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STAFF REINFORCEMENT TACTICAL TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

Badalyan Meri

*PhD, Associate professor of the “Labor Economics” Chair,
Armenian State University of Economics, Armenia*

The efficiency of contemporary higher education institutions (HEIs) is strongly linked to properly organized processes of human resource management. In the education system, the primary issues of human resource management occur in the process of staff recruitment.

Keywords: *higher education institutions, staff recruitment, human resource management.*

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The higher education sector work is science and education oriented, thus the correct use of human resources has a priority role for the efficiency in terms of competitiveness of HEI. Therefore, the structure of lecturing staff obtains an essential role that should meet the following requirements:

1. Recruitment of staff according to the strategy of HEI,
2. Professional training and improvement of the qualification of staff,
3. Optimal distribution of human resources,
4. Work efficiency assessment of staff, remuneration and promotion.

Highlighting all the requirements on staff structure, the processes of staff recruitment in higher education institutions in the Republic of Armenia will be studied.

In the process of staff recruitment, several factors should be taken into account with regards to requirements of the HEIs strategic goals. In most cases, human resource management in higher education institutions is based on intuition, which can often lead to considerable substantial, as well as qualitative losses. Being essential part of economic system, HEIs include and concentrate the main scientific potential of the country. In connection with this we assume that it is necessary to manage the human resources more efficiently. Even though the general thesis of human resource management is applicable in human resource management of HEIs, however, there are certain peculiarities concerned with those.

Human resource management is a topic of research for a lot of economic and sociological science scholars, however a number of issues regarding HEIs' HR are missed out. To find out the dynamics of changes and the trends in staff in higher education institutions in the Republic of Armenia let us study the changes of numbers of main staff accordingly for scientific degree and title as well as occupied position in higher education institutions in 2012-2015.

Table 1. Number of professors and pedagogic staff according to scientific degree and title in higher education institutions in 2012-2016¹

	Number of workers		out of which has									
			doctor		candidate		academician		professor		associate professor	
	total	%	total	%	total	%	total	%	total	%	total	%
2012/2013	7528	-	647	-	3029	-	32	-	757	-	2303	-
2013/2014	7621	101.2	653	100.9	2985	98.5	32	100	753	99.5	2314	100.5
2014/2015	7208	94.6	626	95.9	2991	100.2	25	95.2	738	97.3	2273	101.8
2015/2016	7310	101.4	641	102.4	3094	103.4	-	-*	748	101.4	2357	103.7

As it is obvious from the data of tables 1 and 2 the structure of staff of professors has not almost changed in the last years. The data of 2006/2007 academic year also shows it (the number of professors was 8757). Although there occurred significant changes in higher education: reduction of students number (the number of students in 2006/2007 academic year was 81383, in 2012-2013 it was 76730, in 2013/2014: 73576, 2014/2015: 69538 and in 75393), therefore the indicator of lecturer/student rate has almost remained the same (in 2006/2007 academic year it was 9, in 2012-2013: 9, in 2013-2014: 8, in 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 the rate has remained the same), expansion of international processes, changes in the ways of organizing education.

¹ http://armstat.am/file/article/soc_14_11-12.pdf

Table 2. Number of professors and pedagogic staff according to their position in higher education institutions in 2012-2016²

	Number of workers			
	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
Professors' and pedagogics' staff out of which	8954	9212	8977	9091
Rector, vice-rectors on educational and scientific affairs	112	113	90	104
Dean	140	139	139	146
Chair holder	671	649	655	640
Professors in a chair	754	748	700	725
Associate professor in a chair	2430	2474	2372	2449
Senior lecturer	446	511	560	578
Assistant professor	1686	1819	1361	1428
Lecturer	2715	2759	3100	3021

A question arises what is the reason of this phenomenon? Traditionally the treatment to lecturers (the absence of age limit), the role of HEIs as a unit to regulate the social issues of professors' staff, which undoubtedly influences on the rating of the HEI, as well as its competitiveness in national and international markets. Based on the studies it was justified the viewpoint that there are objective reasons that contribute to the development of staff in HEIs in current social-economics situation. But the studies do not state it, instead they show the dangerous trends: that is to maintain the available approaches not taking into account the challenges that are available in a number of state and private higher education institutions, intergovernmental institutions, branches of international institution, new requirements to the quality of educational services, the rating of universities with high competitiveness, the opportunities of graduates' employability, etc. The main peculiarities of human resource management in higher education institutions arise from the diversity of aims and problems. There are financial-economic problems in each HEI, as well as educational-organizational and scientific-research ones, which, as a rule, are not standard and require operative solutions in any management level. It is worth mentioning that the investigations showed that there have not been substantial changes in human recourse management system in HEIs, which has promoted to being more flexible and react to the changes concerned with competition in labor and education markets in new situation. Under these conditions, new approaches of human resource management should be adopted considering the importance of the role of science and knowledge in current social-economic situation. As it is mentioned in

² http://armstat.am/file/article/soc_14_11-12.pdf

the 4th point of the 30th article in the draft of RA law "On Higher Education", the liabilities of those of professors and (or) administrative staff is terminated by the decision of the rector, if their age is 70 or up. We think that such approach stated in law is the best option to the solution to this problem.

We also think that the efficiency of higher education institutions should not be mainly evaluated with quantitative characteristics and the rationalistic approaches to human resource management should be replaced with self-realization principles. It assumes to move from rigid control to self-control.

In current situation the principle of management according to goals is mainly efficient, which is not based on regulation and control of current operations, but on the idea of realizing the final outcome. If the rationalistic approaches to human resource management require an active role of the manager in the frames of each staff member's activities, the principle of management according to goals emphasizes self-realization and private initiatives, creativity, the idea to achieve the final outcome. That is why the HEIs that enable the workers to have relative freedom in choosing necessary means and methods to achieve the aims have progress now. But it should be noticed that in particular in higher education institutions the elaboration and implementation of correct policy has special importance which can be efficient only if the HEI has recruited the necessary skilled staff. We are prone to insist that the freedom of activities should be accompanied by some control (draft of RA law "On Higher Education") and some regulation of activities (internal regulations, procedures, rules). The management of higher education institutions should be implemented by clear division of main functions and such a logical sequence of them which is at most relevant to the HEIs main strategic goal. The personnel policy can be implemented in two action lines for the strategic goals of the HEI. On one hand the HEI should take actions to maintain the available traditions, including teaching methods and approaches, on the other hand it should choose the development strategy establishing innovative, creative groups that will be engaged in studying the opportunities to adopt new practices and elaboration of own development vision. It is worth noticing that the separation of these alternative versions of strategy is highly conditional. It is hard to imagine an educational institution which will choose only conservative strategy and will allocate all its resources to maintain the traditions. However, the leading HEIs, in particular, allot more efforts to maintain the approaches and traditions that have been the pledge for their fruition, development and becoming a leader. The data of the table state that. The maintenance of tradition particularly in the scope of human resource management, global developments and the shaped situation in national higher education market do not enable us to continue the previous policy as it can greatly hinder to the progress of the HEI and its competitiveness positioning in the market. In parallel to this even leading higher education institutions allot

a great role to innovations and creativity. The problem is that the application of innovations and creativity by various HEIs has substantial impact on their competitiveness first of all. Without innovations and creativity, it is impossible to maintain a leader's role, moreover, become a competitive and a leader. When it comes to the HEIs that do not have the above-mentioned state, current social-economics changes require them to take principal steps to gain competitive advantages and realization. The changes in personnel policy in higher education institutions come up with substantial problems and have multiple levels.

In nowadays market-driven economic condition the main problem of human resource management in higher education institutions in the development of workers' potential and its realization, an important precondition of which is the optimization of staff recruitment and operationalization. To achieve the mentioned aims, it is necessary for higher education institutions to solve the following issues:

- 1) provision of staff with required professional and moral qualities,
- 2) enabling the conditions to efficiently realize the knowledge, skills and experience of the staff,
- 3) shaping a healthy moral environment,
- 4) efficient management of professional and job promotions,
- 5) participation in the management process of HEIs.

The necessity of solution to the above-mentioned problems comes from the benefits of any HEI. In this case it is necessary to choose such approaches and mechanists that will enable to solve them in the best efficient way.

Thus, shaping favorable environment to recruit, development and integration of staff becomes an important problem by itself. It assumes provision of job discipline, motivation, establishment of healthy moral environment, harmonization of interests between a HEI and the staff, as well as between staff members and enabling to apply the efficient ideas.

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