

Coordinates of the Global Performance in the Pre-university Educational System

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Abstract

Given the changes at the global level, the Romanian pre-university educational system must modify its mission, vision, educational offer so as to obtain the best results and to obtain performance. Thus, considering the importance in reflecting performance in the pre-university educational institutions, we proceed to present some tools for revealing the global performance of these institutions.

Key words: performance, quality, performance tools, results

J.E.L. classification: A21

1. Introduction

The Romanian educational system has been subject to successive reform measures, of structural and functional renewal. These changes mainly focused on the legislative framework, the curricular offer, the reorganization of the educational units, perfecting the initial and continuous training programs for teachers and generalizing the ten years compulsory education (Cucoş, 2009, p.17). The educational system, including the pre-university one, involves educational steps programmed and realized in specialized institutions, a continuous effort to train the human being.

Performance is the necessary lever to achieve certain goals, but also a motivating factor to be better in competitive conditions. Currently, the major objective of the pre-university educational process on the path to modernization is closely linked to the concept of quality, meaning that there is the desire to get closer to the international standards. The improvement of the informational-accounting system in the pre-university educational institutions aims to involve the entire category of resources: human, educational, financial and informational.

Our research is motivated by the need to reflect the global performance of the pre-university educational institutions taking into account the current requirements of the society; "information regarding financial performance remains confusing, and the decisions which were taken based on them are insufficiently substantiated and unrealistic" (A. Ştefănescu, E. Ţurlea, O. Vladu, 2010, p. 36).

2. Literature review

N. Albu, C. Albu (2005, p. 30-34.) considered the word performance is the bearer of an ideology of progress, effort and always improving, it implies a behavior which depends on means, activities, objectives and not a static, singular result. In C. Cucoş (2009, p.506) opinion performance refers to results of an objective - material, cultural - spiritual or active nature, but also to create a value. From a dimensional point of view, the performance presents three aspects: financial (profitable relations, balancing the exchange with third parties, fair remuneration); social (quality of services provided, good working conditions, respecting human rights); environmental (preserving the quality of the environment). Reynaud E (2003, p.15) considers that global performance lies in the ability of pre-university educational institutions to create value for all parties involved. It is represented by the sum of economic, social and environmental performances.

The economic performances of the pre-university educational institutions are represented by obtaining better results than the objectives, while the social performance presupposes that the mission of the pre-university educational institutions becomes a reality, meaning the quality of the educational services offered to be reflected by the obtained results. Environmental performance takes into account biodiversity, environmental compliance, environmental costs or the impact of educational services offered on the environment.

N. Albu, C. Albu (2005 p. 39) presented some performance tools in the pre-university educational systems: dynamic planning, quality monitoring, teamwork organizing, technology use, change management, tracking results and improving skills.

A model of performance analysis based on results and quality. The quality of the pre-university education can be reproduced by the effort made by it to achieve the progress of the students compared to the previous level. This paper presented the results of the National Evaluation Exam for the students in the VIIIth grade by technological highschool from Olt county in last two years. We would like to mention that the research in this field is very few and that it is very difficult to appreciate the global performance at the level of pre-university educational institutions.

3. Research methodology

The research methodology may be assimilated to a structured and coherent system of rules, principles, methods, instruments and know-how (Ristea and Franc, 2009, p.33). The scientific knowledge of the facts, phenomena and social processes is acquired through some well defined concepts, using some compelling research methods and techniques, or following the

objective description of the social life (Chelcea2007, p. 48). This plays an important role in all institutions, including pre-university educational ones, as well as in our society.

The premise which began this scientific endeavor was the need to outline an image on how to reflect global performance in the pre-university educational institutions.

Given the characteristics of the field, the research methodology which was used is standardized, being constructed by first identifying, study and systematize the specialized literature but also a factual documentation carried out in the pre-university educational institutions as well as the county school inspectorates.

4. Performance dimensions in pre-university educational system

Pragmatically, relating strictly to the accounting figures, performance in pre-university educational institutions could be perceived as follows: the surplus of incomes in respect to the expenses, the minimum difference between the initial budgetary provisions and the definitive budgetary provisions, respectively between the initial budgetary credits and final budgetary credits, a level as high as possible for revenues and as rational as possible for expenses. All these data are summarized in the balance sheet and the budget execution account. Is this sufficient in order to describe performance in pre-university educational institutions, given that education is the determining factor for society's progress? Maybe, but it describes only partially the financial performance.

Education has a vital role in the development of civilization, culture, humanity, to increase the degree of order and rationality in social life, to cultivate spiritual values and confer a high status to the human condition. This idea is also supported by Nelson Mandela, who stated that: "education is the most powerful weapon that can be used to change the world" (<http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/briefingpapers/efa/quotes.shtml>)

Education's finality is to form the human personality, through the acquisition of scientific knowledge, of the national and universal cultural values, the formation of intellectual capacities and practical skills, through the assimilation of humanistic, scientific, technical and aesthetic knowledge. In particular, education is required to produce value for as many beneficiaries as possible, to have social conscience, to have performance.

In these conditions, we naturally ask ourselves the questions: how is the harmonization between the quality of public services and the need to minimize budgetary expenses in order to obtain performances by public institutions? What does performance mean for a public pre-university educational institution?

From a general point of view, "performance shows the ability to progress through constant efforts. The word performance is the bearer of an ideology of progress, effort and always improving" (Albu and Albu, 2005, p. 30-34.), it implies a behavior which depends on means, activities, objectives and not a static, singular result; it refers to results of an objective - material, cultural - spiritual or active nature, but also to create a value (Cucos, 2009, p. 506).

From a dimensional point of view, the performance presents three aspects: financial (profitable relations, balancing the exchange with third parties, fair remuneration); social (quality of services provided, good working conditions, respecting human rights); environmental (preserving the quality of the environment). Financial performance is associated with profitability (procurement of the necessary resources at the lowest cost), efficiency (to maximize the results, starting from a given amount of resources, or to minimize the amount of resources for a predetermined result) and efficaciousness (the obtained results match the provisioned results). In accounting terms, which is in search of legitimacy, truth, performance signifies a faithful image, generated by giving accurate, complete, punctual and relevant information regarding economic facts and processes, expressed in a monetary standard.

Global performance lies in the ability of pre-university educational institutions to create value for all parties involved. It is represented by the sum of economic, social and environmental performances (Reynaud, 2003, p.15). The economic performances of the pre-university educational institutions are represented by obtaining better results than the objectives, while the social performance presupposes that the mission of the pre-university educational institutions becomes a reality, meaning the quality of the educational services offered to be reflected by the obtained results. Environmental performance takes into account biodiversity, environmental compliance, environmental costs or the impact of educational services offered on the environment.

Performance is expressed by an increased value attached to education, but also the intensity with which an individual contributes to the development of the society, in relation to the goals and standards that were set. What is the social and environmental dimension of this increased value? There are complex aspects, difficult to appreciate, considering the diverse spectrum of the fields in which the training is carried out, the absence of quantitative indicators and the difficulty of considering and quantifying all the activities generating education.

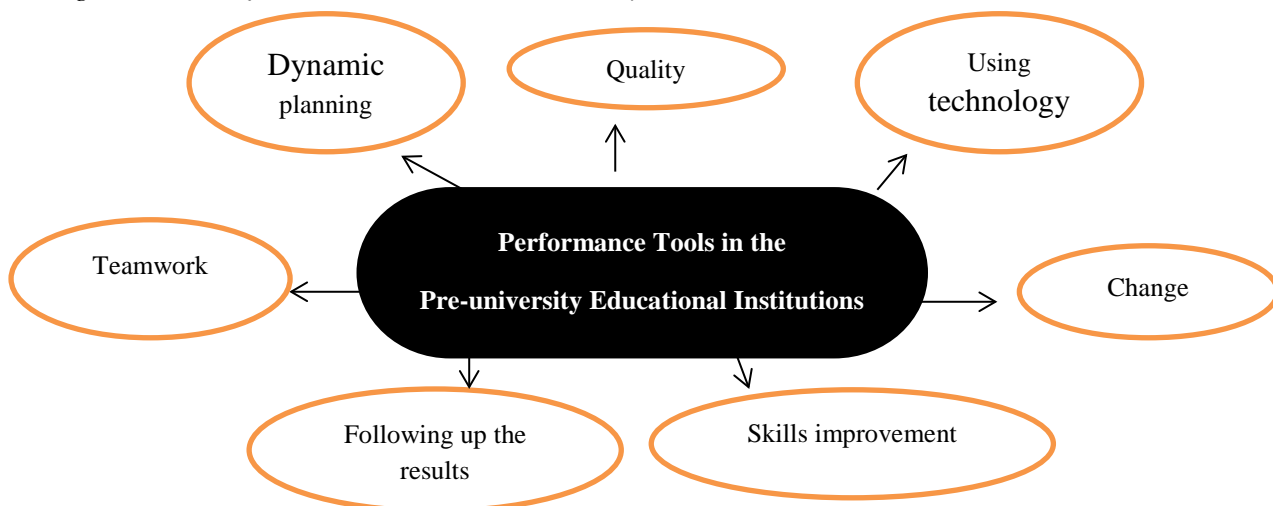
However, we conclude that there is no aggregated information regarding the insertion in the labor market of the beneficiaries of education in relation to the specialization they followed, to the impact produced by the practical activity on the theoretical knowledge, the degree of access to higher levels of education, the degree of capitalization of the knowledge acquired during the student years, the satisfaction of the employers, etc.

We also do not exclude the possibility of completing the information contained in the financial reports with elements regarding the ability of pre-university educational institutions to adapt to the ever-changing environment: identifying and flattening risks, justifying the quality by referring to the beneficiaries of education, evaluating the human resource, with all the more so as, in this field, the quality of the human resource is directly affecting future generations.

5. Performance Tools in the Pre-university Educational Institutions

The pre-university educational performance aims at a dynamic planning, quality monitoring, teamwork organizing, technology use, change management, tracking results and improving skills (Albu and Albu, 2005 p. 39), as shown in figure no. 1:

Figure no. 1: Performance Tools in the Pre-university Educational Institutions



Source: Own processing

Offering quality educational services, the degree of insertion on the labor market, the realization of projects that fit in time and within the established budget, the degree of commitment of the staff is reflected in the results obtained and in accordance with the expectations of the students, parents and of the society, the achievement of educational projects and the degree of commitment of the staff in relation to their responsibilities. A model of performance analysis based on results in Olt County level is shown in chart no. 1:

Table no. 1. The results of the National Evaluation Exam for the students in the VIIIth grade

School year	Promotion according to mean:			
	< 5	5-6.99	7-8.99	9-10
2018 - 2019	20%	53%	6%	2%
2017 - 2018	50%	16%	25%	8%

Source: own processing based on the data pgiven by a technological highschool from Old county

The percentage of exam promotion at the National Evaluation for the eighth-grade students is higher in the 2019 session compared to the one of 2018, due to students and parents, the students' presence at the additional training hours, a better school-family collaboration. The results of the baccalaureate examination are shown in the chart no. 2:

Table no. 2 Comparative situation of the baccalaureate examination results

Session		Unattending	Eliminated from the exam	Rejected (% from the number of the ones who participated in the examination)		6.00 - 6.99	7.00- 7.99	8.00- 8.99	9.00- 10.00
				< 5 at least one subject	≥ 5 all subjects but with mean < 6.00				
2019		11,42%	-	74%	0%	6%	10%	0%	10%
						Total promoted 26%			
2018		7,57%	-	52%	0%	13%	12%	18%	5%
						Total promoted 26%			

Source: Own processing based on the data provided by technological highschool from Olt county

The percentage of promotion in the Bacalaureate exam is lower in 2019, compared to the previous year, due to the lack of interest expressed by students, teachers and parents who did not respond to the requests. These results are for guidance only, they need to be expanded nationally to reflect the performance in pre-university educational institutions.

6. Conclusions

All institutions aim to achieve performance in their field, except that this fact is viewed differently depending on the purpose pursued and the specificity of the activity. In the public institutions, the performance analysis based on the documents drawn up is carried out only through the patrimonial result account, but this analysis, it is not sufficient to establish whether a pre-university educational institution is efficient, taking into account the fact that it pursues the provision of quality educational services.

The performance of pre-university educational institutions is reflected in the results obtained, and these depend to a large extent on the quality of the educational process. In order to achieve the change in the pre-university educational institutions and to improve the quality of the educational act, a series of transformations regarding the mission and the vision of these institutions are needed, the modification of the educational offer, the performance improvement of the evaluation and reward system, changes in the organizational structure and others.

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