

# Study of the Level of Employers’ Satisfaction with the Quality of Training in Universities

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**Abstract**—The study of employers’ attitudes and public opinion shows a serious problem in the relationship between employers and universities. The problem is that the professional qualification of university graduates is more likely to be insufficient to satisfy growing employers’ demands. The key aspects of the problem are the lack of both work experience and practical and socio-psychological training of the graduates.

The introduction of new requirements to the educational process, regulated by modern State educational standards, as well as changing employers’ attitude to the issues relating to staffing should improve the quality of training of university graduates in terms of their readiness to perform practical tasks in real conditions.

This study aims to assess the level of employers’ satisfaction with the quality of training in universities for the regional labor market.

The results identified the employers’ requirements for university graduates, the priority of criteria for personnel selection, the importance of university graduates’ personal characteristics for employers and other things that should be taken into account by universities while developing the model of interaction with the labor market.

**Keywords:** *level of employers’ satisfaction, quality of training in universities, interaction between employers and universities, labor market, competence-oriented education*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The study of employers’ attitudes and public opinion shows a serious problem in the relationship between employers and universities [1, 2]. The theoretical, practical and socio-psychological training of university graduates is more likely to be insufficient to match the growing demands, needs and requirements of employers due to the mismatch

between university training facilities and the requirements of the modern economy as well as to the lack of qualified teaching staff [3, 4].

The lack of experience complicates the problems for graduates when applying for a job in a company where the main requirement for a prospective employee is work experience [5].

The university training system in modern conditions aims to provide high-quality education. The introduction of new requirements to the educational process, regulated by modern State educational standards [6], as well as changing the employers’ attitude to the issues relating to staffing should improve the quality of training of university graduates. One of the most important criteria for assessing the quality of education is employer satisfaction with the quality of training of university graduates [7].

University can assess the level of its competitiveness in the educational services market by identifying the employers’ demands and studying the quality of professional training by fields of study [8]. The study of the competitiveness of graduates in the labor market and the implementation of actions aimed at upgrading professional competencies of graduates in order to increase the employers’ satisfaction make it possible to implement the concept of competence-focused education [9].

The need to eliminate the mismatch between the level of competence of university graduates and demands of the regional labor market [10] identifies the need to analyze the degree of employers’ satisfaction with the level of competence of university graduates. The problem of mismatch between the results of graduates training in universities and market

demands is typical of relationship between the three key participants in the regional labor market – universities, students and organizations. The solution to this problem, as well as the identification of the parameters of the existing gaps between the level of graduates competence and the needs of the regional labor market will enable educational institutions to devise measures to better train students in accordance with the changing requirements of organizations and enterprises to ensure their competitiveness.

The study aims to assess the level of employers' satisfaction with the quality of training in universities for the regional labor market.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

The questionnaire survey was used for collecting data. It was conducted with the support of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Chuvash Republic. The leading business executives in different sectors of the economy were surveyed through the questionnaire. A total of 54 respondents took part in the study. The questionnaire included the questions addressing the problems of filling vacancies [11], quality of training of graduates and the criteria for staff selection.

## III. RESULTS

The survey identified the popularity of the main methods of filling vacancies in organizations who participated in the study. Respondents were asked to indicate the degree of priority of the following options: to employ a university graduate, to transfer staff, to train staff who held other positions and transfer them to vacant positions, to hire a person from the labor market or poach staff from a rival organization.

The most popular of the above-mentioned methods of filling a vacancy which involves necessary training was to transfer an employee. 23% of respondents chose this approach. The second most popular response is poaching from a competitor (22%), and the third one is hiring a graduate (21%). The least popular approaches are hiring from the labor market (18%) and transfer of staff from another position (16%). More than half of the respondents (52%) noted that professional experience is not required for university graduates. The rest of the survey participants stated that the experience is desirable.

The results show that graduates have high probability of employability, even if there are such effective ways as the use of internal staff capacity of the organization and poaching employees from rival companies [12, 13].

The study determines the level of employers' satisfaction with the quality of training in universities. For this purpose, it was necessary to assess the level of significance of the criteria of quality of university graduates training for the survey participants, as well as the level of satisfaction with these criteria [14, 15]. In this case, the criteria of the quality of university graduates training refer to theoretical training of graduates, i.e. having basic and specialized knowledge, practical skills, including the ability to apply theoretical knowledge into practice, and socio-psychological training,

which implies the ability to communicate effectively with colleagues and work in a team environment [16]. The evaluation was based on a 5-point scale, where 1 is low score, 5 is high score.

The data obtained show that the above-mentioned types of training are almost of equal importance for employers who took part in the study. But the socio-psychological training is a little more important than practical one, and the theoretical training is less important (Table I). The level of employers' satisfaction with theoretical training is equal to that with socio-psychological one: 3.11 out of 5. The level of satisfaction with practical skills is the lowest. It is only 2.63 points. The ratio of level of satisfaction with criteria of graduates training quality to the level of their importance for employers is considered as a degree of employers' satisfaction with the quality of graduates training. The respondents are 87.5% satisfied with theoretical training, 80% with socio-psychological and 72.4% with practical one [17].

TABLE I. ASSESSMENT OF THE DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE QUALITY OF GRADUATES TRAINING

Quality criteria	Value, points	Satisfaction, points	Degree of satisfaction, %
Theoretical training	3.55	3.11	87.6
Practical skills	3.63	2.63	72.4
Socio-psychological training	3.89	3.11	80.0

The significance of having practical skills indicates that systematically organized theoretical knowledge alone is not enough to meet the employers' requirements. In this regard, in order to provide themselves with qualified employees, some organizations make efforts to increase the level of graduates competence in selected areas of training [18]. The most common way to recruit graduates, used by survey participants, is to offer a traineeship programme and identify the most qualified candidates. This recruitment method accounts for 28% of all forms of interaction between organizations and universities. The second most common form is meeting with graduates, where organizations provide information on their activities (25%). The method "Inform the Department / Dean's office of the need for employees" came in third in the assessment (19%). Apart from the mentioned forms of attracting university graduates, the survey participants named the so-called "active" methods: participation in the educational process and conducting classes for students where the best available candidates are identified (11%), as well as setting up a joint university-organization laboratory or a classroom or basic department, in which the selection of the most talented students takes place (9%) [19].

The degree of satisfaction with theoretical and practical training among employers using "active" methods was higher than that among all participants of the study (Table II). The degree of satisfaction with socio-psychological training decreased from 80% to 78.02%.

TABLE II. ASSESSMENT OF THE DEGREE OF "ACTIVE" EMPLOYERS' SATISFACTION WITH THE QUALITY OF GRADUATES TRAINING

Quality criteria	Value, points	Satisfaction, points	Degree of satisfaction, %
Theoretical training	3.54	3.45	97.46
Practical skills	3.64	2.73	75.0
Socio-psychological training	3.73	2.91	78.02

18.5% of the surveyed representatives of organizations indicated that they do not interact with universities to recruit graduates.

Apart from the quality of training, employers are also interested in personal characteristics of a university graduate [20, 21]. To identify the importance of personal characteristics, respondents were asked to evaluate them on a five-point scale [22]. The results show that the most important quality in a person for an employer is responsibility, assessed at 4.3 points (Table III).

TABLE III. IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Personal characteristics	Value
Responsibility	4.3
Discipline	4.0
Sense of duty	4.0
Development ambitions	4.0
Working capacity	4.0
Good organization	4.0
Industriousness	3.9
Leadership qualities	3.1

The second most important qualities are discipline, sense of duty, development ambitions, working capacity and good organization (4 points). The last thing all respondents are interested in is leadership qualities of graduates (3.1 points).

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The results determined the level of importance for employers and the level of their satisfaction with the theoretical, practical and socio-psychological training of university graduates. It was found that the interaction between organizations and universities on providing joint training is important to improve the quality of graduates training and eliminate the mismatch in the labor market [23, 24].

The results of the study are the basis for the development of a mechanism of interaction between organizations and universities on strengthening training programmes and providing effective training.

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