



# Students' Opinion on the Quality of Study Programs Implemented in Latvia in the Field of Education

Jelena Davidova<sup>1</sup>, Sandra Zarina<sup>2</sup>, Svetlana Ignatjeva<sup>3</sup>, Ivars Zalitis<sup>4</sup>, Eva Bogdane<sup>5</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Daugavpils University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, 13 Vienibas St., LV-5400 Daugavpils, Latvia, [jelena.davidova@du.lv](mailto:jelena.davidova@du.lv)  
<sup>2</sup> Daugavpils University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, 13 Vienibas St., LV-5400 Daugavpils, Latvia, [sandra.zarina@du.lv](mailto:sandra.zarina@du.lv)  
<sup>3</sup> Daugavpils University, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Healthcare, 13 Vienibas St., LV-5400 Daugavpils, Latvia, [svetlana.ignatjeva@du.lv](mailto:svetlana.ignatjeva@du.lv)  
<sup>4</sup> Daugavpils University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, 13 Vienibas St., LV-5400 Daugavpils, Latvia, [ivziv1965@gmail.com](mailto:ivziv1965@gmail.com)  
<sup>5</sup> Daugavpils University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, 13 Vienibas St., LV-5400 Daugavpils, Latvia, [evabogdaane@gmail.com](mailto:evabogdaane@gmail.com)
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**Annotation.** This article examines the factors and criteria characterizing the quality of teacher study programs implemented in Latvia. In one of the universities in Latvia, the opinion of students of bachelor's, master's, and doctor's level in the field of education about the quality of studies is ascertained. As a result, the most important factors affecting the quality of studies, according to the students, are collected and analysed.

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**Keywords:** *study programs, internal quality, field of education, students' opinion.*

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## Introduction

The quality of HEI is very important for the society, because students, employers, and society benefit from it, and quality education contributes to the economic development of the country. The growing popularity and demand for greater attention to the quality of higher education in the 21st century is related to several global developments and trends in the field of higher education. Quality assurance integration principles in higher education have become a Europe-wide issue. In the implementation of the

Bologna process, transformations from structural changes to pedagogical innovations are observed; there is also a shift of emphasis from the creation of a unified higher education system to a unified meaningful improvement of the quality of the study process. In each country or region, the key factor is likely to be a unique and specific set of events (Matei & Iwinska, 2016).

In Latvia, the question of ensuring the quality of higher education as a systemic management mechanism is becoming increasingly relevant. In 2011, Article 5 of the Law on Higher Education Institutions (1995) included a requirement for the implementation of the internal quality assurance system in higher education institutions. In this context, universities implement their own internal quality assurance systems, within which each university:

- Establishes policies and procedures for quality assurance of higher education.
- Develops mechanisms for the creation of its study programs, internal approval, monitoring of their operation, and periodic inspection.
- Creates and publishes such criteria, conditions and procedures for evaluating student results that allow to make sure that the expected study results are achieved.
- Creates internal procedures and mechanisms for ensuring the qualification and work quality of the academic staff.
- Ensures that information on students' progress, employment of graduates, students' satisfaction with the study program, on the efficiency of the academic staff's work.

On April 8, 2021, the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia adopted Amendments to the Education Law, which define the state system for ensuring the quality of education, as well as determine the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of education institutions, their founders, state, and local government institutions for education quality. The Educational Development Guidelines for 2021–2027 direct education policy solutions to be based on data analysis and research, paying special attention to education quality monitoring and education quality management, involving various parties interested.

To respond to the needs of the society in the 21st century, it is necessary to identify new opportunities for creating the necessary changes and to study mechanisms guaranteeing the quality of teacher education for stable quality assurance during the processes of study program implementation in the field of education. In 2019, along with the introduction of competence-based educational content and approach, significant changes have taken place in Latvian education, which were also the basis for conceptual changes in teacher education programs. Through the cooperation of universities implementing study programs in the education field, six new study programs were developed and since 2020, these new study programs have been implemented at five universities in Latvia. External evaluation of the quality of these programs at the national level took place in 2022. In one of the six universities, a study was conducted

in which the evaluations of external experts were analysed using thematic analysis in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of teacher study programs (Davidova et al., 2023). Systematic participation of all interested parties, including students, in the internal evaluation of study quality was mentioned as one of the recommendations for improving the quality of study programs.

**The aim of study:** To investigate the opinion of the students in the bachelor, master, and doctoral programs about the quality of educational study programs implemented in accordance with the developed factors and criteria at one of the universities in Latvia.

## Theoretical Frameworks

This part focuses on the factors and criteria for the quality of teacher education. The comparability of regulations of individual university has become a key component of the reforms carried out as part of the Bologna Process, which resulted in the creation of a formalized external and internal quality assurance mechanism (Bollaert, 2014). International experience shows that internal quality assurance has a more direct and positive impact on HEI's quality improvement (Friend-Pereira et al., 2002; Kettunen, 2008; Brittingham, 2009; etc.).

The following criteria for the internal quality assurance are fixed in the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area:

- policy for quality assurance;
- design and approval of programs;
- student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment;
- student admission, progression, recognition, and certification;
- teaching staff;
- learning resources and student support;
- information management;
- public information;
- on-going monitoring and periodic review of programs;
- cyclical external quality assurance. (ESG, 2015, pp. 11–15).

European efforts in the field of quality assurance require qualified and competent teaching staff so that the quality of education is improved and comparable across the region. Some European policy initiatives have already recognised the need to enhance the quality of teaching:

- The Bologna process has embraced student-centred teaching, quality assurance and quality improvement processes in higher education, student evaluation of teaching, and diverse teaching and learning strategies.

- The European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG, 2015) state that teachers are the single most important learning resource available to students.

Effective teaching is vital for students' learning in higher education. HEI's dedicated team of academic staff with good knowledge, good ethical qualities and passion for their careers is the driving force behind the quality of teaching and learning (Pham, 2021).

The student-centered study process puts new demands on the academic staff:

- To take into account and respect the diversity of students' needs, creating suitable learning paths;
- To consider and use different ways of implementing programs according to each individual opportunity;
- To use different teaching methods, paying special attention to interactive teaching methods;
- To promote students' tendency towards independence by providing teacher support;
- To promote mutual respect in student-teacher relationships;
- To link study results with teaching and learning activities and evaluation.

The field of research is considered one of the success parameters of higher education institutions (Marin et al., 2017). In this context, HEI teaching staff should demonstrate their qualifications not only as teachers, but also as researchers, as research should not be seen as a separate entity, but as a continuous and integral part of the teaching profession (Evans et al., 2017).

The quality of service is one of the most important factors of competitive advantage. Perceived service quality in HEI can be defined as the difference between what students expect and their perception of what they actually receive (Jošanov-Vrgović et al., 2020). Getting to know students' wishes gives HEI the opportunity to adapt their actions to what is expected of them, and thus positively influence the quality of services perceived by students.

The strategic goals and the principles for study derive from the university's mission statement, which thus provides a guiding framework for the development of the university. Sustainability is the foundation for developing a curriculum approach that enables students to experience the link between research and learning as the core of the academic environment education. Hesser (2014) distinguishes the following indispensable features, which characterize a commendable teaching/learning culture:

- Professionalization of teaching.
- Consideration of students' heterogeneity.
- Interaction between students and teachers as well as.
- Interdisciplinary collaboration based on skills and a problem-oriented approach, and partnership.

The aim of developing the key content of a study course is always to create an increasing number of stimulating and intelligently coordinated study units in which the students learnt to deal with their knowledge in a manner appropriate to the respective discipline. Hesser (2014) stressed that the vision of good teaching also has to provide answers to the following questions:

- What objectives do we associate with the lecture?
- What learning objectives are to be achieved?
- What are the students intended to learn?
- In what ways can students acquire the knowledge independently?
- What exercises can be used to convey the teaching/study objectives?
- How can an examination be designed so that the students are motivated to continue learning?

The library is an essential component of university environment, which play a critical role in quality education by providing access to knowledge, promoting research, creating a favorable atmosphere for continuous learning among both students and teachers. Chinese researchers (Ho et al., 2023) distinguish five dimensions of library service quality: responsiveness, tangibility, reliability, confidence, and empathy. They highlight the importance of understanding the needs and preferences of library users in order to provide high-quality services that meet their expectations.

Infrastructure and resources are critical to effective teaching/learning and creating a favorable learning environment for quality education. In addition, infrastructure and resources are essential to provide suitable conditions for students to learn and to effectively deliver learning and teaching to employees. Infrastructure includes ancillary and complementary resources, facilities, equipment, systems and processes necessary for every organisation's functioning, whether the organisation is public or private. Resources include people, materials, machines, money, and other assets that can be drawn on by a person, organisation or nation in order to function effectively. Infrastructure and resources work hand-in-hand (Khawaja, 2022).

Duffy (1997) developed a holistic conception considering of workspaces based on two "iron laws": the need to remain competitive through simultaneously driving down occupancy costs and using the physical environment to attract, retain, stimulate, and inform the increasingly valuable people who work for them. The author noted that the rapid development of information technology brought significant changes in the organizational work model and flattened hierarchies, emphasizing teamwork, and cross-functional interactions in service-driven economies. Speaking about HEI's academic resources vitally important the library, computer laboratory, virtual learning environment, and equipment such as printers and photocopiers, all of which are crucial in providing an effective learning environment in HEIs.

The University of Tomorrow will certainly serve the information society. In this context, each institution needs to develop its own plans and strategies to be proactive

in the context of the environment and must not lag behind society in general and other education institutions in particular (Adina-Petruta & Roxana, 2014). In this context, the following aspects have to be improved: academic achievement, the process of HEI's admission, quality of study programs implementation, institutional effectiveness, student learning performance, evaluation of the instructional delivery, and the accreditation process.

## Methods

### *Participants*

With the aim of studying the opinion of students in bachelor, master's, and doctoral programs about the quality of educational study programs according to the developed factors and criteria in one of the Latvian universities.

117 students from bachelor, master, and doctoral study programs in the education field (75 respondents from bachelor, 27 – master, and 15 – doctoral study programs) took part in survey.

The student survey was conducted anonymously and in accordance with the basic principles of research ethics. The questionnaire was sent to 204 students of bachelor, master, and doctoral level study programs of the university involved in the study. Students' participation in the study was voluntary.

### *Procedure and Measurement Instruments*

The content of the questionnaire was grouped into two sections for each category of respondents, similarly:

- Section 1 – respondent's data in terms of study program, study experience, education level, competence, and gender of the respondent.
- In the 2nd section – a structure of seven identified factors is created, which is intended for the evaluation of the factors influencing the quality assurance of study programs in the field of education according to the Likert scale. 56 indicators were included in the survey tools, which enabled the respondents to evaluate the factors influencing the quality assurance of study programs in the field of education. Respondents were instructed to make an evaluation on a Likert scale with one of the five proposed evaluation categories: no impact, weak impact, medium impact, high impact, decisive impact. The survey was conducted online using Google Forms.

The questionnaire included two free-form questions with the aim of finding out the respondents' proposals for determining factors and improving the quality of the study process at the university.

The participants of the survey evaluated the quality assurance factors of the educational study programs, determining the evaluation according to the 5-point scale of the indicators mentioned below (which were developed in this study):

- *Professionalism of academic staff* (Indicators: Qualification of academic staff; Professional capacity/personal dedication in implementing the learning process; Communication skills; Availability of advice/friendliness of academic staff; Linking theory with practice in the implementation of the learning process; Involvement in research activity; Student's assessment and feedback; Methodological rigor);
- *The quality of activities and services provided by the university administration* (Indicators: Availability/friendliness/support of administrative staff; Competence of administrative staff and speed of student service; Accessible and clear rules and regulations; Availability of current informative material; Use of e-environment for announcements and communication; Availability and quality of IT support; Availability of social and cultural events; General operational organization and management of the university/faculty);
- *Quality of study program structure, content, and implementation planning* (Indicators: Current, interesting study content; High-quality learning material; Effective structure of modules; Availability of information about the structure of the module; Variety of optional modules in areas of specialization; Internship program; Study plan (semester, year); Study schedule (weekly, monthly) planning);
- *Quality of library services* (Indicators: Availability of textbooks and periodicals; Simple process of receiving textbooks/periodicals; Staff friendliness/support; Convenience of working hours; E-library options; Access to databases; Terms of use (compliance with students; needs); Reading room capacity);
- *Quality of infrastructure and resource for ensuring the study process* (indicators: Qualitative study infrastructure; Safety and well-being (while staying in DU premises); Dormitory services; Sports facilities; Medical provision; Availability of catering services; Effective infrastructure administration; Technical resources for ensuring the study process);
- *Prospects/development opportunities* (Indicators: Availability of exchange programs with other Latvian universities; Availability of exchange programs with foreign universities; Availability of ERASMUS+ programs; Availability of postgraduate programs; Availability of information about continuing studies abroad; Employment and professional career prospects; University's connection with possible employers; Combining studies with work);
- *Quality management system* (Indicators: Existence of a quality management system in the university; Effective operation of the quality management



system; Existence and regular use of the system of hospitalization of classes; Regular survey (survey) of students; Conducting surveys among the graduates; Anonymity of surveys (survey); Regular evaluation of study results and updating of programs; Regular inspection and improvement of study infrastructure and technical support (equipment).

Exploratory analysis was used to find connections between variables in situations where there are no (or insufficient) a priori ideas about the nature of these connections and includes descriptive statistics of quantitative data (calculation of average values of characteristics, standard deviation, median, quantiles). Bar charts and radar charts were used for presentation and analysis at this stage of the study.

The analysis of the identified differences and relationships was carried out using:

- Student's test for independent samples (t-test);
- One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA);
- Two-factor analysis of variance;
- Correlation analysis.

The method of one-factor analysis of variance was applied in cases where changes in the effective characteristic were studied under the influence of changing conditions or gradations of any factor. When using two-way analysis of variance, the effect of two independent variables on the dependent variable is tested.

For all statistical criteria used in the study, the acceptable margin of error associated with the distribution of the observed result to the entire population is taken to be a p-level (level of statistical significance) equal to 0.05.

## Results and Discussion

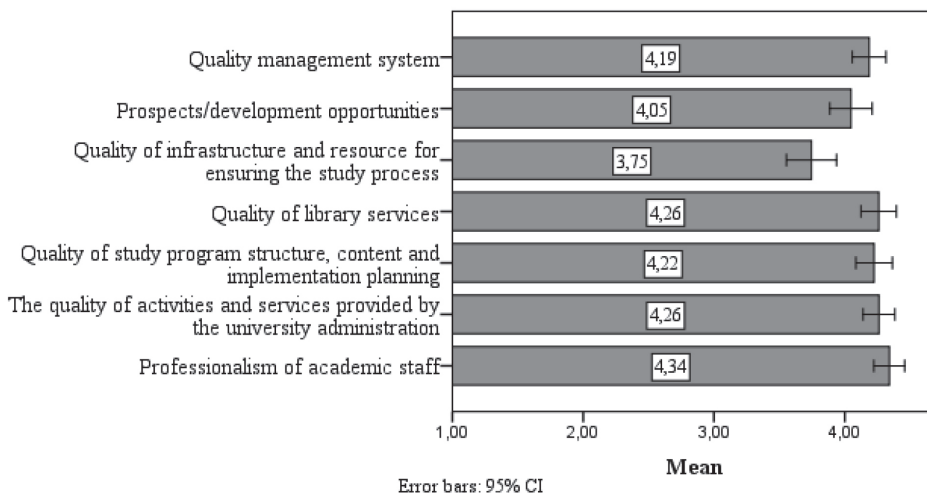
The reliability of the questionnaire in terms of its internal consistency was checked by calculating  $\alpha$ -Cronbach's coefficients, which are displayed in Table 1. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is an estimate of reliability based on the homogeneity of the scale, and is calculated as the sum of correlations between test participants' responses to questions within the same test form. Its calculation formula takes into account the number of questions, the total variance of individuals' scores, and the sum of the variances of the respondents' scores on each scale item. All scales showed optimal internal consistency ( $\alpha > 0.9$ ). The quantitative values of the factors are obtained as the average values of the corresponding indicators.



**Table 1***Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients of Factors of Quality Study Programs*

Factors of quality study programs	Cronbach's Alpha
(F1) Professionalism of academic staff	0.914
(F2) The quality of activities and services provided by the university administration	0.928
(F3) Quality of study program structure, content, and implementation planning	0.931
(F4) Quality of library services	0.924
(F5) Quality of infrastructure and resource for ensuring the study process	0.934
(F6) Prospects/development opportunities	0.918
(F7) Quality management system	0.914

Figure 1 displays the average ratings of curriculum quality factors. Students rate the factor *Quality of infrastructure and resource for ensuring the study process* lower than other factors. Scores for this factor range from 1.13 to 5 and for 25% of respondents do not exceed 2.88. The average value of the indicator is  $M = 3.75$ . This indicator has the greatest variation  $SD = 1.04$ . Students rate the *Professionalism of academic staff* most highly. The average value of this indicator is  $M = 4.34$ . Half of the respondents rate this factor at least 4.5.  $SD = 0.64$  and this is the smallest value of standard deviation observed in the assessed quality factors of study programs.

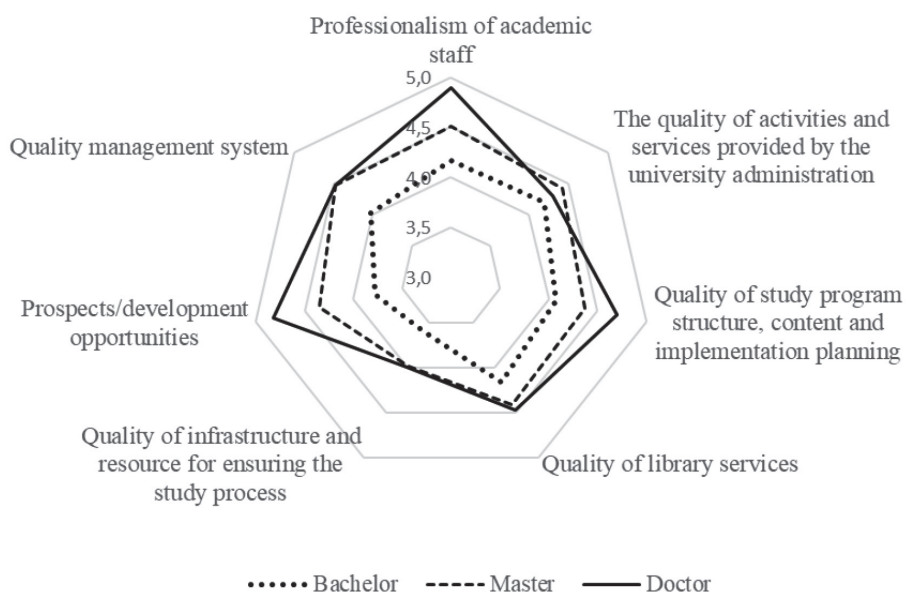
**Figure 1***Average Ratings of Factors of Quality of Study Programs*

For the assessment of the factors influencing the study quality, the level of competence affects only the assessment of such factors as *Professionalism of academic staff* (Pearson's correlation = 0.293) and *Quality of study program structure, content, and implementation planning* (Pearson's correlation = 0.229). The observed correlations are direct, weak, but, according to Pearson's criterion, statistically significant.

Figure 2 shows the average ratings of quality factors of study programs at different levels.

**Figure 2**

*Average Ratings of Factors of Quality of Study Programs at Different Level*



Doctoral students give the highest ratings to the quality factors of their curriculum, while bachelor students give the lowest ratings. However, according to the results of ANOVA, differences in the assessment of such factors as *the quality of activities and services provided by Quality management system*, *Quality of library services*, *Quality of infrastructure and resource for ensuring the study process* are not statistically significant. Students who have the experience of studying in other education institutions rate all factors of the quality of study programs implemented at the university higher than those who do not have such experience. Table 2 highlights those factors for which the differences in estimates are statistically significant.

**Table 2**

*t*-test for Equality of Means of Factor Assessments by Students Who Have Experience Studying in Other HEIs and Those Who Do Not Have Such Experience

Factors of quality study programs	Study experience in other higher education institutions	N	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Professionalism of academic staff	No experience	64	4.37	0.654
	Has experience	53	4.39	
The quality of activities and services provided by the university administration	No experience	64	4.11	0.007
	Has experience	53	4.44	
Quality of study program structure, content, and implementation planning	No experience	64	4.05	0.008
	Has experience	53	4.43	
Quality of library services	No experience	64	4.08	0,003
	Has experience	53	4.48	
Quality of infrastructure and resource for ensuring the study process	No experience	64	3.63	0.177
	Has experience	53	3.89	
Prospects/development opportunities	No experience	64	3.95	0.181
	Has experience	53	4.17	
Quality management system	No experience	64	4.05	0.023
	Has experience	53	4.35	

The main results of the students' survey, according to the developed factors and criteria, are as follows:

- *Professionalism of academic staff*: a) students evaluate high academic staff's participation and engagement, positive and supportive attitude, and competence in creating a learning environment where students are active study participants; b) students note that the academic staff's openness and respect for students, competence in organizing discussions, and opinion sharing have an impact on students' interest in the teacher's profession; c) motivation of academic staff influencing indirectly students' performance and academic responsibility; d) an integrated and continuous process of self-reflection; e) providing context and justification for decisions.
- *The quality of activities and services provided by the university administration*: respondents positively evaluate: a) learning interactivity and students' involvement in their educational processes; b) the efforts made by the students themselves, which are often influenced by the above-mentioned staff's attitude; c) possibility of e-learning, which provides students (and hence also teachers) with some flexibility in time and place.
- *Quality of study program structure, content, and implementation planning*: students evaluate high: a) focus of the study process on practice and analysis of concrete practical examples and situations in the students' group, which in-

creases students' professional competences; b) student-centred paradigm, which is based on student learning experience as the focus of educational quality and involving students as partners in evaluation processes.

- *Quality of library services*: the participants of the survey rate both the university library's collection and the possibility of working with sources from databases, which are particularly relevant nowadays, quite high. An automated reader service system is used in the operation of the university library.
- *Quality of infrastructure and resource for ensuring the study process*: a) students would like an inspiring and supportive democratic leadership style not only from the academic staff, but also from the administration, and b) students pay attention to the improvement of information technologies and tools, because the digitalization of a study and management process significantly affects the quality of higher education.
- *Prospects/development opportunities*: students express their desire to study individual study courses in other programs at the concrete HEI and other universities.
- *Quality management system*: respondents express their desire to participate in discussions on the problems of quality assurance of studies and to cooperate in the creation and implementation of new ideas and strategies, as well as to improve the learning environment by offering a variety of modern technologies and open educational resources.

The results of the study show that six of the seven factors offered for evaluation, according to the opinion of the students, have a relatively high impact (with an average indicator of  $M > 4.00$ ) on the quality assurance of the study programs implemented at the university in the field of education.

According to the respondents' opinion, the most important influencing factors (with an average score of  $M > 4.20$ ) were evaluated: *Quality of the structure, content, and implementation planning of study programs* ( $M = 4.22$ ), *Quality of activities and services provided by the university administration* ( $M = 4.26$ ), *Quality of library services* ( $M = 4.26$ ), but *Professionalism of the academic staff* is recognized as the factor with the relatively most decisive influence ( $M = 4.34$ ) on the quality of the implemented study programs in the field of education. This factor is one of the most important factors determining the quality of education, and as such has been recognized in the studies by several scientists, who note the following aspects of the professionalism of the academic staff:

- The academic staff's openness and respect for students, competence in organization discussions and opinion sharing, which have an impact on student interest in teacher profession (Depoo et al., 2022);
- Motivation of the academic staff, influencing indirectly students' performance (Sammons et al., 2011), and academic responsibility (Merchant et al., 2012);

- Learning interactivity and students' involvement in their educational processes (Gámiz et al., 2014);
- The academic staff's positive and supportive attitude to and competence in creating a learning environment where students are active study participants (Hopland & Nyhus, 2016);
- Benevolent interpersonal relationships between students, academic staff, other employees of HEI, and other representatives of education-related institutions (teachers, heads of educational institutions, representatives of the educational administration, etc.), which form the supportive social environment (Zhdanko, 2018).

On the other hand, the factor *Quality of infrastructure and resources for ensuring the study process* ( $M = 3.75$ ) was rated as the lowest, which could be explained by the relatively low provision of study programs in the field of education with modern technological resources and infrastructure, so students do not perceive the given factor as making a significant impact on the quality assurance of study programs in the field of education.

It should be noted that respondents with more experience in participating in study processes (students of master's and doctoral study programs) rate the level of their competence in assessing the factors affecting the quality assurance of studies as sufficient, they rate the influence of several factors on the quality of the implemented study programs in the field of education higher than students with less experience (professional bachelor's study programs), which can be explained by students with experience having a deeper understanding of quality assurance processes in the field of education. This shows a positive trend: while acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary for the teacher's profession and school management, students simultaneously gain experience and competence in evaluating aspects of quality assurance of educational processes during their studies at the university, which will certainly be useful for their future professional careers in the field of education.

On the other hand, the results of the study are also a definite signal to the management of the university and relevant study programs about the need to pay attention to factors that were rated lower than others, for example, *Quality of infrastructure and resource for ensuring the study process* ( $M = 3.75$ ) and *Prospects/development opportunities* ( $M = 4.05$ ). The relatively low rating can be explained by the fact that the activities of the education institution or study work areas identified in these factors are not sufficiently developed in the university, and students cannot see their role as sufficiently determinant for the quality assurance of study programs in the field of education. Respondents highly recommend improving the situation related to information in the field of technology for the successful digitization of the study process. In this regard, the authors of this study agree with Norwegian researchers (Hopland & Nyhus, 2016) about the need to improve the learning environment.

Despite the fact that the respondents valued high the factor *Quality of study program structure, content and implementation planning* (M=4.22), students of the bachelor's study program highly evaluate the focus of the study process on practice and analysis of concrete practical examples and situations in the students' group, which increases students' professional competences. Researchers from Spain (Colombo & Gómez Pradas, 2014) and the Czech Republic (Depoo et al., 2022) have also come to the same conclusion. Master's and doctoral level respondents note that it is necessary to provide flexibility concerning time and place; Alepis and Virvou (2014) have arrived at the same conclusion. In this context, respondents in academic master's and doctoral study programs believe that the e-learning is a very good solution for those students who live and work in different regions of Latvia.

Evaluating the factor *The quality of activities and services provided by the university administration* quite high (M = 4.26), survey participants note that it is a good tradition to organize several workshops, doctoral schools and academic discussions: it gives possibility to analyse, interpret research results, and disseminate the best examples practiced in the field of education. It is especially important in today's ever-changing world: the time has come for a coherent debate about the value of education philosophy. Respondents maintain that distance learning technologies can play a positive role in providing access to their digital resources in other universities, thus expanding academic and staff mobility programs.

## Conclusions

Quality assurance in HEI is a multi-partnership field, in which students are one of the main partners in the university and should be involved in quality mechanisms. One of the internal quality assurance measures is the obtaining of regular student feedback; the opinion of students is especially important when monitoring the quality of new teacher study programs in order to detect deficiencies in time and react by introducing the necessary improvements.

In ensuring the sustainability of teacher education programs, it is essential to integrate cross-cutting competencies – research, innovation, entrepreneurship, digital, global, and civic – into the content of teacher study programs. It is a solution to close the gap between the competences of graduates of educational study programs and the knowledge and skills needed by teachers on a daily basis. In Latvia, the content of core competences to be developed in university study programs has been defined and their implementation has also been started in teacher study programs.

The management has to provide a good basis for the quality assurance process of study programs and promote transparency. The study has found that HEI has a good potential for international cooperation in the provision of study programs in the field of

education. It is important to continue the academic and research cooperation between the academic staff and students of different partner countries in the development and implementation of educational innovations.

Study programs in the field of education are considered flexible in the process of sustainable development. However, the university needs to develop its own quality assurance procedures and pay attention to the results of the evaluation of the quality management system factor, because students generally do not see the significant influence of the university's quality management system on the quality assurance of study programs in the field of education.

The university needs to find a balance between centralisation and decentralisation: a transparent and participative approach is more adequate and likely to be successful and sustainable. HEI can promote the involvement of employees and employers by building cross-functional teams by promoting cooperation between employees and employers, encouraging their voluntary participation in quality management initiatives, as well as taking suggestions from employees and employers regarding quality management systems.

One of the current issues, which significantly complicates the maintenance of a certain consistency in the quality of education, is the rapid change in the educational environment. HEIs should adequately respond to these changes by adapting their educational processes. For example, the digitization of the educational process has transformed society and the economy, increasingly influencing everyday life.

It is important to continue cooperation in the organization of annual international master student scientific readings and international doctoral schools, which would promote students' cooperation and leadership skills in an international environment, as well as develop cooperation with similar programs in foreign universities in order to ensure continuous improvement of the professional competence of the study program and the teaching staff, teachers, mentors, and students involved in its implementation.

In the conditions of digitization in education, a serious investment of both financial and human resources is necessary for the renewal of information technologies and tools. Therefore, it is recommended to increase the university's investments in the creation of virtual environments, platforms and open resources for studies and research. For this to happen, IT systems need to be modernized to make them suitable for distance learning and/or mixed studies, and effective IT support systems for students and academic staff. Under these conditions, it is necessary to increase the digital competences of academic staff, as well as to give them the opportunity to organize a high-quality study process using modern advanced educational technologies.

Based on the analysis of statistical data from the conducted survey, it is useful to continue the research with the aim of obtaining more detailed information about the reasons why the quality of infrastructure and resources can determine the fact that the study process is evaluated at a relatively very low level. Accordingly, a complex of



measures should be planned and provided for the prevention of problems that determine the low impact of the given factors on the quality assurance of study programs in the field of education.

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# Studentų nuomonė apie Latvijoje vykdomų studijų programų kokybę švietimo srityje

Jelena Davidova<sup>1</sup>, Sandra Zarina<sup>2</sup>, Svetlana Ignatjeva<sup>3</sup>, Ivars Zalis<sup>4</sup>, Eva Bogdane<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Daugpilio universitetas, Humanitarinių ir socialinių mokslų fakultetas, Vienības g. 13, LV-5400 Daugpilis, Latvija, jelena.davidova@du.lv

<sup>2</sup> Daugpilio universitetas, Humanitarinių ir socialinių mokslų fakultetas, Vienības g. 13, LV-5400 Daugpilis, Latvija, sandra.zarina@du.lv

<sup>3</sup> Daugpilio universitetas, Gamtos mokslų ir sveikatos priežiūros fakultetas, Vienības g. 13, LV-5400 Daugpilis, Latvija, svetlana.ignatjeva@du.lv

<sup>4</sup> Daugpilio universitetas, Humanitarinių ir socialinių mokslų fakultetas, Vienības g. 13, LV-5400 Daugpilis, Latvija, ivziv1965@gmail.com

<sup>5</sup> Daugpilio universitetas, Humanitarinių ir socialinių mokslų fakultetas, Vienības g. 13, LV-5400 Daugpilis, Latvija, evabogdaane@gmail.com

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## Santrauka

Technologijų plėtra, ugdymo mokslų, filosofijos, kultūros bei ekonomikos pokyčiai kelia vis naujus reikalavimus universitete vykdomų studijų programų kokybei. Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjami Latvijoje vykdomų mokytojų studijų programų kokybę apibūdinantys veiksniai ir kriterijai. Tyrimo tikslas – ištirti bakalauro, magistrantūros ir doktorantūros studijų studentų nuomonę apie edukacinių studijų programų, vykdomų pagal sukurtus veiksnius ir kriterijus, kokybę viename iš Latvijos universitetų. Tuo tikslu buvo analizuojami svarbiausi, studentų nuomone, studijų kokybei įtakos turintys veiksniai. Nustatytų skirtumų ir sąsajų analizei atlikti buvo naudojamas Stjudento testas nepriklausomoms imtims (t-testas), viapusė dispersinė analizė (ANOVA), dviejų veiksnių dispersinė analizė ir koreliacinė analizė. Vienfaktorinės dispersinės analizės metodas taikytas tais atvejais, kai buvo tiriami efektyviosios charakteristikos pokyčiai, veikiant kintančioms sąlygoms ar kurio nors veiksnio gradacijoms. Taikant dvipakopę dispersinę analizę, buvo tiriamas dviejų nepriklausomų kintamųjų poveikis priklausomam kintamajam. Respondentų nuomone, kaip svarbiausią įtaką darantys veiksniai (vidutiniškai  $M > 4,20$ ) buvo įvertinti šie: studijų programų struktūros, turinio ir įgyvendinimo planavimo kokybė ( $M = 4,22$ ), veiklos ir paslaugų kokybė, teikiama universiteto administracijos ( $M = 4,26$ ), bibliotekų paslaugų kokybė ( $M = 4,26$ ), tačiau sąlygiškai didžiausią įtaką įgyvendinamų studijų programų kokybei ( $M = 4,34$ ) turinčiu veiksmu vis tik pripažįstamas akademinio personalo profesionalumas.

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**Esminiai žodžiai:** *studijų programos, vidaus kokybė, ugdymo sritis, studentų nuomonė.*

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