

### 3.6. BENCHMARKING IN POLISH AND UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATION<sup>68</sup>

#### 3.6.1. INTRODUCTION

For many higher education institutions, the idea to learn from each other and to share aspects of good practice, is almost as old as the university itself. Desires to learn from each other and to share aspects of good practice have traditionally manifested

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<sup>67</sup> J. Van Ettinger, J. Sitting, *Better quality-larger effects*, Warsaw: Technical Publishing House, 1970.

<sup>68</sup> Vitalii Naumov, Kharkov National Automobile and Highway University, Ukraine; Marta Tutko, Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Polska.

themselves in different ways: meetings to share common interests or discuss common problems, taking part in professional associations or visits by delegations from one higher education institution in another. Therefore improving performance of higher education institutions by comparison is nothing new.

What is new, is the increasing interest in the formalization of such comparisons. At this point it might be worthwhile to refer to one of the methods of the quality management, which is benchmarking.

Higher education institutions are operating in competitive environments and many of them are currently affected by the economic recession and cuts in public expenditure. On the other hand they have to deal with demands to deliver excellence in education and research. That is why improving higher education institutions performance is crucial to demonstrate accountability for the use of public funding and quality of education and research.

In this context benchmarking is a powerful management tool which, through self-assessment and a structured comparative institutional learning approach, provides higher education institutions with crucial information to increase the quality of their development and performance.

There is an increasing consensus that university benchmarking is an important instrument in helping to make higher education fit for the 21st century, and to maximize the contribution which universities and colleges make to their host societies and economies<sup>69</sup>.

The goal of this paper is to define the perspective directions of the use of benchmarking tool in the management of Polish and Ukrainian higher education.

To achieve the objective, the definitions of benchmarking and its types, the experience of the benchmarking concept use in Polish and Ukrainian higher education are analyzed, as well as the model of the benchmarking concept implementation in higher education, based on an analysis of global best practices, is proposed.

### 3.6.2. DEFINITIONS AND TYPES OF BENCHMARKING

Benchmarking is a concept adopted from industry, where it has been used in manufacturing and services with great success for over three decades. However benchmarking in higher education institutions is currently at an early stage of its development in many countries.

Benchmarking as a management tool is used commonly but differently throughout Europe. Definitions of benchmarking are varied widely, from the practical “a self-improvement tool for organizations which allows them to compare themselves with others, to identify their comparative strengths and weaknesses and learn how to improve”, to the participative “the open and collaborative evaluation of services and processes with the aim of emulating best available practice” through to the global

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<sup>69</sup> *A University Benchmarking Handbook. Benchmarking in European Higher Education*, Brussels: The European Centre for Strategic Management of Universities, 2010, p. 14.

and ambitious “benchmarking is the process of continuously comparing and measuring an organization with business leaders anywhere in the world to gain information, which will help the organization take action to improve its performance”<sup>70</sup>.

According to another definition, benchmarking is a process inside an organization with the aim to improve its performance by learning about good practices for primary and/or support processes by looking at those processes in other, better-performing organizations, building on evaluation of relevant performances in own and others’ organizations<sup>71</sup>.

Reassuming, benchmarking in higher education is an improvement process, and it works by comparing one higher education institution with other organizations, operating in a similar kind of environment, who face the same kind of external variations and uncertainties and who have to deal with the same kind of problems. By benchmarking higher education institution can assess its internal strengths and weaknesses, evaluate comparative advantages of leading competitors, identify best practices, and, as the result, gain a position of superiority.

In the literature, the following types of benchmarking might be distinguished<sup>72</sup>:

- internal benchmarking in which comparisons are made of the performance of different departments, campuses or sites within a higher education institution university in order to identify best practice in the organization, without necessarily having an external standard against which to compare the results;
- external competitive benchmarking where a comparison of performance in key areas is based upon information from institutions which are seen as competitors;
- external collaborative benchmarking usually involves comparisons with a larger group of institutions who are not immediate competitors;
- external trans-industry (best-in-class) benchmarking seeks to look across multiple industries in search of new and innovative practices, no matter what their source (this is perceived to be the most desirable form of benchmarking because it can lead to major improvements in performance, and has been described by North American Colleges and Universities Business Officers as “the ultimate goal of the benchmarking process”);
- “implicit benchmarking” has already been referred to above, and is likely to increase in future years as governments and central funding agencies seek to apply benchmarking approaches to universities.

Also there is a shared understanding of true benchmarking process. A true benchmarking process is improvement-oriented. Indispensable elements of true benchmarking are: clear and explicit goals, negotiation, collaboration, dialogue and the development of a mutual understanding<sup>73</sup>. In true benchmarking organizations and people

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<sup>70</sup> *Benchmarking in Higher Education: An International Review*, London: Commonwealth Higher Education Management Service, 1998, p. 9.

<sup>71</sup> *A University Benchmarking Handbook*, *op.cit.*, p. 132.

<sup>72</sup> *Benchmarking in Higher Education*, *op.cit.*, p. 13–14.

<sup>73</sup> *A University Benchmarking Handbook*, *op.cit.*, p. 132.

learn from each other and there is dialogue. True benchmarking is always creative: adapting best practices does not mean the same as copying them.

On the contrary, false benchmarking is rank-oriented or merely explorative without interest in improvement. Hidden and fuzzy goals and undefined processes are typical false benchmarking constituents.

By true benchmarking process higher education institutions can obtain three different products<sup>74</sup>:

- improved networking, collaborative relationship and mutual understanding between participants;
- benchmark information about the area of study;
- a better understanding of practice, process or performance, and insights into how improvements might be made.

The interest for benchmarking in higher education should be understood in the context of the European Higher Education Area, which emphasizes the need for more comparison, transparency and visibility of quality in higher education. Benchmarking does not only relate to the international political context. It should also be seen as a response to the growing competition among educational institutions and their search for best practices and delivering excellence in education and research.

An important conclusion is that benchmarking can be an effective diagnostic instrument and suggest alternative solutions, but that the judgment about how far those solutions can be applied must remain in the hands of management of higher education institutions.

### 3.6.3. BENCHMARKING IN POLISH HIGHER EDUCATION

Almost all international reports (e.g. by OECD or the World Bank) on the Polish higher education level point to the necessity to improve the school management system that presently does not enable to build their strong international position. That is why efficient model of higher education management was implemented as the result of the reform conducted in 2011. In order to create better conditions for operation of university-level institutions in Poland and to use better the potential of the Polish higher education institutions it was necessary to expand their autonomy, to assume instruments of quality management and to reinforce connections of schools with the external environment.

Higher education institutions must be able to present measurable achievements. That is why reform introduced many pro-development and pro-quality mechanisms. However, it is mostly up to the schools and the personnel to what extent the new possibilities will be used and will help modernize Polish higher education system.

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<sup>74</sup> N. Jackson, *Benchmarking in UK HE: an overview*, "Quality Assurance in Education" 2001, Vol. 9, Iss. 4, p. 221.

In this context benchmarking is a powerful management tool which, through self-assessment and a structured comparative institutional learning approach, might provide Polish higher education institutions with information to increase the quality of their development and performance.

Polish higher education institutions are operating in competitive environments and they have to adjust to the requirements arising from the presence of Poland in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Postulates formulated in frames of EHEA create the necessity to compare with national and international rivals.

So far, true benchmarking in Polish higher education institutions was not conducted. Only false, rank-oriented benchmarking and forms of informal benchmarking are present<sup>75</sup>.

Therefore, in 2007, project Benchmarking in higher education was implemented by the Polish Rectors' Foundation. In the scheme of the project Polish higher education institutions will be monitored with regard on diverse criteria, on basis qualitative parameters and effectiveness<sup>76</sup>.

The main aims of the project are: growth of efficiency of performance and improvement of international competitive position of Polish higher education institutions and introduction of the benchmarking system for higher education in Poland. The assumption of the project is that for objective assurance and the independent character of undertaking the operator of the benchmarking system will be the Polish Rectors' Foundation.

The project Benchmarking in higher education will result in two products: the benchmarking of higher education institutions with comments (for each year) as well as the comparative database, which will characterize the revealing trends in higher education, in reference to chosen of measures and indexes of position of respective higher education institutions<sup>77</sup>.

Having the access to such system of advanced information the institutions responsible for higher education will be able to make prognosis and to stimulate realized policies. Project links to similar European undertakings, like European Benchmarking Programme on University Management.

### 3.6.4. BENCHMARKING IN UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

#### 3.6.4.1. The present state of the benchmarking concept usage

The signing of the Bologna Declaration by Ukraine has actualized the problem of new approaches forming in the competitiveness management of higher education institutions. Despite a thorough review of a large number of economic and manage-

<sup>75</sup> *Benchmarking w systemie szkolnictwa wyższego*, ed. by J. Woźnicki, Warszawa: Fundacja Rektorów Polskich, 2008, p. 32.

<sup>76</sup> Wiodące wieloletnie projekty FRP, Benchmarking w szkolnictwie wyższym, Fundacja Rektorów Polskich, Instytut Społeczeństwa Wiedzy, <http://www.frp.org.pl> (access: 31.03.2012).

<sup>77</sup> *Benchmarking w systemie szkolnictwa wyższego*, *op.cit.*, pp. 180–181.

rial aspects of the university functioning in the works of Ukrainian scientists, the problem of competitiveness management of universities based on the principles of benchmarking is not solved theoretically and this conception is not adapted for use in practice.

The first scientific publications in the field of the concept of benchmarking realization in the management of higher education in Ukraine have appeared at the beginning of the 2000s. Active promotion and practical realization of benchmarking as a management tool in Ukrainian universities is engaged by Dr. L.R. Prus. In her works the author proposes to consider the benchmarking not only as the method of analysis, but also as an integrated control method based on the permanent comparison with selected standards. As these standards the research objects in the internal environment (institution units) and the external environment of high school (competitors, market leaders and organizations of other branches) can be used<sup>78</sup>. The globalization processes development and the competition intensification at the market of educational products in Ukraine necessitates the increased use of benchmarking in public universities, because they require the strengthening of the orientation on a client and the flexibility under the condition of the significant impact of the state on the formation of their strategic priorities. The limited at the present time use of benchmarking is caused by significant differences in the activities of Ukrainian and foreign universities, as well as in the financial aspects of the higher education institutions functioning. The higher education as a capital-forming sector plays a key role in the formation of security and competitiveness of the state. However, the analysis of the competitive environment by the political, economical, social and technological indicators<sup>79</sup>, lead to conclusions about the presence of factors, which are not conducive in increasing the competitiveness of Ukrainian universities. This could be explained by the excessive centralization of higher education in Ukraine, the imperfection of legal support, the insufficient funding, a decrease of the potential capacity of the education market, as well as a reduction of the universities staff level due to aging and inefficient updating of scientific personnel.

The leaders of Ukrainian market of educational services in order to hold their positions create the satellites universities primarily as a non-governmental institutions to meet the increased demand for educational products. Their followers to enhance the competitive position create separate structural units such as branch offices, educational and counseling centers, and local centers of distance education. Research has shown that some subjects of the education market in Ukraine use methods of unfair competition, among which the copying of educational products of leading universities and the simulation of qualitative and successful activity are worth mentioning. Such a position allows to save financial recourses and to operate efficiently even under condition of the university's low-resource potential, but does not create a basis for the formation of sustainable competitive advantages.

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<sup>78</sup> Л.Р. Прус, *Управління конкурентоспроможністю вищих навчальних закладів на засадах бенчмаркінгу*, Тернопіль: Тернопільський національний економічний університет, 2008, р. 7.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

### 3.6.5. THE RESULTS OF THE USE OF BENCHMARKING

Research in the field of the feasibility and efficiency of the benchmarking concept use in Ukrainian universities, conducted on the basis of higher educational institutions in the Khmelnytsky region<sup>80</sup>, allow to state that the highest level of competition in the market of educational services of Khmelnytsky region has formed in the segment of training of students, who study the disciplines of economic direction. In this segment the leader positions are held by public universities (this situation is typical for other regions of Ukraine). The competitive analysis has revealed the following leaders:

- on the assortment – Khmelnytsky National University;
- on the price policy and the logistical support – Podolsk State Agrarian Technical University;
- on the personnel policy – Private institution of higher education “University of Economics and Business”;
- on the international, scientific and educational activities – public universities;
- on the marketing activities – Khmelnytsky National University and Kamenetz-Podolsk State University.

V.M. Zapuchliak and I.A. Niemceva on the basis of expert interviews have conducted the benchmarking of organizational culture of higher education institutions, and also has made an attempt to adapt the results to the strategic development process of the Chernovtsy National University named by Yury Fedkovych<sup>81</sup>. According to the study results, it was concluded that the University “KROK” takes a leading position among Ukrainian universities by the formalization of the main activities. In this university the “Declaration on the mission, strategic goals, fundamental values and objectives of the University” was formulated. The first place on the criterion of traditions and rituals depth is occupied by the National University “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy,” but the number of such events in the university is much lower comparatively to the European leader in this indicator – Università di Bologna, where about one hundred events are performed during an academic year.

Benchmarking analysis carried out by V.I. Maykovska, has allowed her to conclude that practically all the disciplines of higher school of Ukraine in greater or lesser extent provide opportunities to use interactive teaching methods<sup>82</sup>. The greatest effect is achieved by the use of interactive methods in disciplines that are not characterized by a relatively small number of well-established laws and there are difficult to find unequivocal answers to questions. In a set of the disciplines of such a type the author includes disciplines that are directly focused on business and management activities, as they develop the students’ practical skills, which could be

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>81</sup> В.М. Запучляк, І.А. Немцева, *Бенчмаркінг зовнішніх елементів організаційної культури як інструмент управління ВНЗ*, “Вісник Чернівецького торговельно-економічного інституту. Економічні науки” 2010, вип. 39, pp. 196–204.

<sup>82</sup> В.І. Майковська, *Тренінгові технології навчання як елемент бенчмаркінгу в діяльності вищого навчального закладу*, “Вісник Чернігівського національного педагогічного університету ім. Т.Г. Шевченка” 2011, вип. 84, pp. 125–128.

used in the conditions of market and uncertainty. V.I. Maykovska, basing on the results of the conducted analysis, proposes to use training techniques while teaching Ukrainian students. It allows improving the quality of specialist training up to the contemporary world level.

### 3.6.6. PERSPECTIVES OF THE BENCHMARKING CONCEPT

L.R. Prus notes that the increase in competitiveness of Ukrainian universities is possible due to the internationalization of higher education, which could be implemented in such forms as the mobility of students (undergraduates, graduates, doctorates) and faculty staff and the internationalization of the curriculums<sup>83</sup>. Studies of the competitive environment of Ukrainian educational institutions have identified the trends of its development, which form the additional arguments in favor of the implementation of benchmarking in the management of the universities competitiveness:

- an expansion of market relations in higher education and its commercialization;
- an increase of the competition on the basis of non-price methods, in particular due to develop of skills;
- the diversification and strengthening of the customer orientation of Ukrainian universities;
- a convergence of the educational market and adjacent markets;
- strengthening the integration of higher education in Ukraine into the international educational space.

V. Saveliev in his paper concludes that the competitiveness of the educational services of universities in Ukraine shall be provided by the creating of training programs with the obtaining by graduates of the Master's double degree<sup>84</sup>. For the successful implementation of this direction in-depth study of foreign languages on younger courses is necessary.

As a result of the introduction and the implementation of the benchmarking methodology an educational institution receives a detailed action plan for adapting the best practices and self studying in creating of new knowledge, accessing knowledge outside the university, accumulating knowledge and the implementation of processes and products, placing them in databases, promoting knowledge and their transfer, as well as estimating the intellectual capital. Particular attention should be paid to the need to consider life cycle stages of the educational product and to the inadvisability of a complete copying of other organization activities in conducting the benchmarking.

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<sup>83</sup> Л.Р. Прус, *Управління конкурентоспроможністю вищих навчальних закладів на засадах бенчмаркінгу*, Тернопіль: Тернопільський національний економічний університет, 2008, р. 8.

<sup>84</sup> В. Савельєв, *Вища освіта України перед викликами XXI століття: критичний вимір*, "Психологія і суспільство" 2009, вип. 4, р. 247.



### 3.6.7. BENCHMARKING MODEL FOR POLISH AND UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

There are a lot of benchmarking models presented in the literature. G. Anand and R. Kodali have reviewed some of the benchmarking frameworks and have classified them into the following groups of models<sup>85</sup>:

- Academic/research-based models. These are the models, which are developed mainly by academics and researchers mainly through their own research, knowledge and experience in benchmarking. In these models, the academic/researcher tend to look at it from theoretical and conceptual aspect, which may or may not have been implemented and validated through real life applications.
- Consultant/expert-based models. These models are developed from personal opinion and judgment through experience in providing consultancy to organizations embarking on a benchmarking project. They would be adequately tried and validated through implementation in the client's organization and hence the approach taken by consultant/expert tend to be more practical oriented.
- Organization-based models. These are the models, which were developed or proposed by organizations based on their own experience and knowledge. They tend to be highly dissimilar, as each organization is different.

In addition to variations presented above, a review of the benchmarking models revealed that they are highly dissimilar in terms of number of steps, number of phases and application. G. Anand and R. Kodali identified 71 steps in 35 analyzed models of benchmarking. Out of the 71 steps, 13 steps were considered as “common steps”. Common steps in the benchmarking process are<sup>86</sup>:

- (1) Identify benchmarking subject;
- (2) Identify benchmarking partners;
- (3) Perform benchmarking study;
- (4) Determine current competitive gap;
- (5) Establish functional goals;
- (6) Develop action plans;
- (7) Implement of action plans to bridge the gap;
- (8) Recalibrate the benchmark;
- (9) Understand the current situation by collecting and analysing the existing information on the subject to be benchmarked;
- (10) Monitor results of the implemented actions;
- (11) Identify the critical success factors or indicators of the subject to be benchmarked;
- (12) Measure the existing state of the subject to be benchmarked with respect to the critical success factors/indicators;
- (13) Form a benchmarking team and identify a leader of the team to carry benchmarking study;

<sup>85</sup> G. Anand, R. Kodali, *Benchmarking the benchmarking models*, “Benchmarking: An International Journal” 2008, Vol. 15(3), pp. 257–291.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 279.

One of the benchmarking models proposed for higher education institutions, which might be adopted for Polish and Ukrainian higher education, involves six main stages to ensure that it contributes most effectively to institutional performance improvement<sup>87</sup>:

- Strategic decision-taking. The first stage is the decision by the institution that it wants to undertake a benchmarking exercise and the field within which it wishes to benchmark. The institution needs to have a commitment from its senior managers to support the completion of a benchmarking project, to appoint a project team with sufficient gravitas to sustain project momentum and draw selectively on senior management support, and able to fir the benchmarking exercise and its results into the developing institutional strategic agenda.
- Choosing partners; The second stage is the identification of potential partners with whom to form a benchmarking group. There is a need for these partners to also have a strategic interest sufficiently close to your own for the exercise to be interesting for them, and also for them to be of a similar degree of development for there to be opportunities for exchange of best practice between the partners. There is also the need for the identification of external experts who are able to provide feedback on the subsequent stages.
- Defining priorities, targets, criteria, indicators and benchmarks. The third stage is the elaboration of the field within which the benchmarking will take place, in terms of the priorities which the institutions wish to achieve and the processes which are being improved. This stage also involves the technical construction of the benchmarking exercise in terms of defining performance indicators and evaluation criteria, and the criteria for what would represent best practice in that particular field.
- Data gathering and reporting. The fourth stage involves gathering data amongst the partners, identifying relative performance levels between the partners, and for all partners identifying areas of strength and weakness. From this stage individual institutions have an awareness of where there is scope for greatest improvement, as well as an understanding of the practices and processes of comparable institutions which nevertheless perform better than themselves, and which can help shape their action plan.
- Developing an Action Plan to introduce change. The fifth stage is the development of an action plan to address the weak points identified through the benchmarking, informed by the best practice observed in the benchmarking exercise as well as the theoretical understanding of the process and the benchmark from stage 3. These action plans must be implementable and drawn up in parallel with business plans which allocate the necessary resources and impetus to ensure the strategic changes are implemented.

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<sup>87</sup> *A University Benchmarking Handbook. Benchmarking in European Higher Education*, Brussels: The European Centre for Strategic Management of Universities, 2010, pp. 51–52.

- Monitoring and follow-up. The final stage of the performance improvement process comes once the improvement plan has been implemented, and evolves evaluating the success of the changes made and then whether the overall performance has been improved. This can be delivered on the one hand by setting targets for success within the action plan, or potentially by comparing past against current performance, or conceivably by the benchmarking group coming back together after an appropriate time interval to benchmark themselves and evaluate who has improved their overall performance.

These six steps give an idealized process overview of what a benchmarking should achieve, to hold together a group of higher education institutions together to complete successfully a shared learning process that translates into individual performance improvement.

Benchmarking is not complicated but it does seem initially difficult for higher education institutions to learn from others and complete exercises successfully in order to deliver measurable improvements. Often the difficulties seem to have less to do with the technique of benchmarking than the pressures the organization and individuals are experiencing and their lack of a coherent plan for integrating change management<sup>88</sup>.

To overcome these difficulties in the benchmarking process it is worth to remember that benchmarking means<sup>89</sup>:

- understanding the process: data gathering is secondary,
- relying on having a peer group with a shared strategic interest,
- getting the best out of all group members,
- thinking about what kind of institution you want to be,
- giving you the tools for greater institutional self-awareness.

Benchmarking in Polish and Ukrainian higher education might be conducted with the support of The Benchmarking Code of Conduct and Guidelines and Ethics for Benchmarkers. According to the proposal of The American Productivity & Quality Center the following principles might be used in the benchmarking process<sup>90</sup>:

1. Principle of Legality. Higher education institutions should refrain from the acquisition of trade secrets from another by any means that could be interpreted as improper. They also should not extend benchmarking study findings to another organization without first ensuring that the data is anonymous so that the participants' identities are protected.
2. Principle of Exchange. Higher education institutions should be willing to provide the same type and level of information that they request from benchmarking partner.

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<sup>88</sup> M.E. Gonzalez, G. Quesada, K. Gourdin, M. Hartley, *Designing a supply chain management academic curriculum using QFD and benchmarking*, "Quality Assurance in Education" 2008, Vol. 16(1), p. 40.

<sup>89</sup> *A University Benchmarking Handbook*, *op.cit.*, pp. 22–24.

<sup>90</sup> The Benchmarking Code of Conduct and Guidelines and Ethics for Benchmarkers, American Productivity & Quality Center, <http://www.apqc.org/knowledge-base/download/33845/a%3A1%3A%7B%3A1%3B%3A2%3B%7D/inline.pdf> (access: 31.03.2012).

3. Principle of Confidentiality. Higher education institutions should treat benchmarking interchange as confidential to the individuals and organizations involved. Information must not be communicated outside the partnering organizations without the prior consent of the benchmarking partner who shared the information.
4. Principle of Use. Higher education institutions should use information obtained through benchmarking only for purposes stated to the benchmarking partner.
5. Principle of Contact. Higher education institutions should respect the corporate culture of partner organizations and work within mutually agreed procedures.
6. Principle of Preparation. Higher education institutions should demonstrate commitment to the efficiency and effectiveness of benchmarking by being prepared prior to making an initial benchmarking contact.
7. Principle of Completion. Higher education institutions should follow through with each commitment made to benchmarking partner in a timely manner and they should complete each benchmarking study to the satisfaction of all benchmarking partners as mutually agreed.
8. Principle of Understanding and Action. Higher education institutions should treat benchmarking partner in the way that benchmarking partner would want to be treated.

The following guidelines apply to partners in a benchmarking process. The American Productivity & Quality Center developed and adheres to the code of conduct to guide benchmarking efforts and to advance the professionalism and effectiveness of benchmarking. Adherence to presented principles might contribute to efficient, effective, and ethical benchmarking in Polish and Ukrainian higher education.

### 3.6.8. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of definitions of benchmarking leads to the conclusion, that the benchmarking should be understood in the higher education management as the diagnostic tool for evaluating alternative solutions in the management process. However, the choice of a rational solution, its evaluation and implementation are the subsequent tasks of the higher education management.

The higher education systems of Poland and Ukraine are developed in conditions of the European Higher Education Area. This causes the presence of an international competition in the market of educational services. A constant analysis of best practices in teaching and higher education management tools is required to ensure the competitiveness of Polish and Ukrainian Universities. The analysis should include not only the national market, but also the market of educational services of all countries of the region. The use of benchmarking tools in the management of higher education at universities of Poland and Ukraine will allow to determine development strategies of educational institutions, taking into account the level of educational services and the management level of competing universities.

The level of use of benchmarking in the management of universities in Poland and Ukraine is relatively low: some projects are implemented at the national level in Poland, the unsystematic attempts to use the concept in scientific research are conducted in Ukraine. The developed benchmarking model, based on an analysis of best practice, will allow gradually implement the concept in the management of higher education at universities of Poland and Ukraine.