

## **METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATIONS OF THE ECONOMIST STUDENT**

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### **Abstract**

*The scientific research represents an important domain and an essential component of the higher education system. It provides new knowledge that lies on the basis of education and society development. Scientific research is based on the following principles: competence, objectification, truth, correctness, demonstration, correlation, evaluation of results, utility, and psych morality.*

*The research quality represents an indispensable component of the higher education efficiency. For this purpose, we suggest to pursue the aspects approaching scientific research quality, namely, referring to two fundamental functions: the function of quality management (internal function) and the function of quality assurance (external function), to actual experience, and to the international trends.*

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**Keywords:** *scientific research, scientific research components, scientific research principles, research methods, research quality.*

### **1. Introduction**

The scientific research in the higher education system is carried out within the framework of departments, laboratories, centres, scientific research institutes through different forms: individual projects, institutional projects etc.

The scientific research represents an important domain and an essential component of the higher education system. It provides new knowledge that lies on the basis of education and society development. Scientific and methodological assurance of education modernization and functioning appear as a foreground condition and a vital necessity.

In the point of view of N. Vințanu, the contemporary conception about university is based on three meanings:

1. University for students;
2. University for science;
3. University for society [4, p. 21].

### **2. Current Level of Understanding the Problem, the Purpose of Research**

The interests towards the problems of innovations and their prominence throughout the most important directions of contemporary scientific thought are the result of realizing the progressing dynamics of innovative processes taking place in society. The scientific investigations development towards this direction has divulged the complexity and multi-aspectuality of the given phenomenon, the result being the occurrence of different analysis approaches. Therefore, this has determined the necessity of realizing the fact that the innovative processes and the

innovative transfer need a systemic and integral examination, taking into account the factors which refer not only to innovations, but also to socio-cultural environment.

The initiatives of universities which have evolved according to the European higher education development have stimulated the interest for innovations and innovative transfer.

The purpose of the research consists in forming skills, students' competencies, by combining instruction and research, the mission of our institution being to teach economic science through research and instruction.

### **3. Materials and Methods**

The action-research is, essentially, a naturalist research, which means that it accomplishes right in the place of the action, with the help of some comfortable procedures, with the subjects implicated within the action, appealing to different methods of data collecting, such as observation, document collection, analysis, synthesis etc. It also offers the occasion of explaining and analyzing actions, instead of exposing the results.

The action-research presents a more relaxed vision on the scientific method and on the stage of establishment and application in a spiral: planning, action, observation, reflection, review, improvement.

Throughout the investigation process, attention needs to be focused on the study case method, which strongly motivates the students and urges them to be active. Therefore, they succeed to get to close quarters the university to life, offering them the chance of confronting real problem-situations, extracted from different contents which represent a category of situations, events, phenomena etc.

### **4. Results and Discussions**

#### **4.1. Opportunities of the Higher Education System within European Context**

The educational policy of EU, which Republic of Moldova will adhere to, is essentially based on the abundance of cultural diversity. The educational system has to respond to both internal and external opportunities (through content and research) based on:

- the procreation of an education system transparent and cognizant with the one of EU;
- globalization, where the competitiveness of different economical domains is based on the working resources holding a large scale of abilities, knowledge and innovations;
- the adaptation to the requirements of informational era in the higher education system;
- the application of new educational theories and the implementation of interactive and motivational curriculum;
- the assurance of an efficient education through the application of some creative evaluation techniques.

In order to implement these priorities, the strategy of the educational domain presumes a set of programs and project, such as:

- ♦ elaborating the methodology of underlying and projecting integrated researches;

- ◆ reorganizing the institutional chain in order to assure the quality of educational and investigational processes;
- ◆ the research of educational alternatives and the consolidation of academic autonomy;
- ◆ the fusion of university management features from the perspective of research innovative and functional interdisciplinarity (accountancy, marketing, culture, situational, intuitive, empirical);
- ◆ Investigations oriented towards joint approach with other systems, from the perspective of community purposes and European integration.

The creation and development of a society based on knowledge depend on: providing new knowledge, especially through scientific research; their communication through education and training; their dissemination by the agency of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies); the use of knowledge within industrial processes and logistics, thus turning knowledge into innovation for development. Universities hold a unique place, being involved by their mission in all these processes: in research, education/training (training of researchers) and development in the context of education paradigms for change.

The structural reforms generated by the orientations and trends of higher education represent the effort of organizing diversity within the European area of higher education institutes. Thus, these reforms take place into a coherent and compatible circumstance, as a necessary condition of European competitiveness.

The international development of education and research is accelerated by new technologies based on information and communication. As a result, it is enhanced not only the competition between universities and countries, but also competition between universities and other institutes, such as public research laboratories, private formative institutions specialized in specific profiles. More and more funds are obtained based on competition, at national and international levels, determining a continuous strive to attract the best talents and the human resources. If the keyword is “based on knowledge” – the society based on knowledge or the economy based on knowledge, then the key resource is “knowledge asset”, which includes “knowledge workers”, referring to high competence human resources, capable of contributing to the generation of original knowledge, formed within the academic course and seminary.

Requirements towards an academic course:

- an academic course has to be a clear exposure of ideas and concrete actions, organized into a theoretical system which follows an accurate conception;
- any course has to hold moral and emotional hues; it has to be an intellectual dialogue, which could attract through its elegant exposure, through novelty, through the amplitude of information and through attention students’ interest;
- through the academic course, the student has to discover and to acknowledge scientific information and cultural assets; moreover, the meeting with the professor represents the symbol of dignity, as the students associate the professed knowledge with the person who teaches it. The professor- model underlies the development of intellectual knowledge and the character based on the respect of students’ scientific and cultural values;
- the academic course offers a model of thinking, it answers students’ questions and intellectual interrogations;
- the academic course fulfils the intellectual role between students and professor, which leads not only to the development of persuasions through knowledge accumulation, but

also to emotional opinions [1, p. 158], that conduct to the development of investigational skills (of research), that refer to an assembly of abilities, specific for the research process and the mental operations activated during the research, trained within different situations, reorganizing external and internal resources in order to reach the defined objectives. Therefore, for detecting these skills, there have been established the following characteristics: the problem formulation, the demonstration of the problem apprehension, the research itself, the obtained results and evaluation.

The core of contemporary psycho-educational concepts is based on:

- the dependence, social conditioning and permanent renewal of aims, content and educational methods, corresponding to the constantly changing education requirements;
- the unity of the educational process;
- the unity, perspective and continuation of aims, content and methods;
- multidimensional pedagogy;
- the unity of socialization and individualization;
- the variety and the freedom of choosing the ways, the methods and the patterns of achieving the educational strategic ideas;
- the formative role of relationships in the development of a moral and affective personality;
- the complexity and the unity of educational structures functioning conditioned by the multitude of academic courses, by the internal and reciprocal bonds within personality structures, by time limit for instruction and education;
- the unity of creative and efficient approach of content and organization of the academic process.

Based on the presented approaches, different recommendations are elaborated aimed at the efficient organization of the educational process. We underline the fact that this process, along the way, generates problems which need to be continuously explored.

The peculiarities of developing a scientific research are based on:

- the improvement of the actual legislation towards the diversification of investigational management, the return to research branch management, the implementation of Bologna's forethoughts regarding research;
- the creation of a National Council focused on the coordination of scientific research within the educational system;
- the establishment of foreground subjects of psychology and education sciences;
- the diversification of financial resources directed towards research in the educational system.

#### **4.2. The Characteristic of Scientific Research Criteria**

The principle of competence. This principle establishes the person who is capable and who can develop an activity of scientific research. Based on this, it appears the question if anyone, anytime and anyhow could develop an activity of scientific research. The answer is of course negative, because there are some rules which have to be obeyed in this situation, such as:

- during the activity of scientific research there have to be admitted only specialists trained in the respective scientific domain;

- there are some special abilities requested from a potential researcher (will of knowing, curiosity, critical spirit, observation spirit, intellectual capability of analyzing and synthesizing, passion and patience, commitment, honesty and earnest);
- a certain professional experience, doubled by a training “stage” in the field of scientific research activity;
- a preliminary stage which every young researcher has to get through by working, under the guidance of some experienced and expert researchers, in order to assimilate to the thinking way, the working techniques and methods, the hypothesis statement, the preparation of the research phases, the results evaluation and their improvement etc.;
- the scientific and professional education of the future researcher must cultivate seriosity, critical spirit, austere life, detachment of subjective attitudes of an emotional character, maintaining enthusiasm afore discovery, caution and common sense.

The principle of objectification refers not only to the scientific research object and the way in which it has to be studied, but also to the researcher’s attitude towards the object of his research. Hereby, it is mandatory to bear in mind the following aspects:

- starting from the object which follows to be committed under scientific research, attention should be focused on a certain goal which represents the exact purpose of the respective research;
- during the scientific research, the researcher doesn’t have to deviate from the reality of the studied object and doesn’t have to change the followed purpose;
- to adapt the research methods and techniques to the particular nature of the researched object and not the other way around;
- not to “alternate” and not to “change” the nature of the researched object, in order not to admit errors, thus maintaining the research object.

The principle of truth, whose aim consists in finding the truth within the conclusions made on the research of a certain object. This truth has to reflect the real nature of the researched object and has to be stated and understood. Therefore, some rules need to be obeyed:

- the research needs to follow the discovery of the truth about the researched object;
- any activity of scientific research has to be coherent, logic, have continuity and be conform to the object reality committed to its research;
- the statement of the research results has to be made utilizing a clear, precise and coherent language, which can be universally accepted and utilized;
- within the scientific research activity, partialism, fantasy and speculation should be avoided, otherwise they could lead to orderly deformation, and to mistaken results;
- any activity of scientific research needs to be coherent and correspond to rational reasoning.

The methodical principle relates to the scientific research methodology. It achieves the correlation between the necessities of objectifying the followed data to the object under scientific research and the necessity of finding the truth about the respective object. Hereby, for confirming the studied object with the methodical principle, it is needed to bear in mind some rules:

- any activity of scientific research needs to be carefully lead, according to a rigid „plan” previously prepared by the respective scientific researcher;

- within a scientific research activity there must be faithfully respected the working methods and stages, in order to assure a coherent and rational development of the process directed towards finding the truth;
- the research must include working techniques and methods adequate to the nature of the researched object, as well as the intentions connected with the respective research objectives;
- methodologically speaking, any activity of scientific research has to start with the study of easy, clear, explicit things, bringing forward the activities which imply a higher level of difficulty and complexity.

The demonstration principle affirms the fact that any assertion (or result) issued from the scientific research activity of an object has to be demonstrated, proved that it is true and that it belongs as a quality to the studied object. For this matter, the following rules need to be considered:

- any scientific research has to be demonstrated, evaluated and reproduced, eventually by another researcher or research group, different from the one who has first discovered the respective data;
- any scientific research has to be reproduced, as much as possible, under a theoretical model which represent authentically the researched object and its qualities;
- the verisimilar results obtained from the performed scientific research have to be integrated into the data system of the scientific domain in which the research has developed.

The correlation principle. As in the previous principle, it is related with the method. It states the fact that the scientific results issued out of the object research have to be correlated with the already existing data of the respective scientific domain or the ones of interdisciplinary area from the related scientific domains. Therefore, the following rules have to be kept in mind:

- to consider the evaluated object reports with other objects from the same branch or with objects related to it;
- to have in mind the already existing knowledge about the adjacent objects or related to the respective research object;
- the obtained results from the effectuated scientific research have to be incorporated within a well established scientific domain which they will belong to;
- after the adjustment of the obtained results from the scientific research, a synthesis needs to be realized with similar data which are already existing within a given scientific domain.

The results evaluation principle relates to methodology and highlights the evaluation and realization pattern of the obtained results from the scientific research activity. In compliance with this principle, the following rules have to be honoured:

- all results obtained from the scientific research of the evaluated object, have to be correctly evaluated, strictly rationally;
- the results evaluation has to be correct, without any grade of partiality from the researcher who has developed the study;
- the obtained results have to be compared with the existing data, taken from the scientific literature of the evaluated problem;
- the squareness of the obtained results has to be verified, operation which has rather be performed by another team of researchers.

The utility principle. According to this principle, the scientific research activity of the obtained data, further undertaken, has to keep in mind not only a theoretical utilization, but also a practical

one. Therefore, the activity has to justify the research, as an effective contribution to the respective scientific domain, as well as the implementation of these results. Thus, the following rules have to be honoured:

- the performed research has to be useful not only theoretically, but also practically;
- it is rather good that an undertaken scientific research to be original and new, thus, representing an efficient contribution to the respective scientific domain;
- the issued data from the research to be utilized and applied regularly, as soon as possible, by the specialists.

The psycho moral principle reports both to the researcher and the way in which the activity of his scientific research develops. The problem that faces the researcher is seriosity and onestity of the research activity. In other words, the problem refers to both scientific and moral responsibility of the one who investigates towards the research, the research results and the consequences of the research results regarding theoretical and practical implementation. Because of that, there is need to go after the following rules:

- any activity of scientific research has to have an intrinsic character, to be sincere and detached of getting some material or any kind of advantages by the respective researcher;
- the research, being applied under the sign or responsibility, has to be conducted after the ethical principles of a correct activity, respecting the ethic-professional reports between the researchers of the same domain and even communicating with them during the respective research;
- the undertaken research has to be conformed with the nature of the researcher's personality, with the preparation and his personal concern, with the grade, the specialization and his professional aptness within the domain in which he develops the scientific research activity;
- to accept the collaboration with the specialists from the same domain or related domains, in a sincere, open and detached way, in order to avoid the studies overlapping or errors that may occur during the results procurement and interpretation;
- the researcher has the duty of obtaining, demonstrating and defending the scientific research results towards the critics which may be brought into his attention related with the undertaken research;
- the person who performed the scientific research needs to be credible and persuasive in order to assess, through arguments and demonstration, the theoretical and practical results of the research, so that they would be recognised and accepted by specialists from the respective scientific domain.

The principles presented above have to mandatory represent a strictly direction, in order to be followed by any other person which is hired in a research activity by the researchers' collective and the actual research activity. If not, it may occur unpleasant situation, difficulties or, in the worst case, there could be obtained erroneous results or even any kind to research activity to be [5, pp. 12-15].

The action-research establishes a complex methodological object, in its essence, and it has the following characteristics:

- ✓ the action-research is an applied research at the student action, but starting from its action; therefore, the enterprise is realised (a) regarding a subject; (b) with this subject; (c) at the request of this subject, being a research for/within the action;

- ✓ the action-research is an implied action, because of the fact that there is not possible to not take position; the researcher influences the course of the events observed in the moment at which they are sources of interests;
- ✓ the action-research is a combined research, the student being the supreme in its environment, in which he occupies a legitimate place, being the ideologist of its life and of the surrounding events; the experimentation term is the real one, in which the researcher combines the implied subjects with the context;
- ✓ the action-research is an engaged research, the student researcher takes upon himself into an action, not only observing it from distance, but also indenting upon the action, waiting for the practical utility effect.

The stages of the action-research could be the following:

- the identification, the evaluation and the formulation of a critical problem from the concrete process of initial development;
- conversations and preliminary negotiations between the participants of the action-research, who button up all the details by proposing a research project, in which the problems and the solutioning intention are defined;
- the analysis of the theoretical biography in order to clarify comparatively the solutions proposed by other researcher of similar problems;
- the alternation of the initial project;
- the selection of research and action procedures: the research administration, the participants' responsibilities, the choice of practical action methods, the tasks repartization etc.;
- the establishment of the evaluation procedures that will be applied during the research period;
- the project implementation of the actual research, the assignation of the data collecting methods (periodical meetings, journal consignments, reports, evaluations etc.);
- monitoring the activities, tasks and the assurance of permanent communication of the researchers group;
- the analysis and interpretation of data, results and research project evaluation;
- the final research report, in which will be mentioned the main results, the recommendations, the dissemination patterns of the results for those interested about and the future action direction [2, pp. 127-128].

The scientific research results, the acquaintance and the developed/created expertise of universities are available to the society through three main ways: scientific publications, licence-patents and also through creating of a new company (spin-off and start-up). More and more, the capacity of universities is highlighted, not only for gaining knowledge, but also for involving in mechanisms capable of making available the knowledge, namely mechanisms that assure the conversion of knowledge into innovation.

In the content of the complex role, which the universities play through their mission, they have commitments to: the students which they inform the public authorities that assure the universities' financing, the workforce marketplace which utilizes the qualification and the skills developed during the academic and research process, as well as towards in the main society. The general goal is to maximize the social result of the investment represented by the public financing.



Currently, there are three main criteria, associated to the research quality, become effective. The first criterion is the authenticity, proved by the contribution that the research has for developing new acquaintances, these might be in contradiction with the old principles and they determine a new way of thinking. The second criterion is endurance, determined by the methodology through which the research has accomplished and that allows the results to be verified. The third criterion, relevance, represents the particularity of presenting interest for other people and of being useful for them. The researchers associate different priorities to these criteria, the studies showing the fact that, generally, the main priority is the authenticity.

There might be considered the fact that, the investigations of high quality have the origins in the system oriented to the individual, each researcher working independently, usually defying or challenging the existent theories and methods. In reality, it is discussed the fact that a favourable environment for the quality research facilitates the communication and collaboration in an internal and external environment. The cooperation at national level, as well as the international contacts with the advanced working groups is very important. The favourable environments look diversified according to the age, the researchers' specialization and the activities unfolded in the research unity: specializations, development, dissemination, as well as contacts with the socio-economic environment. In fact, all this suggests the difficulty of establishing individual criteria for research quality.

For this purpose, we suggest to approach about the aspects regarding the scientific research quality in universities. Thus, there will make mentions of two main functions: the function of quality management (internal function) and the function of quality assurance (external function) of the existent experience, as well as the inclinations developed internationally.

#### **4.3. The Quality and the Features of Scientific Research in the Higher Education**

The research quality represents a mandatory component of the higher education performance. The academic scientific research has to be emboldened for two reasons:

- the universities proved to be important yielding structures of knowledge through varied domains;
- the activity of academic scientific research is an essential component of the educational activity, a professional accession of the academic cadres.

Currently, the academic scientific research is accomplished by academic cadres, by temporary groups of researchers in scientific laboratories during projects and research programs.

In order to achieve the higher education strategy, it is necessary the foundation of a scientific-methodical centre for researching the problem of higher education modernization. Its mission would be to substantiate scientifically the modernization and integration actions of the higher education within the European academic space.

The university needs to develop, as part of the strategy, towards research, mechanism through which the research virtuousness would be stimulated in the internal environment. Hereby, it is essential the establishment of a research capital that will assure supplementary resources for the most efficient research unities, which prove excellence. This capital may be important at the moment when the university strategically decides to support the development or consolidation of a

research direction for their interest. The capital might be the source for organizing internal competitions and for research projects, especially for young researchers.

A major component of any research financing is established from external sources of the university. The capacity of attracting public and private capitals, for which the research groups from university have to entry the competition, is an important criterion. Obviously that not only the research performance is important, but also the capability of launching well-set projects of scientific or technologic interest, credible regarding their organization. The capability of finding external capital is an important indicator of the research quality, but, in this context, the obtained resources from international competitions must have a supplementary balance.

The university has to develop its informing and networking capability, both at the institutional and researchers levels, in order to get acquainted with financing opportunities of the research. At the level of created structures in the university, it is necessary to assure the support the researchers need while preparing successful applications for research capital and for a better communication with the economic and social environment. There will be organized different information and training sessions, and it will be developed an efficient system of internal communication exploring relationships between people, as well as the electronic environment. We could talk about the value of a knowledge management system in the university, based on: existing projects, partnerships, skills, documentation support, successful practices etc. The organization of a “metapole” in the university could assure the interface with the agencies outside the university. This system has to be part of the knowledge transfer office that the universities will develop. The international practice refers to different models, the university being admitted to choose its own deployment solution [3].

Table 1: Validation criteria of the option concerning the subject of bachelor, master and doctorate theses

Evaluation criteria of the chosen subject	The criterion significance
1. The criterion of subject relevance	Relevance refers to the research subject orientation towards the basic aspects of the respective domain, aspects in which the acquisition dynamics of scientific knowledge is at a high level, its scientific interest being elevated by both theoreticians and practitioners. The eventual new original contributions enter directly the professional debate circuit and the practical applications.
2. The criterion of subject actuality	Actuality refers to the orientation of the subject to the priorities of research and academic practice from a specific period towards the significant aspects of the present and future of the approached domain. The satisfaction of the actuality criterion presumes to avoid the option for the research subject which refers to obsolete aspects, approaches without a theoretical and/or applied horizon, outdated practical and thought systems.
3. The criterion of subject specificity	Subject specificity refers to the possibility of its assignation, as a basis for its adequate treatment and structuring. The themes that satisfy this criterion have an obvious individuality on theoretical, methodological and applied plans. Individuality results from the chosen study problem and from the approach angle adopted by the author, from the research methods, from concrete examples, utilized cases and, especially, from author's conclusions and proposals – as an expression of recommended solutions.
4. The criterion of concordance between the subject requests and author's possibilities	The concordance criterion is respected if the chosen subject is a spread one, of proper complexity for an individual research and the associated elaboration effort allows concluding at the established term and at the quality level requested at the Bachelor exam. Moreover, this criterion hypothesizes the concordance of the chosen subject with the education profile in which the candidate is prepared for. Thus, he is empowered to undertake his own scientific research path in order to settle a concrete problem, which refers to research and academic practice, claiming professional solution that a new licensee could offer.

Source: [5, p. 88-89]

## 5. Conclusions

1. The theoretic basis of the scientific research is represented by specific principles, whose consideration is indispensable for the analysis of the initial professional development of the researcher student.

2. The implementation of case study generates competence stimulation and promotes cooperative and individual work. The students who work together lead to the establishment of interrelationships that develop professional and adaptation skills to the group rules. In this context, critical, creative and lateral thinking are elaborated. Moreover, it develops self-confidence, motivates active participation and engagement in the collective task.

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### Rezumat

*Cercetarea științifică reprezintă un domeniu important și o componentă esențială a sistemului de învățământ superior. Prin cercetare se produc cunoștințe noi care stau la baza dezvoltării învățământului și a societății în genere. O cercetare se axează pe următoarele principii: competenței, obiectivității, adevărului, metodic, demonstrației, corelației, evaluării rezultatelor, utilității, psihomoral.*

*Calitatea cercetării reprezintă o componentă obligatorie a funcționării învățământului superior. În acest context, ne propunem abordarea aspectelor privind calitatea cercetării științifice, referindu-ne la cele două funcții de bază: funcția de management al calității (funcția internă) și funcția de asigurare a calității (funcția externă), a experienței existente, precum și la tendințele manifestate pe plan internațional.*

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**Cuvinte-cheie:** cercetare științifică, competențe de cercetare, principiile cercetării științifice, metodele cercetării, calitatea cercetării.

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### Аннотация

*Научное исследование является важной областью и основополагающим элементом системы высшего образования. Исследование производит новые знания, находящиеся в основе развития образования и общества в целом. Любое исследование фокусируется на принципах компетентности, объективности, правдивости, методичности, демонстративности, корреляции, оценки результатов, полезности, психоморальности.*

*Качество исследования является обязательным компонентом функционирования системы высшего образования. В этом контексте, мы предлагаем рассмотрение проблемы качества научного исследования, ссылаясь на двух основных функций: на функцию управления качеством (внутренняя функция) и функцию обеспечения качества (внешняя функция), а также на существующий опыт и тенденции изучаемого аспекта на международном уровне.*

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**Ключевые слова:** научное исследование, научно-исследовательские навыки, научные принципы исследования, методы исследования, качество исследования.

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