

# PERFORMANCE IN ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT

Ion PETRESCU\*

**Abstract:** *The academician-manager is a path breaker in his own way. He has options, he expresses his points of view, affirms himself, wants to mean something both for him and for the academy he is leading. He thinks, analyzes, he is careful around him, he searches for paths and he is never satisfied with what he conceived and accomplished. On the well-trodden path by his predecessors, he tries to make his own path, at the base of which he places fragments of performance.*

*Being aware that nothing is built as heavily and destroyed as easily as performance in academic management, the academician-manager considers it as the biggest asset of the academy, he builds it on confidence and good faith, using it coherently and continuously.*

*The preoccupation became a tradition, accompanied by concrete actions and methods, rules, by monitoring the results mirrored in the performance level and state of manager and academic personnel satisfaction, as participants to ensuring performance and its management.*

**Keywords:** *performance, academic management, inciting criteria, approach solutions, performance price.*

**JEL Classification:** *M12*

## 1. Introduction

Performance is treated as a state of competitiveness reached by the level of efficacy and scientific productivity which ensures its sustainable presence on the academic market, in the conditions of multiform and

---

\* Prof. Dr. Dr. H. C., “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu

complex interaction of many factors (Petrescu, I., C. Barbuand & Cruceru, N., 2011, p.183).

Reaching the expected objectives is a necessity and definitional component in academic management and especially in the performance that must always accompany it.

The points of view of academy specialists are presented below and they express the multidimensional relations of performance, their place and role in academic management.

## ***2. Interpretation and definition context***

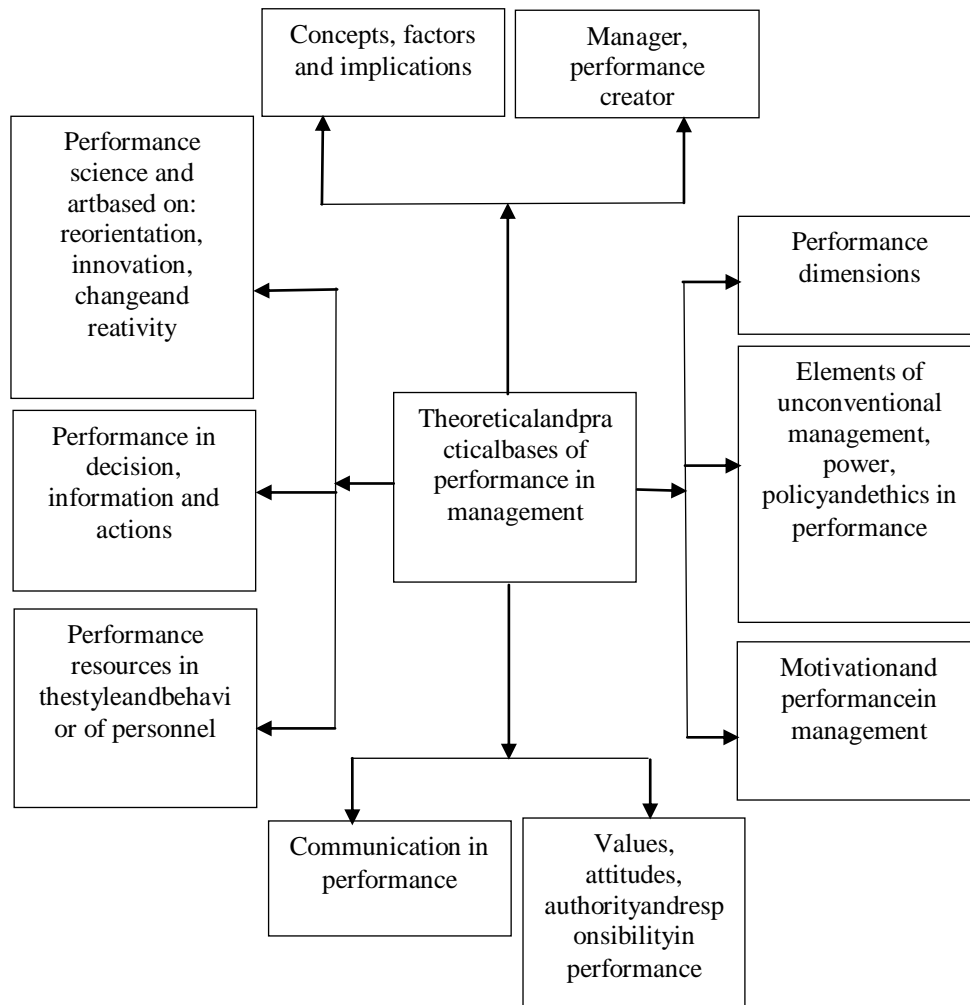
Specialists emphasize that performance is often invoked in the academic context that incites to efficacy, just like in the case of other terms associated with the exigency to results or rigor. The idea that the best can lead the academy by their thinking to the renovation of their management mode as the only way to position themselves higher in the competition tries to be accredited.

In reality, performance is a complex notion (fig.1.) which encompasses the meanings generated by general and specific opportunities.

The performance process, accompanied by a wide range of potential effects presented as competitiveness, permanent adaptation to the environment, social and political internal balances or financial profitability, is taken into account. We can find the performance-specific energy in these, able to determine modifications and changes that create obsolete rules and behaviors. New conceptions appear, put into practice by the structural flexibility of organizational actors of changes. As it is normal, the performance components set the managerial links in action.

In order to achieve performance, it is necessary to understand the entire evolution process, which involves measurement instruments and modes of action.

There are cases when, for scientific judgment reasons, it is tried to ensure vigor in defining the notion, attempting as many opinions as possible. There are situations when the performance idea remains imprecise with respect to the answer to its functions. It is even claimed that performance is conceptualized by opposing terms with adjacent meanings.



*Fig. 1. General framework for approaching performance in management*

There is also the opinion that the organizational actors interpret performance as heterogeneous stake, meaning that the academy is efficient not only by reference to its environment, but also by the movements and complexity generated by strategy (Dragomir, C., Pânzaru, S., 2014, pp. 43-54).

Treating performance as the result of the effort made for achieving the academy objectives, motivated by a complex process, seemed to us closer to the academic reality and scientific approach. It is associated by objectives related to the result obtained by the level of efficacy and productivity which provides it the sustainable presence on the academic market.

### ***3. Exigencies and objectives***

Regardless of the general conception, the way of thinking and methods used, academic management takes into account some exigencies that ensure the achievement of high and sustainable performance. The following are considered more significant:

- (1) Raising the professional and competence level and creating the adequate framework in this way for formulating and cultivating performers, efficient managers;
- (2) Ensuring the stability of labor force and natural and moral engagement of personnel, as a way of developing the interest in taking part in the process of performance growth;
- (3) Maintaining and developing the collaboration climate between the manager and team and academic personnel, of the performance-participative environment;
- (4) Placing success in the conditions of scientific, technical and economic progress, able to encourage creativity, innovation, change and manager and academy performance in this way;
- (5) Increasing the marketing role in ensuring performance by developing the competitive environment in design, production stages and in the commercial area and international academic relations and rigorous knowledge of academic market requirements.

The objectives are quantitative and qualitative characteristics of academy goals. In its turn, performance is the fundamental goal of the academy. By definition, the objective is the desideratum to be reached in order to achieve the goal. Therefore, it results that all performance objectives must derive from the wish to provide academy competitiveness. The objective can be quantitative or qualitative and it usually has the following structure (Muntean, S. N. & W. H. Fleischer, 2014, pp. 31-36):

- its characteristic, consisting in the objective description;
- indicator, marking the value to be reached;

- trend, showing how the evolution will be.

The requirements related to the performance objectives:

- to be formulated efficiently, to be concrete and well delimited;
- to allow their evaluation by imposed criteria, even if they are qualitative;
- to be according to the academy possibilities and restrictions;
- to be realistic in the probability plan of their achievement;
- to ensure structural compatibility and continuance in time.

The performance objectives are established based on academy strategy. The program for solving the objectives and the instruments that can be used for this purpose is established based on the objectives.

As a rule, the following are established:

- strategic objectives (increase of creativity, education and performance, technical level of products and services, sensitization of personnel on performances);
- tactical objectives/reduction of performance cost, communication or teamwork encouragement, knowing and influencing partners of academic relations.

The academy specialists recommend to follow some rules for establishing objectives, which we present below:

- (1) performance objectives are established according to the general academy strategy and performance strategy;
- (2) defining methodology for rationally establishing the general and derived objectives;
- (3) mentioning the requirements of collaborators, with external demand and internal necessity division;
- (4) materializing actions based on realistically fixed basis of objectives;
- (5) ensuring the top-bottom diffusion of objectives by using the operative method “management based on objectives”, which requires that everyone knows its own objectives and create the ones of subordinates;
- (6) carrying out the targeted development, starting from the need of academic services beneficiaries.

#### ***4. Performance, as philosophy of academic management***

In academic management, performance philosophy is created as included theory of academy, which allows establishing the objectives and

their achievement model. It includes general principles and behavior of all factors that must conform to these principles for action uniformity.

The elements of performance philosophy are found at the strategic levels of academy. Ensuring the performance, being a transfunctional activity at its level, can define the performance philosophy. To be noted that strategy definition for performance can be carried out correctly, by only understanding its place within performance philosophy.

Implementation of performance philosophy requires the adoption of specific attitudes, creation of new manager and team competences and their use of adequate instruments: quick beginning of action, taking into account the opinion of beneficiaries, favoring of innovative spirit, inoculation of motivation for performance, perseverance, combination of flexibility with rigor (Peters, Th. J. and R. H. Waterman Jr., 2011).

Performance philosophy requires to have the mutual appreciation relation between the manager, team and executants, which starts from mutual trust and to develop it through communication and participation to the academic managerial process.

Performance philosophy is also based on manager orientations and competences: continuous improvement of academic process; attention granted to beneficiaries; improvement of organizational methods and structures; stimulation of the satisfaction feeling at employees generated by their participation to performance achievement. The manager needs to learn to listen, know how to innovate and learn how to work with the personnel in order to mobilize it to achieve performance.

## ***5. Human action and academic performance***

Divergent points of view on concepts, people and organizational behaviors are not only between academies, but also within the same academies. Essential modes of differentiating topics on academy appear in this way. Each point of view influences the mode in which social performances and participation to academic performances are presented, in contexts with their own singularity. From this point of view, we can distinguish *three levels of interpretation* which are complementary and not contradictory.

Human sources, reduced to the factor of scientific creativity, represent only a partner of collective action, subject effectively to the indirect control by supervision, contract or ideology. Moreover, it also represents an asset

with the value characterized by the assembly of skills, knowledge and principles. In this vision, social dysfunctions are not perceived as change indicators but as risks that must be prevented or anticipated, in other words as the competence loss. There are also points of view that claim the idea that specific effects of innovation and stimulation are produced in this framework. Direct references to the research-development are made.

According to the *interactional vision*, academicians and personnel are the actors involved who regulate their contributions and recognition they deserve. At the same time, they take part in establishing action rules as conventions, collective regulations, etc. Each academician has an individual and collective strategy, depending on its competences for intervening in solving specific, technical or operational problems of the academy. If academic performance passes to the control in relation to commitments and research capacities, it compels to take into account the behavior subtleties and its reaction potential. It explains in this way the appearance of complex interpretative models, such as the delicate relations between motivation and performance.

The performance factors, use of academicians passes also through *organizational incitations*. They fall within the strategic context with complex components. It finds its meaning only in the presence of competent actors, who are capable to operationalize their involvement. Competence to which we refer requires to have attached a certain potential that gives it the possibility to take the action necessary for evolution. Potential is a temporary, global and conceptual judgment on the level and style of responsibility that an academician can reach within a determinant temporal horizon. Because it is difficult to make considerations on the future of the state, evaluators often use experience, approvals of colleagues or experts, collective judgments, transfer of evaluation task on the one in question (Dery, R.,1990, p. 124).

In the academy, social life cannot be reduced to the assembly of certain conducts. There are organizational and institutional frameworks that serve as support for collective action. Systemic regulations are important in operational (synergic) processes that are symbolized or normative (contractual rules, models of action, organizational cultures) processes. The management situations, as emphasized by Favereanu (1993, p.12), show the recognition of collective attitude to adaptation. These skills correspond to the academy management. They involve organizational approaches that use

mechanisms for identifying or sharing values by reference to individual competences or academic provisions. The effects of these performance factors are still partial, but also the means to recognize actual limits that impose their effects (fig. 2.).

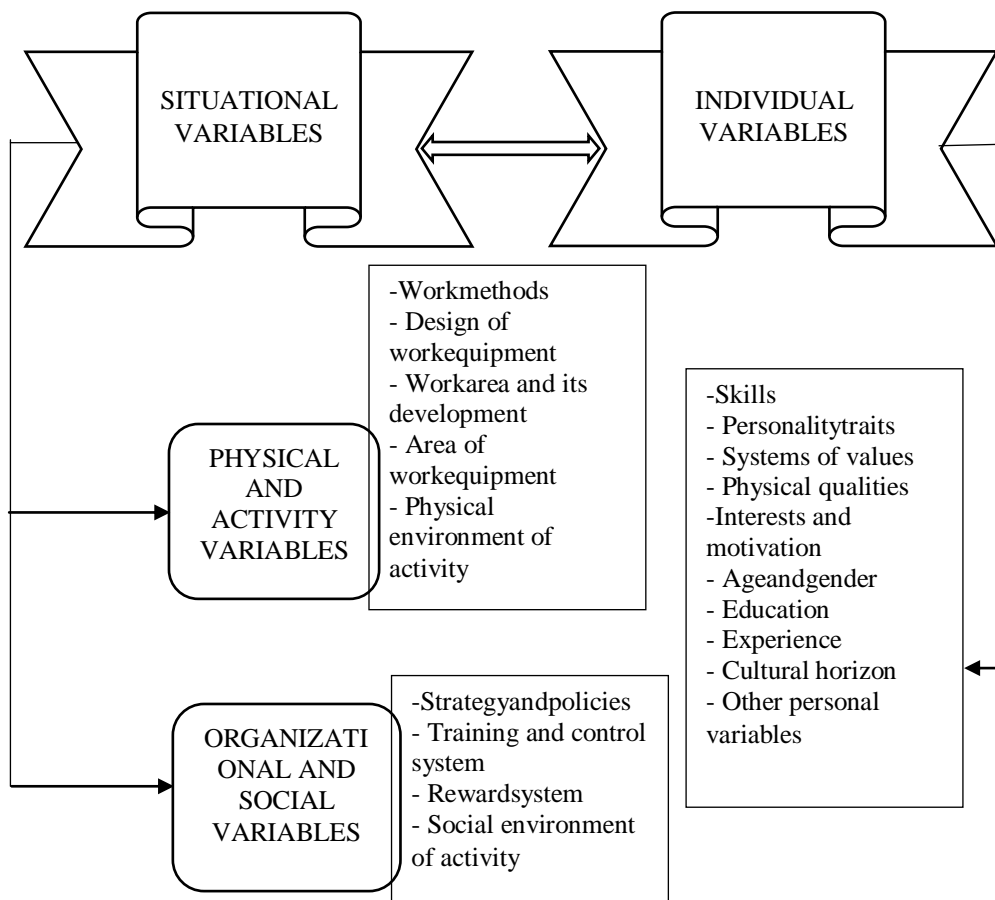


Fig. 2. Interactional factors in affirming competence and performance in academic management

Let's start with a few *elements of organizational logic* in performance optics. It is absurd to mobilize competent people with less efficient equipment. In a similar manner, they cannot be involved in a hostile, deficient or less dynamic organization.



As J. F. Amandienand G. Groux (1998, pag. 8) claim, the elaboration of rules can also contribute to the definition of performance notion, to the same extent as research practices. These rules are public and private. They also apply to the academy management of human resources.

It is necessary to start from the universal reality on essential characteristic of resources of being limited when approaching the performance phenomenon itself, resulting the logic consequence which requires that performance approach refers mainly to the analysis and comparison of result with the effort made for obtaining it.

The use of this approach mode in analyzing human resources from the academy leads to the obligation to examine these as human resources, respectively as the fundamental component in the process of scientific creation and in no case only as sources of costs. And the more so as each academy, each manager mainly aims to maximize the performance of human resources in relation to efforts made.

## ***6. Management of academic performance***

Management of academic performance is a major area at theoretical level, by direct reference to achieving academic, economic and social performance, being the most important factor.

In a general approach, management of academic performance refers to both spheres of human activity – productive and non-productive -, to the entire social and economic life and targets the actions for achieving maximum effect with minimum effort, costs and time.

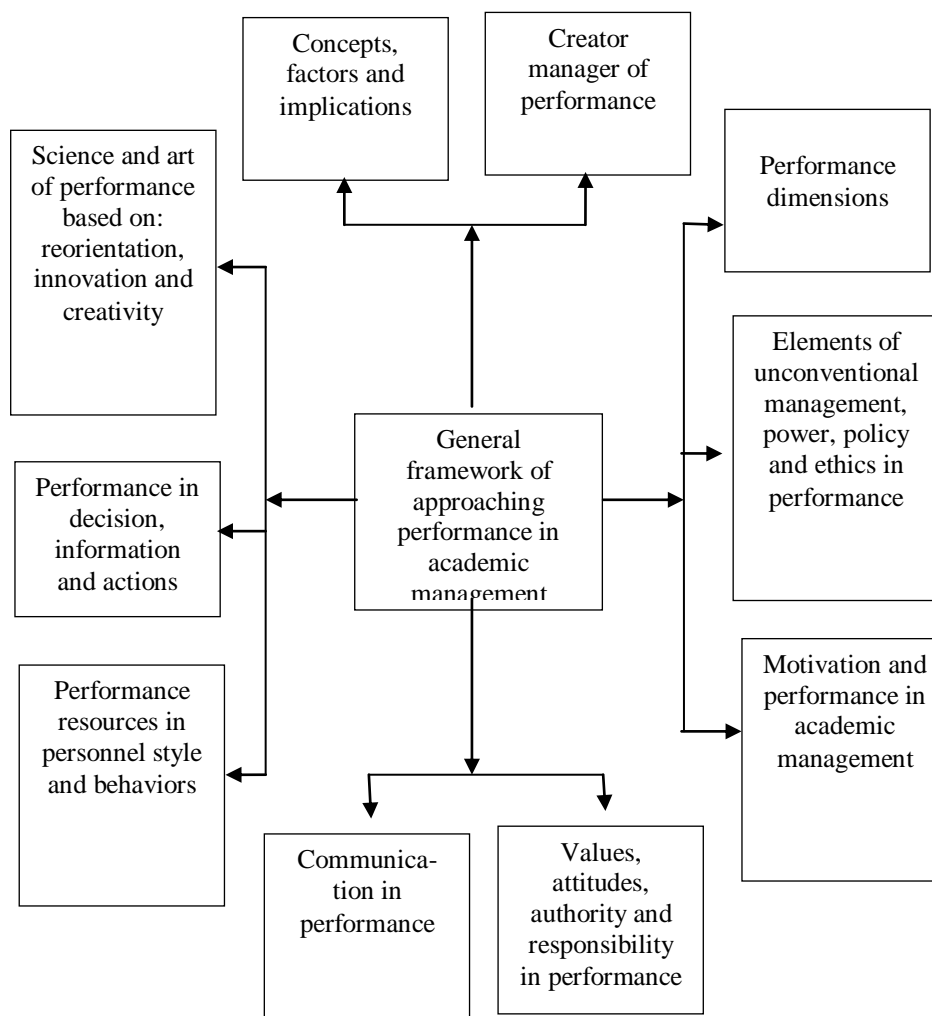
The academy specialists in the area define performance management as the process of achieving great successful goals by using and coordinating intellectual, technical and financial resources in the given environment context.

Management of academic performance studies the management processes and relations in order to discover the regularities and principles governed, to conceive new systems, methods, techniques and modes that ensure the increase of academic performance.

The management process of academic performance consists in the assembly of stages and phases which determine their objectives and those of incorporated subsystems, resources and work processes necessary for their achievement and execution, by which the personnel work is integrated and controlled, using a complex of methods and techniques for fulfilling the academy rationale as efficient as possible.

The relations of academic performance management are relations established between the system components and between these and components of other systems, in the processes of foreseeing, organizing, coordinating, training, controlling and evaluating the efficient activities of the academy.

The general framework of approaching theoretical and practical bases of performance in academic management is presented in fig. 3.



*Fig. 3. Theoretical and practical bases of performance in academic management*

For the academy, performance management is a major area not only at theoretical but also practical level. This significance is emphasized by important progresses recorded until now, as well as future ones, the only capable to support academic, technical, technological, psycho-social and legal modifications occurred in the last years. By direct reference to obtaining academic and social performance, management is the most important factor.

This is deeply realized by managers, academicians, economists, engineers, jurists, politologists, psychologists, sociologists who enter into and capitalize on the concept and practice significance of performance management in the complex process of relations between the academy at national level and in international academic relations, deeply influenced by the strong environment which multiplies and complicates them.

The creation of performance management was influenced by an important number of factors. They increase their number along with the academy development, which complicates the monitoring of their effects for defining the area specific responsibilities.

The traditional concept of academic performance management is associated with the existence of distinctive and special factors or services which grant a certain statute to the creator of user.

Management of academic performance treats analytically the relations between costs, efficiency and risks of alternative means of action suggested for achieving the goals. Analysis in management of academic performance is complemented by more options of dividing admissible declared solutions.

The efficient attribute found in management of academic performance must be looked at with nuanced acceptation, by taking into account indirect effects, time factor and “social costs”. The principle of minimum action “desired goal with minimum effort” suggests one of the fundamental questions in the definition of academic performance management. In systemic vision, we can talk about objectivity degrees in performance management, depending on the degree of goal reflection of objective functional needs of the system.

Management of academic performance targets the useful physical, value and social effects from social point of view, obtained in the activity. Therefore, the systemic approach of academic performance management is important theoretically and practically. Practically, all managerial activities

and processes consume work, material and financial resources and they must be analyzed through the prism of academic performance in order to achieve the expected results.

### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, we formulate the following conclusions:

1. The academician-manager, his team and academic body lead the academy way, based on which they place performance fragments.
2. Academic performance is treated as competitiveness state, reached by efficacy and scientific productivity level, which provide its sustainable presence on academic market.
3. In academic management, performance philosophy is the implied academy theory, which allows to establish the objectives and the mode of achieving them.
4. Academic performance is carried out under human action which is the scientific creativity factor.
5. Management of academic performance is the major area at theoretical level, by direct reference to achieving academic, economic and social performance, process in which management is the most important factor.

### **References**

- Amandien, J. F., Groux, G., (1990). *Productions de regles, relation d'emploi et performance économique*. Economica Publishing House, Paris, p. 8.
- Dery, R., *De l'information à l'argumentation*, în: I. F. Chanlat, L'individudans l'organization, EskaPublishing House, p. 124.
- Dragomir, C., Pânzaru, S., (2014). Managerial performance. *Review of General Management*, 19(1), pp. 43-54.
- Favereanu, O., (1993), *Objects de gestion et objet de la theorieeconomique*. RFG, November – December, p. 12.
- Muntean, S. N. & Fleischer, W. H., (2014). *Locul și rolul performanței în cadrul organizațiilor moderne*. In: Papers of the Sibiu Alma Mater University Conference, Sibiu, vol. 2, pp. 31-36.
- Peters, Th. J. & R. H. Waterman Jr., (2011). *În căutarea excelenței*, Bucharest: Meteor Press.
- Petrescu, I., Barbu, C. and, Cruceru, N., (2011). *Management de mediu*. Craiova: Universitară Publishing House, p.183.