bologna Process and the European Union, recommend the development of the Third Degree Studies. [9] Hence, the Act of 18 March 2011 about the change of the act – the law on education, acts on university degrees and titles in the sphere of arts and also, changes in some acts. The requirements imposed upon Faculty Boards in relation to opening Doctoral Studies, have been amended. At present, just two qualifications are sufficient for the Faculty to open up PhD Studies. Earlier on, a faculty Board was required to have at least two qualifications to be allowed to grant a doctoral degree in two disciplines, but they had to be in the same field of study.[10] Prior to extending the Third Degree Studies, one should first find the answer to the questions about the reasons why the Second Degree graduates decide to take up doctoral studies.

The respondents enlisted the following factors decisive, in their view, for taking up doctoral studies in the following order (in the degree defined by the average degree of variant importance, at standard deviation given in brackets):

- prospects of a better job with a doctoral degree – 4.28 point, (0.94);
- the prestige associated with a doctoral degree and a higher social status – 4.27 point, (0.90);
- fulfilment of personal academic pursuits – 4.25 point, (0.88);
- the opportunity to develop international relationships within scientific circles – 3.73 point, (0.99);
- tutorial supervision and assistance– 3.60 point, (1.06);
- getting full access to domestic and foreign information base in libraries available to PhD students – 3.56 point, (1.13);
- the desire to extent one's studies – 3.56 point, (1.22).

None of the above mentioned answer variants received high assessment (from 4.32 points). There are, however, four factors which achieved a status of variant importance; the proof of their high impact upon the decision about taking up doctoral studies. In the highest rank among these four there is a prospect of a better job and the prestige associated with attaining a doctoral degree. At the same time, those factors which , in fact, are really relevant for a PhD student, but which are not recognized as such by the Second Degree graduate, got a much lower position in the ranking. These include: ensuring tutorial supervision and assistance, and full access to the domestic and international information base in libraries.
What surprises is the fact, that the reason fot taking up PhD studies which was ranked lowest - "the desire to extend one's studies" – was given such high importance by the responding students. Apparently, doctoral studies prolong school times and delay the moment of starting work.

[9] T. Wawak, The adjustment of the management system In higher education institution to the requirement of the Bologna Process, (in:)"The restructuring potential under the conditions of globalization and new economy" collective work edited by R. Borowiecki & A. Jaki, Cracow University of economics, Kraków 2007, pp 251-252.
[10] Art. 1, act 140., Journal of Law 2011 No 84, item 455.

The main purpose of the Bologna Process is to create appropriate conditions for students' mobility within the member states. [11] Universities have to play a very important role in this respect. How do they fulfil this duty? How do students assess them? According to the respondents, the followng factors of different strenght are responsible for the participation of students in the international students' exchange, thus giving them a chance to study abroad (in the degre defined by the average degree of variant importance, at standard deviation given in brackets):

- foreign language fluency – 4.38 point, (0.83);
- university assistance in taking up studies abroad for one semester within the international exchange framework – 4.22 point, (0.86);
- introduction of the so-called "mobility window" into the curricula – 4.17 point, (0.93);
- adjusting our curricula to international requirements – 4.06 point, (0.92);
- international co-operation – 4.04 point, (0.88);
- providing students with more care and help to develop their interests and talents – 3.96 point, (0.94);
- following the European Union requirements in relation to education – 3.85 point, (0.94).

The respondents gave the highest credit to the significance of the level of fluency in foreign languages. Students realize, that without good knowledge of foreign languages no foreign exchange is possible. The remaining answer variants belong to a class of high impact upon the participation of students in the international exchange and they are addressed to the university authorities. At present, while creating new fields of study, new curricula and specializations (which meet the requirements defined by the amended laws on higher education), universities introduce the so-called "mobility windows" into the curricula. They should also help students in taking up one-semester studies within the framework of an international exchange and boost international co-operation. New academic curricula should realize the requirements on education in the European Union, ensure students greater care and help them develop their interests and talents.

Apart from the university and faculty authorities, students' decisions as to their participation in the international students' exchange programmes are influenced by personal reasons. The respondents elisted the following factors to this group (in the degree defined by the average degree of variant importance, at standard deviation given in brackets) coming in the order given below:

- perfect knowledge of a foreign language – 4.44 point, (0.94);
- individual economic situation – 4.28 point, (0.87);
- the opportunity to gain knowledge and competence – 4.17 point, (0.88);
- economic and substantive benefits of foreign employment – 4.14 point, (0.89);
- high prestige of the chosen university – 4.06 point, (0.94);
- the spirit of adventure – 3.90 point, (0.98);
- family situation (starting a family, taking care of aged parents) – 3.75 point, (0.89).

The respondents' attitude to the assessment of personal determinants which are decisive in the participation in the international students' exchange proved very constructive and realistic. They placed good knowledge of foreign languages first; in the second position they mentioned their economic situation, which may hinder the opportunity to study abroad. Only after fulfilling these requirement do they see the benefits arising from

[11] Higher Education (in)"The quality in university research and didactic activity ' collecive work edited by: S. Doroszewski & A. Kobylińska, Main School of Commerce in Warsaw, Oficyna Wydawnicza, Warsaw, 2007, pp 561-562.

participation in the international exchange in the sphere of gaining knowledge and competence as well as in the prospects of attractive (both economically and substantively) job offers abroad. It is noteworthy, that they placed factors such as starting a family or taking care of aged parents in the last position, whereas the adventure spirit – in the last but one. The students have adopted the generally accepted rule: career first, looking for adventure next. Such approach will defnintely not improve the birth rate in Poland; neither will it point to the solution of the retirement age issue.
While answering the questionnaire, the students outlined the new, immensely important tasks to be undertaken by the newly elected university authorities. The students of Cracow University of Economics will be waiting for their fulfillment.

5. The similarities and differences in the assessment of the researched areas by the students of two Cracow universities

The research was conducted mainly among the students of the Jagiellonian University (JU) and Cracow University of Economics (CUE). The respective number of students who filled in the questionnaire correctly was comparable:
At the Jagiellonian University the number reached 1874 students, and at Cracow University of Economics – 1963. Statistically, the findings revealed small differences at the significance level of 0.05 between the two groups of students from these universities, by means of a non-parametric two-sample Kolmogrov-Smirnov test.

The order in which the surveyed students of both universities arranged the answer variants was very similar; in all cases when this order was not identical, the differences were minor. In most cases, the difference was a matter of one position. On the other hand, the differences between the average importance indices of the variants (separate one for each question) was slight, and only in eight (out of 84) cases it amounted to over 0.2 point of the average degree of variant importance. Therefore, one can conclude that the opinions of students in the researched areas were very close.

The order of the selected answer variants in both universities was the same for two questions: 9 (What is the significance of the factors given below for those students who are taking a decision about the field of study or specialization in the Second Degree Studies), and 11 (To what extent do the following factors of the university policy influence students' decisions to take part in the international students' exchange?) (diagrams 9.21 and 9.23).

In each of the six consecutive questions numbered: 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 12, five variants of answers were given in the same positions at both universities and only one difference was noted between the positions of two neighbouring variants; that is, for example, a given variant at one university was in the sixth position, and another one in the seventh position while at the other university these variants changed order with each other. However, the difference between average indices of importance of these variants was slight. We can conclude, therefore, that there was no particular difference in the students' assessment of the impact of variant answers upon these questions.

In answers to three questions (numbered 6, 7, 8) there were differences in the ranking for two pairs of factors, that is four variants altogether (however, the difference between average indices of variant importance was rather small); the remaining three variants took up the same positions at both universities.

In answer to question 4 (To what extent the external factors of an institution of higher education attract talented students?) three variants assumed the same position at both universities, but a considerable difference occured in the ranking of the remaining ones, in particular on how the role of practitioners in the process of education is perceived. This

variant took the second position at Cracow University of Economics, while at the Jagiellonian University - the 5th one. (the difference between average indices of the importance of this variant was the second greatest, and it amounted to as much as 0.32 point of the average degree of variant importance, to the advantage of CUE). In the Jagiellonian University questionnaire, ensuring perfect conditions in the process of education (lecture rooms, laboratories, the equipment) was placed in the second position, whereas students from the CUE placed it in the fourth position. At the Jagiellonian University active co-operation with reputed international universities took the fourth position, while at CUE it took the far sixth position. The greatest difference between answers given by students of both universities was revealed in the sequence of appearance of factors (variants) covered in question 4.

In answer to question 7 (To what extent the factors mentioned below are crucial for the development of students in terms of living conditions), students of both universities gave low marks to the importance of students' clubs and sports teams; however the marks given by students of the Jagiellonian University are much lower (by 0.2 and 0.32 point of the average degree of variant importance respectively). The importance of sport and cultural activity has dropped very significantly since the author's student's times. (diagram 9.19).

The respondents from the Jagiellonian University attached more importance than their counterparts from Cracow University of Economics to students' participation in scientific research activities of the University as well as to the assessment of student's individual contribution such as: projects, or case studies (average importance indices were higher at the Jagiellonian University than at Cracow University of Economics by 0.27 and 0.24 point of the average degree of variant importance respectively. Alternatively, the students of Cracow University of Economics attached more importance than their counterparts from the Jagiellonian University to (apart from the factors discussed earlier) students' opinion on choosing a field of study or specialization in the Second Degree Studies, inspection by a body created by the Dean, as well as innovative and experimental forms of education (average importance indices were higher at Cracow University of Economics by 0.4, 0.3 and 0.22 point of the average degree of variant importance respectively).

Only in four cases students of both universities reached full agreement. In their opinion, personal predispositions and competence make the most important factor which should be decisive in the choice of specialization or the field of study in the Second Degree Studies. The respondents of both universities judged very highly the degree of importance of this factor (4.35 point of the average importance index). The students agreed that concern about students' good knowledge of foreign languages is the most important aspect of the university policy, as it has a very powerful effect upon students' participation in international students' exchange. Thus, the students of both universities allocated 4.38 point of the average degree of variant importance to this answer variant. At the same time, they acknowledged the need to adjust an academic curriculum to the exchange requirements. The students from both universities allocated 4.06 point of the average importance index to this factor.The fourth answer variant which obtained the same assessment from students of both universities, related to the individual economic conditions factor (with a high degree of importance - 4.28 point of the average variant importance). It was placed in the second position in answers to the last question (To what extent do the personal factors given below influence students' participation in the international students' exchange?). It means that the economic situation of students from both universities may slow down or block participation in the exchange. What should be done to prevent this exclusion and give all talented students a chance to take part in the international students' exchange and to develop international relationships (both didactic

and scientific). This issue should be promptly addressed by the university decision-makers.

The comparison of answer variants, (influencing factors) placed in the order of importance, to individual questions allows us to draw the following conclusions on the basis of the analysis of students' opinions expressed in the questionnaire:

- the students treated all the issues covered in the questionnaire very seriously and filled in the questionnaire on a voluntary basis; hence 3956 students taking active part in the project;
- the answers submitted by the students from the Jagiellonian University and Cracow University of Economics are, to a high degree, similar while the differences are slight;
- in answer to question 6, representing the impact of factors concerned with the methods of education upon its quality, the students placed "making case studies obligatory" at the bottom of the list – 3.58 point of the average degree of variant importance.The reason, perhaps, is rooted in the fact that most of the respondents are not acquainted with this method, hence the lack of expertise in this matter.
- In answer to question 11 about the factors of the university policy crucial for students' participation in the international students' exchange, students placed "fulfillment of the European Union requirements concerning education" in the last position; only 3.85 point of the average degree of variant importance; this standpoint is the consequence of students' lack of knowledge about the European Union requirements in terms of international co-operation and exchange between universities in the sphere of education. On the other hand, a high score of points allocated to all answer variants confirms that the issue of international exchange between universities is very important for students.

The opinion of students expressed in answers to question 5, on the impact of factors concerning academic teachers and their contribution to the quality of education, deserves a particular attention:

- in the last but one position, as the consequence of limited knowledge of foreign languages, students mentioned "the obligation imposed upon their academic teachers to deliver a minimum of one lecture in the English language" – 2.97 point of the average degree of variant importance (low impact factor in the quality of education);
- the last position was filled by students with "inspection by a special unit created by the Dean" (e.g. Head of Department) allocating it 2.95 point of the average degree of variant importance. Thus they ranked it among the factors of low level impact upon the quality of education;
- in the fifth position, the students placed "monitoring the quality of education via the ranking system in which students validate their academic teachers;
- key operations of the university authorities: inspections and validation have little effect upon the quality of education in the opinion of students As research reveals, this opinion is also shared by the professors. Why do then university authorities concentrate on those simplistic, ineffective means of raising the quality of education instead of following the methods ranked first and recommended by the students?
- in the first positon students listed "employment of best lecturers from all over the country" – 4.15 point of the average degree of variant importance (high importance factor for the quality of education);
- in the third position there is "the program for continuous improvement of scientific and didactic competence of academic teachers" – 3.9 point of the average degree of variant importance (high impact factor in the quality of education):

The opinions of students expressed in answers given to the questions confirm that some universities are in need of genuine, reliable system ensuring the quality in line with the requirements by the European Union, which was adopted by the Ministers for higher education of the states-signatories of the Bologna Process at the 2005 Conference in Bergen.[12] The continuous improvement of the quality of management accelerates the university development, as the changes for quality in the system of university management lead to the increase in the quality of scientific research and education.[13]

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