

COORDINATES OF SHORT-TERM BENEFITS GRANTED TO ACADEMICS

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ABSTRACT. Academics' work means a great responsibility in preparing young generations of graduates in different fields of knowledge, as well as in the future of society, the future state of the nation. That is why we considered appropriate an approach the coordinates of short-term benefits provided to academics. This paper deals with issues concerning the structure and characteristics of short-term benefits granted to academics, the method of finance and accounting recognition and presenting these in the financial statements of academics, the role of this information for decision makers and achieving performance in education and research.

Key words: short-term benefits, rewards, academics, public universities

JEL codes: M12, M41

Introduction

Changes in the Romanian higher education, as well as across Europe and elsewhere, were as numerous and radical as they were continuous, requiring essential changes of the educational process.

The quality of education and training is an essential process, of maximum importance for the learners' becoming and progress as well as for society. One of the main factors that have a bearing on this quality is the academics. This paper address, from the structural, financial and accounting aspect, academics' short-term benefits, considered part of counterpart investments made to prepare them in providing education.

The intended purpose is to build an arrayed image on short-term benefits provided to academics, subsequently liable to comparative approaches (both typologically and in terms of value and periodicity at the level of public entity, but also in relation to other economic sectors). The issue is treated in a general manner both by literature and legal framework, being no study focused on this segment of human resources.

We justify our approach to address the short-term benefits granted to academics through the importance of higher education contribution to create professionals who will lead, in the near future, the Romanian economy and society and not only.

Research methodology

The need for research is more pressing than ever, both to search and find solutions to immediate problems of organization practice and to make reasonable theorizing and propose viable generalizations. Naturally, the human side is a sensitive segment, extremely complex and vital to any organization, the more so as it is in a position of knowledge provider.

The premise from which we started in achieving this scientific approach was the need to shape an image on the spectrum of short-term benefits granted to academics and on the manner of their accounting recognition.

Given the characteristics of the area, research methodology used is somewhat standardized, being built from the identification, study and systemizing literature in accounting and management,

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legislation addressing structural employee benefits generally, respectively those granted to academics, especially.

From an epistemological point of view, this approach belongs to the category of positive type research, which "describes situations in reality field" and that "can be used for predictive purpose" (Andone a.o, 2011). Research is almost never developed in a pure form (Zait and Spalanzani, 2006) and therefore, the nature of research is predominantly applicative, the approach being of consensual – inductive type, which is supported by the opinions and judgments made by professionals in conjunction with the legislative patterns to formalize the problem, explaining the representation of short-term benefits and the construction of a specific image of the teaching staff's benefits in universities funded (also) from public funds.

Research strategy aimed at cross approach (to identify the relationship between long-term and short-term benefits, as well as between different components of the latter), the study of documents as a method of observation for short term benefits attributed to academics, the case study as casuistry research method of a socio-professional category. For the interpretation of research results there were used both comparative method (at the level of academic ranks, and in relation to the average salary in the economy) and interpretive method (with the premise of the need for improving the information on short-term benefits in finance - accounting reports).

The working techniques addressed, as "methodological prescriptions" or "methods used in practicing a profession" (Zait and Spalanzani, 2006), were documentary analysis (for a general framework outlining on the advantages granted to academics), classification, reasoning to formulate problems, conditions and basic assumptions for granting short-term benefits, based on predetermined rules, and for processing and interpretation of the obtained results, synthesis, comparative analysis.

Literature Review

Professional life is a privileged land of individual development; it is a source of wealth. Life organizing compels an individual to spend most time in labor, work motivation being a necessity materialized in purposes, projects and experiences.

There are studies that address the complexity of the issues that are placed in front of higher education, which has the difficult task to create value-added (intellectual capital in all economic sectors (Stefan and Chiviu, 2011; Nevado Peña, et. al., 2010, Talukdar A., 2008). Naturally, the academics have the key role in achieving this mission. Dual, natural and inherent approach in any scientific endeavor, requires consideration of higher education needs ("education quality, research excellence, capacity to produce knowledge in the highest standards, cultivate innovation and creativity in the teaching - learning process and research, boosting performance, competitiveness at national, European and world wide level and never less a strong labor market addressability" Stefan and Chiviu, 2011) in exchange for compensation of providers of education at the highest level (academics).

The issue of short-term benefits is a complex one being addressed by both labor and social protection legislation, by accounting regulations, and at the level of domain activity. Knowing this problem is equivalent to the survival of any organizational structure, with the ability to cope with a permanent constant: "change".

The patterns for legal, financial and accounting approach of short-term benefits relate to academics are offered at least by the following acts:

- Law 571/2003 of the Labor Code;
- Law 63/2011 on employment and salaries in 2011 of teachers and auxiliary teaching staff in education;
- Law 283/2011 approving Government Emergency Ordinance no.80/2010 to complete the art. 11 of GEO 37/2008 regarding certain financial measures in the budget
- Public Finance Law 500/2002;

- Law no. 285/2010 on salaries in 2011 of staff paid from public funds;
- The Order of the Public Finances Ministry no.1917/2005 for the approval of the Methodological norms regarding the organization and the management of the accounting of the public institutions patrimony.

- International Accounting Standards (IPSAS 25 “Employee Benefits”, IPSAS 20 “Submission of information on Related Party”).

Most of the mentioned regulatory framework makes the general approach of the employees’ rights and the conditions under which they are granted. Naturally, a component of this refers to academic staff and auxiliary staff and it is built with the premise of staff unit salaries paid by public funds, regulated by Law no. 284/2010.

In human resources management, the system of employee tangible and intangible reward is addressed as issues referring to functionality, objectives, principles and procedures it relies on, the relation between cash payment and motivation, factors that influence the size of the rewards, components (salaries, incentives, alternative forms of money stimulus) and features (Simionescu et.al, 1999; Lefter et.al., 2008; Panisoara, 2007; Mathis et. al., 1997; Manolescu, 2007 etc). Naturally, the academics’ advantages are also identified in this framework.

In accounting literature, employee benefits include benefits provided to employees or to their dependents and may be granted by payments (or the provision of goods and services) made either directly to employees or to their spouse, to children or to other dependents or other persons, such as insurance companies (IPSAS 25 “Employee Benefits”).

Higher education is the area in which the equity theory, developed by I.S. Adams, makes its presence strongly felt. According to it, people make comparisons between them and others in terms of two variables, namely (Nicolescu et. al., 2004):

- entries or rewards, that means salary, additional benefits, recognition and promotion and other rewards from the employer;
- entries or investments, that means their own contribution to the smooth running of the organization (working time, effort, qualification, experience, ability, education, etc.)

Gary Becker launched the human capital theory, according to which, from an individual’s point of view, his education is an investment (Stan S. et. al., 2006). The investment value depends, on the one hand on the expenses on education, on the other hand, on the anticipated future benefits the acquired knowledge can generate through education. Within these benefits, short-term benefits are also included, which we intend to analyze starting with the typological issue.

In a general approach, according to IPSAS 25 “Employee Benefits”, employee benefits structure is as follows:

- short-term employee benefits (both monetary and non-monetary form);
- post-employment benefits (pensions, other retirement benefits, life insurance, post-employment medical assistance);
- other long-term employee benefits (leave after a long work experience, leave for research purposes, benefits for anniversary or other benefits for long-time service, benefits for long-term disability, bonuses and deferred compensation);
- benefits for employment contract closure.

The issue of benefits / rewards is addressed pragmatically in national accounting literature, which presents the accounting investigation method of settlement relations to the staff (calculation of net salary or of different compensations for temporary work disability, the documentary support used), applied to academics for public universities alike (Ristea, 2007; Paraschivescu, 2010; Todea, 2009, Matis and Pop 2007 etc). Some references are targeted at the accounting for short-term benefits, as outdated benefits, for no accumulation compensated absences and, respectively, accumulation compensated absences. (Popa et. al, 2007; Feleaga and Feleaga, 2007).

One can also notice a certain inclination of accounting literature to approaching the complex issue of employees' long-term benefits in general, until recently considered a "foreign language" (Bunget, 2005)

We notice a temporal structure of benefits, according to international accounting rules and one "dispersed, segmented" according to national legislation (we mean that the legal elements are complementary and only a cumulative approach can generate a comprehensive image upon them). There is also a third approach, that is managerial, which refers to employees' rewarding system.

Pragmatically, the human resource in higher education is distinguished by dispersion in a disproportionate number of institutions, faculties, study programs and specializations in a territorially oversized and unbalanced network; continuous erosion of academics' status, chronic underfunding, problems of compatibility with European reference marks, etc. (The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education - ARACIS).

It is known that the major form of short-term benefits, granted to academics, is the salary. An indicative structure of costs indicates that at the level of IIS, the first is salary costs, which represent about 50% of their total budget of expenditure.

Providing benefits to employees is done based on:

- formal plans or other formal agreements between an entity and individual employees, groups of employees or their representatives (collective and individual labor contract);
- legislation that requires entities to contribute to national plans from the area or other plans that include more than one employer or, if the entity is required to contribute to the comprehensive program of social insurance (framework law on social security pensions, health, unemployment, annual budget laws etc).

Performance-based pay system requires the introduction of wage differences between academics with the same title and same length of service. The main idea this system is based on is that people are different between them, get different results at work and therefore have to be paid differently, depending on performances (Cicea, 2004).

Results and discussions

Approach on short-term benefits

The benefit represents material or spiritual income, earnings, the utility someone gets of something (DEX).

Making reference to international accounting rules, short-term employee benefits are all forms of consideration given by an entity in return for employee service (except for the benefits for employment contract closure) which are due in full within twelve months from the beginning of the period in which the employees have rendered service.

The structure of short-term employee benefits, according to IPSAS 25 "Employee Benefits" is as follows:

- allowances, salaries and social insurance contributions;
- short-term compensated absences (paid annual leave and paid sick leave) where the absences are expected to take place within twelve months from the beginning of the period in which the employees have rendered service;
- performance and profit sharing bonuses payable within twelve months from the beginning of the period in which the employees have rendered service;
- non-monetary benefits (medical assistance, housing, cars and free or subsidized goods and services) for current employee.

Another taxonomy (Manolescu, 2007) of short-term benefits (our emphasis) requires identification of direct benefits (salaries, allowances, gradations of merit – for academics) and indirect ones, namely:

- social protection programs: medical insurance, life insurance, accident insurance, for temporary work disability, unemployment dole and other forms of short-term protection;
- not worked time payment: holidays, sick leave, public holidays, parental leave, travel time;
- services: leisure facilities, company car, payment of training courses, transportation, and accommodation facilities and food (Lefter et. al., 2008).

The rewards/short-term benefits system includes both financial and non-financial rewards, such as responsibility, professional satisfaction, recognition of self, independence of thought and individual action, the feeling of being informed, esteem and prestige, the opportunity to develop interpersonal relationships etc.

Short-time benefits for academics

Next we want to study the benefits offered to academics in our country. These are: allowances, salaries and social insurance contributions; short-term compensated absences; unpaid leave; no monetary benefits.

Allowances, salaries and social insurance contributions

The salary is the consideration for the work done by an employee according to the individual labor contract (Labor Code, art. 159, paragraph 1). For the work performed each employee is entitled to a salary expressed in money.

Starting from the general legal framework, the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports, acting as chief credit and the universities acting as employers, are required to establish base salaries, bonuses and other salary rights, to ensure promotion of staff in order to fit the amount approved for this purpose in their own budget.

Gross salary of academic staff is composed of basic salary, plus bonuses, allowances and other remuneration.

The basic salary consists of:

A. Employment salary of academic staff that includes the stability increase only for over 10 years seniority installments, as well as neuropsychological strain increase existing to all education seniority installments.

According to art. LEN 327 of 1/2011 - Salaries of academic and research staff is in accordance with the current legislation and decisions of the university senate.

The gross amounts of the employment salary for academic staff vary depending on academic rank, and between a minimum and maximum level, set for each academic position in relation to seniority in education. In the table below we present the levels of employment salary corresponding to education seniority installments between 10-15 years, 20-25 years and 35-40 years:

Table no. 1

Seniority installment (years) Academic function	10-15			20-25			35-40		
	Min (lei)	Max (lei)	Var (lei)	Min (lei)	Max (lei)	Var (lei)	Min (lei)	Max (lei)	Var (lei)
Assistant	1414	1800	386	1427	1835	408	1449	2017	568
Lecturer	1521	2309	788	1564	2341	777	1776	2579	803
Associate professor	1750	2968	1218	1951	3005	1054	2294	3365	1071
Professor	2518	4959	2441	2828	5378	2550	3474	6486	3012

Source Law 63/2011

The data presented reveal a relatively small gap between employment salary rates of for teaching assistants, lecturers and associate professor, which is slightly higher for professors.

Thus, if the minimum employment salary for a teaching assistant only varies with 35 lei (from 1414 lei to 1449 lei) on the presented range of seniority installment, for professors the spread

is 27 times higher, 956 lei respectively. For lecturers, the difference is 255 lei and, for associate professors, 544 lei. A state of matter, we consider, a natural one, if we look at the situation through the need for performance in higher education and its correlation with a certain standard of teaching and research. The same gradualism stands if we refer to the maximum employment salary, the differences having values of 217 lei for a teaching assistant, 270 lei for a lecturer, 397 lei for assistant professors respectively and, approximately 3.85 times more than the latter (1527) for professors. We can not but sense the difference, obviously higher both under the ceiling aspect and compared to the level awarded to other academics' ranks.

Legislation distinguishes between education continuous seniority (both academics' work as well as auxiliary staff work, on the employment contract), effective education seniority (during the actual work of teaching), and recognized education seniority (the period in which the education employee coming from other sectors, provides evidence that he worked in the specialty stated on the diploma).

Seniority in education consists of actual length of service in education and recognized seniority in education.

Payment rates for hourly paid work are set by the university senate in accordance with Law no.1/2011 for teaching positions.

We present in the chart below the ratio of the average gross salary in the economy in 2011 and the minimum and maximum gross salaries of academics with 10-15 years of seniority of on different educational levels:

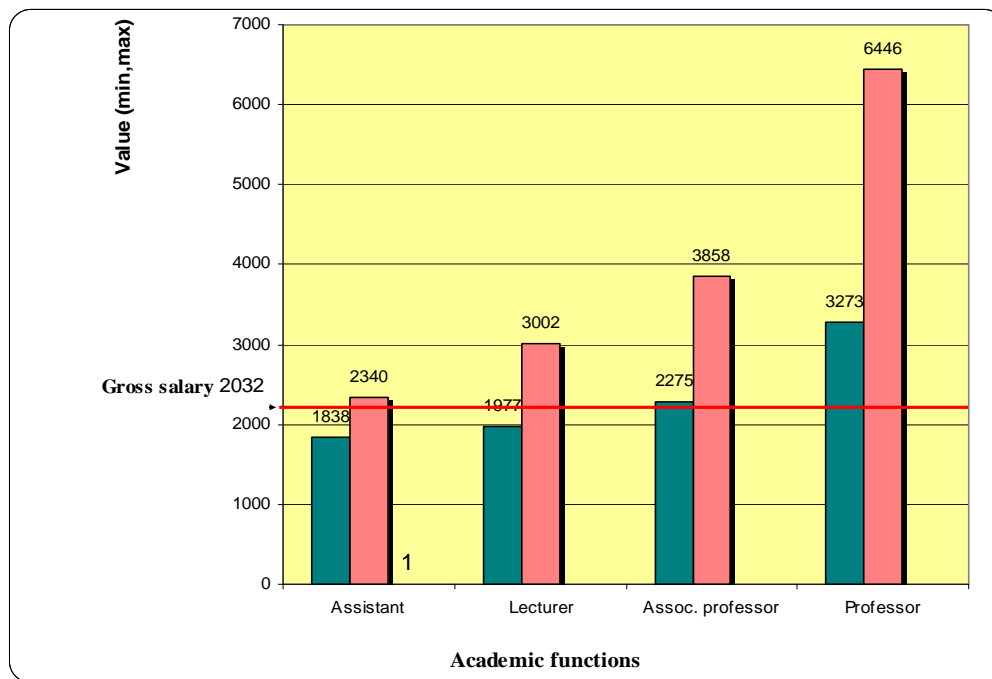


Chart no. 1. Gross salary in the economy and the minimum and maximum gross salaries of academics with 10-15 years of seniority in 2011

Obviously, given the previous considerations, we conclude that the average gross salary of university teachers are above the average gross earning in the country, except the minimum level for teaching assistants. Yet, the differences are not significant, if we compare them, for example, with those in financial intermediation and insurance, where the average was higher than 4950 lei (according to NIS).

According to GEO nr.19/2012 on approving some measures to recover wage cuts, starting with June 2012, base salaries of academics will be indexed by 8% and by 7.4% in December. This mitigation of the salary levels does not compensate for the increasing demands Romanian higher education is subject to.

B. Management allowance. In relation to the management function, this percentage varies between 15% - 20% for vice dean to 35% - 45% for rector. The vice rector's allowance is situated between 25% and 30%. For Dean the percentage is between 20% and 30%, the minimum of 20% also applying for department heads, where the maximum can reach 25%.

The percentage established by university decision-making forum within the limits specified above applies to minimum employment salary for a professor function, with seniority in education for over 40 years that is 3733 lei. The resulting amount is the basis for calculating other bonuses and salary rights.

An employee may provide services for an entity under a contract of full-time employment, part-time, permanent, casual or temporary.

Academics' component also includes management key-staff according to IPSAS 20, "Submission of information on Related Party".

Remuneration of management key-staff means any consideration or benefit for the services provided in their capacity of members of the governing body or employees of the university.

Management key-staff include all managers and university members who have responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the entity's activities. Management team has the authority and responsibility for planning and controlling university activities, managing resources and fulfilling its overall objectives.

For their services, management key-staff are remunerated on the basis of criteria established by the general legal framework, but also within each university. In this case, there is a risk that responsibility to enable this staff to influence the benefits that are generated by the university or affiliated parties.

B. Gradation of merit. The amount of the gradation of merit is calculated by applying 25% to the employment salary, which is the basis for calculating other bonuses and salary rights.

The gradation is granted for a period of 5 years for 16% of the existing teaching positions in the higher education institution.

In addition to basic salary, transitional compensations are granted (doctor's increase which represents 15% of the basic salary) and seniority increase (it varies between 5% and 25% of basic salary according to seniority installments). The two elements are part of the basic salary, but not a calculation basis for establishing of other benefits, allowances or other compensations.

From their own income, universities may establish differentiated salaries and this means an increase of up to 30% of employment salary.

These amounts, however, cannot constitute a calculating basis for establishing of other salary rights.

According to art. 163 of the Labor Code, the salary is confidential, universities having the obligation to take all necessary measures to ensure confidentiality.

The legal document on which the monthly salary of each member of teaching and research staff is based is the staffing schedule. Total working hours in an output standard for a research or teaching position is 40 hours per week.

Salary is paid in money at least once a month on the date set in the individual labor contract, the applicable collective labor contract or internal regulations if necessary.

For the deductions to be performed, the employee's debt must be due, liquid and exigible and found as such by a final and irrevocable court decision. The legislation has a certain order for deductions from salary, namely: a) maintenance obligations according to Family Code; contributions and taxes owed to the state; public property damage caused by illegal acts, other debts.

Also, to protect the employee, deductions from salary are capped, meaning that each month cannot exceed half the net salary.

Social security contributions are considered by the International Accounting Standards short-term benefits of employees. According to national legislation this category includes social security contributions (for pensions), contribution to the unemployment fund and social health insurance contribution. Perhaps this classification takes into account the potential benefits because, as defined, they are due in full within 12 months from service provision by the employee. Pensions, unemployment benefits, health care are owed to employees in exchange for social contributions, once they become legitimate.

It is true that insurance and social security institutions and legislators have not yet found a recognition method in accounting of these social benefits, based on commitment accounting principles.

Short-term compensated absences

According to IPSAS 25, an entity should recognize the expected cost of short-term benefits of the employee as compensated absences which can be:

- cumulative compensated absences when services provided by employees increase their right to future compensated absences;
- non-cumulative compensated absences when they occur.

The university may compensate the employees for absences due to rest leave, sick leave and temporary work disability, maternity or paternity leave, jury service or military service.

Compensated absences, which are cumulative, may be carried over and used in future periods if the right for the current period is not fully exercised. Cumulative compensated absences may be guaranteed (employees are entitled to cash payment for the right not exercised on the date of leaving the entity) or not guaranteed (employees are not entitled to cash payment for the right which was not exercised on the date of resignation). Obligation arises when employees render service that increases their right to future compensated absences. Obligation exists and is recognized, even if the compensated absences are not guaranteed, although the possibility that employees leave before exercising the cumulative right which was not guaranteed affects that duty assessment.

Academics receive paid annual leave, during university holidays, lasting at least 40 working days (Detailed Rule of October 7, 2011, on the rest leave performance of academics in education).

University Senate establishes the periods to perform the leave, according to education interest and the interest of that in question.

Legal leave may be canceled by the university management in appropriate cases, academics at issue being paid for the work. Outstanding leave can be done in the following university year holidays.

Programming the leave must be made in the first two months of the academic year by the Senate, in the best interest of education and of the involved academic.

In case the academic was in temporary work disability or unpaid leave for the entire university year he is not entitled to holiday for that academic year.

For the holiday period academics are entitled to an indemnity calculated according to the number of leave days, the daily average of the basic salary, seniority increase and, if necessary, management allowance, all taken together, corresponding to each calendar month in which leave days are performed.

Rest leave allowance is paid at least 5 days before leaving on holiday.

Carrying out the rest leave is interrupted in situations where the academics are on a temporary work disability leave or maternity leave, and if they are required to perform public duties, or for work emergencies or unforeseen service interests which require their presence in the university.

An entity should measure the expected cost of cumulative compensated absences as the additional amount estimates to pay for as a result of unused cumulative right at the reporting date.

Recall from holiday entails the obligation of the institution to pay for all the expenses of the academic and his family, needed in order to return to work and any possible damage sustained by them as a sequence to interrupting the rest leave.

Carrying out the rest leave days can be made after the situations generating interruptions have stopped, or on a date established by new programming.

Compensated absences which are not cumulative, are not carried over and expires when the right for the current period is not fully used and does not give employees entitlement to cash payment for the right which was not exercised on the date of leaving the entity. This is the case of sick leave, to the extent that unused past entitlement does not increase the future right of maternity or paternity leave.

By the collective labor contract applicable or by internal regulations there can be established a number of paid days off academics are entitled to and which are not included in the resting holiday period.

The entity recognizes no liability or expense until the absence date, because employee service does not increase the amount of the benefit.

Sick leave and social health insurance benefits to which policy holders are entitled, under the conditions of Government Emergency Ordinance no. 158/2005, are granted for temporary work disability, due to common illnesses or accidents outside work; illness prevention and rehabilitation of work capacity; for maternity, care for sick child, maternal risk.

If the temporary work incapacity was caused by work accident or an occupational disease, the insured are entitled to following benefits and services: for medical rehabilitation and recovery of working capacity; professional rehabilitation and retraining; temporary work disability, the temporary transition to another job and compensation for reduced working hours; compensation for achieving integrity, compensation for death; reimbursement of costs (Law no. 346 of 5 June 2002 on insurance against occupational accidents and occupational diseases, updated).

Unpaid leave. To solve personal situations or for studies, academics are entitled to unpaid leave. The internal regulations of the university establish the duration of these leaves. The National Education Act stipulates that an academic can take advantage of unpaid leave 3 years at most in a period of seven years, in case, on their own initiative, seek to specialize or participate in scientific research in the country or abroad.

Also, academics holding a teaching position in education may benefit from unpaid leave for one academic year, once every 10 years, with the approval of higher education institution, with the reservation of their position during that period. Booking period for the teaching position is considered seniority in education.

No monetary benefits (healthcare, housing, cars and free or subsidized goods and services) for current employees.

Education staff benefit from medical assistance in medical and psychological clinics, in dispensaries and hospitals, established by a protocol between the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Health.

Interrupting teaching activity by a parent, with the reservation of the position can be done for child care, the child aged up to 2 years old, respectively 3 years old for children with disabilities, as required by law.

Higher education institutions can provide, entirely or partly, from their own sources, the transport and accommodation for academics who reside elsewhere.

Academics with exceptional performance are supported through grants for studies or research at universities in the country or abroad, awarded on a competitive basis, and for the conduct and completion of research;

Dismissal of academics can not be disposed over the period of: temporary work disability; suspended activity due to the imposition of quarantine; the employed woman is pregnant, provided that the employer became aware of this issue before the redundancy decision; maternity and parental leave.

Also, exercising an eligible function in a trade union body (except for serious or repeated disciplinary offenses) and performing the rest leave eliminate the risk of dismissal.

We ascertain the existence of various forms of short-term benefits for academics. One part is aimed at the entire teaching staff, another, justified, (such as gradations of merit) a relatively small percentage of these.

State higher education institutions are financed from funds allocated from state budget (basic, complementary and supplementary financing), outside the budget income and from other sources.

The Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports, on institutional contract basis, allocate money for basic financing, between whose destinations financial rewards for academics are also found. These are also provided from universities' own revenues.

The salary funds remaining at the end of the year from the implementation of the budget provided in the institutional contract and out of budget revenues remain at university's disposal and are included in its budget, with no payments to the state budget and without affecting the state budget allocations for university staff for the following year.

Accounting information on short-term benefits of academics

In terms of investigating accounting method, short-term benefits do not raise difficulties. Thus, if an academic has rendered service to a university during an accounting period, the latter should recognize the undiscounted amount of short-term benefits of the providers to be paid in exchange for service.

Specifically, a liability and an expense are recognized. If the amount paid exceeds the outdated value of benefits, the entity should recognize that excess as an asset to the extent that the prepayment to determine, for example, the reduction of future payments or cash repayment;

Accounting the short-term employee benefits is generally made through the direct method because actuarial assumptions are not required to measure the obligation or cost and there is no possibility of actuarial gains and losses since the due term of these debts.

In case of non cumulative compensated absences (sick leave), universities recognize the expected cost of short-term benefits of academics, when they occur. These are not reported in the event that they were not used in the current period.

Presenting information regarding the remuneration of management key-staff and their families have the aim to provide insurance on the fact that appropriate minimum levels of transparency are applied to their salaries.

National accounting regulations do not stipulate submission of information on the parts related to universities or other public institutions.

If non-monetary remuneration that can be reliably measured was included in the aggregate value of the remuneration of management key-staff in that period, in the notes to the accounts the presentation of the non-monetary remuneration base will be made.

The same authors consider internal motivation particularly important to stimulate professionalism, responsibility and social relations, an important source of job satisfaction. External motivation generates individualism, lack of confidence, passive attitude at work, being recommended a smaller proportion of it in relation to internal motivation.

Having as reference the equity theory (Nicolescu et.al, 2004), the bidders of short-term benefits in university system should be aware of the following:

- academics' motivation is affected by both generalization and ignorance of awards;

- academics always make comparisons on the equity motivation, which influences their behavior;

- to establish and maintain a fair system of motivation, it is necessary to constantly review the goals, the required efforts and the awards /benefits provided to each academic.

We notice that the wording "employee benefits" is not consistent with the accounting entity principle, according to which representations must be circumscribed to the accounting entity with a financial position that makes financial performance. If we refer to academics, we naturally speak of benefits, but if we consider the legal status as a factor that "requires" producing accounting information, then a university optics consideration is needed, in terms of which they represent current obligations, arising from the intellectual capital to be settled when they become due.

Conclusions

Human resources are important to achieve a high level of performance and competitiveness in every field of activity.

Linking short-term benefits to the performance level should follow the evaluation of academics' real performances and their potential; the progress recorded since the previous assessment, establishing training requirements, etc.

The issue addressed in this paper is sensitive and likely to generate much debate. Without taking the risk to issue final verdicts, because "we perceive reality through the distorted lens of our own attitudes and values", we conclude the following:

- the most important obligation of universities in relation to the academics is to pay them;
- material rewarding is ahead the salary, as constituting an integrated system that establishes for what and how academics are paid;

- designing a short-term benefits plan must take into account criteria such as: accuracy of payment, that means payment of salaries and other "additions" on a competitive basis, linking rewards to academics' performance educational institutions targets, etc.

- the Romanian labor legislation does not identify separately short-term benefits as a form of reward of human resources, including academics

- national accounting legislation addresses rather synthetically and pragmatically the issue of employee benefits, aspect that induces the idea that accounting technique is still dominating the fight with professional judgment and the need to consider legal pattern an indicator and not something imposed or limiting;

- the legal framework on short-term benefits granted to employees makes way for performance-based pay system, by having up to 30% margin by which employment salaries can increase, and the existence of minimum and maximum limits for the basic salary;

- although the way of accounting recognition of short-term benefits related to academics is simple, we consider that in financial situations, the information presented is likely to completions in terms of accounting policies adopted by institutions, preference for a certain level of salary, their justification, the structure of non-monetary benefits, related party transactions, etc.

Knowing the range of short-term benefits granted to academics from state universities, of the financing and accounting recognition method, creates premises for their identification in other socio-professional categories as well, which operate in public and / or private environment, making explicit comparisons etc., in other words, the development of a substantial part of social accounting.

We believe that if the academics are given opportunities that they can reach and not only illusions, they will be actively involved in achieving the education system objectives. The problem is complex because the system of short-term benefits must meet a variety of individual values that change over time, represents a significant cost to universities, which is assigned on a legal provision basis, a mechanism in which monetary benefits are supplemented by a number of competing factors such as appreciation of others, career, ambition, work stability, desire of self-affirmation.

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