

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: STRATEGIES FOR QUALITY AND COMPETITIVENESS MANAGEMENT

GESTÃO EDUCACIONAL EM INSTITUIÇÕES DE ENSINO SUPERIOR: ESTRATÉGIAS PARA GESTÃO DA QUALIDADE E COMPETITIVIDADE

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Abstract. Adequate quality and competitiveness management strategies in universities and other higher education institutions require a balanced approach to educational management. It involves setting clear goals and objectives, developing a system for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and research activities, and continuously improving the educational process. In addition, it is crucial to meet the needs of students, faculty, and other participants in the educational process while maintaining open communication with stakeholders. This comprehensive approach is necessary to achieve high-quality standards and enhance the institution's competitiveness. This study aims to consolidate theoretical and scientific-practical approaches to form effective education management strategies in the context of modern realities. Educational management involves organisational, administrative, strategic, and pedagogical processes to achieve high-quality education and efficiently operate higher education institutions. The text outlines the significance of developing cross-cultural competence, leadership, and digital literacy in future professionals. Additionally, it establishes a correlation between the Human Development Index, as a measure of education quality, and gross national product. This text outlines the main aspects of educational management in higher education institutions, identifies the primary levels of strategic development management, and highlights the dimensions of higher education quality and requirements for its assessment in contemporary realities. Additionally, it proposes methods and approaches to assess the quality of educational management in higher education institutions to ensure their competitiveness.

Keywords: educational management, quality of education, higher education institutions, Human Development Index (HDI), leadership, educational innovation, competitiveness.

Resumo. Estratégias adequadas de gestão da qualidade e da competitividade nas universidades e outras instituições de ensino superior exigem uma abordagem equilibrada à gestão educacional. Envolve o estabelecimento de metas e objetivos claros, o desenvolvimento de um sistema de monitoramento e avaliação da qualidade das atividades de ensino e pesquisa e a melhoria contínua do processo educacional. Além disso, é crucial atender às necessidades dos alunos, professores e outros participantes do processo educacional, mantendo ao mesmo tempo uma comunicação aberta com as partes interessadas. Esta abordagem abrangente é necessária para alcançar padrões de qualidade elevados e aumentar a competitividade da instituição. Este estudo tem como objetivo consolidar abordagens teóricas e científico-práticas para formar estratégias eficazes de gestão educacional no contexto das realidades modernas. A gestão educacional envolve processos organizacionais, administrativos, estratégicos e pedagógicos para alcançar uma educação de alta qualidade e operar com eficiência as instituições de ensino superior. O texto descreve a importância do desenvolvimento de competência intercultural, liderança e alfabetização digital em futuros



profissionais. Além disso, estabelece uma correlação entre o Índice de Desenvolvimento Humano, como medida de qualidade da educação, e o produto nacional bruto. Este texto delinea os principais aspectos da gestão educacional nas instituições de ensino superior, identifica os níveis primários da gestão estratégica do desenvolvimento e destaca as dimensões da qualidade do ensino superior e os requisitos para a sua avaliação nas realidades contemporâneas. Além disso, propõe métodos e abordagens para avaliar a qualidade da gestão educacional nas instituições de ensino superior para garantir a sua competitividade.

Palavras-chave: gestão educacional, qualidade da educação, instituições de ensino superior, Índice de Desenvolvimento Humano (IDH), liderança, inovação educacional, competitividade.

1. INTRODUCTION

At the end of the 20th century, the opposing view of education management has given way to a more optimistic and positive perspective, reflecting a closer integration of management and teaching. Large-scale studies and meta-analyses of national trends have led to a more nuanced approach to educational management, especially in high-performing systems. Higher education institution managers face significant challenges regarding innovation, prospects, learning, and continuous professional development (Caldwell, 2015).

Currently, numerous publications are dedicated to researching ways to improve the quality and competitiveness of university-level educational services. It is important to note that education quality is a multidimensional concept that depends on various factors. This approach allows for a focus on the most relevant issues of the process by identifying appropriate indicators of education quality. There is a global consensus that education quality is crucial in ensuring sustainable national development (UNESCO, 2017). Understanding and improving educational outcomes are closely linked to maintaining national competitiveness in sustainable development (Inciarte-González, Bozo-de-Carmona; Parra-Sandoval, 2012). Defining variables that best meet the population's needs directly impacts education quality outcomes.

Further research is required to identify overlooked factors as existing indicator research and models are limited, widely spread, and not consistently rigorous from a technical and methodological standpoint, making them insufficiently useful for decision-making (Murillo, Román, 2010). In transitioning to distance learning for effective education, educators, mentors, and governments must devise the best strategy to enhance students' independence levels (Hasanah et al., 2022). Professionalism based on digitalisation involves online platforms that reflect professional identity and educational management values (Lonappan et al., 2023). Practice has shown that each university requires its quality concept model. Therefore, it is necessary to build as many system indicators as possible, as different types of universities may emerge (González, 2012). The economic transformations in Ukraine since gaining independence require corresponding changes in the education management system to ensure the competitiveness of national universities in line with global standards (Yampol, 2023). An analysis has been conducted on various indicators that reflect the impact of reform measures at different levels of education on the development of Ukraine's national education system (Yasinska, 2022).

Transformational changes in national economic systems and the globalisation of the educational process require research monitoring and implementing a quality control system for education. It includes quality audits of the learning process and interaction with university culture to enhance the collective quality of education, contributing to the development of balanced educational management strategies.

2. METHODS

Various means and research methods were employed in the process, including formal-logical, interdisciplinary, and specific approaches. Systems thinking facilitated the assessment



and analysis of all phenomena, considering the various connections between their components and properties, identifying system-forming factors, and uncovering hidden aspects of the problem. Conceptual thinking contributed to modifying systems analysis. Formal logical methods are the foundation of research in education management at higher education institutions. Interdisciplinary methods reflect the scientific approach to research. Specific methods highlighted the nuances of education quality management systems and management activities in higher education institutions. Fact-finding research methods were used to demonstrate the impact of education duration on human development levels. The significance of factual material is determined by comparing the relationship between the human development index and the gross national product per capita. The relationship between facts was established using the comparative method (benchmarking) and correlation analysis, which directed further research. The main criteria for assessing the quality and competitiveness of educational management were established using analysis and synthesis. This study aims to review and contextualise existing definitions of quality from a management perspective. It also presents factors that support decision-making in educational institutions. The study will consider different approaches to measuring educational quality and investigating various factors influencing it. The results obtained will serve as the basis for future research and the development and construction of multidimensional models adapted to the needs of educational institutions for measuring management quality. The generalisation of research results helped to form conclusions.

3. RESULTS

The global competition for knowledge as a critical factor in economic growth is increasingly shaping higher education policies in various countries worldwide. The European Union, which aspires to become a leading knowledge economy globally, is concerned about the quality indicators in the knowledge sector of higher education institutions and their innovative connections. The primary concern is addressing the “European paradox”, where Europe has the required knowledge and research but struggles to translate them into innovations, productivity growth, and economic development (Wende, 2009). It is further complicated by policy measures being formulated and implemented at various levels within the EU, including European, national, regional, and institutional levels.

Moreover, policy formulation often relies on different perceptions of globalisation, the nature of international competition in higher education, and the current capacity of institutions to stimulate innovation in the private sector effectively. This document presents an overview of European policies in higher education and their response to global competition. It suggests ways to promote and achieve global competitiveness, highlighting the roles of competitive and cooperative strategies at national and European levels. It also recommends considering various combinations of these strategies.

Educational management in higher education institutions involves various organisational, administrative, strategic, and pedagogical processes to achieve high-quality education and effective operation. Educational management aims to ensure efficient resource utilisation, improve the educational process, increase student satisfaction, and support innovative approaches to education (Human Capital, 2021). Education managers should differentiate between strategic goals at the institutional level and goals in functional areas related to the strategic direction of the development of higher education institutions and scientific research (Stukalina, 2014).

Education management in higher education institutions involves planning, organising, directing, and controlling all aspects of the educational process. To attain high-quality education and enhance competitiveness, it is imperative to cater to the student's needs, ensure



the relevance of educational programs, and employ contemporary teaching and assessment techniques.

Given the acknowledged importance of leadership in higher education institutions, there is a significant focus on identifying, training, and developing future leaders. Studying the strengths and weaknesses of training programs and future professionals enables refining educational policies and practices in universities. Comprehensive programmes that offer both traditional and alternative career paths can help identify potential leaders at an early stage. They provide a range of authentic measures to assess their abilities, support their development, and prepare them for leadership roles. Defining influential leaders and methods of selecting them for employment is a challenge that is grounded in research across various jurisdictions worldwide (Drysdale, Gurr, 2022). The domains or opportunities identified include setting direction, institutional and educational staff development, and focusing on teaching, learning, and research (Kongolo, 2019).

Educational management and leadership are central concepts in understanding the organisation of educational institutions. However, their meanings, differences, and values in educational organisations remain subjects of discussion. Educational governance involves ensuring the proper functioning of higher education institutions. Educational leadership is influencing others to achieve goals in the education system, which requires effective measures. When those entrusted with responsibility fulfil it, they exert influence and are thus leaders. Although educational leadership is often associated with responsibility, in practice, it does not necessarily entail accountability for the functioning of the educational system. This analysis emphasises the importance of responsibility, which has been overlooked in organisational management in educational institutions. Responsibility in education is a crucial concept that should be more significant in analysing organisational responsibility in educational institutions (Connolly, James, Fertig, 2019).

Furthermore, it is essential to introduce innovative teaching methods, encourage the professional development of teachers and staff, and enhance the infrastructure of educational institutions. To ensure the competitiveness of higher education institutions, it is necessary to develop international cooperation, create a comfortable learning environment for students and teachers, and actively work on attracting and retaining qualified personnel. Additionally, it is essential to analyse the results of educational activities and make changes to enhance the effectiveness of education.

In a market-driven educational landscape, institutions are compelled to seek innovative ways to improve the quality of their services. One practical approach is to implement a quality management system, which can help institutions streamline their activities, ensure high education standards, and meet all stakeholders' needs.

In the context of a market economy, investors place a premium on the assurance of quality educational services. A quality management system can demonstrate an educational institution's ability to provide quality education and attract more investments. Practical experience indicates that graduates need academic knowledge and practical skills in the job market. Quality management systems can help introduce modern educational technologies focused on practical student training. Implementing a quality management system in education can increase the competitiveness of graduates and enable them to meet the job market's needs. The article shows that economic transformations in Ukraine have created the necessary prerequisites for this implementation. Such a system can improve educational institutions' efficiency, attract investments, and prepare competitive graduates (Yampol, 2023b).

The demand for quality education is increasing, and educational institutions worldwide must adapt to changes in the socio-economic environment while meeting various cultural and technological expectations. Successful educational management requires proper planning, efficient resource allocation, curriculum development, and the engagement of qualified



teachers. In an international context, cultural differences and diverse educational systems enable the implementation of management strategies. The importance of cross-cultural competence for educational leaders has increased due to globalisation, who exchange experiences and best practices. Digital technologies have revolutionised education management, providing new teaching methodologies, data-driven decision-making, and adaptive learning platforms. The integration of technology into higher education has the potential to optimise processes, improve communication, and expand educational opportunities worldwide. However, it also challenges cybersecurity, digital literacy, and ethical issues.

The influence of educational management extends beyond national borders and impacts the formation of national and international educational policies. Joint efforts can enhance academic mobility, scientific cooperation, and standardisation of educational documents. Effective management creates a conducive atmosphere for internationalisation, involving interacting with students and teachers from different countries and exchanging knowledge and ideas. The impact of educational management on higher education is significant and dynamic, particularly in the context of globalisation and rapid technological development. International perspectives highlight the need for culturally sensitive, technologically advanced, and collaborative management approaches to tackle new challenges and opportunities in higher education on a global scale (Karim et al., 2024).

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a comprehensive indicator of human capital quality that can be used to measure the quality of national education. It measures a country's average performance in elements of human development such as health and longevity, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. Analysis of the HDI and gross national income (GNI) per capita for individual countries worldwide has shown a correlational relationship between these two indicators. The position of each country in the coordinate system of HDI and gross national income per capita, as well as the coefficient of determination of correlation models, are graphically represented in Figure 1, confirming the relationship between the two variables.

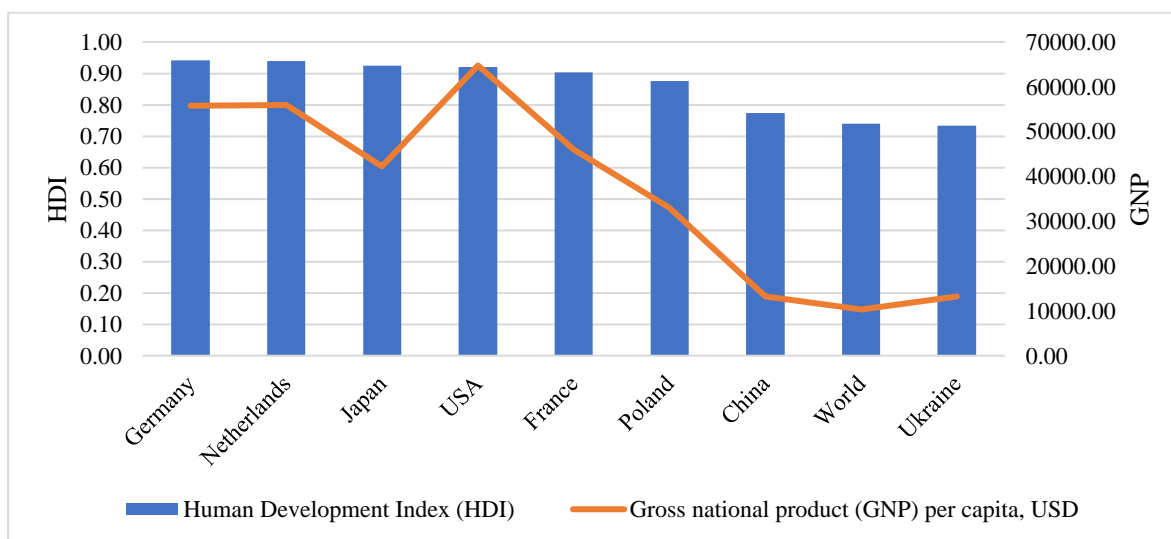


Figure 1. Human Development Index and Gross National Product per capita
 Source: <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI>

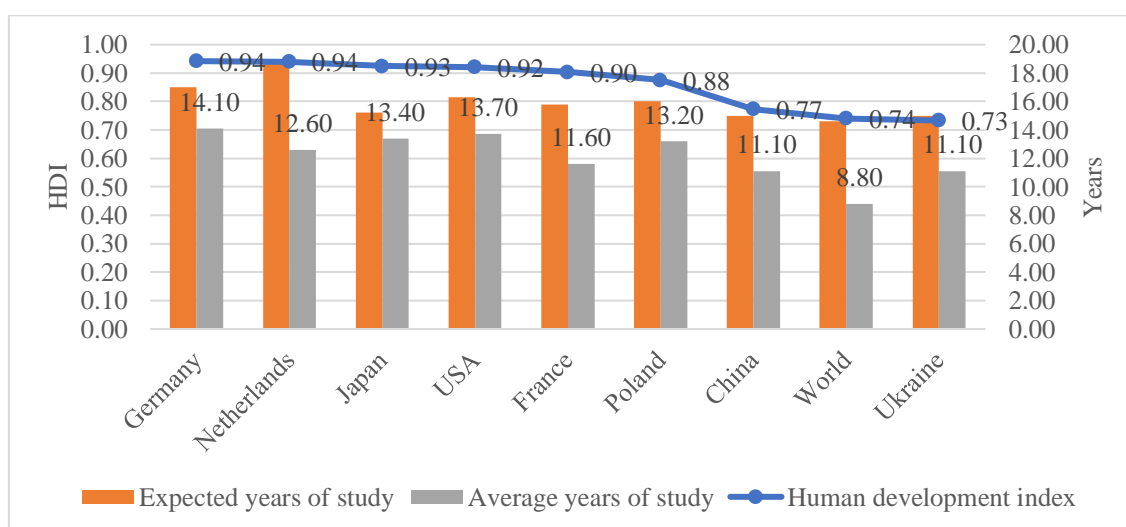
The nature of interdependence between these indicators is determined by correlation coefficients (Table 1).

Table 1. Correlation between Human Development Index, GNP per capita and Period of Study

Indicators	HDI	Expected years of study	Average years of study	GNP per capita, USD
HDI	1			
Expected years of study	0,715209	1		
Average years of study	0,838809	0,554198	1	
GNP per capita, USD	0,942664	0,742899	0,802468	1

Source: <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI>

Therefore, it is clear that access to quality education for all segments of the population in all regions of the world plays a vital role in human development and is a factor in the sustainable development of society (Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Correlation between HDI and Academic Years in Different Countries of the World

Source: <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI>

Educational management involves organising and coordinating educational institutions' people, material resources, and ideas (Yasinska, 2022). It includes pedagogical and non-pedagogical staff, students, parents, community members, and officials. The purpose is to coordinate and organise the educational management process, which includes recruiting, hiring, and developing personnel for educational institutions. Managers of higher education institutions should aim to improve their organisational and managerial practices to enhance the quality of education (Fig. 3).



Figure 3. Key Aspects of Educational Management in Higher Education Institutions

The interaction of all participants in the educational process, including administration, teachers, students, and other stakeholders, is a crucial component of educational management. A balanced and competent approach to management enables higher education institutions to effectively fulfil their functions and prepare students for high-quality professional and personal development.

Quality management and competitiveness are crucial for achieving high educational standards and meeting the needs of participants in the educational process. This text will explore the main strategies used in this context.

Setting quality standards involves developing clear goals for all aspects of the educational process and defining quality criteria for assessing teaching, learning, student work, and other aspects of the learning environment.

The assessment and quality improvement system is based on implementing effective assessment systems that consider the quality of teaching and participant satisfaction. Programs, teaching methods, and curricula are continuously improved based on the results obtained.

The enhancement of teachers' competencies and teaching methods requires the creation of professional development programs. These programs should provide opportunities for teachers to exchange experiences and best practices.

Engaging stakeholders involves bringing together students, parents, teachers, and other relevant parties in the decision-making process to enhance the quality of education. It also entails collaborating with employers and the public to tailor programs to the demands of the job market.

Integrating modern technologies into the educational process aims to enhance learning effectiveness and engagement. Additionally, electronic platforms can be developed to monitor and analyse the quality of education.

The aim is to explore opportunities for obtaining international accreditations and participating in international projects to enhance competitiveness, implementing global standards and practices to prepare students for the international job market. It is achieved through a global perspective and adherence to international accreditation standards.

Marketing and communication strategies aim to develop effective marketing strategies to attract students and ensure a positive image of the university or educational institution. They also involve active communication with the public and stakeholders to support positive feedback and trust.

These strategies can be adapted according to the educational institution's specific conditions and objectives. Continuous improvement and adaptation are critical elements of successful quality management and competitiveness in the education sector. Effective marketing management and a solid institutional brand are also important for attracting students and partners. These strategies interact and contribute to creating a dynamic and competitive educational environment.

Establishing quality management in the education sector of Ukraine is essential for improving the quality of education, the efficiency of the system, and ensuring competitiveness in the modern world. Below are several strategies and approaches to quality management in educational management:

Strategic management of the development of higher education institutions occurs at two levels: institutional and competitive. Institutional strategy forms the strategic direction of activity, organisational structure, and resource allocation at the institutional level. Competitive strategy is created at the level of structural business units and structural subdivisions (faculties, institutes, branches) that implement strategies aimed at maintaining competitive advantages in the market of educational services.

Strategic management requires the presence of five elements: the ability to model the situation (problem identification), the ability to determine the necessary changes (goal setting), the ability to formulate a strategy of change (basic strategy), the ability to use different methods of action (implementation and realisation of the strategy), the ability to coordinate strategies (change management) (Moiseienko, 2018). The mechanism of managing the competitiveness of a higher educational institution should include the following structural elements: goals and management factors, organisational structure, resources, methods of influencing factors, and management results. The use of such a mechanism will allow for the development of the level of competition in educational services, analysing the impact of internal and external factors on the level of competitiveness of the university, enhancing the main directions of increasing competitiveness, and evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed measures (Kobidze, 2021).

Dimensions of higher education quality include research potential, teaching potential, administrative leadership, resource sustainability, student employment, and social relations. Personal, professional, and organisational development is a human resource development strategy for educators aimed at determining the quality of the university (Alhalboosi, 2018). According to Crissien-Borrero et al. (2020), research suggests that there is no singular criterion for constructing indicators and that the measurement process is highly subjective.

Learning processes aim to enhance educators' ability to meet job requirements, including knowledge acquisition, skill development, concepts and processes, or changes in attitudes and behaviours. To achieve career advancement and professional competence, university leadership should initiate development programs that stimulate teachers' professional growth and provide opportunities to gain more experience, which will help them in their future work. The certification and evaluation system of teachers' activities is an important aspect. It allows

educational institutions to identify talented mentors willing to take on greater responsibility and identify skill gaps that must be addressed. This approach guarantees that educators will remain productive throughout their careers and contribute to achieving organisational development goals.

Higher education institutions use curriculum updating to ensure educational quality and competitiveness. This strategy involves constantly modernising subject content to align with current labour market demands and scientific achievements. Organising internships for students is also a productive element that allows them to gain practical skills and prepare for professional activities. Cooperating with future employers and enterprises is essential to ensure the relevance of educational programs and employment parameters for graduates.

It is necessary to consider individual needs and en

courage self-improvement to create a conducive atmosphere for learning and student development. Additionally, continuous monitoring and evaluation of education quality within the institution is a critical strategy. Systematic data collection on student performance, satisfaction with learning, and interaction with stakeholders can help identify problems promptly and develop effective measures to address them. Therefore, a combination of different strategies is necessary to ensure quality education and competitiveness of a higher education institution.

Currently, the functioning of higher education institutions in Ukraine under martial law requires the ability to respond to emergencies, adequate personnel and information policy, quality organisation of the educational process, favourable conditions for work in remote areas and the ability to build partnerships with all social partners (Voznyuk, 2022), the ability to build partnerships with all social groups.

Education management is an essential aspect of modern business. In the information society, rapidly growing knowledge becomes an increasingly important economic factor for companies, promising a competitive advantage over rivals. Human resources development is the responsibility of the company's HR department, which typically has qualifications in education and business pedagogy. Training management promotes new learning processes for employees, provides conducive conditions for learning, and constantly monitors progress in learning.

In the past, corporate training often focused on training and qualification courses aimed at achievement. Corporate training focused on specific business strategies, structures, culture, and goals. For instance, time management courses were popular, allowing employees to manage numerous deadlines and tasks better. However, modern managers, decision-makers, and leaders require a much more comprehensive range of skills than those obtainable through standard corporate training. They need the ability to recognise social changes and economic interrelationships worldwide, process this information, and act accordingly. For instance, strategic thinking is no longer the prerogative of trained economists, meaning that other managers must immerse themselves in figures. Thus, they can actively contribute to the company's decision-making process.

Training management also has a permanent place in the education system. For instance, learning management involves planning, coordinating, and improving procedures. In turn, managing educational institutions deals with the institution's structural, personnel, and financial aspects.

Assessment and quality assurance in higher education are essential components of the modern education system. These processes aim to ensure a high standard of education and guarantee that graduates receive quality education tailored to the labour market's needs and modern requirements. Quality assessment in higher education should include several key aspects, as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Critical Aspects of Higher Education Quality Assessment

Assessment area	Assessment requirements
Academic standards	Developing and defining clear academic standards for each speciality or study programme Assessment of university compliance with these standards through external peer review and internal audits
Teaching and assessment methods	Ensuring effective teaching methods and regular updating of curricula Using a variety of assessment methods such as exams, coursework, practical exercises and other forms
Teaching staff	Selection and support of highly qualified teachers Regular assessment of teaching quality through student surveys and professional evaluations
Infrastructure and resources	Ensuring the availability of the necessary infrastructure and modern equipment for teaching and research Effective use of library and other resources
Graduate monitoring	Monitoring the career development of graduates and their success in the labour market
Reporting and publicity	Publication of reports on the quality of education and implementation of open information mechanisms for students and the public

Quality assurance in higher education requires a systematic approach, involvement of all stakeholders (students, teachers, employers) and continuous improvement. Universities and educational management bodies should cooperate to develop and implement practical assessment and quality assurance strategies to provide a high level of education.

The study of the quality of educational management in higher education institutions can include a variety of methods and approaches (Table 3).

Table 3. Methods and Approaches to Assessing the Quality of Educational Management in Higher Education Institutions

Approaches	Methods
Document analysis	Reviewing statutes, regulations, programmes and other documents to determine the strategies and goals of the higher education institution's management
Questionnaire survey	Conducting surveys among students, faculty and administration to obtain their impressions of the quality of the educational process and management
Observations	Study of the atmosphere in practical and lecture classes and other activities to assess the organisation and quality of teaching
Focus groups	Discussing the quality of the educational process with groups of students, teachers or representatives of the administration
Internal evaluation	Involvement of internal committees or experts to assess the quality of management, compliance of programmes with standards, and evaluation of the use of resources
External evaluation	Involvement of external experts or agencies to assess the overall quality of management and teaching at the institution
Benchmarking	Comparison of results and indicators with other higher education institutions to determine competitiveness
Monitoring of indicators	Continuous monitoring of key indicators of education quality, such as student and graduate satisfaction and graduate success in the labour market.
Expert evaluation	Involvement of specialists and scientists for expert evaluation of programmes, teaching methods and administration

These methods can be combined to obtain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the quality of educational management in higher education institutions.

4. CONCLUSION

Research in educational management in higher education institutions requires consideration of various administration methods and strategies to ensure the educational institution's competitiveness. One of the most common methods is implementing a quality management



system, which standardises teaching processes and ensures compliance with requirements. Competitiveness management strategies aim to ensure high-quality education, promote innovation development, and study the needs of the labour market for effective curriculum planning. The research included an analysis of internal and external factors that influence the quality and competitiveness of the educational institution, enabling informed decisions regarding improvement activities.

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