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**THE EFFECTS OF INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION ON
INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES OF BUSINESS SCHOOLS**

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SUMMARY

The effects of international accreditation on institutional changes of business schools

Among the most important events in management education over the last 20 years, the advent of international accreditation has been top-ranked in the USA, Western Europe and Asia. At the same time, quality management in higher education has rarely been a subject of research, especially in the field of growing international accreditation practices that have emerged globally. The demand for international accreditation in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) appeared in the first decade of the 21st century. There is little knowledge about this phenomenon, and, therefore, it is a highly relevant requirement for a quality management reality check in this market. In this dissertation, we analyse five cases of public and private business schools (B-schools) with international accreditation. It covers the total population of B-schools with institutional top-accreditations in this region which is itself an original contribution. Thus, the units of analysis are B-schools with American AACSB, Western-European EQUIS and Central-Eastern European CEEMAN accreditations. An explanatory case study design is employed to explain the effects of accreditation on the institutional change of B-schools. The focus is to analyse change surrounding the implementation of accreditation with the following research questions:

RQ1: How do B-schools in CEE perceive international accreditation?

RQ2: Why do B-schools in the East seek international accreditation from the West?

RQ3: What are organisational changes as a result of accreditation in CEE?

RQ4: What are the effects of international accreditation in B-schools of CEE?

RQ5: Do B-schools with accreditation send any signals to their stakeholders?

RQ6: What is an institutional change in B-schools that takes place in CEE?

These research questions are translated into corresponding propositions. The respondents are divided into four groups. These groups include: 1. the internal members of B-schools (Deans, accreditation managers, faculty members, administrators); and the representatives of external stakeholders: 2. Competitors; 3. Employers; 4. Accreditation Bodies. We add the opinions of each representative from the listed accreditations about this process in the CEE region. Our approach involves in-depth explanatory case studies of five B-schools from four CEE countries with multiple sources of evidence. Data are collected from semi-structured interviews, a questionnaire and documents to meet validity test. The analysis is conducted at various levels: individual, level of organisation, representatives of the countries' business-education, and the region of CEE. The goal is to bring a legitimate value-added theoretical and practical contributions to the debate on quality and accreditation of management education by examining cases with a sample of the whole population of B-schools of CEE. For the first time, the analysis is implemented in B-schools with three quality differentiators (AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN). The institutional theory is the theoretical framework that explains an institutional change in B-schools as a result of accreditations. The findings reveal that B-schools introduce accreditation due to the institutional forces that are characterised by five types of isomorphic changes: coercive, normative, mimetic and information asymmetry and bandwagon changes with their corresponding effects. The theory advancement is suggested through the dynamics of five organisational changes with their effects and development of cross-national comparison of B-schools' Map of the CEE region and Russia (CIS, the Commonwealth of Independent States). The future research directions include the proposed theoretical framework for future studies of global accreditations in different regions of the world in B-schools, organisations, firms and corporations.

Keywords: accreditation, business schools, effects, institutional change, organisational changes, isomorphism, Central and Eastern Europe, AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN

POVZETEK

Vplivi mednarodne akreditacije na institucionalne spremembe v poslovnih šolah

Med najpomembnejšimi dogodki v poslovnem izobraževanju v zadnjih 20. letih je pojav mednarodna akreditacije, ki se uvršča med najvišje rangirane v ZDA, Zahodni Evropi in Aziji. Kljub temu so prakse obvladovanja kakovosti v visokem šolstvu le redko predmet raziskav, predvsem na področju rastočih mednarodnih akreditacij, ki so se pojavile po vsem svetu. Povpraševanje po mednarodnih akreditacijah v Srednji in Vzhodni Evropi (v nadaljnjem besedilu: SVE) se je pojavilo v prvem desetletju 21. stoletja. Malo je znanega o tem pojavu in zato je zelo pomembno preveriti njegovo resnično stanje in učinke. V doktorski disertaciji smo analizirali pet primerov poslovnih šol (v nadaljnjem besedilu: P-šole) z mednarodno akreditacijo. Zajeli smo celotno populacijo P-šol z institucionalnimi top-akreditacijami v regiji SVE, kar predstavlja izviren prispevek disertacije. Enote analize so javne in zasebne P-šole z ameriško AACSB, zahodno-evropsko EQUIS in srednje-vzhodno evropsko CEEMAN akreditacijo. Kot metodo smo uporabili pojasnjevalno raziskovalno študijo primera in tako razložili učinke akreditacije na institucionalne spremembe P-šol. Poudarek je na analizi sprememb, ki nastanejo kot posledica vpeljave akreditacije, z naslednjimi raziskovalnimi vprašanji (RV):

RV1: Kako poslovne šole iz SVE zaznavajo mednarodno akreditacijo?

RV2: Zakaj poslovne šole iz Vzhoda iščejo zahodno mednarodno akreditacijo?

RV3: Kakšne so organizacijske spremembe zaradi akreditacije v poslovnih šolah iz SVE?

RV4: Kakšni so učinki mednarodnega akreditacijskega postopka v poslovnih šolah iz SVE?

RV5: Ali poslovne šole z akreditacijo pošiljajo kakšne signale svojim interesnim skupinam?

RV6: Kakšna institucionalna sprememba se dogaja v poslovnih šolah iz SVE?

Ta raziskovalna vprašanja so prevedena v ustrezne propozicije. Anketiranci so razdeljeni v štiri skupine. Te skupine vključujejo: 1. notranje člane P-šol (dekane, vodje akreditacij, pedagoge in raziskovalce, ter administracijo); in predstavnike zunanjih interesnih skupin: 2. konkurente; 3. delodajalce; 4. akreditacijske organe. Dodali smo mnenja predstavnikov akreditacijskih organov o postopku akreditacije v regiji SVE kot celote. Metoda dela vključuje poglobljene pojasnjevalne študije primerov petih P-šol iz štirih držav SVE, uporabljenih je več različnih vrst virov. Podatki so zbrani iz polstrukturiranih intervjujev, vprašalnikov in dokumentov, na način, da izpolnjujejo preizkus veljavnosti. Analiza poteka na različnih ravneh - na ravni posameznika, organizacije, države in celotne SVE regije. Cilj disertacije je, da legitimno prikaže dodano vrednost teoretičnih in praktičnih prispevkov k razpravi o kakovosti in akreditaciji na področju poslovnega izobraževanja. V disertaciji so prvič predstavljeni rezultati raziskave, ki zajema tri različne institucionalne akreditacije (AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN) ter preučuje celotno populacijo P-šol SVE, ki so imele v času raziskave mednarodno akreditacijo. V disertaciji uporabimo institucionalno teorijo kot teoretični okvir, ki pojasnjuje institucionalne spremembe kot posledico uvedbe akreditacij v P-šolah. Rezultati raziskave kažejo, da P-šole uvajajo akreditacijo zaradi institucionalnih silnic, ki se kažejo v petih izomorfnih spremembah in njihovih učinkih: prisilnih, normativnih in mimetičnih spremembah, ter v spremembah zaradi zmanjševanja asimetrije informacij in 'sledenja večini' (angl. bandwagon). Predlagamo nadaljnji razvoj teorije z vključitvijo dinamike petih organizacijskih sprememb in njihovih učinkov ter z upoštevanjem zemljevida razlik med P-šolami, ki smo ga razvili v disertaciji. Napotki za prihodnje raziskave vključujejo aplikacijo predlaganega teoretičnega okvira v prihodnjih študijah akreditacijskih učinkov v P-šolah ter v podjetjih in drugih organizacijah.

Ključne besede: akreditacija, poslovne šole, učinki, institucionalne in organizacijske spremembe, izomorfizem, Srednja in Vzhodna Evropa (SVE), AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose and objectives	5
Contents outline.....	7
1. LITERATURE REVIEW	10
1.1 Global Forces in Business education	10
1.1.1 Forces of Accreditation	15
1.1.2 B-schools in Central and Eastern Europe	21
1.2 Accreditation: Change for Quality or Legitimacy	28
1.3 Accreditation Effects	38
1.3.1 AACSB effects	38
1.3.2 EQUIS effects.....	41
1.3.3 CEEMAN effects.....	46
1.4 Institutional Theory Framework: Relevance	48
1.4.1 Organisational and Institutional Change	49
1.4.2 Relevance of Institutional Theory	53
1.4.2.1 Isomorphic effects	56
1.4.2.2 Additional effects: Information asymmetry and bandwagon	60
1.4.2.3 Conceptual Framework and Propositions.....	67
2. METHODOLOGY	69
2.1 Case studies research	69
2.2 Research setting.....	74
3. CASE STUDIES RESULTS	78
3.1 Case study 1: Faculty of Economics, Ljubljana University, FELU	80
3.1.1 Results of B-school FELU.....	81
3.1.2 Results on Competitors	90
3.1.3 Findings from Employers	93
3.2 Case study 2: Kozminski University (KU).....	95
3.2.1 Results of B-school KU	96
3.2.2 Results on Competitors.....	103
3.2.3 Results of Employers.....	107
3.3 Case study 3: Zagreb School of Economics&Management, ZSEM	108
3.3.1 Results of B-school.....	109
3.3.2 Results on Competitors.....	115
3.3.3 Results of Employers.....	117
3.4 Case study 4: Graduate School of Management, GSOM.....	119
3.4.1 Results of B-school.....	121
3.4.2 Results on Competitors.....	126
3.4.3 Results of Employers.....	127
3.5 Case study 5: International Management Institute, IMISP.....	129

3.5.1 Results of B-school	130
3.5.2 Results on Competitors	134
3.5.3 Results of Employers	135
3.6 Perception of Accreditation Bodies on CEE B-schools	138
3.6.1 Effects of Accreditations	139
3.6.2 Change of B-schools with Accreditation	143
4. DISCUSSION	146
4.1 Forces for Accreditation.....	148
4.2 Change and Effects.....	162
4.3 Signalling and Institutional Change	169
CONCLUSION.....	177
REFERENCES	183

APPENDICES

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. AACSB-accredited schools (2015)	13
Figure 2. AACSB, EQUIS, AMBA accreditation (2015)	13
Figure 3. Number of all institutionally accredited B-schools	14
Figure 4. Hofstede 6-D Model Comparison b/n Slovenia, Croatia, Poland and Russia.....	24
Figure 5. A conceptual framework for Institutional Accreditation	67
Figure 6. Structure of B-schools with the types of informants	77
Figure 7. Structure of informants in B-schools and among stakeholders	77
Figure 8. Effects of EQUIS accreditation on FELU	162
Figure 9. Effects of EQUIS accreditation on GSOM.....	163
Figure 10. Effects of AACSB on private school (KU)	165
Figure 11. Effects of AACSB on private school (ZSEM).....	165
Figure 12. Institutional Accreditation's Framework in Organisations.....	147

LIST OB TABLES

Table 1. Paradigm Toward Theory Building (TB)	4
Table 2. Challenge to theory and implications	14
Table 3. AACSB educational members by country of CEE region (2015).....	20
Table 4. Map of differences for B-schools	27
Table 5. Types of Quality	28
Table 6. Models and Processes for Quality assurance	29
Table 7. Quality assurance (QA) and quality enhancement (QE)	30
Table 8. Accreditation of Business schools (BS): Gaps	32
Table 9. Viewpoints of the top-Accreditation bodies on its Value and Benefits	34
Table 10. Summary Table of Reviewed Dissertations on Accreditation of B-schools	36
Table 11. Effects, standards and value of AACSB.....	40
Table 12. Effects, standards and value of EQUIS	43
Table 13. Comparison of AACSB and EQUIS	45
Table 14. Effects, standards and value of CEEMAN	47
Table 15. Definition of Institutional Change with interesting insights	53
Table 16. Concepts from institutional theory	55
Table 17. Institutional isomorphic change	57
Table 18. Review of Isomorphic change	65
Table 19. Types of organisational change with its effects	66
Table 20. Four tests relevant to case studies	71
Table 21. Three approaches to explanatory case studies.....	72
Table 22. Quality control in study	74
Table 23. General Profiles of B-schools with accreditation.....	75
Table 24. Interviews with Stakeholders of B-schools	75
Table 25. Interviews with the informants of five B-schools	76
Table 26. The number of Tertiary Education Students (thousands) in 2013, CEE	78
Table 27. Profiles of B-schools with Accreditations in CEE, 2013-14.....	80
Table 28. Key periods of the FELU	81
Table 29a. Values of EQUIS Accreditation in FELU	82
Table 29b. Values of AACSB accreditation in FELU.....	82
Table 30a. Pros and Cons of EQUIS Accreditation in FELU	83
Table 30b. Pros and Cons of AACSB Accreditation in FELU	84
Table 31a. Reasons for EQUIS Accreditation.....	85
Table 31b. Reasons for AACSB Accreditation	85
Table 32a. Isomorphic Changes and Effects of EQUIS Accreditation	86
Table 32b. Isomorphic Changes and Effects of AACSB Accreditation.....	87
Table 33. General Effects of Accreditations in FELU	88
Table 34. List of Changes necessary for Accreditation.....	88
Table 35a. Changes implemented in FELU	89

Table 35b. Changes expected in FELU	89
Table 36. Summary table on differences b/n AACSB and EQUIS	89
Table 37. FELU and its competing B-schools in Slovenia	90
Table 38. Competing Business School about FELU	91
Table 39. Employers about FELU and its accreditation	93
Table 40. Key periods of Kozminski University (KU)	95
Table 41. Values of Accreditations (EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN)	97
Table 42a. Advantages of Accreditations (EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN)	97
Table 42b. Disdvantages of Accreditations (EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN)	98
Table 43a. Reasons for Accreditations (forces for EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN)	99
Table 43b. Reasons for Accreditation (decisions for EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN)	100
Table 44. Changes and Effects from Accreditations in KU	101
Table 45. Effects of accreditations in KU (Poland)	102
Table 46a. Changes implemented in KU	103
Table 46b. Changes expected in KU	103
Table 47. KU and its competing B-schools in Poland	104
Table 48. Summary of rivals about KU	106
Table 49. Employers about KU accreditations	107
Table 50. Key periods of ZSEM.	109
Table 51. Values, Advantages and Disadvantaged of AACSB	110
Table 52a. Reasons for Accreditation: Forces (for ZSEM)	111
Table 52b. Reasons for Accreditation: Decision (for ZSEM)	112
Table 53. Isomorphic Change and Effects of AACSB Accreditation	113
Table 54. Effects of AACSB accreditation in ZSEM	114
Table 55a Changes implemented, ZSEM	115
Table 55b.Changes still required, ZSEM	115
Table 56. The best schools in Croatia	116
Table 57. Competing B-school about ZSEM	116
Table 58. Employers' Perception about ZSEM and its accreditation	118
Table 59. Public and private HEIs in Russia in 2013	119
Table 60. Key periods of GSOM	120
Table 61. The Values of Accreditation (GSOM)	122
Table 62. Advantages and Disadvantages of EQUIS accreditation	122
Table 63. Reasons for EQUIS accreditation	123
Table 64. Isomorphic Changes and Effects of EQUIS	124
Table 65. Effects of EQUIS accreditation	125
Table 66. The list of top B-schools in Russia, 2013	126
Table 67. Competing Business School about GSOM	127
Table 68. Employers about EQUIS Accreditation	128
Table 69. Key periods of IMISP	130
Table 70. Values, Advantages and Disadvantages of CEEMAN	131
Table 71. Reasons for CEEMAN accreditation	132

Table 72. Effects and changes of CEEMAN accreditation	133
Table 73. General Effects of CEEMAN accreditation	134
Table 74. Competing B-school about IMISP	135
Table 75. Employers on IMISP and CEEMAN accreditation.....	136
Table 76. The effects of accreditations on all B-schools.....	139
Table 77. The common effects of Accreditation in B-schools.....	140
Table 78. Forces for AACSB, EQUIS and CEEMAN accreditation	141
Table 79. Comparison of AACSB, EQUIS and CEEMAN	142
Table 80. The main change for B-schools with accreditation: Viewpoint.....	143
Table 81. CEE B-schools: perception by Accreditation Bodies.....	144
Table 82. Accreditation bodies: future change.....	145
Table 83. Propositions P1 & P2 for Public Schools (EQUIS).....	149
Table 84. Propositions P1 & P2 for Private Schools (AACSB).....	155
Table 85. Propositions P1 & P2 for Private Schools (CEEMAN)	159
Table 86. Propositions P3 & P4 for Public schools (EQUIS)	162
Table 87. Propositions P3 and P4 for Private B-schools (AACSB).....	164
Table 88. Propositions P3 and P4 for Private schools (CEEMAN)	167
Table 89. The common effects of Accreditation in B-schools on various factors	168
Table 90. Propositions P5 and P6 for Public schools (EQUIS).....	171
Table 91. Propositions P5 and P6 for Private schools (AACSB).....	173
Table 92. Propositions P5 and P6 for Private schools (CEEMAN)	175

INTRODUCTION

Since we never reckon that we understand a thing till we can give an account of its 'how and why' of things coming into existence and passing out of it... in order to trace back any object of our study to the principles so ascertained.

Aristotle (400 BC – 300 BC). Prose, Philosophy, Physics

Human knowledge and human power meet in one: for where the cause is not known the effect cannot be produced. Nature to be commanded must be obeyed; and that which in contemplation is as the cause is in operation as the rule.

Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626), Novum Organum (1620)

An appearance of accreditation quality schemes in the global higher education market became a recent phenomenon in the 21st century. Among the most important and significant events in the field of management education over the last 20 years, the advent of accreditation was rated by Deans of business schools (hereinafter: B-schools) as the most significant event after globalisation (Thomas et al., 2013). This raises the question: why do all Deans of B-schools from Europe, US, Canada, Australia and Asia select international accreditation as a key topic of agenda? Despite remarkable growth in accreditations, there has been limited empirical research on this phenomenon according to Elliott and Goh (2013).

Word 'Accreditation' is used from the year of 1535, originating from a Latin 'accredere' ('give credence to'). According to OECD (2009, p. 324), the term "accreditation" is outlined as "a form of quality assessment where the outcome is a binary (yes/no) decision that involves the granting of special status to an institution or programme". In business education, accreditation is the process by which an academic programme holds itself out for review by an external organisation, to be measured against a set of predetermined standards (Sciglimpaglia et al., 2007), "a way to promote a quality improvement in the business schools" (Durand & Dameron, 2011). The ultimate goal for many B-schools is to gain accreditation from internationally recognised bodies because it brings the 'Quality seal' and provides a balanced assessment of strengths and improvement opportunities. There are other reasons to seek accreditation outside the national context: "an absolute lack of accreditation opportunities at home; using international accreditation to enhance relative national position; using accreditation to evade the requirements or prohibitions of national accreditation; enhancing global recognition via accreditation by a reputable foreign accreditation body" (Marginson & Van der Wende, 2006; p. 23; OECD, 2009, p. 49).

The top accreditation bodies in business education are AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools in Business), EFMD (European Foundation for Management Development with institutional EQUIS), and AMBA (Association of MBAs). It has become necessary for a B-school to meet international standards from these top international bodies: AACSB, EQUIS and AMBA (Alajoutsijärvi et al., 2012). B-schools have been among the fastest-growing segments for the last 20 years, who are seeking AACSB or EQUIS. The United States has the longest experience in accreditation: the first management education's accreditation body, AACSB was founded in 1916 with a goal of enhancing the quality (Trapnell, 2007). After its foundation, it sets standards in 1919 and began to accredit colleges and B-schools in 1948 (Palmer, 1981). However, accreditation is a rather new phenomenon in Europe (Helmig et al., 2010). The European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) was launched by EFMD only in 1999 when the challenge of creating a European market for higher education was first on the political agenda (Shenton, 2010). In the beginning, many of the European schools copied the American model of business education, but now they are slowly developing their own identities, relying more on European case studies and building

a more European faculty (Thomas et al., 2013, p. 34). In a similar way, at the beginning of the 1990s, the transfer of the American model of education and management practices also started spreading among the countries in transition from command to market economies in the Central and Eastern Europe (hereinafter: CEE) to replace former ideology through various projects (Hull, 2000). Since the fall of Communism, management education has been consistently addressed as one of the key issues in the transition to the market economy, and countless educational initiatives have spread across CEE, leading to growth of management education programs and institutions (Kozminski, 2008, p. 199). The higher education (HE) systems of CEE, CIS and traditional management paradigm have undergone dramatic changes during the last two decades. Since the beginning of the 1990s, markets have been integrating, competition has become global, 'corporate' have been replaced by entrepreneurs and leaders in transitional economies (Kozminski, 2008, p. 8). It is no surprise that cross-border providers of HE play a significant role in these countries where they are in competition with the existing systems, and accreditation schemes have in some cases been established for cross-border delivery of HE (OECD, 2004). At the same time, Cheng (2007) refers to recent changes in the EU with many interesting emerging phenomena with exciting opportunities for conducting phenomenon-motivated, theory-based international management research that develops new interdisciplinary theories using cross-national settings. The practices of introducing the international "Quality seal" by top-global differentiators of AACSB and EQUIS in CEE's B-schools in the quest of legitimacy started spreading from the 21st century. The lack of adequate research and non-awareness of reality on visible phenomena of changes as a result of accreditation process bring the most frequent questions:

Why do B-schools in CEE apply for international accreditation?

How do B-schools perceive international accreditation?

What are organisational changes in B-schools as a result of international accreditation?

Nemec (2006) shows that the first experiences with accreditation in CEE indicate that there are many open questions related to this phenomenon. The current debate in B-schools of CEE has raised the related questions: Does international accreditation from the West try to change the B-schools in the East? Does the "Quality label" from the West have any value for B-schools in the East? What impact does international accreditation make for B-education, and therefore, for the transformation of the whole generation of the future managers in CEE? The emerging debate about the role of B-schools, their transformation and the strategies for organisational change in CEE are of importance for research (Adom̂ent et al., 2014).

The definitions of "accreditation" to promote 'continuous quality improvement' (AACSB) (Hedin et al., 2005), 'to raise the standard of management education worldwide' (EQUIS), contains an assumption of quality, but accreditation agencies oppose the other's recognition as part of competitive strategies. This raises the first question 'Whose standard and quality?' The transnational "top league" accreditations are becoming not only assessing agencies instead of state regulations but the new modes of regulation for management education (Hedmo, Sahlin-Andersson & Wedlin, 2006). Bridwell-Mitchell (2008) presents contexts, where institutions (quasi-legal mandates, laws) serve as catalysts for actions. Institutional accreditation has well served the public interest for a century, but now its purposes are changing quickly and dramatically (Hartle, 2012). Our rationale and the underlying reason for this research is to gain an understanding of dramatic changes in B-schools and explain what is happening in reality. White, Levernier and Miles (2006) described how AACSB introduced new less restrictive standards in 2003 reducing its value after it went internationally. In 2005, US Commission on the Future of Higher Education produces a

critical report of the accreditation system: it has inadequate transparency and accountability for measuring institutional performance (Amaral et al., 2009). AACSB International has been modifying standards in 2003, 2010, 2013 and in 2015. Yunker (2000) addresses the “true” quality: how is it possible to measure accurately the success of graduates or the indicator of teaching effectiveness? Young & Chambers (1980) and Baker (2011) refer to “quality” of accreditation as a very elusive concept. Miles et al. (2014) talk about AACSB standards, but no B-schools had been a subject of research under the new standards.

The **second** debate is associated with ‘Whose Standard’: when academic degrees of individuals are either accredited or not accredited by an agency - it is called ‘accreditation discrimination’, and competition on a shared market of clients among agencies contributes to the creation of discrimination with a negative impact (McFarlane, 2011). The stamps of top-accreditations are interpreted as “quality inherent” in B-schools. But McFarlane (2010) says it is not true, because accreditation is “profit-maximizing and monetarily-engaged industry”.

The **third** problem is a performance problem: standards are “dropping” rather than changing (Jalbert T., Jalbert, M., & Furumo, 2011). The study shows that CEOs with non-accredited degrees provide higher returns than those with ‘the Gold standard’ of AACSB. Strang (2013) shows that required exams are an obstacle for AACSB-accredited schools: the top universities have a contradiction between high-quality teaching and low student achievements. AACSB and EQUIS are related “only” to research performance, without the empirical evidence for a quality effect, in addition to its high cost: a great number of resources, control and bureaucratisation (Nigsch & Schenker-Wicki, 2013). The conditions are worsening: research is often financially carried out by a researcher, who also edits the articles on his own funds and waits for being published in the journals suggested by “global agencies”. Frustration is widely shared by all B-schools: how long it takes to publish papers: researchers feel trapped in a submission, rejection, review, re-review and re-re-review (Powell, 2016). The question is: Who benefits from this situation?

The **fourth** trouble is an “ideological control” of values. Paccioni et al. (2008) justify that accreditation is not only an effective form of professional control but control based on forms that are more ideological than coercive. He also concludes that the implementation of improvement plan involves the ideological control of values.

The **fifth** issue brings another question of Brown (2013): “Is accreditation voluntary or not?” The motivation for university B-schools is not about quality, but about gaining marketing benefits from being accredited, e.g. AACSB, EQUIS (Brown, 2013). Greenberg (2014) answers it: “accreditation is not voluntary”. Meeting the inevitable political challenges, an honest appraisal of the current situation must be confronted by academia. Specifically, he suggests the new definition for accreditation that should be re-defined to refuse “the academic myth of the separation of politics and education” (Greenberg, 2014).

The **sixth** complication brought about by Ashkanasy (2008) is based on Julian and Ofori-Dankwa’s (2006) research: “Is accreditation good or bad for B-schools?” With environment towards turbulence and accreditation’s characteristics with dysfunctional effects on the strategic decision making, authors conclude that due to the discontinuous change and competitive environment the characteristics of accreditation are not suited for B-schools. The **seventh** dilemma connects us with a “jungle of accreditations” which soon will be replacing “a jungle of degrees”, but Ghooi (2015) says when accreditation is implemented, no one understands its reality. The eighth dispute is about homogeneity in B-schools at the

organisational level: ‘trait-based imitation’ is a result of accreditations (AACSB, EQUIS) with a generic quality approach trend (Kaplan, 2014; Fertig, 2007; Bevelander et al., 2015).

The **ninth** debate is about the accreditation practice in CEE. Brennan and Shah (2000, p. 338) specify, that quality assessment based on accreditation is the common practice in CEE: it can affect status, replacing the regulatory mechanisms of the communist governments. Abell (2012) concludes that western accreditation standards do not fit in Eastern Europe or Russia due to peculiarities of their environment. The other trend is shown by Lock (1999, p. 73): “EFMD has also established with CEEMAN (Central and Eastern European Management Development Network) a Strategic Audit scheme for Central and Eastern European business schools, funded by the European Union’s PHARE and TACIS programmes. It is based on the EQUAL and EQUIS schemes, but recognises the different starting points of most business schools in transition economies.” The founder of CEEMAN explains that professional organisations in the B-education have a strong influence on B-schools in CEE, because they act as accreditation bodies, granting ‘seal of approval’ to schools that abide by their criteria (Bandelj & Purg, 2006). Hommel (2009) writes that CEE B-schools have approached accreditation rather slowly, because of limited progress with respect to internationalisation: they are being forced to play by the rules of the global business. They will retain leading positions in their market only if they are able to develop institutional internationalisation, to resolve shortage of funds, an underdeveloped research culture, governance, and inadequate human capital (Hommel, 2009), but it is “hard to predict, given the absence of a generally valid pattern” (Kohoutek, 2009, p. 48). It is very important to examine the forces that affect the movement of the new institutions of private HE in CEE along legitimacy continuum (Giesecke, 2006). Cheng (2007) proposes phenomenon-motivated and theory-based research, resulting from the recent changes in the European environment, and integrating knowledge with greater explanatory and predictive power. The 17th-century philosopher Leibnitz emphasized the need for “Theoria cum Praxi” (a theory with practice) as suggested by Abell (2012). We also look for practice supported by theory (“Praxis cum Theoria”) in this region. However, we should mention that Gioia and Pitre (1990) remind that the organisational field has not developed the adequate approaches towards theory building that can account for organisational phenomena with its multifaceted nature: what is stable becomes a target for change, and, therefore, we cannot argue that positivist/functionalist theory building applies everywhere. Gioia and Pitre (1990) suggest the Interpretivist, Radical Humanist, Radical Structuralist, or Functionalist paradigms, and we follow the Functionalist paradigm (see Table 1) due to its orientation toward its managerial focus, and the difference in findings of the role of organisational structures.

Table 1. Paradigm Toward Theory Building (TB)

Stages	Functionalist Paradigm
1 Opening Work	1.1 Selecting a topic. What are the issues? What are the research questions? 1.2 Reviewing literature: What do we know. 1.3 Finding a gap: what is missing 1.3 Putting a framework together: What are the relevant theories and variables 1.4 Formulating hypotheses or propositions 1.5 Designing research: What are data? Where to find data? How to measure data?
2 Data	Probing representative samples of subjects: according to the propositions formulated
3 Analysis	Testing propositions + Coding; Identify the emerging concepts and relationships
4 TB	Writing up results: Show how the theory is refined, supported, or disconfirmed.

Source: Gioia, D. A., & Pitre, E. (1990). *Multiparadigm perspectives on theory building*, p. 593

Qualitative research is more useful for theory building according to Sutton and Staw (1995). The logic of thesis begins from global forces in b-education leading to quality practices, where international accreditation is the emerged new trend. Its effects can provide only part of the explanation. The simultaneous analysis of organisational and institutional changes of B-schools in a big regions like CEE has not yet been done. The institutional theory is selected as the main theoretical framework explaining change in CEE B-schools.

Purpose and objectives

The aim of this doctoral dissertation is to explain the practices of international accreditation in the Central and Eastern European region through the lenses of institutional theory. The **purpose** is to contribute to the global debate on the international accreditation of management education by examining the cases of B-schools with the institutional accreditation in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) to advance the institutional theory. The **main motivation** for this study is to explain the essence of global practices emerging in Europe based on the perception of experts in terms of “how”, “why” and “what” questions.

This topic is very important, because of the recently emerged global practices of international accreditation in the region of CEE, which also includes some countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (hereinafter: CIS) like Russia. The emerging market of CEE region comprises twenty-one former socialist countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Croatia, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Russia), extending east from the border of Germany and south from the Baltic Sea to the border with Greece. The eastern part of Germany (ex-GDR) is not included here (its B-school ESMT Berlin with a triple accreditation). It makes this topic especially interesting for the new practices of global accreditors and their effects in four CEE countries with a population of 188.34 mln. people (from Slovenia with 2.06 mln. population up to Russia with 143.5 mln. people as of 2013). In the context of this study, the practices of AACSB and EQUIS accreditations are available only in the B-schools of four countries of CEE region.

The objectives of the dissertation stem from its purpose. The main objective is to explain the emerged practices of accreditation through the prism of change through the lenses of the institutional theory framework. Therefore, further objectives are:

- to explore the trends and forces that push B-schools to apply for global accreditation;
- to present findings of B-schools on their experience with institutional accreditation;
- to reflect the peculiarities and differences of CEE B-schools and compare them;
- to discuss the findings on the organisational changes for public and private B-schools as a result of accreditation from the positions of different stakeholders;
- to theorise the institutional changes surrounding the introduction of accreditation from EQUIS, AACSB and other bodies (ex.: CEEMAN, Central and East European Management Development Association) in B-schools' practices;
- to evaluate whether the practices for the introduction of international institutional accreditation are consistent with the theories presented;
- to advance the Institutional theory, explaining the institutional change in B-schools' accreditation practices of CEE, thus, introducing the theory of global accreditation.

Problem statement or context is situated in terms of a. perspective (institutional), b. focus (change), c. level (individual, organisation, country, CEE region), and d. scope (Slovenia, Poland, Croatia, and Russia). **The research questions** (RQ) are stated in analytical and researchable terms around the Why-How-What questions. Thus, this study contributes to the body of knowledge needed to address this problem by answering the following questions:

RQ1: How do B-schools in CEE perceive international accreditation?

RQ2: Why do B-schools in the East seek international accreditation from the West?

RQ3: What are organisational changes in B-schools as a result of accreditation in CEE?

RQ4: What are the effects of international accreditation process in B-schools of CEE?

RQ5: Do B-schools with accreditation send any signals to their stakeholders?

RQ6: What is an institutional change (IC) of B-schools that takes place in CEE?

In addition, the RQ1, RQ2 and RQ5 have additional clarifying questions to encourage problematisation as a methodology suggested by Alvesson and Sandberg (2011) for formulating research questions that are likely to lead to more influential theories:

RQ1: How do CEE's B-schools perceive international accreditation?

- What are the values of accreditation?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of accreditation?

RQ2: Why do B-schools in the East seek international accreditation from the West?

- What are the forces that push B-schools to seek accreditation? (External Reasons)
- How do B-schools make decisions about accreditation? (Internal Reasons)

RQ5: Do B-schools with accreditation send any signals to their stakeholders?

- Does accreditation of B-school have an impact on stakeholders (rivals & employers)?
- What is the opinion of global accreditors about CEE B-schools?

Based on the research questions (RQ) and literature review that cover RQ, we develop the following propositions (P) tested in our study:

P1: Perception of accreditation values in B-schools is relatively more important than perception of accreditation cost;

P2: B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy;

P3: B-schools enhance isomorphic organisational changes (mimetic, normative, coercive) as a result of accreditation;

P4: B-schools acquire more isomorphic changes (bandwagon & information asymmetry) as a result of accreditation;

P4a: B-schools seek accreditation as a result of bandwagon effects;

P4b: B-schools seek accreditation to reduce information asymmetry's effects;

P5: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to stakeholders;

P6: Institutional change occurs through the mechanisms of isomorphic organisational changes with bandwagon and information asymmetry's changes;

Research implications/limitations - This research highlights the perceptions about the forces, effects, organisational and institutional change under the framework of institutional theory, presenting its underpinnings of the accreditation theory for organisations. The study also incorporates the opinions of stakeholders, limited to competitors, employers and accreditors. The "What, Why and How?" are the underlying psychological, economic, or social dynamics that justify the selection of factors (Forces, Effects and Change) with the causal relationships. This rationale constitutes the theory's assumptions, the theoretical glue that welds the conceptual model together. The concepts are logically considered as part of the explanation of this phenomenon. This study has **practical implications** for management education, as AACSB and EQUIS accreditations have become a global phenomenon, and CEEMAN is now expanded to the emerging economies.

Originality/value - This study offers a novel approach to studying the international institutional accreditation and analyse the consequences of global accreditation in the accreditation theory of "*transition countries*" through the lenses of neo-institutional theory. By using a multiple case study, this research provides a unique opportunity to focus on the context and potential consequences of accreditation in other regions. The value-added contribution includes the advancement of institutional theory with the development of mimetic, normative and coercive in line with bandwagon and information asymmetry's isomorphic changes with corresponding effects. The other contribution is the Map of cross-national comparison of B-schools.

Contents outline

This dissertation consists of the following chapters: Introduction, Literature review, Methodology, Case Study Results, Discussion, and Conclusions. After the Introduction, the thesis proceeds with the **Literature review**'s *first sub-chapter* "*Global Forces in Business education*" (1.1) to reflect the external global forces and environment that shapes higher education (HE) and "*Forces of accreditation*" (1.1.1) in the CEE region. It also explains what "*B-schools in Central and Eastern Europe*" (1.1.2) and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) have in common and how they are different in the cross-national comparison with the US and EU B-schools with the developed set of institutional features. The following sub-chapter "*Accreditation: Change for Quality or Legitimacy*" (1.2) shows that quality management and legitimacy have their central aspects in B-schools in Central and Eastern Europe" (CEE). The intermediate "*Accreditation Effects*" sub-chapter (1.3) describes effects of each accreditation on public and private schools. The last sub-chapter on Institutional Theory Framework (1.4) presents its relevance, explaining how "*Organisational and Institutional Change*" (1.4.1) emerge as a result of accreditation, with its "*Relevance to Institutional theory*" (1.4.2), that includes "*Isomorphic Effects*" (1.4.2.1) with "*Additional Effects: Information asymmetry and Bandwagon effects*" (1.4.2.2), resulted in "*Conceptual framework and Propositions*" (1.4.2.3). The Methodology chapter justifies selection of cases in "case study research" (2.1), its "research setting" (2.2) with the sample of five B-schools with accreditations in 2013-14 year. The chapter on Case study results presents the Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana (FELU; 3.1), Kozminski University (KU; 3.2), Zagreb School of Economics and Management (ZSEM; 3.3), Graduate School of Management (GSOM; 3.4) and International Management Institute of St. Petersburg (IMISP; 3.5) with stakeholders (rivals & employers) and accreditors (3.6). The Discussion is organised around the propositions (P): P1 and P2 on Forces for Accreditation (4.1), P3 and P4 on Change and Effects (4.2); P5 and P6 on Signalling and Institutional Change (4.3).

The general summary of the final Conclusions is the following: The B-schools considered in this thesis are the leaders in local markets of their countries. On the global market, however, they are not the leaders, but the followers. B-schools usually do not undertake a cost-benefit analysis to justify the decision about accreditation. B-schools in the region of Central and Eastern Europe take the accreditation either as a business opportunity or follow the suggestions of the formal leader ("agent of change") in their schools. B-schools with accreditation undergo through the key isomorphic change: mimetic, normative, coercive (described in Institutional theory), and additional information asymmetry and bandwagon change with corresponding effects raising as a result of global accreditation practices. After accreditation is gained, B-schools have the following perception about its values: a legitimacy, reputation, members of a club, a tool and a driver for change, international benchmarking, a better research and publishing opportunities, internationalisation of student body leading to the increased enrolments, connected with associated profit from international students. The major part of international students are coming from the B-schools of neighbouring European, CEE or CIS countries. This makes B-schools direct competitors in the conquest of the markets for students. Values are important for the private B-schools in their endeavours to compete in their local as well as on their CEE market: they do it quite successfully because they are more mobile and less bureaucratic in their decisions compared to public schools. The internationalisation of the student body is becoming the main purpose of private schools in CEE after the legitimacy in the form of accreditation is reached. The only exception is Russian IMISP, which is not interested in internationalisation due to the different adult learning model. The general trends revealed are:

- Isomorphic effects are becoming more evident as the pathway towards legitimacy;
- The competitive rivals catch up accredited B-schools applying for similar accreditations;
- B-schools in the CEE region are younger (about 20-25 years), the level of changes is higher;
- The higher the number of institutional top-accreditations, the greater level of organisational change, where one accreditation is a legitimacy for local market, two - for international market and the triple – for power and legitimacy, where each accreditation and re-accreditation speed up the level of change;
- In the case of first-movers with accreditation practice, the initial bandwagon or information asymmetry might be missing, however other isomorphic changes are present;
- The institutional change takes place in the local market at the time, when competitive schools start reproducing the analogous practices of accreditation with the bandwagon trend;
- This institutional framework is the theoretical underpinning for the accreditation theory that can be applied on other B-schools of CEE regions and business organisations.

The findings of this dissertation with the regional specifics fit well into the framework of institutional theory. While the institutional accreditation shows the general trends of creating isomorphic pressures on B-school's practices, the cases also illustrate the differences within the field. This thesis is based on assumptions, that experts answer truthfully and the sample groups are representative of the whole population of B-schools with accreditation (AACSB/EQUIS and CEEMAN). The dissertation is subject to the following limitations:

- Only top-management teams working on accreditation are presented from the side of B-schools, and other groups are omitted (such as students, students' unions, faculty members not involved in accreditation, the newly employed faculty and Alumni); the number of employers and one representative of each accreditation body are other limitations.
- Students as a main stakeholder are not included in this research: the student's knowledge about accreditation is limited and their opinions are not yet the key factors in accreditation process according to the experts' opinions;
- Accreditation reports of FELU are not included. The accreditation reports from other schools are permitted to be accessed, but the information used is an 'open sources' data;
- The possibility of a retrospective bias (as in the case of CEEMAN) exists because the informers are interviewed about the events and intentions in the past;
- In the case of Russia, the interviews were carried out and recorded in Russian language, it may raise some slight comparative deficiencies. Therefore, we suggest that further studies are based on this framework.

Contribution to science

This study advances quality management practice and institutional theory: it has been rarely a subject of research in the field of global accreditation, it is a highly relevant, timely and pioneering substantive contribution for a reality check of the current knowledge in management, economics and higher education, as well as political economy and sociology. Examining cases with a sample of a total population of B-schools with AACSB, EQUIS and CEEMAN accreditation is an important empirical contribution. Considering the concepts of Forces, Effects, Organisational and Institutional Change with Signals is a new context of global accreditation with re-contextualization of theory and applicability of this model. Applying the criteria of Institutional theory for organisations provide a framework and a template of the future research for the public and private B-schools in 21 countries of CEE, firms and organisations. Map of cross-national differences for the CEE and CIS B-schools is developed for the first time and presents an additional contribution to science and practice.

Terminology and Abbreviations

Accreditation is the process by which an academic programme holds itself out for review by an external organisation, to be measured against a set of standards (Sciglimpaglia, 2007).

Accreditation body - An accreditation body is an organisation delegated to make decisions, on behalf of the HE sector, about the status, legitimacy of an institution, or programme.

AACSB – the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business also known as AACSB International, is a global business education network and association

EQUIS - the European Quality Improvement System, specializing in HEIs of management, and run by the European Foundation for Management Development (**EFMD**), or the Management Development Network, membership organisation of B-schools & corporations.

EPAS – An international programme accreditation system operated by EFMD. It aims to evaluate the quality of any business and/or management programme that has an international perspective and, where of an appropriately high quality, to accredit it.

ECBE - The European Council for Business Education, is an international not-for-profit educational organisation, supporting academic and professional learning institutions.

AMBA – The Association of MBAs is the authority on postgraduate management education and is committed to raising its profile and quality standards internationally.

ACBSP - The Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs is a leading specialised accreditation body for b-education supporting teaching excellence.

CEEMAN – The Central and Eastern European Management Development Association, established in 1993, that became an international management development association.

RABE – The Russian Association of Business Education, set up with the purpose of effective foundation of the business education in Russia.

Business school - a university-level institution that confers degrees in management.

Organisational change - Change in formal structure, organisational culture, and goals, programme, or mission (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 149)

Institutional change – Change that occurs through three mechanisms of isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983): coercive as a result of political influence; mimetic - as a standard response by imitation; and normative - as a result of professionalisation.

Institutional theory – the theory presented by DiMaggio and Powell (1983), where the most important explanatory potential is in the analysis of organisational and institutional change.

Institutions are the rules of the game, where **organisations** are the players (North, 1994).

Organisations - Organisations are increasingly organised around rituals of conformity to wider institutions, increasingly homogeneous within domains (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Bandwagon theories - theories grounded in institutional theory, managerial process and agency theory, where they argue that firms try to imitate their rivals regardless of value-enhancing (Pangarkar, 2000).

Information Asymmetry - Information asymmetry is a discrepancy in the information levels of managers and stakeholders (Akerlof, 1970).

Isomorphism –is a constraining process that forces one unit to resemble other units in the same set of environmental conditions (Hawley, 1968).

Legitimacy - is a foundation of a theoretical apparatus addressing the normative and cognitive forces that constrain, construct, and empower actors (Suchman (1995, p. 571).

Signalling - It is one of the key functions of signaling theory to reduce such asymmetries in information between two parties, occurring as a result of knowledge disparity, in a variety of organizational settings (Spence, 2002).

Signaling theory – The key elements of signaling theory comprise of signaler, signal, and the receiver. Its emergence resulted from the information economics study under conditions in which buyers and sellers dealt with asymmetric information (Spence, 1974).

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Literature review starts from (1.1) sub-chapter on global forces in business education, because the aim of the first sub-chapter is to show how the forces of globalisation, including accreditation present the challenges for HEIs located in the CEE region. We compare the young CEE B-schools of 25 years of average existence with American and European B-schools, depicting their values in the Hofstede 6-D model. The intermediate sub-chapter (1.2) describes different types of quality assurance, including accreditation with the various effects of AACSB, EQUIS and CEEMAN (1.3) shown on B-schools. The (1.4) sub-chapter presents the Institutional and the inter-related complementary fields of this theory on change.

1.1 Global Forces in Business education

The B-education prepares its graduates for the new type of global business in multicultural environment in the 21-st century. It is affected more than any other branch of academia, being related directly to the world's market forces: globalisation, technological change, and new workplace requirements (Friga, Bettis & Sullivan, 2003). The concept of globalisation is a complex phenomenon with various forces creating new interdependencies between actors, institutions and state. Globalisation emerges with the forces of capitalism and the erosion of state sovereignty (Woods, 1998); and associates it directly with Americanisation (US-isation) (Friedman, 1999). It is viewed by Rennan and Martens (2003) as the interactive co-evolution of technological, cultural, economic, social and environmental integration, "global forms of governance" with social and environmental developments (Dreher, Gaston & Martens, 2008). The global development of HE involves supranational institutions, where the EU pursues political agenda in its quality improvement (Bryant, 2013). There are four fundamental and interrelated forces in HE according to Altbach et al. (2010): its massification, globalisation, the knowledge society and information technology. Out of these forces, the impact of globalisation on HE is linked to worldwide inequality with the McDonaldisation of the university (Altbach, 2004). B-school is changing towards the focus on global challenges and innovations in curricula, professional roles, pedagogy, uses of technology and organisational delineations (Thomas, Lorange & Sheth, 2013).

At the beginning of the 21st century Van Damme (2001) in UNESCO meeting justified the need for a new regulatory framework for quality assurance and accreditation within the force of globalisation that presents a challenge, depending on universities' specific location in the world, with the emphasis made on the regional location. The Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) is a region of our interest, because of its unique experience and many challenges for its universities (Meyer & Peng, 2005). Although the "Iron Curtain" between Eastern and Western Europe was demolished more than 20 years ago, little is known about organisational change processes of HE in CEE countries (Adom̂ent et al., 2014). Global business internationalisation of management education emerges as a global phenomenon with for-profit universities' growth, the diffusion of accreditation and market's restructuring in recruitment networks (Hardy & Tolhurst, 2014; Zammuto, 2008). The potential supply for accredited degrees from Eastern Europe varies from 191 institutions from Poland, 18 - from Croatia and 13 – from Slovenia (AACSB International, 2015, p. 15-17). Hence, our broad questions are: **How do HEIs from CEE perceive international accreditation?** and if they apply for it: **Why do they apply for it?** Thus, we look at global forces in HE of CEE region.

1. *Global demand for higher education (HE)*. During 2000-2012, the number of foreign tertiary students enrolled worldwide more than doubled, with an average annual growth rate of almost 7% (OECD, 2014). The AACSB recognises that "internationalisation" is used interchangeably with "globalisation", and accreditation serves as an indicator of quality

(AACSB International, 2011, p. 70). Cavaliere, Glasscock, and Sen (2014) argue that “*internationalisation is considered to be the response to globalisation*”, and internationalisation is a mind-set, but globalisation is an activity, “*a driver for change*”, but B-schools do not respond to it in a coherent way (Cavaliere et al., 2014). *First*, “Profit over quality” is a driving force of globalisation, and the internationalisation model in Europe with a naive confidence in the partners' s quality, has reached its limits (Job & Sriraman, 2013). Internationalisation is a central force, increasing from 2 million up to 15 million students by 2025 who study abroad (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 303). *Second*, “the private revolution” takes place with 30% of global enrolment in HE, and private universities are expanding in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and in the countries of the former Soviet Union (CIS) (Altbach et al., 2009; 2010). According to Business school data Guide (AACSB International, 2015), the total estimated number of educational institutions offering business degrees reaches 16,484 institutions as the potential demand for AACSB from India, China and Russia (BRICS countries). *Third*, a different type of *research knowledge* is another demand in the new economy with a focus towards “*Mode 2*” knowledge developed in the context of practice, recommended by AACSB reports (Banerjee & Morley, 2013) and demanded by corporations and governments (Van Damme, 2001). *Fourth*, the role of the state has shifted in “*new statism*” areas, specifically focusing research on sovereign wealth funds, the military-industrial, public-private partnerships (Wood & Wright, 2015). An internationalisation and globalisation lead to an erosion of the national regulatory and policy frameworks in which universities are embedded (Altbach, 2004), and the academic world is characterised by centres and peripheries, where stronger universities have its traditions, size, wealth and language, based on the European or North American academic model (Altbach et al., 2009). In addition to the fact, that CEE is not a global center of knowledge, the last years in Europe (especially in CEE) have also been dominated by the economic crisis with negative demographic trends and the growing gap between the highest and lowest funded HE systems (Sursock, 2015). Cornuel and Hommel (2015) observe that demand in management education has shifted from full to part-time and online programmes. Scientific communication has plunged in the anarchy: “*technology, greed, a lack of clear rules and norms*”, “*more institutions are lured by the rankings, where accreditors push research and publications*” (Altbach, 2017, p. 6).

2. *New technologies*. The new technologies’ threatening forces (Duderstadt, 2012, p. 581) will play a key role in the 21st century (Altbach, Reisberg & Rumbley, 2010) with Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) as an epiphenomenon and a symbol of technology integration with the use of technology-based learning (Sursock, 2015) and the era of robots and digitalisation. The shift from traditional mass media to the Internet horizontal communication and digital networking technologies powered social and organisational networks, overcoming the traditional limitations of organisation’ networking (Castells, 2011). Business campus is losing its relevance as a geographical location (Cornuel & Hommel, 2015). The network society already became a system with the new form of globalisation, inducing geography of social, economic, and technological inequality, while the institutions of the nation-state lose their capacity to control global flows of wealth (Castells, 2011). The needs for lifelong learning driven by knowledge and innovation, reshaping it by rapidly evolving technologies (Duderstadt, 2012). But even in the cases of engineering accreditation, there is no emphasis to keep the pace with the advancement of technology (Zhengmao & Mohamadian, 2013).

3. *Spread of university rankings global schemes*. The present evaluations of HE institutions have various forms – from ranking, classification, accreditation, typology, rating and up to benchmarking (Jarocka, 2015). Ten global rankings and 150 international ones are used in

tracking shift in performance (Hazelkorn, 2013; 2015a), and forming legitimacy for organisations within the management education field (Wedlin, 2011). The US dominance in the western world after Second World War in HE was reinforced by the mechanisms of B-schools rankings, accreditations, and journals rankings (Dameron & Durand, 2013). European B-schools appeal with “*Bologna agreement for faculty*” claim, between the EU states to facilitate mobility for the EU faculty. There is a growing obsession with rankings which maintain university reputation, formed by geo-political force in its “*battle for excellence*” in the world order: in publications from 1992 (Times Higher Education, FT), and in worldwide university rankings (Hazelkorn, 2015a). The Financial Times (FT) ranking was encouraged to strengthen the European identity, resulted with a European accreditation EQUIS launched in 1997 (Wedlin, 2007). As Kogut (2008) shows, rankings have **coercive** character, accompanied by the *Red Queen effect* (“investing into new buildings, IT infrastructure, and buying up faculty at higher wages”) and the *Matthew effect* (attracting “more funding from donors”). Experts know, “*rankings are not a good measure of B-school quality, but everyone nonetheless pays attention to them*” (Corley & Gioia, 2000, p. 331). Devinney, Dowling and Perm-Ajchariyawong (2008, p. 204) highlight a paradox of ranking game, with a broad meaning of quality, and *undermined validity of rank*. Rankings shape the competitive profile of B-schools, its effects on research are twofold: through defining the linkages and by promoting conservative approach in research (Thomas & Wilson, 2009).

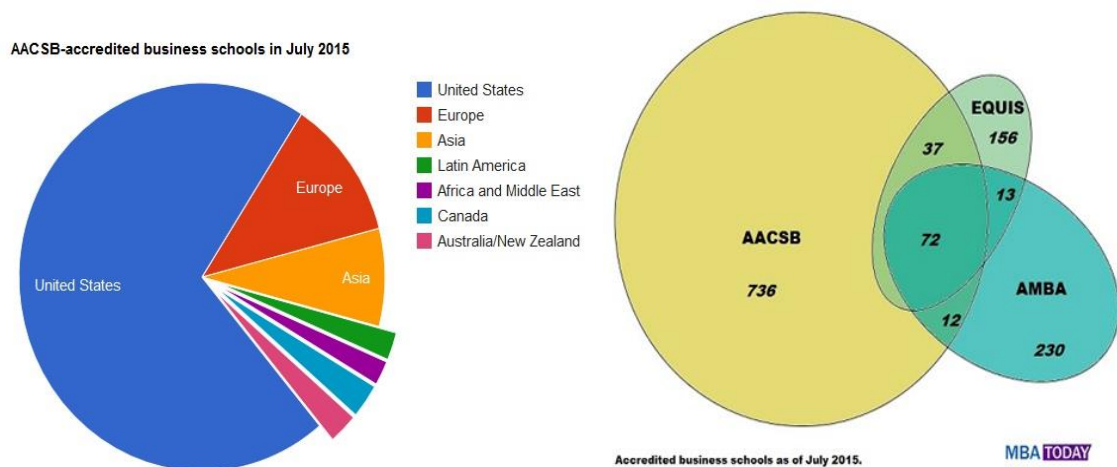
Government officials of ex-Eastern Bloc nations are committed to increasing the role of universities, with policy “memes”: ‘elite world-class research universities’, ‘triple helix’ and ‘innovation hub’ (Sterligov, 2015). Mau and Mansilya-Kruz (2008), recognise that MBA rankings provide signals to students about salary prospects, but rankings focus on degree programmes ignoring other trends, creating misleading incentives, discouraging innovation and stifling life-long education. The rankings’ presence is everywhere. Russia has developed its “*5-100*” programme aimed at pushing its universities into “world university rankings” by 2020 (Semyonov, 2014), and Poland declared to bring Polish universities in top-100 of the Shanghai ranking by 2015 (Sterligov, 2015). Geo-political forces of rankings challenge national perceptions of quality, status and reputation, despite criticisms about their validity and meaningfulness (Hazelkorn, 2015b). Projects like “*Rankings in Institutional Practices and Strategies*” show how rankings are used for competitive strategies and choice of international partners (Sursock, 2015). As for journal rankings, it is “*the hegemonic structures of inequality in the academic labour process*” (Özbilgin, 2009, p. 113), that have enhanced isomorphism (Alajoutsijärvi, Juusola & Siltaoja, 2015).

4. *The diffusion of accreditation worldwide.* Zammuto (2008) predicted two trends with the growth of for-profit universities and the globalisation of b-education with the diffusion of accreditation as a quality differentiator. Several issues surround accreditation: its role, processes, expansion, and costs (Shibleu, 2004). Elliott and Goh (2013) note, accreditation is a pervasive global trend with its influence in other countries. The pursuit of accreditation in Europe is viewed as a form of *mimicry*, a competitive force of homogeneity amongst top B-schools with predominantly convergence dynamic (Thomas, Billsberry, Ambrosini, & Barton, 2014). Thomas et al. (2014) say that homogeneity has influence in B-schools: (a) the adoption of the US model of management education; (b) the introduction of rankings (Financial Times) with assessment of teaching quality, internationalisation, salaries of graduates, audits of research performance; and (c) homogenised accreditation of the oldest European B-schools. Accreditation is the answer to the Bologna challenge (Westerheijden, 2003), but the empirical relationship between accreditation and outcomes is tenuous and unclear (Teodoro & Hughes, 2012). The Bologna commitment in 1999 to pursue reforms for

the ‘European Higher Education Area’ (EHEA) facilitated the accreditation with the ECTS credits (Keeling, 2006).

The starting point for European accreditation was opposite to American one: Eastern Europe introduced accreditation in an effort to protect academic standards perceived to be under threat from private sector providers (Stensaker, 2011; Schwarz & Westerheijden, 2004). The growth of accreditation expands both in Western Europe and the CEE region (Surssock et al, 2010). The private accreditation initiatives from the USA, have also occurred in Europe with mechanism which “*extends accreditation gained in one part of Europe to a broader part of the continent*” (Haug, 2003, p. 239). Accreditation is understood as a procedure to provide legitimacy, it became “*an artefact in the ongoing battle between academic and bureaucratic forces competing for power and influence*” (Stensaker, 2011, p. 760). Questions of legitimacy often arise “*when something new is coming into the picture*”, and a “*similarity*” is the way to decrease the shock (Bump, 2009, p. 47). Moreover, organisational populations influence not only their legitimacy, but the legitimacy of competitors (Bitektine, 2008). In Europe trends towards convergence in accreditation and quality assurance meet resistance, because countries fear to lose their national sovereignty (Van Damme, 2002). The situation with study programmes in the Bologna calls for a “*multiple accreditation*” versus the first generation (Westerheijden, 2001): a multiple accreditation system may be the only quality system that would answer the demands (Van Vught et al., 2002), and multiple accreditations are used as a means of differentiation (Durand & McGuire, 2005). AACSB knew that the HE “*is a multibillion-dollar industry*”, expanding its “*brand presence*” (Scherer et al., 2005). As of January 2017, there are 77 B-schools with “*triple crown*” (MBA Today 2017).

Figure 1. AACSB-accredited schools. Figure 2. AACSB, EQUIS, AMBA accreditation

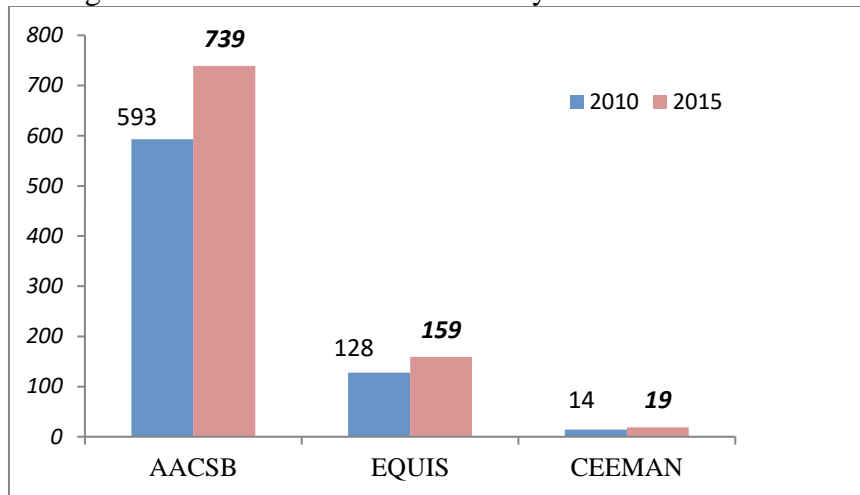


Source: MBA Today, 2015: <http://www.mba.today/guide/triple-accreditation-business-schools>

Graph shows 73 B-schools in 2015 July, where 68.2% of them are from Europe (MBA Today, 2015). Accreditations’ diffusion shows the regional share’s in Figure 1 for AACSB accredited schools, and Figure 2 - the number of triple-accredited schools in July 2015. The AACSB was the only accreditation institution in the world till 1997: it accredited first school outside North America (ESSEC, France). By 2014 AACSB has 17 members from Eastern Europe and 220 members by Western Europe. According to B-school Data Guide (2014, 2015), there are 1343 educational AACSB members in 2014, 1384 members – in 2015. The competitor to AACSB is EQUIS, which is set up in 1997-98 by the EFMD with its own peer-based accreditation system (Durand & McGuire, 2005). The Ministers of Education of 29 countries agreed on a vision of EHEA in Bologna, Russia joined it in 2003, the year

of 2004 became another turning point, the end of the first European wave of accreditations (Cret, 2011). There are 739 institutions accredited by AACSB (520 institutions - in the USA), 159 – by EQUIS, 19 – by CEEMAN as of 2015 compared to 2010 year, shown in Figure 3. These institutional accreditations are present below with our research focus.

Figure 3. Number of all institutionally accredited B-schools



Sources: Data compiled from AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN web-sites, 2015

The major difference between institutional and programme accreditation is the granularity of interest (Challa et al., 2005). Besides huge profitability and political issues, there are other reasons for accreditation (Durand and McGuire, 2005). It includes the growth of MBA programmes and businesses outside of the US with increased competition for faculty, students, and funding in Europe. CEE countries (and Russia) are increasingly attractive markets. CEE B-schools need to remove shortage of financial resources, an underdeveloped research culture, unresolved governance and human capital support for internationalisation being forced to play by the rules of the global business market (Hommel, 2009). As Bennett (1996) wrote, the combination of competitive pressures, the exposure to Western practices should bring a transformation to Eastern Europe. Meyer and Peng (2005) say CEE provides an interesting laboratory for theories, with unique societal quasi-experiments through testing existing theories in management studies in (1) organisational economics; (2) resource-based; and (3) institutional theories, summarised in Table 2. The challenges described in Table 2, is about the business education in a highly volatile environment under the forces of accreditation.

Table 2. Challenge to theory and implications

Challenge to theory	Implications	Methodological challenges
Institutions, especially informal ones, are highly idiosyncratic, and may vary along dimensions not previously analysed	Businesses need to adapt to each institutional context (e.g.: effective strategies)	Need for good constructs and measures to capture countries= informal institutions (in addition to formal institutions)
Institutions are in constant change with a highly volatile environment and uncertainty about future arrangement	Organisational forms of local and foreign businesses have to be flexible, and be often re-adjusted	Need to identify, measure the changes and impact of formal and informal institutions over time. Need to study the impact of institutional uncertainty on business
Cultural change under foreign influence, subcultures emergence	Culture may not be a constant (contrary to what is assumed)	Need to regularly update assessment of culture, to study the change processes
Rapid institutional change interacts with organisational change	Rapid change b/n institutions & organisations	Need to observe, record, and model the interdependent change processes

Source: Meyer and Peng, 2005

The next question “**How organisational change interacts with institutional change** in accreditation of business education of the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)?” already presents the challenge to theory and its implication from the Table 2. Hereby, we put our broad questions, and split them into the following specific research questions (RQ):

RQ1: How do CEE’s B-schools perceive international accreditation?

RQ2: Why do B-schools in the East seek international accreditation from the West?

RQ3: What are the differences between organisational and institutional change?

Having these questions in mind, we address the experience of accreditation practices in B-schools, highlighting the most interesting debates in 1.1.1 which have been discussed in literature on management and describe the specifics of B-schools in CEE outlined in 1.1.2.

1.1.1 Forces of Accreditation

The most frequently discussed issue in accreditation theme is about its *standards and quality*.

1. “*Standards vs. Quality*”. Various national organisations were improving standards in higher & professional education in the US. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching was illuminating the process of bettering standards, and already in 1913 they are presented in 9 fields by various Associations (MacLean & Edwin (2013)). The AACSB was set up in 1916 with a goal of enhancing the quality, but developed its standards only in 1919 (Palmer, 1981). A new set of standards were approved by AACSB in 1991, which is coincided with two important events: the break-up of the socialist camp, and appearance of a competing organisation, the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). The main forces of this change were explained by Porter and McKibbin (1988) emphasizing the role of HE in business, leading to changes in curriculum, the value of research in solving practical business problems, and relations with the business community (McKenna, Cotton & Van Auken, 1997). After AACSB became AACSB International, it has been changing or modifying its standards few times within the 21st century: in 2003, 2010, 2013 and in 2015. Yunker (2000) raises the issue connected with the issues of different accreditation standards related to the “true” quality: how is it possible to measure accurately the success of graduates or the indicator of teaching effectiveness? Jantzen (2000) consider that adopted mission-related standards of AACSB are rather reactive than proactive to meet the interests of unaccredited B-schools. In the connection with the changes in standards, Thompson (2004) partly answers this Yunker’s question (2000) raised in paper about the quality of students and faculty, where the quality of interaction is important. Blake (2009) resume the lack of students’ achievements effects under accreditation. Hedin, Barnes and Chen (2005) explain how it has been done in their conversation with the impact on quality improvement connected with the biggest conceptual change in 2003 assurance of learning’s standards. When the new standards of AACSB are changed again in 2013, Sullivan (2013) explores its four areas: learning and pedagogy, knowledge creation, the way administrators manage schools, and the measurement of AACSB impact. Krom and Buchholz (2014) explain 15 standards in: (1) Strategic management and innovation; (2) Participants-students; Faculty, and Professional staff, (3) Learning and teaching; and (4) Academic and professional engagement. Standards were changed in 2013 to incorporate innovation, impact, and engagement. Miles et al. (2014) also talk about a major revision of AACSB’s standards in 2013, which are good for deans and active scholars, with increased globalisation of management education. These authors agree that AACSB accreditation is valuable, and it is an indicator of a quality education, but the irony of this survey lies in the fact that at the time of this survey no B-school had been subject to review under the new standards. The international standards (AACSB, AMBA and EQUIS) were compared in Portugal, because

the massification of higher education has led to legitimate concerns about the quality with some tensions between different stakeholders at institutional level and quality governance with different accountabilities (Sarrico & Pinheiro, 2015). The accreditation standards for business programs in the transitional economies (such as the Baltics, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union) did not exist in 1999 or were about to be formed (Manning & Poljeva, 1999). At that time, in North America, approximately one third of B-schools have already full accreditation (Lock, 1999). Casile and Davis-Blake (2002) notice the important difference to standards: private schools are more similar to market organisations, and more likely to seek accreditation, and public schools are similar to nonmarket organisations and would respond to social cues indicating the legitimacy of new norms. Legitimacy is a generalised perception or assumptions that the actions of an entity is desirable with socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions (Suchman, 1995, p. 574).

2. McFarlane (2010) examines the problem called “*accreditation discrimination*” for individuals because “*qualifications are not accredited by a specific agency or agencies*”. The stamps of accreditations are interpreted as “quality inherent” in B-schools. He explains why accreditation has undesirable effects on educational institutions. *First*, due to variations in accreditation, it prevents future graduates from being hired. Many non-AACSB doctoral degree holders desiring to teach in business AACSB schools will find themselves having to complete AACSB Bridge programmes (with cost over \$25,000) to become academically qualified (McFarlane, 2013). *Second*, like any private businesses accreditation bodies compete aggressively to develop their brand reputation and image: it is “*an expensive venture which many schools simply cannot afford*” (McFarlane, 2011, p. 1). Accreditation is just another profit maximizing monetarily-engaged industry, which is located in the grip of Capitalism (McFarlane, 2010), and the factors of service, quality, image, and price should be taken into account before considering accreditation. *Third*, “*academia is losing both its appeal and prestige as declining morale among current and future or prospective academics is being further eroded*”, (McFarlane, 2011), because quality is a perception, and accreditation should not be used as a synonym for quality or excellence (McFarlane 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014). *Fourth*, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East have become the new playing grounds for AACSB as many B-schools in these regions are jumping on the bandwagon to be more competitive with the US institutions in prospective students and prestige (McFarlane, 2013), and deans and faculty should think outside of the box (McFarlane, 2014).

3. The third issue is “*performance problem*”. It is connected with an increasing inability to adapt and an exposure to contradictory institutional arrangements (Cooper et al., 2014, p. 241). Under the massification of HE in UK, performance standards are “*dropping*” rather than “*changing*” (Gibbs & Morris, 2001, p. 83). The exploratory study of Jalbert, T., Jalbert, M., and Furumo (2011) examined the education background of CEOs of large American firms and their results at work. B-schools devote considerable resources to earn and maintain the AACSB accreditation, and the graduates from accrediting schools have an increased chance to become the CEO of a large firm. However, the survey shows surprising results: there is a negative relationship between person’s performance as CEO and having an AACSB accredited degree. The revealed evidence is that the CEOs from non-accredited schools show much better results and provide higher returns than those coming from the most prestigious “Golden degree” schools. Standardized testing is a hindrance for AACSB-accredited schools: even the top universities have gap between high quality pedagogy and low achievement in the student exams required for accreditation (Strang, 2013). Jackson, Sibson, and Riebe (2013), recognise that the standards presented in relevant professional association as AACSB or EQUIS prescribe that all graduating students must have employability skills with knowledge, principles and concepts and learning skills for

professional employment, but the relationship between AACSB accreditation and achievement of students seems to be problematic. Despite the new programs continue to emerge (in the Middle East, Asia, Latin America) the accreditation agencies do not consider that the quality of the student body worthy of evaluation, and standards remain silent on an objective measure of student capability (Wilson, 2007). No empirical evidence was found for the effect of accreditations related to quality management, except international accreditations' specific incentives to research (Nigsch & Schenker-Wicki, 2013). Lejeune and Vas (2009) observe that European EQUIS accreditation may not lead to improve students' satisfaction with curricula or the quality of programmes, but more focuses on the attractiveness of school as an improved performance.

4. Some studies (Paccioni et al., 2008, Dent, 2011, Veeran, 2013, Noori & Anderson, 2013, Collins, 2015) confirm that accreditation may be conceptualised as “*ideological control*”, when implementation reinforces the ideological control of values (Paccioni et al., 2008). The evidence shows that even American law faculties reflect the accreditation's ideological tilt based on political orientation (Dent, 2011). Western models of ideology may not be the most applicable benchmark for accreditation, shown on the UAE example (Veeran, 2013). In terms of geopolitical and transnational forces, accreditation and ranking systems offers another means of analysing the transformative impact of global regimes on institutions of HE in developing countries. It is reflected on the power question by Noori and Anderson (2013, p. 165): “*Since accreditation agencies operate under the purview of the US government is there a mechanism permitting the US central government to indirectly regulate educational practices?*” The theoretical framework for Diede (2009) is based upon Etzioni's (1964) Compliance Theory, when organisations are performance directed, goal oriented, in conformity with power structure. International accreditation refers more to value and organisational culture with ideology: “*Societal culture and the apparent imposition of 'Western' neo-liberal educational and management values onto the rest of the world must also be considered*” (Collins, 2015, p. 145). Paccioni et al. (2008) conclude that accreditation is an effective control, which is based on ideological than coercive form: the implementation of improvement involves the ideological control of values. In UK universities, the shift is made towards an ideology: from “*collaboration within a community to self-interested learning*” with the goal to make capitalist economy more efficient” (Gibbs & Morris, 2001).

5. The other question “*Is accreditation voluntary or not?*” Brown (2013) showed that industries have varying degrees of control expressed in accreditation requirements which may be voluntary like in HE or compulsory (aged care institutions). Many organisations may be driven to secure accreditation for fear of being the “odd one out”; and in cases of voluntary accreditation, the motivation for B-schools is not about quality, but about marketing benefits (Brown, 2013). It was a real advantage for those who had EQUIS and at present it is becoming required (Bell & Taylor, 2005). The recent concern is “*accreditation is not voluntary*” anymore: it should be re-defined to refuse “*the academic myth of the separation of politics and education*” (Greenberg, 2014, p. 4). The phrases: “accreditation is not voluntary”, “it is not nongovernmental”, “without quality ” lead to Greenberg's definition (2014, p. 3): “*accreditation is a process by which recognized authorities validate that an institution meets minimal professional standards and accountability based on its mission*”.

6. *Is accreditation good or bad for B-schools?*” debate brought by Ashkanasy (2008) for schools based on Julian and Ofori-Dankwa's (2006) research which was treated seriously by different authors. Examining Julian and Ofori-Dankwa (2006, p. 229), we observe turbulence, “*accreditocracy*” when accreditation's characteristics (formalised process, documentation for external accountability, data-driven, continuous improvement) may have dysfunctional effects on the strategic decision making. Authors conclude that accreditation

is not suited for the new competitive conditions due to environmental turbulence, competitiveness, and potentially discontinuous change, including technological, societal, and industry changes. Oliver (1992) indicates more organisational and external pressures: *political* (crisis, beliefs of members, pressures on innovation, reduction in the dependence of stakeholders with growing power), *economic and social* accelerates the fundamental change in organisation. *Entropy* also tends to accelerate deinstitutionalisation, inertial pressures impede it, with intra-organisational (internal), environment factors (external) and competitive pressures (Oliver, 1992). Pressures from more continuous environment push schools to seek and renew field-specific accreditation. According to Julian & Ofori-Dankwa (2003), accreditation may be viewed negatively in the case of rapidly changing environment. The same authors point out that there is very little theory development and empirical research on the effects of accreditation in B-schools. The purposes of institutional accreditation that used to served HE and the public interest for more than a century, now are “changing quickly and dramatically” (Hartle, 2012). SWOT analysis of accreditation process is seen in team spirit, commitment of university management, international cooperation, qualified and benchmarked programmes, modern methods to assess curriculum, and threats as a top-down mandate, that prevents true development, future status of accreditation unclear (Niemelä et al., 2014). Critics are also related to AACSB standards that do not have different learning objectives and guidelines between research-extensive and non-research-oriented B-schools, without differentiation between part-time, full-time, and executive MBA. This implies a need for more theoretical and empirical analysis of accreditation and its implications for B-schools. There are six issues about accreditation (Murray, 2012), allowing to see both sides of “*misconceptions*”: a. Accreditation does not protect students from bad schools; b. Its' wrong focus: organisation is judged by if it has fulfilled mission, not education; c. Accreditation is not transparent; d. It has conflicts of interest: organisation pay to accreditors, like “purchasing” it. Its reviews are infrequent: organisation exist in volatile environment with rapid change; f. It is not always fair to institutions: the outcomes of public education remain contested. Mathewson (2015, a, b) announces that the HE Act in the US will include required changes of accreditors: there are more changes to be expected.

7. Many observers also fear that the accreditation system will replace “*a jungle of degrees*” with “*a jungle of accreditations*” (Van Vught et al., 2002). The author Ghooi (2015) summarises that accreditation looks great on paper, but when it is implemented, we do not know how implementation will follow plans. Process for AACSB is lengthy and bureaucratic as compared with EQUIS, which is “*light touch*” according to Adolphus (n.d). EFMD is formed as an association which links the European Union’s major B-schools with the European Union’s leading multinational companies, and EFMD has also established with CEEMAN, Central and Eastern European Management Development Network, a strategic scheme for CEE B-schools through the PHARE and TACIS programmes (Lock, 1999). A joint accreditation is first mentioned in 1999 in UK’s Warwick B-school for AACSB and AMBA. Already at that time, it questions how different systems, including EQUIS, might be the sources of difficulties and how these bodies will succeed out of home market (Vinten, 2000). European schools feel pressure to gain accreditation, which reinforces professionalization (Spender, 2005). Accreditation is more a determinant of student and recruiter choices, and B-schools are more obliged to run them as businesses, as the rankings do (Spender, 2005). Concern is expressed about the costs of multiple accreditation which is increasing together with the “*hidden costs of staff time*” (Lock, 1999, p. 75).

8. “*Powerful influences and homogeneity*”. Kondra and Hinings (1998) proposed that organisations become similar both in the way they operate and their performance. Accreditation bodies (AACSB/EQUIS) have become powerful influences on institutions’

strategic positioning: they transcend national boundaries, becoming a major factor homogenizing management education globally (Thomas, et al., 2014). Professionals (12,015 informants from twenty-one countries) show more homogenous attitudes than non-professionals and the effect of professional membership on attitudes does not vary across countries (Factor, Oliver, & Stecklov, 2012). Homogeneity was not the norm until the Ford and Carnegie Foundation reports published in 1959, when AACSB accrediting body began to influence b-education with the tiering effect and homogeneity towards academic importance of “scholarly” values in the USA (McKenna, Cotton, & Van Auken, 1997).

9. The least studied issue is the *effects of accreditation in certain regions*. First, no any articles found in the research literature on the effects of B-schools in CEE region with accreditations, except the exploratory study in Lithuania (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2015). AACSB International penetrated this region together with EQUIS and CEEMAN, and its effects are unknown. This region with the emerged transition countries is classified into two political-economic entities: CEE and CIS (the Commonwealth of Independent States), called as “*former communist states*”. The collapse of communism in 1989 created a new group of countries, and it is clear that these economies are progressing in a different ways (Hoskisson et al, 2000). Traditional paradigms in CEE have being replaced in the 1990s: competition is becoming global, markets - get integrated, and “*corpocrats*” are substituted by entrepreneurs (Koźmiński, 2008, p. 8-9). Westerners think that “*Eastern Europeans have remained fond of their former system's philosophy and its implications: disciplinary order, traditional authoritarian management style, social protection, government paternalism, security of employment, full employment, low wages, and uninteresting but secured work*” (Tixier, 2000, p. 322). Since the 1990s, CEE has provided unique societal quasi-experiments, indicating opportunities to test the applicability of existing theories in management studies (Meyer & Peng, 2005). Accreditation is about two important things: first, about a shift of power from educators to bureaucrats, and second, the professional body represents its own interest: the organisations promote the powerful position of controlling body, where control, legitimated by public interest mixed by control based on self-interest (Harvey, 2004).

The expansion of tertiary education in CEE was particularly marked after the collapse of socialism: the steepest growth appeared in Slovenia, and larger expansion occurred in Estonia and Lithuania (Robert & Saar, 2012). Many countries of Eastern Europe and ex-Soviet Union have observed a shift to private higher education, the fastest-growing segment, concentrated in time and cross-nationally, raising questions about its legitimacy and trustworthiness (Giesecke, 2006; Suspitsin, 2007). In the quest of legitimacy, the practices of international accreditation started spreading recently in this region with a growing number of questions about its influence on B-schools: Does accreditation from the West change the B-schools in the East through accreditation standards? Which change does it bring to the CEE? What is the impact of accreditation for business education, and, therefore, for the transformation of the whole generation of future managers and leaders? The accreditation in CEE started spreading from the CEEMAN at the end of 1990s (Lock, 1999). B-schools in CEE region approach accreditation slow because of the shortage of financial resources, an underdeveloped research culture, unresolved governance issues and inadequate human capital support for institutional internationalisation (Hommel, 2009). It is “*hard to predict, given the absence of a generally valid pattern*” whether CEE accreditation schemes will be “*first generation*”, or if they will evolve a *second-generation* approach with mutual recognition of agencies’ practices (Kohoutek, 2009, p. 48). It is important to examine the forces that affect the movement of newly founded institutions of private HE in CEE along this legitimacy continuum (Giesecke, 2006). Conforming to Suspitsin & Suspitsyna (2007), compliance with state accreditation of private universities in Russia is becoming a condition

for federal funding, irrespective of ownership. In the last 20 years, there has been an appearance and a rapid growth of B-schools in CEE as a response to demanding management-training needs in a transition to a market economy, but there is little understanding on what is happening in this sector and region. As stated in Bandelj and Purg (2005, p. 9), “*network connections constitute a key resource in the process of establishing private business schools, which emerge as a new type of organisation in post-socialist Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall*”. The authors suggest using networks with personal connections of “*political elite members*”, and this “*dependent on knowledge and financial resources that come from foreign partners*” (Bandelj & Purg, 2005, p. 13).

When we look at the demand on European standards, Urgel (2007, p. 80) writes that “*this perception is sometimes difficult to build from an analysis of the standards themselves due to the complexities of the pertinent quality framework*”. Values and effectiveness are important for the European B-schools, but Lejeune and Vas (2009) who did research on 31 B-schools with EQUIS accreditation, say that further research is needed on how accreditation involves cultural change on internationalisation. Johnson (2008) blames that EQUIS charges institutions a substantial fee for membership and initial accreditation. EFMD criticises that B-schools reflect a revenue-seeking motive in applying for accreditation with concerns on the admission policies in times of market turbulence (Hommel, 2009). Faculty salaries in CEE region are in most cases insufficient and far below international norms, there is a prevalence of entrepreneurial B-schools among private ownership compared to Western Europe (Hommel, 2009). The western accreditation standards simply do not fit Eastern Europe or Russia due to its peculiarities of the environment (Abell, 2012). There are 10 accrediting bodies in 7 regions, but Africa and Eastern Europe are regions with the minimal number of accredited institutions (Bruner & Iannarelli, 2011). For this reason, our next step is to view the process of institutional accreditation in CEE region. According to AACSB International (2015, p. 9), its educational members (accredited/non-accredited) are distributed as shown in Table 3. During the research phase (2013-14), only few B-schools gained the institutional accreditations: B-schools in countries highlighted in Table 3.

Table 3. AACSB educational members by country of CEE region

	CEE Countries	AACSB members	Estimated number of institutions offering b-degrees in country
1.	Croatia	2	18
2.	Slovenia	3	13
3.	Poland	3	191
4.	Russia	5	587
5.	Slovakia	1	12
6.	Czech Republic	1	54
7.	Latvia	2	26
8.	Estonia	1	8
9.	Bulgaria	1	25

Source: compiled based on <http://www.aacsb.edu/~media/AACSB/Publications/data-trends-booklet/2015>, 2015; pp. 9 – 17

The B-schools with AACSB accreditation are members (accredited and non-yet-accredited). According to Newman (2000, p. 602), the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe initiated a period of intense social, political, and economic change in the region, where central planning was disassembled, and institutions changed within a short time. In the 1990s, a term “transition countries” entered political vocabularies to describe a number of countries on European East, mainly former socialist countries: a neutral term, which is connected to fundamental social, political and economic changes in a very large and diverse

part of Europe (Zgaga, 2009). The first programmes in the CEE region include the IEDC-Bled School of Management in Slovenia, founded in 1986 by the Slovene Chamber of Commerce, and the Leon Kozminski Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management, founded in 1989 in Poland (Wessel, 2004). For that reason, it is important to compare B-schools in the region of CEE with the Western European and American B-schools. It is also important to understand the specific environment of CEE including Russia. The next sub-chapter includes comparison with CEE and CIS B-schools with their special characteristics.

1.1.2 B-schools in Central and Eastern Europe

In this sub-chapter we add a scientific contribution to describe the specifics of B-schools in CEE countries with the cultural characteristics of four countries. It includes a Hofstede 6-D model (Figure 4) (where countries like Russia, experienced communist rule over 70 years (3 generations) compared to 40-years in Poland (Cieřlik & van Stel, 2014)), and the developed 'Map' of differences for B-schools from CEE and CIS regions. European quality assurance is viewed here in a national effort to deregulate the public sector and to make universities accountable; and as a supranational integration of European HE (Serrano-Velarde, 2014).

The development of B-schools' knowledge started not in the US, but in Europe, with the foundation of Ecole Supérieure de Commerce by the Paris Chamber of Commerce, the oldest B-school in the world (set up in 1819) aimed "*to improve the relatively low societal and professional status of business managers, although impetus came from military forces*" (Thomas, Lorange & Sheth, 2013, p. 4; Harker et al., 2016). The evolution of B-schools continued in Belgium (1852), Austria (1856), Italy (1867), Germany and Switzerland (1898), UK (1902) with the main four areas: with 'écoles de commerce' (in France), 'Handelshochschulen' (in Germany), 'schools of commerce' (in the UK) and 'business schools' (in America) (Thomas et al., 2013). The general perception about business education is different: the US has its hundred-years' history, Europe - fifty years of experience (Shabanova, 2010). The difference between American and European B-schools was in its emphasis on training of business managers in the USA, and, in the European countries - on theoretical "business economics" approach (Kast, 1965). After the WW2 there was a renaissance of professional b-education in Europe based on scientific, technological and social changes, market expansion, emphasis on distribution, growth of professional management, changes in educational system and students' expectation (Kast, 1965). WW2 also led to massive changes in the US research universities: the pre-war system with ad hoc private funding was recognized as inadequate with little federal government funding on research. During the war, government poured vast funds in the research universities: Harvard, MIT, Chicago, and Berkeley (Khurana & Spender, 2012).

Rousseau (2012) shows criticism for AACSB for its drift in B-school's mission, and the interventions to change an organisation's culture with three processes: selection (recruiting faculty, pursue the mission), adoption (altering the school's values, norms and day-to-day practices), and attrition (building a culture of shared beliefs and values). Thomas et al. (2013), Antunes (2009), Antunes and Thomas (2007) identified the differentiation sources between US and European B-schools on institutional, competitive and social capital features. The institutional differences are associated with a national context of schools, competition based on the drivers and social capital (Antunes & Thomas, 2007) with a European order of the Bologna Accord (1999) with accreditation agencies that upsets the balance of power. Europe is made up of about 50 countries with more than 60 spoken languages and European integration in the economic, legal, and political spheres (Kaplan, 2014). The East/West linkages started in 1985, in Budapest's meeting with universities from Eastern Europe to improve contacts between the two sides of Europe, and later the Academic Task Force was

set up in 1990 to support links between Western and Eastern European institutions (Nyborg, 2014). The formation of first B-schools in the CEE region was taking place at that time. The goal was to organise transplanting of Western institutions in CEE economies, where the development of formal institutions is linked to the contexts of informal institutions (social norms and customs) which are linked to entrepreneurship (Kshetri, 2010). Western educators began introducing b-education in CEE because of lack of understanding of free markets, a mismatch of Western thinking with the socio-cultural context (Madhavan & Fogel, 1992).

Business as a new field of research has emerged in the early 1990's due to the institutional reforms with the new conditions for CEE firms. The depth of the institutional changes has been unprecedented with the unique new challenges for all economic actors: foreign investors, existing local firms, and entrepreneurs (Meyer & Gelbuda, 2006). Removing the Communist Party from power was the precondition for privatization and marketization, because the Communist parties declined to change their ideology, - such dramatic shifts in ideology hard to understand to many outsiders (Kornai, Mátyás & Roland, 2008). A fundamental transfer in CEE has taken place from a b-education programme to a reforming economy with teaching for a specific skills that supports management practice (Madhavan & Fogel, 1992). According to Bennett (1996), when local systems are incorporated, the emphasis is made on education as a social and a policy tool. Bennett (1996, p. 23) wrote that area of *"former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, is too broad an area to make meaningful generalisation about"*. Kozminski (2010) explains the map of the world management education divided into core periphery, and distant periphery, where B-schools cannot keep pace with the US or Western European schools because of the cost. B-education in CEE is based on the system, with an uniformity in institutions, similarities on structure, faculty composition, course design, teaching style and resources. A typical CEE's B-school:

1. A new type of organisation, a private B-school, has emerged in CEE based on financial resources from foreign partners and political support from local business elites (Bandelj & Purg, 2006). There were 56 privately owned B-schools (25 with joint MBA), that function as separate entities, with curricula developed with Western schools (Bandelj & Purg, 2006). B-schools embedded in public university tend to display an commercial orientation in CEE (Hommel, 2009). According to the Cybermetrics Lab source, there are 152 B-schools in CEE with their ranking, where the top B-schools are from Poland, then – Czech, Russian, then Slovenian (Ranking business schools of CEE; year: 2014).
2. There is a greater prevalence of entrepreneurial B-schools in private ownership in CEE compared to Western Europe (Hommel, 2009). Many of the region's institutions were established with the help of a Western B-school, often from the United States (Bollag, 1997, p. 48). Over 1,000 new B-schools emerged in the 1990s in Russia and Eastern Europe (Friga et al., 2003). Leading CEE B-schools recognized the value of partnership with Western partners, who influence culture and school governance (Hommel, 2009).
3. There are several forms of B-schools: business, b-administration, and management. B-schools are usually the faculties or departments within the public university and private B-schools are not affiliated with university. Cultural change is a factor conditioning to identity transfer, and management education is developed under the strong influence of Western practice with early and mature imitation for B-schools (Kozminski, 2008). Today, the CEE is no longer benefiting from intellectual subsidies to the same extent, which serves as an growing maturity and rising competitive strength (Hommel, 2009).
4. There was an understanding that accreditation in CEE cannot be gained from the big international bodies: EQUIS, AMBA or AACSB, because B-schools are definitely not like those in the United States or Western Europe, but they also need to be recognised

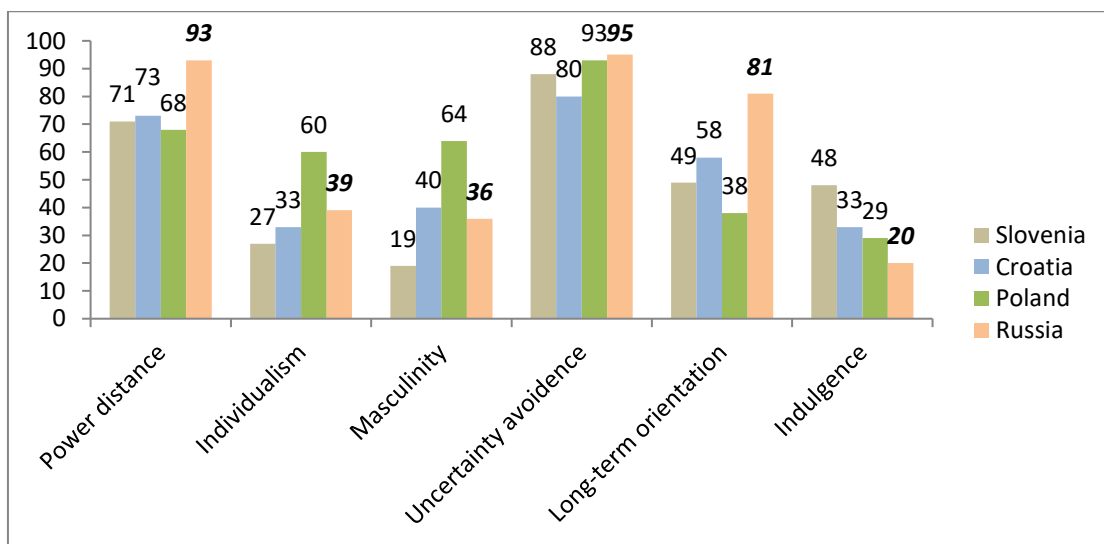
- (Abell, 2012). Kozminski (2010) thinks that the dominating American model of B-school is being challenged because other B-schools cannot afford it. It is noted that very few of the regions' B-schools are internationally accredited in emerging (Bevelander, 2012) or transition economies. Besides, the Western accreditation standard doesn't fit in Eastern Europe or Russia, schools cannot wait 100 years to get accredited (Abell, 2012).
5. The post-communism changes undertaken in most countries of CEE are clear examples of institutional upheaval with a fundamental change in the norms, values, and assumptions underlying economic activity (Newman, 2000). Business environment is characterized by deep and prolonged institutional, economic and social change leading to "generalized uncertainty" with four phases of managerial response on survival, functional restructuring, process restructuring and continuous improvement with different kind of managerial competences (Kozminski, 2008).
 6. International collaboration is difficult because of differences in cultural background and institutional practices. Practically, coordination of visiting foreign faculty who have regular teaching engagements in other institutions is probably quite demanding (Bandelj & Purg, 2005, p. 611). Institutional growth and internationalization create the need to professionalize core school management functions. B-schools de facto become more "*business*" and less "*school*" (Hommel, 2009).
 7. Many CEE B-schools currently push for faculty growth to improve their research performance (Hommel, 2009). The interest of the international research community in the transition process of CEE countries led to lasting collaborative partnerships with CEE faculty. As a consequence, the dynamics of the global market for b-education is impacting CEE B-schools more than in the previous years.
 8. The abundance of new business-education programmes in the region indicates that schools vary widely in scope, mandate, administrative ability and curriculum. Programmes, however, share one thing in common - mainly a lack of funding (Wessel, 2004). "*B-schools in CEE have copied the Western business education model and it is too late to change it. Companies also behave in the same way as in the West*" (Mazur, 2012, p. 77). Many public universities in Europe are also suffering from drops in government funding, often accompanied by a greater financial autonomy for the wider institution and – as a consequence – rising pressures on B-schools to cross-subsidize other parts of the university (Hommel, 2009).
 9. The case of CEE countries highlights the importance of thorough policy studies, both on country level and supranational level. When deep reaching political overthrows take place, education may come under suspicion of collaboration with the overthrown regime, turning education as a topic into a minefield. Institutions in management education accept responsibilities of management, with a progress on preparing today's students and tomorrow's leaders for the realities of future markets (Adomßent et al., 2014).
 10. Some Eastern European schools do more with less, whereas some Western schools, unfortunately, do less with more. They have huge budgets because they have either big endowments or enormous public funding and yet they do not achieve much with those resources. In Eastern Europe, the opposite phenomenon has been witnessed: schools that have limited resources manage to achieve a lot with them (Abell, 2012, p. 34).
 11. Accreditation in CEE has shown that weaknesses in governance go hand-in-hand with quality and strategy problems of a more fundamental nature: partnership portfolios in B-schools suffer from a 'path dependency', with the quality spread of partnership portfolios with harmful effects on accreditation (Hommel, 2009): it is difficult to arrive at any conclusions on the appropriate B-schools' governance structures for CEE countries.

12. Managers in CEE region rely on informal institutions (personal networks) or conduct business due to the void created by the weak legitimacy of the formal institutions fostering dependence on informal ones (culture and ethics) (Puffer & McCarthy, 2011).

Puffer and McCarthy (2011, p. 31) recommend to explore change in business through the cultural values in comparative studies with Russia using Hofstede’s dimensions, because the combination of environmental influences limits the options in corporate governance and b-strategies. We show comparison through the lens of the Hofstede 6-D Model© based on Slovenia, Croatia, Poland and Russia. Cultural dimensions proposed by Hofstede (2011) are associated with the forces of normative nature (Martínez-Ferrero & García-Sánchez, 2017).

In **Figure 4**, the Slovenian culture is taken as a model to other cultures. Power distance is the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions accept that power distributed unequally (Hofstede, 1997). Slovenia (71 score) demonstrates a hierarchical order. Russia shows the difference in highest power distance (93), long-term orientation (81), indulgence (20). **The Individualism** is the inter-dependence’s degree a society has among members, people’s self-image defined as “I” or “We” (<https://geert-hofstede.com>). Collectivist people belong to ‘groups’, Individualists- look after themselves. Slovenia (27) is a collectivistic society with manifest in a close long-term commitment to ‘group’. **Masculinity** indicates that the society is driven by strong competition, achievement and success (<https://geert-hofstede.com>). A low score on Feminine means the dominant values: caring for others and quality of life. The fundamental issue motivating people: to be the best (Masculine) or like what you do (Feminine). Slovenia (19) is a Feminine: “working to live”, solidarity, and quality in lives. The **Uncertainty Avoidance** (UA) feature: it is the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous situations (<https://geert-hofstede.com>). Slovenia with 88 score prefer avoid uncertainty: need for security, rules, work, punctuality.

Figure 4. Hofstede 6-D Model Comparison b/n Slovenia, Croatia, Poland and Russia



Source: Compiled based on Hofstede 6-D Model, <http://geerthofstede.com>, 2015.

The **Long Term Orientation** dimension describes how society maintain links with its past and to deal with the challenges of the present/future (<https://geert-hofstede.com>). No clear preference can be defined for Slovenia (49). **Indulgence** is the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses. Relatively weak control is “Indulgence” and relatively strong - “Restraint”: Slovenia has 48 highest score. Russia approach problems in a different fashion; taught in different ways and learning content, rather than simply transferring

Western b-knowledge; various dimensions in education (Czinkota, 1997) and cultural values. The Russian B-schools (in CIS) have next features:

1. The b-education has two forms co-existing on the ground of competition: a public professional higher education' succession model connected with the historical past, and the model based on the Western system (Баразгова & Жеребцова, 2011). During the last 20 years, there has been a boom in b-education with an emergence of private B-schools and a launch of different-quality MBA programmes. Because of that, B-schools are trying to get an external programme accreditation to raise a reputation on the local markets. The private B-schools have been accepted as 'non-public' schools with a predominantly negative perception (Рубин, 2011, p. 54).
2. There are three types of B-schools according to Mechitov and Moshkovich (2006): those, represented by business colleges housed in traditional universities, business colleges in technical universities (called engineering institutes) and large universities, specialised in business. Russian B-school has two models: when it is a structural subdivision of university or when it is a separate legal entity (Lapidus, Tarkhanov & Razumovskaya, 2015). There are three types of Diploma issued in Russia: public Diploma with a stamp seal by state accreditation, commercial with state accreditation and the established sample of non-commercial activities (without state accreditation).
3. Russian B-schools are characterised by the predominance of MBA programmes in Russian language and the lowest level of internationalisation compared to CEE and Europe. By 2012, in Russia there are 150 B-schools, where 59 nationally accredited MBA programmes, and about two dozen of joint ventures with a Western MBA degree (Myasoedov, 2012). Out of 54 MBA programmes that follow international standards (AMBA, EQUIS or AACSB), there are 12 B-schools with AMBA and 5 B-schools with 6 EPAS-accredited programmes in Russia (MBA today, EFMD, 2015). A strong preference is given for part-time MBA programmes (customers stay in jobs), b-education market in Russia does not have a top-executive training (Myasoedov, 2013).
4. Other factors matter - culture, mentality, and the ways how practices are organised with two distinct workforces (Soviet/Post-Soviet). Within these workforces, there are differences in information and informal communication, with collectivistic individualism, authoritative leadership style, perception of time (which is far from American "Time is money"), personal networks (Andreeva, 2014).
5. The Russian legislation allows two accreditation: state one conducted by the State Executive bodies, and public (professional), conducted by national and international public, academic, and professional organisations (Motova & Pykkö, 2012). The Russian state accreditation methodology based on the US: (1) criteria with type of HEIs; (2) self-evaluation (3); external evaluation (4); decision by a collegiate body (Motova & Pykkö, 2012). Obtaining accreditation is a condition for federal funding, the attainment for accreditation with privileges for nonstate accredited institutions does not guarantee uncontested legitimacy (Suspitsin & Suspitsyna, 2007). After Russia joined the Bologna, accreditation is the condition to integrate EU universities & mobility (Krouk et al., 2008).
6. The Ministry of Education in Russia initiated an accreditation process of new programs to establish academic standards, and the Russian Association of Business Education (RABE), an analogue of AACSB, established in 1990 (Mechitov & Moshkovich, 2006). RABE members include 122 B-schools (01.12.2014) (<http://www.rabe.ru/members>). Russia is a leader on CIS market in accreditation with its 6.5 mill. students in thousand HEIs plus 2 mill. students in 3 thousand colleges (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2013).
7. B-schools in Russia are from 15 years to 25 years. The typical B-school is about 20 years old (Abell, 2012). B-schools are making efforts to change the pattern of a low English

proficiency by introducing English-language business courses. B-schools have a strong role of the founders; most programmes collect the fees from students; endowments are not part of culture; an applied research is a new phenomenon (Myasoedov, 2012).

8. Majority of B-schools have a low level of research practices and publications. The demise of the USSR, in 1991 led to several drastic consequences for R&D: funding was severely reduced, priorities shifted, with national systems emerged free from Soviet influence (Sterligov & Enikeeva, 2014). Research had traditionally been separated from HEIs, being focused in the research institutions. The state standards didn't include the research effectiveness, employer and labour market (Рубин, 2011, p. 213).
9. To strengthen research capacity and to improve Russian universities' competitiveness, the government has consistently invested in HE sector. Universities "5/100" programme aimed at concentrating federal resources at 15 universities, at least 5 of them are to enter top-100 of international rankings (Wang et al., 2012). There is integration between educational and scientific institutions, but business representatives prefer to see actors of science in research (Absalyamova & Sakhapov, 2014).
10. In terms of business practices, a "bottleneck" is a lack of crucial competencies oriented toward post-industrial economies - with the ability to work as a team with the competence in communications in multicultural environments, personal quality for leadership, vision, self-criticism, decisiveness, and purposefulness (Ovsiannikov, 2013).
11. As for statistics (2013), there was a drop by 77 units compared to 2012 (in public HEIs - by 31 units, private - 46) (Source: <http://www.gks.ru>). As on 1 January 2012, there were 1046 HEIs and 2100 branches (609 - state HEIs, 437 - private) delivering over 36 767 programmes to 6 mln. students (<http://www.rosbalt.ru/main/2013/08/30/1170376>). It had been estimated by specialists that by 2012, the annual influx of students enrolled in b-education programmes in Russia could run as high as 200,000 (Shabanova, 2010).
12. There are new trends: the openings of anti-MBA programmes and the formation of corporate universities that are more than B-schools: with engineering and law schools directed to the synthesis of university and corporate education (Katkalo, 2011).

Gelbuda et al. (2008), Meyer and Gelbuda (2006), Meyer and Peng (2005), recommends to look at studies in an institutional vein with the institutional and organisational change with various transition forms of CEE B-schools. Newman (2000, p. 615) advised "*a comparison between the experiences of Russia and other countries in CEE*" for organisational transformation. Institutional analysis has the comparison between CEE and West, where the latter one being represented by the United States (Meyer & Peng, 2005). This comparison fails to explore institutional differences and forces in other settings and integrate them in management prospective in the poorly understood transition economies (Meyer & Peng, 2005) due to a lack of informal institutions' research. "*For instance, researchers could examine how former Soviet republics and other CEE economies...differ in terms of businesses' perception*", and where changes in institutions of important CEE economies (inc. Slovenia) are not researched (Kshetri, 2010, p. 371). Despite managing business in CEE resembles western markets, but differences still prevail, making it important to explore comparative practices of inter-organisational predictors in organisations (Koles & Kondath, 2014). The classification makes cross-national comparison with accreditation standards (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2013) and ownership (Aghion, Reenen & Zingales, 2013). The chapter contributes in formulating accreditation forces, mapping diversified b-landscape. Table 4 develops map of differences based on the described characteristics with a broader cross-national comparison with and between the US and Western European B-schools. Additional features are developed related to accreditation standards, rankings, social capital and included the historical differences with the expanded competitive difference (10,11,12).

Table 4. Map of differences for B-schools or Cross-National Comparison, 2013-14

Features	Sub-features	The US	EU	CEE	CIS (Russia)
A. Institutional differences	1.Language/ Culture/ Regulation	Single language/ Culture more homogenous/ Low level of regulation	50 countries, 60 languages; Multi-cultural , 28 members Heavy regul.	Slavic (Sl) traditions; EU+ national law+University regulation	Russian/Multi- cultural: 160 nation, RABE; liberalisation trend in law
	2.Key accreditation standards (2013)	AACSB International, institutional	EQUIS Institutional + AACSB	EQUIS Institutional + need: multiple	EPAS/AMBA, Programme; state/public
	3. Rankings	Top 10 (FT use AACSB/EQUIS)	Top 50, outlook international	Top 500 (Zaitseva, 2015)	2020: 5 (100) (Wang, 2012)
	4.BS average age	About 100 years old	About 200 years (1819), BS - 50 years	25 years old	10 - 20 years old
	5. Size & number	Medium to large size (c.800 BS)	Small to medium size (c.150 BS)	Small to medium size (c.10 BS per country)	Small to large 150-587 BS: RABE-AACSB Key BS: c.100
	6.Institutional ownership	Private	Mixed, but <i>dominated</i> by Public sector	Trust: public; Suspect conc.: private	Public, private In need of Legitimacy
B. Competitive differences	7.Governance	Predominantly private; Strong Public	Strong Public; Sector linkages	Predominantly public BS; private: less trusted BS	Public: big BS, private: small BS
	8.Funding and Endowment	Large endowments Strong resource base	Predominantly public funding None or small endowments; Weaker Resources	A lack of funding; no endowments; participate in the EU funds/ programmes	fees; some - State budget of Presidential programme management training
	9.International diversity (mindset)	International, but not diverse	International in outlook; diverse	Local trained abroad	Local &invited foreign Faculty
	10.Innovation	Discipline and research-based 2 year M.B.A.	Practical, problem- based; 1 year M.B.A.,	2 year M.B.A discipline- based	From 1 to 2 years M.B.A, practical
	11.Research	Goal: top research quality	Goal: top- research	Goal: the ABS list	Goal: "5-100," 5 top by 2020
C. Social capital	12.Reputation, + Governance, CSR, Leadership	The highest	High	Medium	Improved
D. Historical period****	Founding period Americanisation, Re-emancipation; 1999: Bologna, 2003: global accreditation	1881 (Wharton) 1916-45-99; 1999- AACSB International; 2003: global digital era	1819-1944; 1945-1999; 1999-2003; 2003:Supra- institutional assessment,	1991-99; transition; 1999-2003; Bologna; 2003-Supra- assessment	1991-2003 transition; 2003: Bologna Spread of programme accreditation

Abbreviation: ABS –the Association of Business Schools' Academic Journal Guide

Source: compiled by author; Antunes and Thomas, 2007; 1: Kaplan, 2014; Meyer and Gelbuda, 2006; Levy, 2015, Abell, 2012; Семеркин (2012); 2: Istileulova & Peljhan, 2013; 3. Currie et al., 2016; 11: Collet and Vives, 2013; 12: Wang, 2012; Shabanova, 2010; Thomas et al., 2013, Antunes, 2009; Lapidus et al., 2015, Amaral et al., 2009; C: Filatotchev and Nakagima, 2014; D: Aghion et al., 2013, 5: Рубин, 2011; Семеркин, 2012; Sterligov, 2015; Zaitseva, 2015; RABE;

<http://rankings.ft.com/exportranking/european-business-school-rankings-2014/pdf>

1.2 Accreditation: Change for Quality or Legitimacy

There is a perception that B-school applies for international accreditation in order to prove that there is a quality in processes or performance. To answer a question: “Why do B-school apply for international accreditation?”, we need to clarify the concept of ‘Quality’. ‘Quality’ as a mechanism refers to assessment, accreditation, audit, and external examination (Harvey & Newton 2007). Quality is a complex and multifaceted concept (Garvin, 1984), it cannot be defined (Pirsig, 1999), because no consensus has been reached on its definition; it is different for products and services, industries, and levels (Wicks & Roethlein, 2009).

It is easier to understand why the concept of quality is such a complex one, if we look at the examples of definitions of quality based on five approaches provided in Table 5.

Table 5. Types of Quality

‘Quality’ approaches	Quality definition (Garvin, 1984)	Definition for Product Quality (Garvin, 1988)	Definition for Service Quality (HE) (Seymour, 1993)
1	2	3	4
Transcendent (philosophy)	Quality is “innate excellence”, Plato	A result of producer training & standing	A result of the training, reputation, and Faculty
Manufacturing-based (consumer)	Quality elements on customer preference	Product confirms to the specifications, fit what it was designed	Quality defined by degree offerings, curriculum, course content and improved learning
Product-based (economics)	Quality as a precise & measurable variable	Product-based quality is tied with assessment, presence /absence ingredient & value	Quality is defined by improved student learning and faculty, curriculum-based, assessment
The user-based (management)	Quality lies in the eyes of the beholder	the customer’s needs, wants, desires, and preferences	Quality formed by the market, curriculum, faculty programme, a difficult for HE
Value -based (management, cost & price)	Value -based of operations management	Generic one, acceptable performance at an acceptable price.	Quality based on rankings, powerful endorsement of value

Source: Adapted from Garvin (1984), Garvin (1988) & Koslowski (2006)

From Table 5 we see that the ‘value’ is the only characteristic present in all types of quality approaches. **Perception of values in all types of qualities is more important than other characteristics.** Some companies perceive quality through ‘quality certification’ ISO 9001 reflected on productivity, business value and increase on sales (Heidari & Loucopoulos, 2013). Group, described by Wicks and Roethlein (2009) think that ‘customer satisfaction’ is a crucial factor. Garvin (1984) put elements of product quality: performance characteristics of product reliability, conformance, the degree durability, serviceability aesthetics and perceived quality. There are differences in quality between manufacturing and service sectors, between goods and services due to specifics outlined by Ghobadian et al. (1994). The service sector assumes greater economic importance with “quality”, where its understanding helps organisations with “quality improvement” (Ghobadian et al., 1994). Newton (2007) made a conclusion that any QA model is affected by situational factors, context, and how the system is viewed and interpreted. Quality in the HE refers to content and not lead to the labelling of quantitative factors (Campbell & Van der Wende, 2000).

Since the 1990s, almost every country has developed QA mechanisms, but their examination reveal that many practices fail to theorize what quality means (Blanco-Ramírez, & Berger, 2014). The emergence of regulation of management’s studies – in the form of certification, management standards and quality assurance systems suggests that the expansion could be described as a fashion (Hedmo, Sahlin & Wedlin, 2006). In companies, the 1990s saw Total

Quality Management (TQM) as the promotion of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), and *many companies were looking to use systems of accreditation for their suppliers and this applied also to governments and even the European Union*” (Brown, 2013, p. 587). Companies with international trade, included “best practice” of quality management, prior to seeking accreditation (Heras et al., 2002). The mechanism of accreditation started quickly spreading globally, with powerful interests need to enable human praxis to affect change (Cooper, Parkes & Blewitt, 2014). The AACSB accreditation, like other service-provider programme, is similar to the industry’s ISO9000 and ISO14000 by purpose (Miles et al., 2004). Dumond and Johnson (2013) compared two approaches to quality management: the AACSB accreditation standards is thinking about integration of the ISO 9001 components to improve process for B-schools. Its competitor, EFMD, was set up in 1971 as an industrial accreditation model similar to International Organisation for Standardization (ISO) certification (Sciglimpaglia et al., 2007). Hodgkinson and Kelly (2007) reviewed approaches in quality assurance in HEIs with TQM, EFQM and BSC, and the processes (4-7) on smaller scale shown in Table 6. Table 6 differentiates similar characteristics of QA, Accreditation, Quality Enhancement (QE) and certification.

Table 6. Models and Processes for Quality assurance

Models and processes	What it is
1.Total Quality Management (TQM)	A set of guiding principles with stakeholders benefiting
2.European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM)	Objective self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses
3.Balanced score card (BSC)	Translates organisational vision and strategy into objectives, measures and targets in 4 areas
4.Kaizen process	A process of incremental, systematic, gradual, orderly and continuous improvement
5.School-wide quality steering group	Small scale intervention focusing on continuous improvement and organisational culture
6.Two paradigms of organisational self-assessment	Technical performance & professional approach
Subject reviewer training	Self-evaluation and assessment

Source: Hodgkinson and Kelly, 2007

EFQM model (in Table 6) is used by EFMD as the accreditation framework for EQUIS. Formal quality assurance comes in the form of accreditation, quality audit, and quality assessment (Hoffman, 2013). Meier, Seufert & Euler (2012) describes the EFMD CEL (Chnology Enhanced Learning) quality management system with 6 quality dimensions. Two dimensions were most frequently rated ‘below standard’: competency development and continuous quality evaluation. The concept of quality emerged in HE in the 1980s “*from its more familiar industrial and commercial settings*” (Newton, 2002, p. 45). The development of QA in European HE has been closely linked to the Bologna Process and the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (Gouver & Loukkola, 2015). Quality has been at the heart of the Bologna Process as demonstrated by institutional quality developments and ‘standards’ promoting quality levels through the central role of HEIs (Sursock, Smidt & Davies, 2010). The word “accreditation” became implemented with the “Salamanca message” (in March, 2001) of European universities as one of QA mechanisms (Cret, 2011). At the same time, accreditation is different from certification. Miller (2013, p. 604) explains that accreditation is applied “to entire organisations”, and certification - “*only to specific programs and services*”); accreditation “*uses a peer review process*”, certification run by independent group accreditation approves the certification body and the certifiers issue certificates which are forwarded to the accreditation body which licenses a label for a defined period. The same entities perform simultaneously the functions of accreditors, certifiers, and

rating agencies. QA practices are important because they grant institutions a sense of legitimacy, which is the central theme of quality (Blanco-Ramírez, & Berger, 2014). The launch of the Bologna Declaration coincides with major changes in the HE environment, such as the emergence of a real European labour market and increased competition (Campbell & Van der Wende, 2000, p. 21), where accreditation is a means to guarantee such minimum standards. The Bologna initiative demonstrates an agreement to guarantee the quality of programmes (Campbell & Van der Wende, 2000). QA is viewed as “*a process where key elements of higher education are measured*” (Altbach, Reisberg and Rumbley, 2009, p. 4). Some governments linked rankings with accreditation, how a particular HEI should be classified or formally recognised (Hazelkorn, 2014): Serbia, Albania, Romania, Macedonia and the Czech Republic use rankings to classify or accredit universities. After QA has been highlighted in the European debate on HE, this debate came to a new phase, with accreditation focus (Haakstad, 2001).

According to Schwarz & Westerheijden (2004) there are the main differences in accreditation schemes across the European HE: no patterns found to demonstrate comparable structures, no patterns to demonstrate methods, and the types of evaluation processes in European accreditation schemes vary widely. Accreditation is a quality assurance system (Noori & Anderson, 2013) or, in terms of competitive advantage: “*Accreditation is a mark of excellence that goes beyond regulatory compliance and may provide accredited organisations a competitive advantage over non-accredited organisation*” (Ghooi, 2015). There is one missing element in accreditation connected with the performance element. It is found in the definition of Zammuto (2008, p. 260) for “B-school accreditation” which is “*a quality assurance scheme that certifies that accredited schools have the structures and processes in places necessary to meet their stated objectives and continually improve performance*”. The performance element is included in Quality assurance (QA) and Quality enhancement (QE). Traditionally, quality of HE has always placed an emphasis on QA, and QE is a relatively new concept (Mkhize & Cassimjee, 2013). Despite both QE and QA are concepts of one continuum, there are conflicts between academics and students on the perception about QA (Elassy, 2015). Elassy (2015) demonstrates the difference in QA and QE based on various studies demonstrated in Table 6. Students think about quality from QE perspectives, whereas faculty perceive it from QA processes (Iacovidou, Gibbs & Zopiatis, 2009). The difference between QA and QE is demonstrated in Table 7 in details.

Table 7. Quality assurance (QA) and Quality enhancement (QE)

Quality Assurance (QA)	Quality Enhancement (QE)
Insufficient weight to the teaching/learning	Considerable weight to the teaching/learning
Tends to be associated more with assessment	Tends to be associated more with improvement
Meets external standards	Meets internal standards
Moves from top to lower level	Moves from lower to top level
A summative process	A formative process
A quantitative performance	A qualitative performance
Focuses on the past	Focuses on the present and the future
Less freedom (more absolute rules)	More freedom (flexible and negotiated ways)
Gives a greater space to administrators	Gives a greater space to academics

Source: Elassy (2015), Iacovidou, Gibbs and Zopiatis (2009)

We look at the findings in international management research about the perception of change from global accreditation in B-schools from its emergence in 2001 up to the recent time.

There are two views: independent research of B-schools (Table 8) and the viewpoints of accreditors (Table 9) with recommendations for B-schools. The discussions of B-schools focus on some values, advantages of accreditation and how it produces the effects on the various elements of schools: the faculty body, students, research, internationalisation, change of programmes, missions and goals. As for **perception** on accreditation, institutional factors of school (reputation, innovativeness, progressiveness) and international orientation score lower on the faculty list compared to its highly valued research factors (Verhaegen, 2005). Palmer and Short (2008) note that Public, urban colleges (without a PhD) are most likely to mention the public image, while smaller private colleges are least likely to mention it. As for **change** is concerned, De Onzoño & Carmona (2012) suggest a roadmap of change drivers: organisations with multipolar competition, contents and mode of education, institutionalization. The last feature, institutionalisation is the conformity to expected values, forms and processes would let organisations gain support and legitimacy constitutes a major driver of change, with effect on the strategic alliances, goals of B-schools with the Red Queen effect, “*a constant change to keep in the same place*” (De Onzoño & Carmona, 2012, p. 387). Accreditation changes both B-schools, and their accreditors. For some professions like accounters, integrating PQ faculty will require a change: AACSB has to back off the terminal degree requirements for its faculty (Norris, 2015). Julian & Ofori-Dankwa (2006) look at **the effects of AACSB** on decision making, reputation and legitimisation, and conclude that accreditation may be viewed negatively if the environment is rapidly changing.

Thietart (2009) shows that EQUIS and AACSB bring the institutional **forces**, ranking and the imperative for internationalisation. The AACSB accreditation made its standards easier for B-schools to become accredited which is a threat to business education; AQ/PQ approach is criticised; and, the AACSB body is left without a clear direction for its superior brand position (White et al., 2009). Thus, a new coalition emerged for the reason AACSB was formed: to separate schools from those that are less dedicated to excellence in b-education. Verhaegen (2005) notices the gaps between deans and faculties on AACSB and EQUIS accreditation with the differences between public and private schools: private are more mission and internationally-oriented, they are more satisfied with academic freedom and remuneration with higher ranking of their executive education compared to public schools. The perception on changes in B-schools are listed in Table 8 with the division on research papers (RP), Viewpoints (V), Conceptual (CP) or Essays (E). Marconmi (2013), the only one who include the CEE region in 2004 and 2008 and conclude that professional accreditations can be a means to reduce students’ uncertainty and facilitate student mobility. Wilson and Thomas (2012) notice the similarity in many curricula arising from isomorphic trends and recommend a great change in “*relevant*” teaching, research and business.

McPhail et al. (2015) considers the importance of assessor recruitment, training; service excellence; improved processes; the importance of value with the findings on optimisation of the regulatory environment to drive performance and quality. Harker (2016) questions whether the change is positive under the Anglophone system’s accreditations. In terms of global uncertainties, it is important to examine the consequences of the changes in B-schools for the various stakeholders upon whom legitimacy ultimately depends (Pettigrew & Starkey, 2016). The next Table 9 includes the prevailing opinion of accreditation bodies on change and values. Therefore, their position is presented in a general view (GV), general review (GR) or viewpoint (VP). Vinten (2000) starts from the point that business educators and industry managers should work together in order to implement TQM programmes, with the pressures to liberalise the curriculum in B-schools. Accreditation with AACSB and EQUIS might be the source of difficulties (Vinten, 2000), despite AACSB reinforces professionalisation (Spender, 2005).

Table 8. Accreditation of Business schools: Gaps

Author/Country	Accreditation (A)/Focus/Gap	Findings on B-Schools (BS)
1.Paton&Mordaunt 2001, UK, descript.	EQUIS Accreditation in UK in public non-profit management education	U.K. BS has achieved EQUIS because of the profound changes in modes for teach.& learn.
2.Verhaegen, 2005. The Netherlands, Research paper, RP	AACSB/EQUIS; 69 European BS on reputation, value, research. Gap: non-Western BS, how they different	Perception gap b/n Dean and faculty; Research & internationalisation: values; Institutional factors vs. research.
3. Palmer & Short, 2008. USA, RP on content missions	AACSB. Change towards missions 408 of BS & measures of BS features Gap: contextual analysis b/n BS;	Mission are changed after revision and reflect purpose of BS. Pub./Private BS. It requires continuous improvement: external constituents
4.Romero, 2008. Peru, alternative	Quality and brand, a source of comp. advantage. Gap: response to change;	Negative effect of AACSB. AACSB has positive impact on strategy, flexibility creativity.
5.White, Miles & Levernier, 2009. USA. RP	AACSB & ACBSP. Suggestion to establish different levels of A. Gap: Why B-school do perceive AACSB	The AACSB vocational approach to B-education with different standards & level of prestige presents a competitive threat : AQ/PQ
6.Zammuto, 2008 Australia. RP	AACSB/EQUIS. Gap: is it beneficial for markets & quality differentiator	Negative effect on strategy: corporate universities and on-line education are threats
7. Thietart, 2009. France, RP	AACSB/EQUIS. The shift `teaching to research` in BS created tension, challenge, ins. change. Gap: forces	EFMD mission was a force for change at the institutional level. Research is now a priority to gain credibility, hire faculty & suc. perform
8. Lejeune & Vas, 2009. Belgium, RP	EQUIS. Cutral and environmental change. 31 BS.:descript. Gap: Effect	Cultural changes by EQUIS imply a positive impact on performance. Impact of A.
9.Wu, Huang, Kuo & Wu, 2010. Taiwan, RP	AACSB/EQUIS. 642 curriculum web-content analysis of US, Western European, Oceania and Asian BS. Gap: Comparison of BS with A.	Support for sustainability-related curricula; Regional differences b/n BS; EQUIS – electives, mandatory AACSB approach: compulsory curricular
10.Julian&Ofori-D., 2006, US Essay	AACSB. A is not good for BS. Gap: Little theory development & empirical research on its effects	Competitive B-schools with envir. turbulence, competitiveness & discontinuous change. Effect: decision, reputation & legitimacy
11.Noorda, 2011. Netherlands,View	AACSB & EQUIS. value of rankings and Accreditation. Need: adopt to the needs of business & check value	Learning from peers is good in mission, research, learning, and teaching. Inbreeding – a problem. Need to analyse what went wrong.
12. De Onzoño et al. 2012, Spain, CP	EQUIS&AACSB, certification of firms, Gap: roadmap of main change drivers for A., Red Queen effect	Sources of change: multi-polar competition, new org. species, mode, institutionalisation
13. Everard et al., 2013. USA. RP	AACSB. A major change in 1990s to accredit schools that would not be accredited. Gap: Value of brand	Since the move to a mission-driven focus, AACSB has not achieved its mission, damaged its credibility. It is easier for BS to gain A.
14.Marconi, 2013, Netherlands, RP	EQUIS & AACSB, 2004/2008. Gap: CEE ranking, accreditation	152 HEIs: Accreditation&rankings work as a signal for institutional quality for students
15.Goby/Nickerson 2014, UAE, CS	AACSB development of a testing instrument for the learning process	Valid indicator of the effectiveness of teaching & learning, accreditation requirements
16.Haertle & Miura (2014)	AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN in PRME. Gaps: values	Controversy of B-schools and their leaders are in strategic crossroads, uncertain on long term.
17. McPhail, et al., 2015. Australia RP	Australia undergo reforms in accreditation. Gap: performance Development of a revised standards	Performance indicators to achieve equity, effectiveness, efficiency & quality, focus on regulation & performance
19.Harker, 2016, Aust/Fran/Scotland	Gaps: accreditation/relevance from the dominant Anglophone system	Value: benchmarking; effect on business. Rising A. create a second tier of mediocre clones. Changes: ranking, exchanges
20.Pettigrew&Starkey, 2016, UK	Gaps: to examine the consequences of changes in B-schools for the various stakeholders for legitimacy	In the context of global uncertainties, it is important to analyse stakeholders upon which the legitimacy of B-schools depends on
20.Solomon et al., 2017, USA/France	AACSB. Gap the factors enhancing accreditation. Schools not successful	Factors to match mentor and B-school and the factors to meet the present 15 standards.

Sources: *Journal of Management Development, Journal of Management Learning & Education, 2001-2017*

Change is in managers who should involve liberal art with the imagination which confronts the perceptual, emotional, moral, social, and technological constraints of the time (Spender, 2005). UK's authors discuss B-schools' accreditation: competition comes from B-schools of alternative providers (corporate universities, consulting firms and companies with training); where AACSB with EQUIS helping with value in attracting good quality's foreign students (Hawawini, 2005) and the value of comparative benchmarking in France (Harker, 2016). EFMD recommends B-schools to adopt strategies to differentiate themselves, developing case studies with the balance of West-East and East-West knowledge (Cornuel, 2007). Successful B-schools will seek accreditation with their need to adopt strategies to differentiate B-schools, which will offer innovative international programmes in the multi-cultural environment; with their change in curricula, strategies, alliances, and partnerships. The competitor, AACSB recommends B-schools' leaders, faculty and stakeholders to be responsive to the needs of business and check which accreditation provides value in a time of dynamic change (Trapnell, 2007). Other accreditors give advice to B-schools not to be involved into inbreeding (Noorda, 2011). Accreditation bodies recommend B-schools to look at their values and benefits: how and why they can be relevant for B-schools. International accreditation play a complementary role producing digital market signals and serve as a catalyst for change due to different stages of an accreditation's preparation process (Hommel, 2009; Urgel 2007). Hommel (2009, p. 241) is the only one who focuses on CEE region which is an attractive market due to the high returns and its transition experience, where accreditation as "*a catalyst for change*" shows a different reality in this part of the world. It has "*path dependency*" problem, limited strategic value, when "*the quality spread of partnership portfolios is increasing over time, possibly even to levels with harmful effects on accreditation outcomes*". Assessment, brand recognition and advice for school's improvement are values of EQUIS, and different accreditations (AACSB, EQUIS & AMBA) bringing different benefits and values. EQUIS provides a differential value with respect to other accreditations (national AACSB or AMBA) to a select number of B-schools globally that strive for excellence (Urgel, 2007). The AACSB accreditation demands B-schools articulate clear learning goals with students'outcomes assessments. Value is seen in increasing accountability for student learning, and AACSB accredited B-schools are well positioned to respond to expanded disclosures (Trapnell, 2007). Wilson and Thomas (2012, p. 372) raise two points: first, "accreditation is elitist": it serves to diminish the value of education outside the accredited schools to preserve the elite. Second, B-schools are to become less nationally oriented, because managers operate globally. EFMD discuss responsible management education (RME): it is becoming the value for B-schools. Thomas and Cornuel (2011, 2012) review various B-schools' models of change with the most radical, network-based model that have focus on the values, vision and purpose. Pro-active societal stakeholder should be potential catalyst for change with more emphasis on cultivating values, attitudes and beliefs in B-schools (Cornuel & Hommel, 2015). Due to lack of deep studies and limited theories, the Table 10 includes research on accreditation based on dissertations. The values of quality accreditation are fluid and subject to change over time (Bell & Taylor). Thus, perception on value is very important not only for AACSB and EQUIS bodies, but also for B-schools (Tables 8 & 9). We also expand the articles, papers and publications up to the level of dissertations (Table 10) written mainly in the 21st century to include all perceptions about the values of accreditation, and the forces that push B-schools to seek accreditations.

Based on the analysis of Tables 8, 9 and 10, the following **Proposition (P1)** is derived: **Perception of accreditation values in B-schools is relatively more important than cost.** European accreditor EFMD (Urgel, 2007) in Table 9 recommends considering the change

Table 9. Viewpoints of the top-Accreditation bodies on its Value and Benefits

Author /year / view	Vinten, 2000 GV	Spender, 2005 GV	Hawawini, 2005 VP	Urgel, 2007; Cornuel, 2007	Trapnell, 2007; 2008 Commentary/ VP;	Thomas & Wilson, 2009 VP	Hommel, 2009, view	De Meyer, 2012 VP	Wilson, Thomas, 2012, VP	Thomas, Cornuel, 2011 ; 2012 GV/GR	Cornuel, Hommel, 2015, RP research
Position	Southampton BS, UK	Leeds University, UK	INSEAD, Dean, France	EFMD, QualityDir,	AACSB, USA Execut. Vice President,	EFMD ex-VP, UK, Dean, Warwick BS,	Associate Director of EFMD	INSEAD, Cambridge Singapore	UK, Singapore	Singapore Mang.Uni, EFMD	HEC, EFMD, EBS
Downloads	1	2	3	4, 5	6, 7	8	9	10	11	12,13	14
	1376	2192	4376	2737	2159	1511	n/a	1164	1144	941/1532	117
Purpose	Various forces for BS, global challenges	to examine the notion of management, a critique	To explore the future challenges, opportunities	Value of accreditation (3 val), status for B-schools	To share value, and the benefits of AACSB, its perspectives in a dynamic change time	Examines some of the controversies facing BS in the future	How BS schools of the CEE region are coping with the pressures	insights on experience with internationalisation	Challenge facing BS for A. legitimacy: 19c: 1 st , 1970: 2 nd 1980-3 rd by A.	strategic debate on BS' future; evaluation, focus on educational criteria & outcome	Institut. BS logic is shaped by entrepreneurialism, for-profit orient, reputation
Accreditation	AACSB & EQUIS is agenda: come - what - may	AACSB, EQUIS AMBA	AACSB, EQUIS	AACSB, EQUIS	AACSB standards as an authority to grant degrees (2008)	AACSB research & teaching, value to student/society	AACSB, EQUIS in CEE BS	AACSB, EQUIS prov. a incentive	EQUIS, AACSB	EQUIS, AACSB	EQUIS Market is shaped by A; ranking
Impact of A:	Joint A. as process: how A. bodies will succeed	On the post-degree value of student's credential;	Value in attraction of quality, foreign students	On the BS' brand name & beyond domestic frontiers	Differentiation is crucial. A. is relevant, committed to quality	On research, a pervasive institute.force is a "tyranny of rankings"	Fail to obtain AACSB or EQUIS accreditation	A impact leadership, technology deployment	Mimetic tendency constr. strategic choice. A is elitist	Environm. influences, criticism of legitimacy, research, society, bus.	Mapping RME with intended learning outcomes, ILO
Interesting insight for A.	Controversy around BS; difr. evaluation is an mandate	A. pushes professionalisation; discipline-based art education	The most challenging criteria: internationalisation and faculty	An advice is given to look at the dissertations; special value of A.	In global differentiation students are faced with the dilemma of choice under multiple A.	institutional forces do not make the production of practical knowledge possible	BS seek A for inst. records rather than using it as development strategy	Global drivers; paradox of announcement (for internat.)	BS should change concerns to issues of relevance	13,000 BS in emerging nation that cannot meet A standards; redesign BS; leadership	BS are slow adopters of RME (responsible man.edu)

and accreditation's issues much deeper, - through the lens of dissertations (Table 10). Besides, the lack of deep studies and absence of theories in Table 9, the following Table 10 is highly relevant, based on reviewed 20 dissertations: it includes broader and deeper studies on quality management practices, mainly, accreditations in higher education at the national, regional and international levels. Table 10 includes key research questions and results with future research and limitations. The **change in accreditation** is raised in Palmer (1981), Beard (2005), Faitar (2006), Wolk (2007), Fryer (2007), Hunnicutt (2008), Nash (2008), Hoover (2009), Hodge (2010), Knutson (2010); Dodson (2009), Palmquist (2009), Buttermore (2010), Caravella (2011), Conner (2011), Thibodeau (2011), Williams (2011). Buttermore (2010) explores change on student outcomes and AACSB sell-down effect under Kotter's change theory (1996) and Hefferlin (1969) change theory to HE, "deliberately structured to resist change" with recommendations to consider the **various stakeholders** groups to match the changing needs of employers in **CEE region and Russia**.

Dissertations like Wolk (2007) look at accreditation from the technology point of view as a driving **force**, others like Nash (2008) under the Malcolm Baldrige's model, a continuous improvement framework. Third group (Hunnicutt, 2008; Palmquist, 2009, Elliott, 2010; Caravella, 2011) make some references to the **institutional theory**. Thibodeau (2011) considers the perception of institutional and individual change under the appreciative inquiry as a theoretical framework for regional accreditation and recommends the meta-analysis of case studies on transformational changes to institutions. Wolk (2007) makes a comparison of three accreditation bodies AACSB, ACBSP and IACBE and which is used for ranking schemes. The comparison of accreditation bodies is based on focus of AACSB which is in research excellence, ACBSP – in teaching excellence, and IACBE – in outcomes assessment with AACSB which is exclusively used for ranking. With reference to effects from accreditation, Palmer (1981) concluded that AACSB accreditation is a form of consumer protection, and its effects are indirect: better qualified faculty, better students, better programmes. The most relevant dissertation is Hodge (2010) thesis which refers to the motivation for Western-European, American and New Zealand's B-schools for EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA accreditations under the lens of institutional theory with information asymmetry and bandwagon effect. Accreditation also has a general effect of hiring the new staff (Hodge, 2010). Palmquist (2009) sees transformative effects for employment relations, organizational power, consumer services, and they are all far beyond what anybody could expect. Thibodeau (2011) mentions the effect of institutional effectiveness, and Buttermore (2010) - the effect on student outcomes. Thomas and Cornuel (2012) compare AACSB & EFMD and identify the new needs discussing the impact, challenges and re-invention of B-schools in transition with their current strategic debates and legitimacy. Whilson and Thomas (2012) notice the similarity in curricula, isomorphism, and increase of schools' relevance, where the legitimacy depends on "regime" of elitist AACSB and EQUIS. Hodge (2010) provides evidence that B-schools are seeking accreditation to achieve **legitimacy** rather than performance, where the motivation of B-schools to seek AACSB and EQUIS accreditation is caused by isomorphic and bandwagon pressures (Hodge, 2010) with recommendations on research for countries different from the US and Western European and triangulations of results for Deans, faculty and employers. Palmquist (2009) shows that the impact from AACSB and EQUIS is the increased **legitimacy** and refers to institutional theory with the effects from accreditations. State accreditation is not sufficient in the Eastern Europe and Russian private HEIs (Suspitsin, 2007), referring to other legitimacy with further Table 10. Thus, **Proposition (P2): B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy** (rather than quality) leading to the legitimacy from certain accreditations with effects in chapter 1.3.

Table 10. Summary Table of Reviewed Dissertations on Accreditation (A.) of B-schools (BS)

1.Author/Year	2. Key question	3.Method/sample	4.Theory/Key related issues	5. Key Results	6. Future research/Limitation (L)
1.Suspitsin, 2007. Private HE in Russia: legitimacy	RQ: Who are stakeholders? A. to gain legitimacy	Multiple case study approach 9 non-state institutions;	Institutional theory (IT). The private institutions' forms, legitimacy-management strategies; the forces & constraints in the external environment facilitate Russian universities' chances for Strategies for Accreditation Acquisition.	The federal government as a powerful legitimizing entity based on law/tradition. It shows evidence on how A. enhances private institutions' social security.	A comparative analysis of public & private BS, ideological shift in CIS; cul/econ/pol.factors in CEE. L: Market - a young phenomenon
2.Hodge, 2010 Accreditation: BS explanatory multiple-case	Motivation to seek internat. accreditation for BS	A multiple case study. Sample of 17 BS: AMBA, AACSB, EQUIS,	Isomorphism, information asymmetry (IA), bandwagon (BA). 1. A. model: environmental conditions lead to response in Legitimacy; 2. No analysis by BS. 3. Motivators: recognition, benchmarking, positioning	BS seek A.for legitimacy not performan. Intangible benefit: a driver for change, reputation, internationalisat.. Legitimacy is a signalling quality	1.replicate in different countries; 2. how the value of A. changes; 3.triangulate results: employers; L: Deans are not in the initial A.
3.Palmquist, 2009. Shaping the Identity of the Intern. BS.	RQ: To which extent is A. tool for change? The impact on the organisation.	A semistructured interview, 2 BS with triple A: AACSB, EQUIS,AMBA	The theoretical framework has 3 areas: school environment, Strategy as practice, Institutional theory. A model: the past, present, future; Impact: increased legitimacy: academic excellence, customer approach, employability, internation.. Reasons: competitiveness at the international level; Strategy	Impact: comp. position, legitimacy, creating the identity, making cooper. easier, org. change. Forces: competition, identity, technolo. Risk: homogenizing, discourage innovation, differentiation	How the growing number of institutions with A.will affect the value of A.in the future? Will it lead to the standardisation? What is the effect of A. on organization
4.Caravella, 2011. Mimetic, coercive & nor. influences isomorphism II?	3RQ: Do CO, NO, MI forces lead to institut. isomorphism II?	A comparative qualitative case study.Interviews 6 institutions	IT: old&new streams. Fundamental characteristics of A: 1995-2000; 2004-2009. The evidence of coercive pressures operating in org. field. Coercive isomorphism stems from political influence & org. legitimacy via laws,	Not all inst.practices are isomorphic Forces dictate homogeneity , institution., pressure to be legitimate, fund, network. CO, MI, NO forces, leading to ISO	A focus on isomorphism may provide accurate picture on org. change & inst.practices. L: focus on heterogeneity.
5.Thibodeau, 2011.Appreciative A: a mixed method of IA.	RQ: Do participation in A. relate to inst. change (IC)?	A mixed method (qual/quant). Sample: faculty, adm., stud., empl	AI-Appreciative inquiry is a theoretical framework for regional A. Perception of institutional change (IC), IC scale (low, high), individual.Meta-analysis of case-studies for transformational changes. Institut. practices & Resources,	IC & ind. change across 13 institutions: related to structures, processes, climate change. Input: faculty, audit, stud. Adv., physical imp, data, program, admission	Broader population of IA users: interview individuals who didn't perceive IC from A. or focus ind. Limitation: responses of individ.
6.Buttermore, 2010. Closing gap in b-edu:	RQ: Why a gap exists b/n what BS teach&Bus.	Exploratory case study AACSB. Interviews, doc.	Change theory & how it occurs. Why did BS decide to change its program, reasons for transformation. It explored the change at a AACSB to match the needs of employers.	Cultural& organizational change & part. benefits by AACSB. motivation and process for change at a AACSB. Deans	Focus: employers, b-connections; the other stakeholder is alumni; Limitation: recollections, honesty
7.Palmer, 1981 The effects of AACSB A. in business	RQ: What are the nature & extent of AACSB effects	Case study. Structural-func., content analysis, 4 institutions	Stages: self assessment, a peer review, a compliance review. In theory A. is voluntary, not affecting funding or placement of graduates. A. is a form of consumer protection, safety rather than quality.	AACSB influences B-education, and the effects are indirect: better qualified faculty, better students, better programs, prestige among peers and bus.community.	The effects of A. on management personnel: MBA programs, employers, associations. L: there is no urban institutions
8.Wolk, 2007 Survival: BS & accreditation	RQ: Do student accept technol. & condition?	3 instruments to measure. Sample:110 stud.	AACSB, ACBSP, IACBE: Technology Acceptance Model, ressure to effect change in b-education. EFMD model B-schools survival factors: A.standard, student supply, alumni.	This study utilizes the use of external variables. Forces from internal and external sources.	More variables are to be used. L: the student population
9.Conner, 2011. Practices for A.effectiveness	RQ: What practice for A. effectiveness?	Mixed method study (quantit. & qualitative data)	A theoretical framework based on accreditation purposes: to demonstrate quality, accountability. A. based on 2 models: the experts' opinion model, objectives-based evaluation.	Qualitative data from interviews, doc. Review: student learning outcomes, assessment, planning. Curriculum change	The gaps on institutional practices. No studies to compare institutional effectiveness
10.Dodson, 2009.Examin.: accredited BS	RQ: Do accred. BS follow the best practices?	Quantitative. Surveys are 167, 83 AACSB units	Based on a framework, developed in 1996 under the AAHE (Association of American Education). AACSB, IACBE, ACSBP. AAHE (1992) uses 9 principles of good practice for assessment. Institutional accreditation dates:1997-2010.	3 accrediting bodies. Assessment on student learning & A. provide validation of quality, change in curriculum. AACSB, BS are more research oriented;	Recommendations on assessment, incentives,stakeholders'feedback. L: unequal sample sizes type of analysis

11. Elliott, 2010 Context/Impact, A. consequence	RQ: What are consequences of A. BS? Canada	multiple case Sample: 4 BS with AACSB.	IT. RQ: does A. has an enabling influence on organization? Historical, social, cultural. The contextual factors: impacts, influencing drivers, consequences of accreditat, leadership.	Perceived impact drivers for A.: enhanced reputation, leverage for change, focus on research, efficiencies, quality, pr.changes.	A. learning in 3 schools, the learning effects are limited in scope, definition& magnitude.
12. Faitar, 2006 The role of A.in private HEs.	RQ: does the policy for A. stimulate the private HE?	A multi-site case of universities in Romania with the A.	Grounded theory. A complex framework of privatization& accreditation in HE. The impact of A., the lack of financial support, a state policy, the length of process&evaluation. The changes in CEE: Check Republic, Poland, Estonia.	The complete A. took 12 years. Rectors agreed this process stopped the deterioration education. Some private accredited universities may disappear.	Romania: quality assurance procedures of the future must include an internationalization and practices of institutions
13. Baker, 2011 A mixed method of the A perceptions	5 RQ: examine and identify the perception of A.	A mixed method study. A case study approach.	In the late of 1800s a new trend of A. in American HE: how & why standards should be mandated for education. Views against A.: the faculty of institutions. Concerns are expressed over quality as an “elusive” concept.	The leaders need to be vigilant on changing standards: opinions about A.& how it could be improved. The deans were surveyed using a Likert-scaled	A similar study of other schools: a more holistic understanding of educators on accreditation. L: delimited to 6 seminaries.
14. Fryer, 2007 Accreditation in California: a case study	RQ: Do high school leaders (HSL) value the accreditation	A case study for 4 schools with WASC. Sample: 4 schools	A conceptual framework that details specific predictive instruments of school improvement (accreditation) and the phenomenon of a mismatch between those instruments. Changed leadership.	Leadership –an essential element on When school adapted reporting – they became a benchmark. leaders agreed that there were too many reporting	Longitudinal study that measures the actual time spent by high school leaders in preparing reports, L.: schools in California
15. Hoover, 2009 Accreditation & student results	11 RQ: What is primary purpose of A.? What is A. perceptions?	A qualitative case study. Sample: individuals	Conceptual framework: This study was a qualitative assessment, which utilized a bottom-up approach in analyzing the data. It provides the grounds for changes to the A. model.	How might a specific A. model respect the uniqueness of the individual college providing a measure for student outcomes? Education and career.	L.: include those associated with the sample or mix of participants, skills of the researcher, the individuals from colleges
16. Hunnicutt, 2008. Institut. intended to achieve A.:	RQ: How Deans are impacted by change of A	Qualitative comparative case. Sample: 5 Schools	The dean’s leadership may be categorized as either the Contingency Theory and/or Leader Member Exchange Theory. Instit. factors: cause, constituents, content, control, context. Institutional theory, dimensions; environment;	Leadership approach is influential; Findings supported the concept for conditions and factors impact the leadership approach; market& resources	The leadership approaches of the deans to determine whether other approaches or theories could also apply& influence those theories
17. Knutson, 2010 on change due to accred.A	RQ: What is the cultural changes	Grounded theory: impact of program changes from A. Sample: 7 members	The grounded theory methodology, a grounded strand that supports the study’s theoretical framework, used one case study university. Past/present/future A.- accreditation decisions are reflections of the faculty culture. Change: faculty culture, programs, attitude, structural changes.	Quality leadership is essential; requirements are increasing; accreditation was requesting more data and evidence; A. was a painful process: a lack of faculty cooperation, some - blocked progress	A survey with a large sample, Duplicate this study with a similar/different institution. L: limited sample, unforeseen data from focus group
18. Beard, 2005 Accreditation & org. learning	RQ: How A. affect OLC org. learn capacities	Quantitative methodology; 31 items-survey	The framework is based on two related areas: (a) OL and (b) continuous quality initiatives. OL theory and HE higher education. Forces of change, Structural/Operational change	2001-05 change: mission, vision, org.cult, leaders, knowl. sharing; competence Quality may not transfer well in HEIs	Mixed methodologies research; a larger sample change. L.: limited to quant.data
19. Nash, 2008 Results of A. to guide institution improvement	RQ: What are nat. accredit-n	Sample – 5 schools coordinators	The Malcolm Baldrige model is a continuous improvement framework used in educational institutions addressing specific criteria, self study development process, external peer-team review procedures similar to the accred. process	Recommendations focus on: data on lack of space; student strategies; business, industry & community support strategies; future changes for the public information	Future research on institutions, A., student performance. Limitation: research population is accredited institutions only.
20. Williams, 2011 on the accreditation	RQ: How faculty make meaning of A.	Regional A: focus group; interviews. Sampl e of adm. and faculty	The theoretical framework is social constructivism theory (reality, knowledge, learning). The social constructivist theory Institutional effectiveness; Faculty made meaning of accreditation based on faculty members seem to be negative.	The negativity stems from the lack of knowledge on interactions with faculty about the A. Each participant conveyed a lack of information/knowledge about A. Negative feelings about the process.	The effectiveness of A. the perception of faculty from other types of HEIs; administrators, A; longitudinal. L.: sample is not representative

1.3 Accreditation Effects

The accreditation is one of the most talked about and “*least understood facets of academia*” (MacKenzie, 1964, p. 363; Hardin and Stocks, 1995, Young, 1979): educational accreditation and its effects have never been understood by public. Cornelissen et al. (2015) recognise that Institutional theory has become one of the most important perspectives in management and organisational research with the recent trend to study “*microfoundations*”, explaining the endurance and change. Romanelli (1992) insists that institutions cannot be properly understood. Accreditation is not a new phenomenon: it can be traced back to 18th century: the concept was originated in USA (Reddy, 2008), or in 1850-1920 according to Woolston (2012). What do we know about the global institutions of AACSB and EFMD? The biggest mistakes people make is not understanding an institution’s history, especially in the transition of power (Shinn, 2017). Accreditation bodies behave like transnational institutions (TNI): they penetrate markets to expand their market share with certain strategy. Power system that transforms change does it through the global control system (who decides where and how to change). Political institutions can be viewed as fast-moving institutions as they can change overnight (Roland, 2005, p. 2), but “*the interaction between slow-moving and fast-moving institutions can shed light on institutional change (why it occurs, how, and when)*”. There is a growth among international B-schools, regional teaching, two-year and for-profit institutions (Zhao & Ferran, 2016), that will increase demand for global accreditation. The political economists make conclusion that a change in the 21st century will be seen through three parallel processes linked to the global power: 1. the gradual reform of outdated formal institutions; 2. the subtle decrease of their significance if they resistant; and 3. the emergence of network patterns resultant from the strategies of state actors who have become discontent with the status quo of the international system (Flemes & Ebert, 2017). In the 17th century Spinoza in his theory of knowledge, says that we know something only when we understand it through its causes. For proposition “*the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things*”, Spinoza showed the proof: “*to have the idea of an effect is to “know” the effect*”, where knowledge of effect depends on the knowledge of its cause (Wilson, 1995, p. 97). Indeed, Beatty (2013) confirms how little is known about accreditation effects at the institutional level, because research on its values and effects is limited. We need to explore effects from accreditations.

1.3.1 AACSB effects

Despite the United States has the longest experience in accreditation practices, AACSB accreditation still “*may be one of the most widely discussed and least understood facets of academia*” (Hardin & Stocks, 1995, p. 83). Prior to its international experience in the late 1990s, AACSB had regional accreditation – for the entire college/university; or specialised one, - identifying entrants into the professional fields (Hardin & Stocks, 1995). According to Woolston (2012), regional accreditors developed operations in 1920-1950, and the next next 1950-1985 years were a Golden Age in HE. The AACSB has undergone three name changes for its history, becoming AACSB *International* in 2001, standing for the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (McKee et al., 2005). According to Pinkham (1955), the US Bureau of Education published a list of all universities authorized by the states to grant degrees in 1870, because American students flocked to European universities, where foreign institutions had to assess the educational records of visiting students. Collegiate business education was marked by the founding of the Wharton School of Finance and Economy at the University of Pennsylvania in 1881 (Goodrick, 2002). The growth of B-schools occurred prior to World War I, and in the first decades of the 20th

century, already local forces played a large role in moulding business programmes (Goodrick, 2002). At that time the organizational field was underdeveloped, and some schools imitated the Harvard model, the larger effect was to influence the development of a concept of management based on the scientific model (Goodrick, 2002).

Initial membership standards were adopted in AACSB already in 1917 with the fee of US\$25 per year which is equivalent to \$464 adjusted for today (Glick, 2015). The criticism against “the evil tide” of accrediting was raised in 1924 by the National Association of State Universities with too many accreditation agencies (Pinkham, 1955). The massive accreditation flows are observed: “*twenty high schools for Negroes*” are accredited in 1932 (Trenholm, 1932, p. 34). Despite depression, there were 36 colleges accredited in 1938 (Marks, 1939) with the goal of AACSB to improve b-education by attending conferences and visiting peer schools (Glick, 2015). The federal government was specifying “acceptable” schools after the end of the Second world war, and the AACSB became the accreditation agency in 1948 instead of ‘dean’s club’ (Goodrick, 2002). The decades following World War II were marked with changes. Goodrick (2002) saw four reasons: first, a tremendous growth in student enrolment and B-schools; second, older returning students increased the value of a b-degree; third, field level players (AACSB) gained in strength and influence; fourth, b-education began to be seen as ripe for change. The main criticism was against the trend of standardisation, limiting the local initiative and the freedom (Pinkham, 1955) with “*the Accreditation Problem*” occurred due to the undesirable by-products of the system”: “*the threat of overstandardisation loomed in the minds of those educators who knew how essential diversity is in American democracy*” (Pinkham, 1955; p. 67). AACSB was also brought into accounting (Carey, 1964). Stepanovich et al. (2014) mark that AACSB influence many changes in B-schools, and recognize the importance of the international dimension for U.S B-education in 1959. In 1970s Young (1979) wrote that initially accreditation served for admission to a “*private club of likeminded institutions*”, but it had been changed, with the concerns on educational quality and institutional integrity.

Weber (2013) describes that in 1976 AACSB starts requiring ethics in the curriculum. One of the key recommendations for “Nontraditional Education” is that accrediting bodies cannot have two sets of criteria for “traditional” and “non-traditional”: attention is to be given to educational outcomes (Young, 1979). The same standards are the threat of overstandardisation, and now its purposes are changing dramatically (Hartle, 2012). AACSB has been in transformational process since 2000 (Trapnell, 2012), and the critics say accreditation pushes deans on the image management’s focus which is wrong (Antunes & Thomas, 2007). Accreditation discrimination is “*resulting for individuals simply because their educational credentials, academic degrees are accredited or not accredited by a specific agency*” (McFarlane, 2010, p. 1). CEOs of large firms with non-accredited degrees provide higher returns than “the Gold Standard” of AACSB (Jalbert et al., 2011).

The quality of schools with AACSB has worsened since 1993 till 2011 (Everard et al., 2012), which has damaged AACSB credibility in the process. When AACSB as the ‘highest standard of achievement’ is entirely mission-specific, without the reference to education, the credibility of such reconciliation is in question (Lowrie & Willmott, 2009). It is the idea of profit-making capitalism: “*the revenues that do drive organisation*” (Everard et al., 2012, p. 1001). Effects of AACSB are examined in 1980s with indirect effects on qualified staff, students, programmes, and better occupational performance in the public universities (Palmer, 1981). Sciglimpaglia et al. (2007) shows faculty attitude on EQUIS & AACSB effects: accreditation strengthens motivation to foreign students (85.1%), giving recognition (75.9%), degrees (67.9%), appeal to business (about 62.6%) with local students (60.4%) and an edge in fund raising (42.6%). The AACSB membership’s costs \$20,000 USD per year:

AACSB has the effect of building reputation on the faculty's quality, stringent admissions criteria, and good graduate placement (White et al., 2009). Hedrick et al. (2010) shows effects on performance, where salaries, teaching loads, research productivity are significantly different at accredited versus non-accredited.

Table 11. Effects, standards and value of AACSB

View	Value	Effects	Standards	Other points
McKee, Mills, & Weatherbee, 2005 Canada	In the MBA programme	The presence of isomorphism and ideology of the US	Gold standards, isomorphic process mirroring the US	benefits of AACSB -in the context of isomorphic pressure
Miles, Franklin, Grimmer, & Heriot, 2015 UK & Australia	The AACSB value proposition of accreditation for BS has been hotly debated.	Effect of changes on faculty, workloads, emphasis on teaching, research & service, the cost of initial A.	Revised due to competition & changing social, economic, politics; technologies	school's ability to be effective in faculty recruitment, student placement
Abdelsamad et al. (2015); Eisner, 2015; Brink & Costigan, 2015, Miles et al., 2015; Krom & Buchholz, 2014; Bieker, 2014, Trapnell, 2012 USA & UK	AACSB is an measure of BS accountability and recognised quality The leadership (Eisner, 2015); value profession., practice; oral communication skills b/n job & BS	The new standards will have a profound effect on b-education in the global arena in coming decade; mission impacts academic engagement; closing the gap (learning goals) (Brink & Costigan, 2015	A 2013 set of 15 standards in 4 categories; myths: they are easier; BS outside do not have review as US BS; an update due to globalisation crisis, delivery modes; leadership	B-environment is changing: shifts in technology demography, information access, integration & homogenization; A. as a gatekeeper to insure a minimal quality's threshold (Bieker, 2014)
Farmer & Abdelsamad, 2014 USA	AACSB is becoming important for B-schools, their stakeholders; and businesses who employ graduates	Faculty qualifications (79%), management (56%), curricula (46%); finan. strategy (38%); faculty suffic. (35%), learning (30%);	Standards changed due to 3 new themes: innovation, impact/engagement; Mission: 27%, improvement: 25%	Cont. improvement, school mission & operations, student learning & faculty development must be related to 3 themes
Everard, Edmonds & St. Pierre (2013) USA	The change to a mission-driven focus after 1993	Compete for top-students and faculty, effect on students and recruiters	More objective standards prior 1993; 1993-2011: mission driven	AACSB has not achieved its mission, damaged credibility in 1993
Hodgson & Clausen, 2012 UAE (United Arabic Emirates)	In the MENA region (An interview with John Fernandes) – value for schools & its stakeholders	Increase of international applicants. Bandwagon effect regarding AACSB because there are 9 AACSB B-schools	Assurance of Learning, critical thought, assessment of accreditation 2003	Bandwagon effects due to the fact that there are 9 AACSB-accredited BS? Other regions, besides MENA
Hedrick et al. (2010), USA	1 st quantitative A. examination on the teaching loads, salaries, research	research productivity ahead of teaching and service in assessing faculty performance	Mission-driven standards	AACSB accredited schools: paid more, publish more, teach less than their peers
Hardin & Stocks, 1995; USA	The importance of specialised accreditation	The effect of AACSB on the recruitment (entry-level)	Minimum standards	Effect is measured empirically
Halkias, Clayton, Katsioloudes, Mills & Caracatsanis, 2009; USA & Greece	Accreditation is a value added activity to the operations of B-schools	The long run effect is to raise image, solid reputation & brand awareness; learning effects to improve	The current standards focus on process more than content.	Cases of Hellenic American (HAU), Dubai Aerospace Enterprise Universities
Solomon, Scherer, Oliveti, Mochel, & Bryant, 2017 France & USA	A survey to identify factors that define host-mentor relations	Responsiveness, standard, mission & operational similarity, info. sharing, culture	Standards between 2009 and 2013	All regions, except CEE. It may be the differences in public vs private BS

Sources: the listed authors on the research about AACSB

It increases publication pressure for faculty, where deans lobby administration for more resources and lower course loads (Hedrick et al., 2010). Trifts (2012) refers to the indirect, nonfinancial and cultural effects of AACSB, with impact on: 1. the mission; 2. qualified faculty AQ+PQ must be 90%; 3. assurance of learning, with goals, objectives and metrics that measure students' progress. Bastin and Kalist (2013) doesn't find the effects of AACSB on a wage premium associated with graduating from an accredited college. Everard et al. (2013) show that AACSB has not achieved its mission, and its new approach (from objective to standards of 1993 till 2011) has an effect on the input side (students who differentiate on accreditation status) and on the output side (recruiters who differentiate from a hiring status). Everard et al. (2013) recommend research on B-schools receiving accreditation under the mission-driven focus. Hodgson and Clausen (2012) ask whether AACSB has an advantage in some regions over EQUIS? Papers on AACSB show the accreditation's effects on research, deans' perceptions, costs vs. benefits, and the changes in AACSB standards (Womack & Krueger, 2015). The Table 11 presents views on its effects, standards and its value.

1.3.2 EQUIS effects

Institutional change has emerged as a central topic for researchers interested in gaining new understandings how institutions are created with the functions of control through the mechanisms where pressure is exercised (Fernández-Alles & Llamas-Sanchez, 2008), and here we consider global institutions like AACSB, EQUIS as well as CEEMAN. Hunt (2015, p. 28) mentioned, that a "*limited research has examined accreditation other than AACSB*", and it is "*difficult to use existing research to compare schools holding different accreditations*". EFMD, founded in 1971, is an industrial accreditation model similar to International Organisation for Standardization (ISO) certification (Kaplan, 2014). The forces of increased internationalisation of the Bologna declaration with the focus on the transparency of European higher education (HE), the development of national accreditation systems in Eastern Europe in the 1990s brought a growing interest on the need for supra-national accreditation in Europe (Prøitz, Stenzaker & Lee, 2004). The creation of EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System) by a mandate of the EFMD in 1997 was prompted by the need to develop an accreditation system of B-education with an impact beyond their domestic frontiers with the top B-schools in Europe (including Bocconi, HEC Paris, Helsinki School of Economics, IESE, IMD, INSEAD, Instituto de Empresa, London Business School, and Rotterdam School of Management) (Urgel, 2007). In 1998, 16 European B-schools were accredited, and in 2008, there were up to 113 institutions from 33 countries that had been EQUIS accredited (Lejeune et al., 2015). According to Kaplan (2014), it was a turning point in the European B-school landscape and the beginning of Europe's re-emancipation from the domination of US-style B-schools. EQUIS had the following objectives: to provide market information, an instrument for comparison, permanent benchmarking, and quality improvement and to award the European Quality Label (Prøitz, Stenzaker & Lee, 2004). In addition, Cret (2011) suggests there are two important dates for European accreditation: 1997 and 2004, because AACSB first implemented its accreditation process in Europe at the end of 1997, and EQUIS was designed the same year, and 2004 is a turning point, the end of the first European wave of accreditations. However, accreditation and its quality is still a growing phenomenon in Europe, which is perceived as a means of legitimization, differentiation, and grading which reduces the uncertainty (Cret, 2011).

In European B-education, EQUIS accreditation's effects as a rule were jointly examined with AACSB based on quantitative research which makes it difficult to separate them. The phenomenon of proletarianisation has been found, i.e. a shift from professional work with high levels of trust, to work with more routinized hierarchies of management control, or

McDonaldization of academic work (Sarrico & Pinheiro, 2015). Sarrico and Punheiro (2015) present the evolution, standards and effects of accreditation in the context of management in Portugal, where the accreditation for programmes started in 2012 with the end results in 2016. These authors refer to the perverse effect of academic inbreeding, diversity's decrease among faculty, and stifle research productivity (where major academics are not from management). A staggering level of academic inbreeding in the sector is demonstrated by Sarrico and Punheiro (2015): only 35.8 % of academics work in an institution of which they are not alumni, 73.0 % for the alumni who were awarded their degree there.

The question: “*what are the reasons that B-school apply for EQUIS accreditation?*” (Lejeune et al., 2015) also explores accreditation failure and its influence for the processes of identity dynamics illustrated on the case study of a European Management School. The initial expectation from accreditation is connected with the recognition status only. Marconi (2013) findings apply directly to the preferences of international exchange students, which in Europe constitute a substantial part of the overall student mobility. EQUIS and AACSB Accreditations and international rankings are seen as a means to reduce students' uncertainty over the quality of foreign institutions and facilitate student mobility. Despite accreditation increases the probability of a university to be chosen in rankings, the effects of accreditation on the students is small. Signals associated with accreditation/ranking sent to students do not appear to be relevant to all students. Nigsch & Schenker-Wicki (2013) raise a question that the effects of accreditations remains highly disputed in academia due to the fact that many scholars see accreditations as a restriction on academic freedom, a fruitless bureaucratic burden and an impediment to adaptation and innovation. These authors emphasise that there is very scarce empirical evidence about the effects of accreditations in the literature and practice. Prøitz, Stensaker, and Harvey (2004) argue that EQUIS standards are actually too weak to justify the amount of bureaucratisation the accreditation process requires.

The focus of our study is Europe, its Central and Eastern part, the CEE region. Therefore, as follows, we explain the identified the gaps in the literature considering a very limited number of publications on EQUIS accreditation, and changes that occur in B-schools from dissertations (summary is in Table 10). In Table 10, Suspitsin (2007, p. 167) mentions that a market of Eastern Europe is a young phenomenon that presents a certain limitation, and “*more comparative research is needed on the impact of ideological shifts on private education in post-Soviet countries*”, where different cultural, economic, and political factors produce differential effects in Eastern Europe. Research of Beard (2005) on accreditation is limited to quantitative data, with suggestion to explore change under accreditation with other methodologies. Hodge (2010) suggests replicating case study analysis on motivation of B-schools to seek international accreditation in various countries with the use of institutional theory. Williams (2011) recommends a research that studies the perceptions staff about accreditation “with different populations”. Baker (2011) says that a study of other schools would bring a more holistic view of on educators' perception of accreditation, with a qualitative study where the leaders are interviewed. There is also a recognition that organisations may seek to manage their legitimacy other than the simple adoption, and the study of how and why organisations respond differently to similar demands with a focus to shed light on micro-processes (Forgues et al., 2012). Hodge (2010) and Caravella (2011) recommend to see the arising phenomenon using interviews. Caravella (2011) shows isomorphic trends in the HEI in the US market with other accreditations on a comparative qualitative case. Table 12 also mentions the phenomenon of isomorphism in the association with both AACSB and EQUIS standards in Thomas et al. (2014), McKee et al. (2005) in Table 11.

Table 12. Effects, standards and value of EQUIS

View	Value	Effects	Standards	Other points
Temponi, 2005 USA	A review of literature; Continuous improvement	EQUIS Continuous improvement: develop undergrad., strong relationship b/n Employers & institutions, improved reputation, org. culture	EQUIS standards and CI – continuous improvement (the Japanese ‘kaizen’) improvement of process	Future research on the impact of EQUIS A. process on the continuous improvement culture of already accredited HEI with AACSB
Zammuto, 2008 Australia	the value of A. depends on the changes	On changes – how they are discontinuous or disruptive	a potential to increase comp. advantage locally	Pursuit of A. fosters competitive mimicry
Sarrico & Punheiro (2015). Empirical, Portugal	Debate on the quality and A. : the fit b/m characteristics of current academics and standards	Policy makers need to be aware of the effects of A. Inbreeding (decreasing diversity among faculty & stifle research productivity)	Internationalisation contributes to research intensity. Universities implement mandatory minimum standard	Early stage in A. in Portugal: gaps b/n the acceptable and actual attributes of academics. Academic inbreeding is pervasive.
Lejeune et al., (2015), Case study, Denmark	Academic value (normative) vs. corporate value and Identity threat for BS is to lose A.;	Applied for EQUIS– for recognition issues. “Capability enablers” Effect of failure. How A. influence the external & internal process?	Reflected on the Connection with the corporate world; Strategy - introduced, learning effect	The reasons to apply for EQUIS, organ. change to analyse an A. process other case studies in different settings; managing change to reach A. goal in BS
Thomas, Billsberry, Ambrosini & Barton, 2014	the differential advantage held by accredited BS by improving the quality of programmes	A. provides the mechanism to differentiate one BS from another at national & international level giving a competitive advantage on quality improvement, curriculum content & strategic planning	Standards of AACSB & EQUIS It is now taken for granted that topBS will be accredited and because of these norms, isomorphism across the BS is a likely consequence	Homogenization is occurring, as progressively more BS seek to gain A. such that A. no longer gives an individual institution any distinctive identity
Nigsch, Schenker-Wicki, 2013, Switzerland/ Quantitative	Quality differentiator	Branding effect, ranking; A. lead to research performance; favours integration. Cause–effect is difficult to assess A. quality; feedback loop for research linked to ranking.	Standards of EQUIS: Effective, integrated organis for management Impact: faculty requirements, ext. cooperation; difficult to divide standards b/n twoA	Further research: to list the differences b/n EQUIS & AACSB; a further differentiation of quality management systems is needed
Marconi, 2013 Netherlands	Quality standards in foreign universities	The effect of A. on attracting top students appears large	Both AACSB and EQUIS	Facilitation of students’ mobility Students’ choices
Lejeune, 2009, 2011; France Belgium	EQUIS effect of identity change; culture&image & org. effectiveness; BS rankings; EQUIS is reorganized into a capability-based	External quality monitoring is less significant (2011). Org.culture & effectiveness; a positive impact: performance; change, branding, strat	Mission, faculty, connection with business: the focus EQUIS uses <i>floating</i> standards for quality	Effect of EQUIS more on image of school, performance rather than students and curricula (2009); a risk of a posteriori rationalizations

Sources: the listed authors on the research about EQUIS

Durand and McGuire (2005) compare AACSB with domain expansion vs. recently appeared EQUIS: it has a 'European' identity with orientation towards quality, internationalisation, connection with the corporate world, difference in teams (AACSB has academics, EQUIS has a corporate representative) and conclusion that European don't want AACSB in Europe, AACSB is "too American" with a concern about the costs of accreditation, when there are multiple accrediting bodies. Johnson (2013) shows that only 66 studies out of 3,000 articles examined the effects of accreditation on performance and attitudes, showing the huge gap in the literature on the effects of accreditation on the ability to create organizational change and the needs in empirical research, as accreditation carries a high cost, public employee time and fiduciary expenses. In emerging economies accreditation makes effect in terms of standardisation of policies, integration of institution and a coherence of teamwork (Şahin & Uslu, 2014). The specific is that accreditation in some countries of CEE is used mainly as a regulatory mechanism or tool to set the list of publicly supported universities for public grants and funding (Nemec, 2007). AACSB and EQUIS are the only accreditation agencies that accredit all levels (for example, undergraduate and graduate programmes) of business programmes on a worldwide basis (Kaplan, 2014). There are 5 general accreditation constructs to be taken into account according to Sciglimpaglia et al. (2007):

- 1) cost of accreditation,
- 2) internal process,
- 3) benchmarking,
- 4) attracting students, and
- 5) obtaining organisational support.

Within the US there are two major business school accrediting organisations: the competitor to AACSB International is Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). There is an increasing focus on strengthening accreditation requirements in the United States with the focus on curriculum and assessments, where prior to 2011, AACSB already focuses on research-based institutions (579 schools in 37 countries), and ACBSP – on teaching-based institutions (529 schools in 22 countries) (Kourik, Maher & Akande, 2011). As Jewett, (2012) explore, other differences exist in research productivity and faculty qualifications among the three accrediting bodies AACSB, ACBSP, and IACBE, but, at the same time, they all have mission driven accrediting standards for their respective accredited institutions. According to Julian and Ofori-Dankwa (2006), the value of accreditation depends on how likely the changes they identify are discontinuous or disruptive, or in other words, the higher the level of change, the higher the value of accreditation. According to the various sources of research papers, differences and similarities of AACSB and EQUIS features are outlined in the Table 13. This list is based on the terms, origins, similarities, differences, standards, emphasis, impact, benefits vs. cost and challenges.

Here we also approach the field of the political economy with the question of "What are the primary sources of power in the evolving international order?" The field of political economy concludes that the cases of powerful countries and their institutions demonstrate how a rising power with relatively limited material resources can exploit foreign networks to reserve international legitimacy and bargaining power (Flemes & Ebert, 2017). From the bargaining power it may re-orient to the concept of 'network power'. We consider also a power of CEEMAN with its network power re-oriented from the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) towards the emerging economies, raising its network power towards BRICS and other economies. Thus, based on the characteristics of global institutions such as AACSB or EQUIS, we see the features of institutions that belong to "control system" – they decide where (which schools and regions) and how (competitive strategies are implied) to implement organisational and institutional changes.

Table 13. Comparison of AACSB and EQUIS accreditation

Trends in	American AACSB Accreditation	European EQUIS Accreditation
Founded in	1916, the traditional academic PhD model	1971, industrial accreditation model similar to ISO
1 The terms	AACSB is much older institution (founded in 1916) with a long tradition. It typically takes 3-5 years to gain accreditation.	EQUIS is only 15 years on the market (it was launched by EFMD in 1999. Accreditation for EQUIS typically takes 1 to 2 years.
2 Origins	AACSB is set up with members-universities represented by colleges/faculties; it became International in 1997 (Zammuto, 2008)	EFMD was set up in 1970s, with a double constituency of schools and large corporations, launched EQUIS in 1997 (Zammuto, 2008).
3 Similarity	Both systems are managed by not-for-profit membership organisations. Both schemes are rooted in the concepts of self-assessment & external review by peers, who are deans as peer reviewers or members of the operational committees of faculty. Both Associations require a clear mission (Nigsch & Schenker-Wicki, 2013).	Both seek to provide a tool for the continuous Improvement. Both systems exist independently. Both see the accreditation label as a contribution to international transparency regarding quality institutions. Both set high standards of faculty in teaching and research (Nigsch & Schenker-Wicki, 2013).
Similarity in Effects	Strategy and Operations, Faculty research, Diversity and responsibilities (Bryant, 2013)	Only 3 effects are the same for AACSB and EQUIS out of 10 listed (Bryant, 2013)
4. General Difference	1.AACSB evaluates internationalisation only if it is part of BS mission; 2. AACSB looks more at curriculum design; 3. Reflect collegiate-in-nature US institutions 4. AACSB accredit any management programme or accounting one in university (Kaplan, 2014). 5. AACSB-accredited BS historically have tended to be larger, research, better staffed vs non-accredited. (Zammuto, 2008)	1.EQUIS strict requirements on internationalisation 2. EQUIS analyzes a school's general strategy, how it differentiates itself from other schools; 3. Reflect difference in the structures of stand-alone European institutions; 4. EQUIS accredits B-schools (Kaplan, 2014). 5. International reach of a BS and on a school's connections with the b-community. 3 new accreditations: EPAS, CLIP, CEL (Zammuto, 2008)
difference: effects	Mission, participation of students, achievements, faculty's quality (Bryant, 2013)	Governance and autonomy, corporate links Internationalisation (Bryant, 2013)
difference: regions	In 2000-2010: AACSB accredited 110 schools outside the US. Advantage in the Middle East & North Africa region. (Hodgson & Clausen, 2012)	In 2000-2010: EQUIS has accredited 122 schools for this time. No B-schools in the MENA applied for EQUIS (Hodgson & Clausen, 2012)
difference pros&cons	AACSB has "steamroller" aspects of the American model (Pros). It is "too American", too homogeneous (Cons). (Durand & McGuire, 2005)	EQUIS takes into account the local history, environment and institutions (Pros). Incongruence with A.standardisation (Durand & McGuire, 2005)
5.Standards The breadth of coverage within the assessment	Standards (21) in AACSB system are in 3 groups: 1. Strategic management standards cover the mission, appropriateness to HE, resource adequacy; 2. Participant standards cover students, faculty; 3. Assurance of Learning standards covers programme quality. Focus on Inputs: institutional resources, faculty qualifications, curriculum (Zammuto, 2008). Revision in standards - the increased globalization (Miles et al., 2015)	The EQUIS standards are in 10 chapters: Context, Governance & Strategy; Programmes; Students; Faculty; Research&Development; Exec. education; Contribution to the Community; Resources & adm.; Corporate connections; Internationalisation. EQUIS standards make emphasis on the international reach of a BS, connection with b-community (Zammuto, 2008). Strategy, faculty, corporate world (Prøitz et al, 2004)
6 Emphasis	On mission-driven and looks for alignment b/n mission and operations.	International cooperation, governance, internal management system, strategic coherence;
7 Impact	Value of AACSB: higher EQUIS (Australian BS). Attract students (perception of Faculty); Strengthen appeal to b-constituency (a) & government (b); Gain external recognition & fund raising (Sciglimpaglia et al., 2007)	Attract students (Perception of Deans); Strengthen appeal to b-constituency (a) & government (b); Gain external recognition & fund raising (Sciglimpaglia et al., 2007)
8 Benefits vs. Cost	Benefits (7). Internal: Benchmarking, Internal Assessment, Peer-Review Consulting, Examine Continuous Improvement Processes, Fund Raising (I&E). External: Recognition, Competition for Students (Sciglimpaglia et al., 2007)	Cost (6): re-examining, initial and annual fee, need for faculty (hours) and instructional resources (faculty, support staff), an edge in fundraising, increased demand for research resources (Sciglimpaglia et al., 2007)
9 Challenge	Faculty sufficiency requirements, qualifications, deployment across the degree programmes and the intellectual contributions. Well-documented & communicated process to manage faculty over the progression of careers consistent with BS' mission". Nigsch & Schenker-Wicki, 2013.	High standards: international dimension; professional relevance and corporate links. Failure to achieve EQUIS is a weaknesses in faculty and research. EQUIS expects BS to have "effective and integrated organisation for the management of its activities". Nigsch & Schenker-Wicki, 2013.

Sources: Miles et al. (2015), Kaplan (2014), Bryant (2013), Nigsch, & Schenker-Wicki (2013), Hodgson & Clausen (2012), Prøitz et al. (2004), Durand & McGuire (2004); Miles, Franklin & Shenton (2010); Zammuto (2008), etc.

1.3.3 CEEMAN effects

Mirvis (2014) describes how CEEMAN, the Central and East European Management Development Association was formed: Slovene professor of political science Purg, took over leadership of the Yugoslav Centre for the Education of Leading Workers in 1986, and later joined the EFMD board in 1991. Her frustrations were that “*the EMFD has money to support management development here, but they don’t understand the region*” (Mirvis, 2014, p. 2). The CEEMAN was focused on “transition” environment: a “*passage from one position of state to another*”, with the move from the old planned-economy towards market-based economies (Abell, 2013, p. 6). CEEMAN was established because of the need for high-quality management education in the region of CEE and management development institutions had to work together to succeed (Bickerstaffe, 2009). In 1993, prof. Purg founded CEEMAN, and the IEDC as a head office focused on networking and the development of management professors (Moulton, 2001). Prof. Purg got together Deans and Directors from 13 CEE management schools that became a foundation for a management association (CEEMAN) (Mirvis, 2014). The implementation of quality assurance in the mid-1990s, has changed from symbolic to political and administrative steps resulted in establishing an institutional quality compliance culture in CEE; the Bologna Process made the preference from quality assessment to accreditation, a time-consuming and labour intensive process (Horga & Gal, 2009). President of the Russian Association of Business Education (RABE), Rector of the Graduate School of International Business, Leonid Evenko recalls: “*There were no well-structured plans or even expectations about the aims and tasks of the association at that time*” (Gudić, 2009). When the Third Annual CEEMAN Conference was held in St. Petersburg in 1995, CEEMAN announced about financial support to educate educators at the level of 10,000 top and 100,000 middle managers with the reforms in education (Minkov, 1995).

“*Accreditation evidently becomes a key issue*” with the suggested solution “*to approach accreditation as an ongoing process, rather than as a permanent status granted to a school, and this will ensure a continuous effort to maintain quality*” (Minkov, 1995, p. 26). Having 150 members from 41 countries, CEEMAN has embarked on a regional accreditation project similar to EFMD or AACSB, which ensures that the accredited schools follow international procedures and standards of quality (Moulton, 2001). In May 1999, the IEDC from Slovenia and IMISP, the International Management Institute, St. Petersburg from Russia were the first two schools to be accredited by CEEMAN (Moulton, 2001).

First, EFMD “*has established with CEEMAN a Strategic Audit scheme for Central and Eastern European business, which was “funded by the European Union’s PHARE and TACIS programmes*” (Lock, 1999, p. 73). Therefore, bargaining power of CEEMAN was released. Second, CEEMAN is “*based on the EQUAL and EQUIS schemes, but recognises the different starting points of most business schools in transition economies*” (Lock, 1999, p. 74). The B-schools “*are definitely not like those in the United States or Western Europe*”, and “*...emerging markets are quite different from one another*” (Abell, 2012, p. 34). Third, Bandelj and Purg (2006), Mirvis (2014) explain how CEEMAN brought a mechanism by which B-schools became “westernized”, a process of “institutional isomorphism”: that B-schools from CEE sought endorsement by affiliation with Western institutions for the sake of legitimacy, so they imitated them (mimetic isomorphism). As Hull (2000, p. 327) wrote: “*Although the economic transition in the Former Soviet Union has not been as successful as that in the CEE region, there are encouraging signs that western style management training is taking hold there as well*”. Fourth, Professional associations exerted influence with “seal of approval,” depending on how various schools progressed (normative isomorphism), and

finally, Western donors, funded the launch or makeover of many CEE B-schools, effecting change by controlling their purse strings (coercive isomorphism) (Bandelj & Purg, 2006; Mirvis, 2014). Fifth, Abell (2012) explains that CEEMAN wants to see certain values in B-schools in its standards: the business of consulting; inputs and outputs; relevant local stories; what they do with what they have; the balance between research and teaching; more process versus content; think like venture capitalists – skills for trade; values in practice. Haertle and Miura (2014, p. 14) added: CEEMAN (and other bodies) incorporated the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), “*a powerful leverage over management schools eager to seek and maintain accreditation*”. Table 14 presents the values, effects, standards of CEEMAN in line with their pros and cons.

Table 14. Effects, standards and values of CEEMAN

Authors	Values	Effects	Standards	Pros (P) & Cons (C)
Lock, 1999	EFMD established it, an audit scheme for BS in CEE. BS are different in transition. CEEMAN has PRME's values (Haertle & Miura, 2014).	BS with learning process (Abell, 2012). FDI in CEE as factor integrating CEE in global economy (Bandelj, 2009)	Based on EQUIS. Social responsibility & Sustainability. Ceeman is interested in BS with the learning process (Abell, 2012).	P: less costly than EQUIS & AACSB. C: No specific research (Istieulova & Peljhan, 2015).
Bandelj and Purg, 2005	Networking, connection is a cultural concept guiding organisational action	Networks have effect on org. Embeddedness in social ties has effect on performance	Developing standards Western institutions, networking is an legitimate action.	P: How quality is improved (Myasoedov, 2013). C: Need for curriculum change should be reflected (Sennikova, 2013)
Bickerstaffe 2009	School's diversity and ethical values	Effects: management of BS's programme operating, the phenomena of change	It adapts standards in each BS' mission & environment ; (Mirvis,2014).	C: The difference b/n the US and European models in the economic system.
Hommel, 2009	intermediate step to AACSB & EQUIS. “early initiation”/“late execution” combine	Effects emanating from failed accreditation	BS struggle with economic& regulat. parameters not fully in sync in standards	a supra-regional internationalization strategy, “path dependency” problem
Kudar, 2010	The intent is to help BS in CEE to do the things they have to do to improve education	Expansion of the intellectual capital, a shift from teaching to learning, alignment of outcomes, a change in culture (Dobija, 2010)	We do not have absolute standards. It's more important to be diverse: we dropped “internationalisation”; linkages with alumni	The dynamic tension b/n the vision and the reality. If you are recognized in community as an expert
Abell, 2012; Abell, 2013	How to adopt to the new world via the value of “ <i>institutional change</i> ” (Abell, 2013). A as a good vehicle for change (Dobija, 2010).	Ceeman is a new force of change (Purg, 2012). It is an emerging world order, the world is integrated	Effect on Curriculum covers managing in a dynamic context. This may include strategy in the absence of a clear public policy (Cook, 2012).	P: “Emerging markets” is a label, market-oriented. C: trans-f-n is a new emerging world. If you are not in, you can get thrown out as a country (Abell, 2012)
Haertle & Miura, 2014	value-practice-norm trinity,coupled with the personal, system trust that ensues with it.	The effect of PRME as a collaborative community.	Incorporate PRME's values, social respons. sustainability, in their accreditation standards	P: Enhancing quantity and quality.C: problem of Path dependency & limited strategic value.
Istieulova & Peljhan, 2013; 2015	More value in private BS of CIS (2013), transition countries.	Effects: reputation, students,competition Isomorphic, in. asymmetry and bandwagon	Quality differentiator because of agency's individual standards.	P. in CEE: structure institution, the value-added point; improved reputation C: preparation slows down goals

Sources: *the listed authors on the research about CEEMAN*

If we compare the listed bodies from the position of **bargaining power** as the relative ability of parties in its influence and power, CEEMAN is not on an equal footing in a debate with AACSB or EFMD, and, thus, their corresponding benefits and costs.

1.4 Institutional Theory Framework: Relevance

A ‘theory’ is a logical explanation for why something is as it is (Hofstee, 2006, p. 92). The ultimate goal of this chapter is to show the relevance of institutional theory, to expand and advance management theory in line with this theory explanation with the clarified concepts of isomorphism and select the various types of isomorphic changes in organisations. Organisations are affected by environmental complexity, by technology (*contingency* theory); by power processes (*resource* dependency); by relational system in organisations (network theory); by competition for resources among the same type of organisations, by their population development (*population* ecology); and by cultural and symbolic systems (*institutional* theory) (Scott, 2013, p. 4). Only four conceptual perspectives are identified as leading theories for emerging economies for Central and Eastern Europe: *transaction cost* theory (TCT), *agency* theory (AT), *resource-based* theory (RBT), and *institutional* theory (IT) to understand the different perspectives (Wright et al., 2005). Structuration theory and institutional theory acknowledge that institutions are created and changed through patterns of interaction between an accrediting agency and a school (Barley & Tolbert, 1997).

This framework is based on the neo-institutional theory (further: institutional theory, IT) to explore how and why the effects of external legitimisation (accreditation) are reflected on the change of B-schools in CEE region. The institutional isomorphism is caused by coercive, mimetic and normative factors explained in “*The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields*” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The first neo-institutional arguments were formulated by John Meyer, Brian Rowan in 1977, Richard Scott in 1983, and by Lynne Zucker in 1977. The components of the new institutional theory start from Meyer (1977), when the institutional effects of education are presented based on allocation theory, a limited case of IT. According to Meyer (1977, p. 73), in broader versions of IT, the effects of education “*may expand and alter the role structure of society*”. In one of propositions he concludes that “*the most powerful socializing property of a school is its external institutional authority*”, rather than its internal network; and educators, who know the process of accreditation, understand legitimating effect deeper (Meyer, 1977, p. 61). Organisations are embedded in social and political environments shaped by institutional forces, formed by educational system, profession, public opinion, and the law (Powell, 2007). The attention should be paid to institutional forces; measurement of institutional effects; and multi-level processes across nations for the robustness of institutional analysis (Powell, 2007). There is a critical need to develop powerful theories in change management that will give a better understanding of change (Will & Wetzels, 2018)

DiMaggio and Powell (1983, p. 158) indicate the importance of bureaucratisation forces and the modern trends. **Forces** initially exogenous to the system under study that create disturbances (like changes in technology, new regulations or laws, or major economic shifts, etc.) are most likely for the occasion of institutional change (Barley & Tolbert, 1997). The formal organisational structure reflects not only demands and resource dependencies, - it is shaped by institutional forces, knowledge legitimated through the educational system and by the professions and other factors (Powell, 2007). Haveman and Khairi (2006) show how organisational characteristics or environmental forces affect organisations. Because of that, the forces with trends are contemplated in sub-chapter 1.1. “Global forces in business education”. The most important explanatory potential of institutional theory presented by DiMaggio and Powell (1983, 1991) is in the analysis of organisational and institutional change, explained below in 1.4.1 sub-chapter. The reasons for the relevance of institutional theory framework are listed based on nine reasons shown in 1.4.1 with the key concepts of organisational and institutional change, clarified concepts of theory in 1.4.2 and their application in the accreditation processes of business education.

1.4.1 Organisational and Institutional Change

First of all, the relevance of institutional theory is in the emergence of organisational fields and the analysis of organisational change that starts from DiMaggio and Powell (1983, 1991). DiMaggio and Powell (1983, p. 149) define **organisational change** as “*change in formal structure, organisational culture, and goals, programme, or mission*”. They also identify that organisational change occur “*as the result of processes that make organisations more similar without necessarily making them more efficient*” (DiMaggio & Powell, p. 147). Organisations may adopt practices, policies and institutional rules into their formal structure that are related to their activity, however, once organisations adopt rules and norms established as authoritative guidelines for social behaviour, they become more homogeneous (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Second, the institutional literature (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, 1991) advances understanding of isomorphism. There are general effects (associated with impact on faculty, students, research, curriculum, etc.) and some specific effects which are related to the institutional theory or institutional isomorphism. Thus, **institutional change** occurs through three mechanisms of coercive, normative, and mimetic isomorphism according to DiMaggio and Powell (1983, p. 150): **coercive** isomorphism is a result of political influence; **mimetic** one - as a standard response by imitation; and **normative** one - as a result of professionalisation. DiMaggio and Powell (1983, p. 149) identify two types of isomorphism: **competitive isomorphism** with pressures toward similarity resulting from market competition, and **institutional isomorphism** with organisational competition for political and institutional legitimacy as well as market position. The first isomorphism is more appropriate for free and open competition: it is relevant to early adoption of innovation, but the second one is more spread. The authors provide explanation that organisation with institutional isomorphism compete not just for resources and customers, but also for political power, institutional legitimacy, social and economic fitness.

If institutions are the rules of the game, organisations and their entrepreneurs are the players (North, 1994). Institutions might be recognised in organisations and organisational fields as ‘the rules of the game’ (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). B-schools can be regarded as a distinct organisational field (DiMaggio & Powell 1983, Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). Therefore, it is the interaction between institutions and organisations that shapes the institutional evolution. B-education experiences strong worldwide pressure in “the competitive game” of strategic reorientations, moving “beyond the divide” to publish and teach together with emphasis on research and standards of accreditors (EQUIS and AACSB), rankings (e.g. The Financial Times) and journal classifications (Dameron & Durand, 2013, Kodeih, 2016). As a consequence, accreditation is more and more perceived as a management strategy in the firms and B-schools all over the world from the beginning of the 21st century, thus, becoming a global trend. Matos et al. (2010) consider that like the accreditation of HE, accreditation can be an important competitive advantage for firms or SMEs because it guarantees the capacity to generate relevant knowledge to partners. Institutional theory can be used to examine the field of management practices across many B-schools and to theorize causes and effects (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). These authors show four types of legitimating effects for organisations applying new practices: 1. authority of specialized competence with authoritative culture and social positions entailed by this culture; 2. elite definition and certification; 3. universality of collective reality; 4. extension of membership.

Third, isomorphism as a qualifier for legitimacy. In education, symbols of legitimacy include growing enrollment numbers, a strong student profile, awards, success in publication, and receipt of accreditation (Bump, 2009). Drawing from the foundational work

of Weber (1978), **legitimacy** is a foundation of a theoretical apparatus addressing the normative and cognitive forces that constrain, construct, and empower organisational actors according to Suchman (1995, p. 571). The authors of institutional theory reveal demand for the new institutions as “*new foundations of authorities*” where *legitimacy* is a driving force for organisational actors to justify certain practices. Suchman (1995, p. 574) defines **legitimacy** as “*a perception or assumption in that it represents a reaction of observers to the organisation as they see it*”. Organisational legitimacy is nowhere more essential than in the field of higher education, because “*what higher education itself produces is legitimacy*” (Hughes, 2006, p. 1). The chances of gaining, maintaining and increasing legitimacy are greatly enhanced under the conditions of organisational change or isomorphism (Dattey, Westerheijden & Hofman, 2014). According to DiMaggio and Powell (1983, p. 147), structural change in organisations “*less and less driven by competition or by the need for efficiency*”, and bureaucratization and other forms of organizational change occur as the result of processes that make organisations more similar without necessarily making them more efficient. The process of “*homogenization*” is very similar to the content of “*globalisation*”, - the trend that appeared later on, at the end of the 20th – beginning of the 21st century. At this time the practices of global organisations (TQM in firms, and **accreditation** agencies in higher education) started spreading all over the various continents, bringing not only the organisational change, but also the institutional change. The institutional theorists explain this spread, that “*strategies that are rational for individual organisations may not be rational if adopted by large numbers*”, and, if these strategies are normatively sanctioned (by legitimate organisations like accreditation bodies), it “*increases the likelihood of their adoption*” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148). Institutional theory provides a complex view, where organisations are influenced by pressures (normative), guided by legitimate elements, leading to isomorphism, where legitimacy (“number of accreditations”) decreases “*the likelihood of exit*” (Zucker, 1987, p. 458). Scott (2008a) in its institutional theory assumes that professional group promote its standards, more normative guidelines than coercive ones. Moreover, at the regional level (the level we refer), all colleges are subject to controls exercised by accreditation (Scott, 2013, p. 12).

Fourth, the institutional theory also offers insight into why organisations may be interested in organisational assessment and **accreditation**, exploring the relationship between institutions and interested parties and examining the intentions of individuals in developing the organisation (Slatten et al., 2011). Thus, all these authors anticipate the logic that organisations with more institutionalised myths are more legitimate. In concordance with Scott (1987), institutionalisation also refers to the adoptive process, where the meaning ‘*to institutionalize*’ is to infuse with **value** beyond the technical requirement, how it was initially defined by Selznick (1957). Barley and Tolbert (1997) confirms that institutional theory, unlike traditional theories, highlights cultural experience on **decision making** and formal structures (values, norms, rules, beliefs, taken-for-granted assumptions, cultures).

Fifth, the **effects** of institutional isomorphism on organisations are examined by Meyer & Rowan (1977) with suggestion to reflect the effects of rationalised institutional structure through the use of accreditation bodies. Meyer (1977) recommends to apply the institutional theory examining the effects of education as an institution with the various levels inside of school and beyond as an organisation. Campbell (2007, p. 560) adds that we should consider the effects of actors, their resources, interests, their social and institutional locations and conditions within which they operate for understanding of institutional change. DiMaggio and Powell (1983, p. 157) describe how “*a theory of institutional isomorphism*” shows that organisations are becoming more homogeneous, and that elites often get their way, while at the same time enabling us to understand the irrationality, the frustration of power, and the

lack of innovation that are so commonplace in organizational life”. Bidwell (2001) recommends using the institutional theory in the education sector with profound changes, with the deep understanding of the role of power in society. Higher education institutions are facing growing institutional pressures to incorporate the new legitimated criterions produced by the agency of institutional carriers with the trend of policy borrowing across the nations (Vaira, 2004), and B-schools are leaders here.

Sixth, the institutional theorists also give a great attention to the patterns of **perception**, because the interaction of culture and organisation is mediated by socially constructed mind. As an illustration, Selznick (1996, p. 274) writes that social process can be understood through the behavior and the interaction of individuals in day-to-day situations, especially in their perceptions, linking the larger view to the more limited one in order to see how institutional change is produced by, and in turn shapes. The followers of institutional theory bring indicate a serious **gap** in research connected to the various dimensions (*social, political, historical, business and higher education*) of institutional change, the effects and its origin, and theorization on how organisations participate in organisational change at the individual (micro) or broader levels (from organisations to macro) with the change agents who adopt change in organisations or networks (Pierson, 2000, p. 476; Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott, 2002; Campbell, 2004; Battilana & Casciaro, 2012, Wright & Zammuto, 2013). The listed gaps are all covered in this thesis.

Seventh, Beckert (2010) add to isomorphic forces that competition is as a fourth mechanism, which is not discussed by DiMaggio and Powell. In our case, we include competition into the mimetic change due to the following arguments. Institutional theory assumes free and open competition, diverse approaches to problem solving, and action motivated by economic efficiency in the initial stages of field development (Tuttle & Dillard, 2007, p. 388). Only under conditions of competition, ambiguity, costly search, and environmental variability, organisations that mimic the behaviour of firms have good survival chances (Haveman, 1993, p. 599). Not only institutional theory, but also strategies in the emerging markets, follow competitive advantage which are based on the mimetic forces of isomorphism (Brouthers, O'Donnell & Hadjimarcou, 2005, p. 239).

Eighth, recent developments in organisation theory and the diverse higher education provide a new agenda, where the neoinstitutional theory serves as an important framework for rediscovering environments of organisations (Scott, 2013), providing the most promising lens for their view in modern society (Scott, 2014). In the modern view, institutionalism represents a “*distinctive approach to the study of social, economic, and political phenomena*” for scholars and policy-makers (DiMaggio and Powell, 2012, p. 1). In their review of institutional theory, DiMaggio and Powell (2012) also noted that institutional theory had been “relatively silent” on the issue of organisational change. The authors of institutional theory introduced the concept of isomorphism that best captures the process of homogenisation with two types of isomorphism: competitive (based on market competition) and institutional (a tool for politics) (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 149). At the same time, institutional analysis has been criticized for an inadequate understanding of institutional change, how and when we can recognize its different patterns (Campbell, 2004).

Ninth, many authors confuse ‘institutional change’ with ‘organisational change’, and do not put any clear line or definitions for these two concepts. *So far, the institutional theory has not been dealt much with the problem of organisational changes within organizations as the consequence of accepting institutionalized rules* (Janićijević, 2013, p. 2), especially in the case of accreditation. There are two types of changes: organisational and institutional ones, where “*existing theories of organisational change were developed in the context of relatively*

stable economic systems” (Newman, 2000, p. 603). North (1990) adds that ‘institutional change’ as a change in formal rules through a political process as a result of deliberate actions by organisations and individuals. Change in the regulatory, technological, and competitive areas is a trigger of organizational change, but little work has been done on how organisations react to change in their competitive environment (Newman, 2000). Organisations compete not only for their resources and clients, but also for political power and institutional legitimacy, for their social and economic fitness (what is missing in population ecology) (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In order to reflect the institutional change, “*all four levels must be activated*”: “*to move from individual change to organisation to institutional and then societal*”, and “*the inner dimension of the organisation should be mapped*” (Inayatullah, 2005, p. 48). As stated in Halal (2005), unlike organisational change (in a management - with its focus on processes, teamwork, leadership, etc.), institutional change goes beyond organisational change with a focus on the underlying norms or social rules. Thus, **institutional change** has a broader meaning: it transcends organisational change to focus on entire classes of organisations serving different societal functions (business, education, government) (Halal, 2005). While “**organisational change**” deals with changing technologies, structures, and employee abilities, “effective change” depends on the values and reasoning in the institutional context: how people have to change (Palthe, 2014). There is a wide variety of modes for ‘institutional change’ that can be distinguished and compared, but we look at the most important questions to be addressed (new phenomena; new perspective; new answer; new extension) as it was recommended by Kilduff (2006). North (1990) argues that actors make choices based on costs and benefits with imperfect information, and the resultant institutional changes often have unintended consequences that are not always the optimal choice for the organisation (North, 1990). Context is situational opportunities and constraints affecting the occurrence and meaning of organisational behavior and functional relationships between variables; research is better “contextualized” linking observations to relevant points of view, context, with level of analysis (Johns, 2006).

Modern institutional theorists view change as a continuous process where the drivers of change are very strong organisational norms (example of accreditation standards) about what constitutes appropriate organisational goals (Newman, 2000). Dacin, Goodstein and Scott (2002) describes how institutional change may proceed from the micro suborganisational (interpersonal) levels up to the macro societal and global levels through the weakening and disappearance of one set of beliefs and practices through the arrival of new ones. In line with Streeck and Thelen (2005), the types of institutional change will depend on processes (with incremental and abrupt change) and results (continuity and discontinuity). For comparison, in the context of political science, institutional change can be observed from the point of gradual transformation of five logical steps (types): displacement, layering, drift, conversion and exhaustion (Streeck & Thelen, 2005). The objective of change is greater legitimacy (gaining accreditation), not a better performance (Ashworth et al., 2009). Practice is institutionalised at the organisational level, when the new practice is taken-for-granted; and at the field level, - when diffused by other organisations or highly accepted with a normative quality (Arroyo, 2012). Institutional theory has been little use to study TQM processes: it has tended to be seen as a theory of stability than change (Sharma, Lawrence & Lowe, 2010). Wright and Zammuto (2013) outline two approaches in unpacking change: at the level of a field, and at the level of analysis: levels in the system influence field change. The example is provided that an outcome of an institutional change is a Cup (the field of cricket) in response to societal and organisational pressures. Maxey and Kezar (2015) describe the process when individuals of different groups become the agents of change, when they have the knowledge of misalignments (being aware of how the current faculty model, policies, and practices are opposed to their commitments and concerns for the quality of student

learning and the health of the academic profession). The notion of ‘*institutional change*’ from other authors of institutional theory is brought in Table 15 for its deeper understanding.

Table 15. Definition of Institutional Change with interesting insights

Authors/Publication/	On Institutional change (IC)	Interesting Insights
North (1990)/ Cambridge University Press Book/Theory & Case studies	IC is an incremental, path-dependent process because individuals learn, organisations develop, ideologies form in a set of formal/informal rules.	Organisations act as agents of IC where a central role of IC is about informal rules. Two forces of IC: increasing returns, imperfect markets.
Oliver (1992)/ Organization Studies/Theory	Political, economic, social forces accelerating the fundamental change in organisation with internal, external, moderating factors	Changes in the social consensus surrounding the legitimacy of an established practice. The effects of IC on organisational structure
Newman (2000)/ AMR/on extreme change in the institutional context (about CEE & Russia).	Propositions related to IC. Sources: transformation and organisational upheaval. IC, at the extreme, produces conditions that reduce the rate of org. learning & transformation	Companies in transition economies faced different institutional contexts. Use of organisational change theory, organisational learning & institutional theory. Mimetic&normative change
Dacin, Goodstein & Scott (2002)/AMJ/ research forum	IC can proceed from the most micro interpersonal & suborganizational to the macro & global levels	Change make an important contribution by drawing attention to sources of IC: in deinstitutionalization of existing norms and practices
Seo & Creed (2002)/AMR/ dialectical perspective	IC is an outcome of the dynamic interactions b/n two institutional by-products: human praxis (agency embedded) and inst. contradictions	Question the emphasis on stability in conventional IT. They identify it as the problem of “embedded agency.”
Halal (2005)/On the horizon/Interviews with managers	IC transcends <i>organisational change</i> to focus on entire classes of org. with different societal functions (business, government, education, etc.)	IC focuses on the underlying social rules/norms that define how these functions are structured and governed
Kingston & Caballero (2009)/Journal of Institutional/ theoretical approaches to conceptualizing IC	IC as the result of supply and demand forces. The drivers of IC are political actors. IC occurs “spontaneously”, through the choices of many agents, rather than in a centralized manner	The role of collective & individual learning is unknown. There are different mechanisms of change: they may have different short-run and long-run effects on the broader pattern of IC
Sharma, U., Lawrence, S., & Lowe, A. (2010).	IC is the product of endogenous forces that are associated with the historical evolution of the field.	IT is used in TQM practices via case study. How institutional contradictions impact entrepreneurs
Wright & Zammuto, (2013)/AMJ/A single case study	IC is a change in rules is an observable indicator. IC is examined from vertical and horizontal lenses; pressures from different levels of institutional system	Pressures for IC: at the societal level – ideologies’ shift, at the organisational level - organisation translates scripts into action inconsistent with the rules.
Maxey & Kezar (2015) University of Southern California	Knowledge of misaligned interests are the seeds of institutional change How and why longstanding institutional practices are changed	Contradictions emerge when institutionalized arrangements come into conflict with ideas, interests and goals of individuals in organisations

Source: the listed authors on *Institutional Change*

1.4.2 Relevance of Institutional Theory

The relevance of the institutional theory to accreditation of B-schools is explained here based on nine reasons. The additional reasons are in its paradoxes: *first of all*, institutional theory itself a paradox, because it is a *distinctive analytical framework* to the study of social, economic or political phenomena (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). In addition, the paradox arises when a set of organisations emerges as a field: when rational actors try to change organisations, they make them similar due to coercive, mimetic, and normative processes,

when position of dependence leads to isomorphic change. “*Once a set of organisations emerges as a field, a paradox arises: rational actors make their organisations increasingly similar as they try to change them*” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 147). Moreover, it has a paradox, because the concepts of institutions, institutionalisation, and organisations have been defined in various ways; and it is easier to say what it *is not*, than what *it is* (DiMaggio & Powell, 2012). As Ashworth et al., (2009) say, the empirical tests of isomorphism usually make analysis only one of the organisational characteristics, but organisations are open by different pressures in their environments which implies that the impact of isomorphic pressures should be visible across all features of organisations: structures, culture, processes, and strategy content. In terms of ontology, *power* is needed for security, and in terms of constructivism, *culture* is a soil for security and *power*: norms, identities and a belief between agents and structures are crucial, because socially constructed knowledge and factors are ingredients of *power* that affect state interests (Baghdadi, 2017). This logic (of the political science) liberates constructivists from the narrow perception of power linked to a simple function of material resources towards the “*logic of appropriateness*” and redefined interests (Baghdadi, 2017). In the political science, Nye (1990) developed the concept of soft power demonstrating that the United States is not only the strongest nation in military and economic power, but also in a third dimension of “soft power” which is “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than through coercion.” Nye (2004) explains how it works: “*The basic concept of power is the ability to influence others to get them to do what you want. There are three major ways to do that: one is to threaten them with sticks; the second is to pay them with carrots; the third is to attract them or co-opt them, so that they want what you want. If you can get others to be attracted, to want what you want, it costs you much less in carrots and sticks*”. Nye adds that soft power may not work in plutocracies (a form of oligarchy, defines a society controlled by the small minority of the wealthiest citizen), but it may work in theocracies (a form of government in which a deity is the source from which all authority derives or a commonwealth under such system of government)”. The modern day United States resembles a plutocracy, though with democratic forms according to Chomsky (a figure in analytic philosophy, cognitive science).

In Table 16 we compare and select concepts, derived from the institutional theory to avoid paradoxes. We add the definitions for the key concepts of force, values, institutional and organisational change, isomorphism and legitimacy, and put the key concepts in *italic* to follow, coming closer to the notion of “*isomorphism*”. Bailey (2013) interpret isomorphism as “*iso*”, meaning equal and “*morphism*”, meaning the act of forming: how dynamic social forces come into play in organisations – those ones that have similar environments, pushing them to behave, think, and look alike. Institutional theory explains that organisations are becoming increasingly homogeneous within given domains, according to conformity rituals to bigger institutions. In the definitions for organisations in Table 16, the effects of homogeneity/isomorphism are present with interesting insights coming from the concepts of “organisation” by Barley and Tolbert (1997). Being re-formulated, “organisation” is ‘a structure with the scripts incorporating institutional encoding in its level of analysis’. In its re-defined “*formal organisation*” by Meyer & Rowan (1977), “organisation” can be formulated as “*a structure that coordinate and control its work only up to minimum level of degree*”. Thus, organisation is a structure that coordinates its activities under the control of institutional scripts (accreditation). It is a structure with its institutional scripts. Isomorphism has consequences for organisations when a) they have elements of external legitimacy; or b) external assessment criteria, when dependence on external institutions reduces turbulence. Organisations whose structures become isomorphic in the institutional environment decrease internal organisation and control to maintain legitimacy (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Thus, we have to look at the structures how and why they become isomorphic.

Table 16. Concepts from institutional theory

Concept	Definition	Author/Insights
Institutions	They are products of interaction or adaption	Selznick, 1957; Scott, 1987
Institutions	Institutions are to be perceived as being enacted through 'scripts' (interaction order).	Barley&Tolbert (1997). IT and Structuration Theory
Institutions	Institutions are the rules of the game.	North (1994)
Organisations	Organisations are increasingly organised around rituals of conformity to wider institutions, and are increasingly <i>homogeneous</i> within domains	DiMaggio&Powell, 1983, p. 150
Organisations	Organisations and their entrepreneurs are the players. Organisations include social, political, economic bodies (firms) and educational bodies (schools, universities).	North (1994).
Organisations	Scripts whose central actors are organisations encode institution at the organisational level of analysis.	Barley&Tolbert (1997).
Organisations	Systems of coordinated and controlled activities that arise when work is embedded in complex networks of technical relations and boundary-spanning exchanges.	Meyer & Rowan (1997)
Organisations	Technical instruments designed as means to definite goals	Selznick,1957; Scott, 1987
Organisations	Organisations are being viewed as being embedded in networks of interdependencies and social relations	Pfeffer & Salancik, (2003).
<i>Institutionalised organisations</i>	Those organisations whose success depends on the confidence achieved by isomorphism with institutional rules	Meyer &Rowan (1977, p. 354)
Institutionalised organisations	It is "institutionalized" when it take on a special character and to achieve a distinctive competence or built-in capacity	Selznick, 1996
<i>Institutional pressures</i>	The demands of centralized authorities or regulatory agencies; and widespread beliefs, practices, and nor	Barley & Tolbert (1997)
<i>Forces</i>	Changes exogenous to the system that create disturbances (technology's change, law, economic shift)	Barley & Tolbert (1997)
Values	A central place in the theory of institutions. We need to know which values matter in the context at hand.	Selznick, 1996
Legitimacy	A generalised perception that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed norms, values, beliefs and definitions	Suchman, 1995
Legitimacy	Is organisational "imperative" that is a source of inertia	Selznick, 1996
<i>Organisational change, OC</i>	<i>Change in formal structure, organisational culture; goals, programmes and mission. Make organisations more similar without making them more efficient; it varies in its responsiveness to technical conditions</i>	<i>DiMaggio & Powell (1983, p. 149)</i>
<i>Institutional change, IC</i>	<i>IC occurs through three mechanism of change: normative, mimetic and coercive isomorphism</i>	<i>DiMaggio & Powell (1983, p. 150)</i>
Institutional change	A change in formal rules through a political process as a result of deliberate actions by organisations and individuals. It is the interaction b/n institutions and organisations that shapes the institutional evolution of an economy	North (1990) North (1994)
Isomorphism	A constraining porcess that forces one unit to resemble other units in the same set of environmental conditions	Hawley (1968)
Instituional isomorphism	Formal isomorphism become matched with their environment by technical and exchange interdependencies	Meyer & Rowan (1977)
Isomorphism	It addresses the structural determinants of the range of choices that actors perceive as rational or prudent	DiMaggio& Powell, 1983

Sources: *the concepts of the listed authors*

DiMaggio and Powell (1983, 1991) define institutional change as a change that occurs through these three mechanisms of isomorphic organisational change: coercive, mimetic and normative considered in section 1.4.2.1.

1.4.2.1 Isomorphic effects

The effect of institutional isomorphism is homogenization, and the best indicator of isomorphic change is a decrease in variation and diversity (DiMaggio, 1983, p. 155). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identify three types of institutional isomorphism: mimetic, coercive, and normative, where the distinction between them can be made analytically.

Mimetic (MI) isomorphism results from standard responses to uncertainty, a powerful force that encourages imitation, and modelling (convenient source of practices) can be a response (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 151). The principle driving mimetic dynamics is that uncertainty induces imitation. Organisations respond to uncertainty by mimicking or modeling the practices of those in the field that have a proven track record of those who have survived. Mimetic forces compelled the design. Selznick (1996, p. 273) writes that justifications “*encourage institutional mimicry or mimesis, which means that the organisation is highly sensitive to the cultural environment*”. Jeyaraj, Balser, Chowa, & Griggs (2004, p. 2639) make reference on two mimetic mechanisms: **bandwagon (BA)** and status-driven.

Normative (NO) isomorphism stems from professionalisation, connected with the approach for filtering the personnel which refers to the “homosexual reproduction of management”, selected from the same universities, viewing things in a similar fashion (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 153). Normative isomorphism stems primarily from the state-of-the-art practices brought by the professional associations, networks, conferences, journals (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). Normative isomorphism involves filtering of personnel by hiring the members with similar training which provides similar worldviews, and interaction through professional associations that further diffuse ideas (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). When salient values are embedded in networks of interdependence, options are more limited, and institutionalisation constrains conduct by bringing it within a normative order. Two forms of isomorphism - mimetic (MI) and normative (NO) involve managerial behaviours at the level of taken-for-granted assumptions rather than strategic choices (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 149).

Coercive (CO) isomorphism stems from political influence and the problem of legitimacy, and it results from formal and informal pressures exerted on organisations by others upon which they are dependent and by cultural expectations in the society. Such pressures may also be felt as force (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 150). Coercive forces set the parameters. Moreover, coercive pressures are based on exchange relationships. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) show it: organisational change might be a direct response to government mandate (e.g.: schools hire education teachers and administrators who advocate curricula that meet state standard; or staff involved into advocacy can change power relations in organisations). Coercive factors involve political pressures and the force of the state with regulatory control; normative forces stem from the education’s role; and mimetic forces draw on habitual responses to uncertainty (Powell, 2007).

Therefore, **Proposition (P3)** is derived: **B-schools enhance three organisational isomorphic changes** (mimetic, normative, coercive) **as a result of accreditation.**

The Table 17 summarises institutional isomorphic change, based on DiMaggio and Powell’s theory (1983, 1991), who also mention that CO, MI, NO (especially, MI and NO) are not always clearly and empirically identifiable. They tend to derive from different conditions and outcomes, and therefore it is important to describe each feature of change. Besides the forces of power (coercive isomorphism), attraction (normative pressures), and mimesis (mimetic processes), there is an additional competitive force (Beckert, 2010).

Table 17. Institutional isomorphic change

Mimetic (MI)	Normative (NO)	Coercive (CO)
Motivation: to improve performance by copying	Motivation: conformity with expectation from values/norms	Motivation: conformity with powerful constituencies' demand
Mimesis	Attraction	Power-political
Non strategic managerial pressure Taken-for-granted assumption	Taken-for-granted assumption Non strategic managerial pressure	Cultural pressure
1	2	3
Results from standard responses to uncertainty, leading to imitation	Results from professionalisation and structuration	Results from political influence and the problem of legitimacy
It reflects environmentally constructed uncertainties.	Legitimation for the occupational autonomy	By cultural expectations in the society
Organisations copy others, more legitimate or successful. MI is more assumption than strategic	NO and MI have managerial behaviour more at assumptions than consciously strategic choice	Pressures might be persuasion, or invitations to join in collusion. Cultural expectations in society
Modelling is a response. Companies adopt 'innovations' to enhance legitimacy.	Professionalisation is the formal education and of legitimation produced by university specialists	Isomorphism can be more subtle and less explicit
A skilled labour force, broad customer base encourage MI isomorphism	Sources of NO: professional networks' growth, institutions that span units in their field	As a response to government mandate: hire special teachers, advocate curricula
New organisations are modelled upon old ones.	Universities, training institutions are centres for the development of organisational norms	Staff involved in advocacy can alter power relations in organisation in the long run
Models are powerful: structural changes are observable, and changes in strategy, policy are not	Personnel flows in organisational field are supported by structural homogenization (career titles)	A common legal environment affects an organisation's behaviour and structure.
It is easy to predict the organisation of a newly emerging nation without knowing about it	Mechanisms: personnel' filtering; hiring of individuals within the same industry	Organisations faced with interdependence to use greater power of the larger system
Peripheral nations are far more isomorphic in administrative form and economic pattern	Professional, trade associations are another vehicles for the definition of normative rules	Organisations employ ritualised controls of credentials, practice of the parent corporations

Source: compiled based on DiMaggio & Powell (1983, 1991).

Field of the institutional theory may be considered through the novel forms of organisations or actor learning (Fligstein, 2013). Mizruchi and Fein (1999) showed that regardless of forms of institutional isomorphism, the various authors examine their indicators which can be open to alternative interpretations. The purpose is to highlight the features of isomorphic indicator with effects. We start from **mimetic isomorphism (MI)**.

Mimetic organisational change has often been thought of as “a contagion process” that spreads its features to other organisations (Tolbert and Zucker, 1983; March, 1981; Burns and Wholey, 1993; Haveman, 1993). In agreement with Haveman (1993), mimetic isomorphism can be almost like the “obligatory action”, when social actors do things a certain way, and it is taken for granted or institutionalized, and other social actors undertake that course of action without thinking. As stated in Dattey et al. (2014), the mimetic isomorphism is evident in the public universities, when academics adopt practices and standards similar to those of their foreign alma mater (mimetic isomorphism) and copying the ways of their mentors (mimetic isomorphism). Most of the private universities put up impressive physical and library facilities as an attraction for students to imitate public universities in the form of a mimetic isomorphism (Dattey, Westerheijden & Hofman, 2014). Mimicry occurs through the formation of benchmarking clubs with “Beacon status” - the

practices that spread in 1999 with publicity of work, being associated with excellence and innovation (Ashworth et al., 2009). All three types of isomorphism occur simultaneously from benchmarking against other “model” organisations with a similar mission: in this case both mimetic and coercive pressures occur simultaneously, reinforced by the normative legitimacy of the accrediting standards (Tuttle & Dillard, 2007). It is evident that the national academics are favourable towards those accreditation measures and practices acquired from the countries of western higher educations they were studying in. It is a mimetic change (MI) when standards brought into the new environment are in compliance with the certain international standards from the top accreditation bodies (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2015), which transform them into the normative nature (NO) during the time. However, it is unclear as to whether mimetic pressure will encourage a competitive orientation towards internationalization (Bennett & Kottasz, 2011). In terms of quality and mimetic isomorphism, the claims are limited to the diffusion of certificates, rather than applying to actual quality practices (Guler et al., 2002, p. 228). We include below additional features associated with the **mimetic effects**:

1. Copy successful practices, B-schools (McGurk, 2012), mimic a successful peer (Mizruchi & Fein, 1999);
2. Little empirical evidence of performance benefits (Abrahamson, 1996);
3. Benchmarking and best practice (Tuttle & Dillard, 2007; Ashworth et al., 2009; Hodge, 2010);
4. Leading players in the field (Tuttle & Dillard, 2007);
5. The commonly accepted standards as a response to uncertainty by imitation (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Long et al., 2008), imitating similar, and successful organisations (Haveman, 1993);
6. Imitation by structures and practices of other organisations (Jen-Jen & Ping-Hung, 2011; Mizruchi & Fein, 1999; Hillebrand et al., 2011);
7. Status-driven imitation and process (Kraatz, 1998) with low performance (research);
8. Creation of academic programme or unit to be added as a formal requirement (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2015);
9. Formalised quality in processes, policies, procedures (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2015);
10. Almost like the “obligatory action” (Haveman, 1993);
11. Credibility (McKee, Mills & Weatherbee, 2005);
12. Impressive physical and library facilities: for private schools (Dattey et al., 2014).

The greater the extent of professionalisation in a certain field, the higher the amount of **Normative (NO) isomorphism**. The normative mechanism function is a filter of the certified personnel in the field (Horii, 2012). The normative pressure to conform to industry-wide standards established by an accrediting body, for example, is especially prevalent in professional organisations (Slatten, Guidry & Austin, 2011). Normative isomorphism takes place when actors develop shared understandings of organizational practices via education, training, and employment experiences (Hwang & Powell, 2009; Barman & MacIndoe, 2012). Neither membership in a professional network nor the possession of accreditation status from an external body is a statistically significant explanation for the implementation of outcome measurement, an evaluative technique used to assess the impact of an organisation’s programmes (Barman & MacIndoe, 2012). The notion of “structuration” the jurisdictions of professions are not absolute and the outcome of ongoing claims with specification of roles, behaviors, and interactions of organizational communities (Greenwood, Suddaby & Hinings, 2002). Study of interorganisational networks also show

that organisations adopt new structures due to mimetic and normative pressures (Burns & Wholey, 1993). As Weber observed, methods of control based on the kinds of informal social networks (DiMaggio, 2001). We resume shown effects:

1. Members of professions receive similar training (Mizruchi, 1999);
2. Interaction through professional/trade associations, attendance of seminars (Finch et al., 2017), belonging to association & diffusing ideas among them (Mizruchi, 1999),
3. Be acknowledged as legitimate and reputable (Frumkin & Galaskiewicz, 2004);
4. Networking for establishing legitimacy (Bandelj & Purg, 2005);
5. Conformation to standards (Slatten, Guidry & Austin, 2011);
6. Structuration (Greenwood, Suddaby & Hinings, 2002);
7. Having identified cultural norms and values as normative forces (Blasco & Zølner, 2010; Martínez-Ferrero & García-Sánchez, 2017; Tolbert & Zucker, 1994). The moral values that culture imposes on the business world (Su, 2006) may influence the organizational strategies (Martínez-Ferrero, & García-Sánchez, 2017);
8. Beyond a differentiation countries (developed and undeveloped), the national culture is related to normative forces, which contain the prescriptive, evaluative and obligatory dimensions of social life (Scott, 2008b).
9. Being part of a club, enhance brand (Hodge, 2010);
10. Connection with community, partners, networking (Istieulova & Peljhan, 2015);
11. Leadership effect (Suchman, 1995);
12. Access to resources (Oliver, 1997).

Coercive isomorphism (CO) stems from political influence and legitimacy problem (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). An institutional isomorphism derives from coercive authority: *“The greater the dependence of an organization on another organization, the more similar it will become to that organisation in structure, climate, and behavioral focus”* (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 154). No surprise, that organisations adjust their procedures and structures to those institutions on which they are dependent (Dobbins & Knill, 2009). The institutional theory (IT) explains that isomorphic change based on coercive pressures built into exchange relationships: pressures, position of dependence, cultural expectations in the society, response to government mandate, promulgation of curricula conforming state standards, invitations to join in collusion, and credentials with group solidarity (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 150). Accreditation also can be considered both as a competitive advantage with the access to certain resources. Cross-organizational networks facilitates large-scale social transformation and cultural embeddedness (Bandelj & Purg, 2006). The late adopters succumbed to coercive pressures to change (Sherer & Lee, 2002). Leadership is crucial in combining different institutional logics in a strategic way and managing balance in times of institutional change (Howells et al., 2014). Coercive effects are outlined below:

1. Political influence, dependence & power imbalance position, legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Furnari, 2016);
2. Cultural expectations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983);
3. Request for Certification (Papadimitrou, 2011, p. 238)
4. Invitations to join in collusion (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983);
5. Leadership (Howells et al., 2014) change agents; Networks (Bandelj & Purg, 2006)
6. Promotion of curricula according to standards (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983); or specific accreditation standards (Finch et al., 2017);
7. Regulatory control (Powell, 2007); cultural embeddedness (Bandelj & Purg, 2006)
8. Access to resource (Wiley & Zald, 1968; Verbruggen, Christiaens, & Milis, 2011); resource dependency (Hessels & Terjesen, 2010).

9. Late adopters fall for coercive power to change (Sherer & Lee, 2002);
10. Adjustment of procedures and structures (Dobbins & Knill, 2009);
11. Social obligation, coercive lobbying (Istieulova & Peljhan, 2015);
12. Prestige (Tuttle & Dillard, 2007, DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Already in 1960s it was shown that coercive sanctions operate through the membership of accreditation bodies and control organisational behaviour via the law, electoral systems and affects access to resources in line with positions and opportunities (Wiley & Zald, 1968). A resource-based view of strategic management examines the resources and capabilities of firms to gain competitive advantage (Oliver, 1997) through the strategic markets from which the resources can be obtained. The coercive isomorphism and resource dependence have been used in organisation research with the explanations that the institution (government, accreditation agency) that sets the rules also controls important resource flows (Verbruggen, Christiaens, & Milis, 2011). According to theory, coercive isomorphism is driven by two *forces*: pressures from others (AACSB/EFMD) and organisation's pressure to conform the cultural expectations (values). Furnari (2016) says that dependence theory is a condition which explains institutional change between fields in power imbalance and dependence. Accreditation is conceptualized as ideological control, when the organisational control's development is based on ideological forms than coercive (Paccioni, 2008): ideological values are put in coercive change. Isomorphic pressures interact with other variables to produce organisational change (Ashworth et al, 2009).

1.4.2.2 Additional effects: Information asymmetry and bandwagon

As Batteau (2006) writes, definition of accreditation does not tell about the reasons why accreditation exists, its forces and why this issue become paramount in higher education. From the Akerlof's theory we know that the balance on the free market can only be achieved under the low quality and the low price. The main hindrance to the better competitive system in the higher education is the *adverse selection* risk, for instance, when B-school suggest the MBA programme (Batteau, 2006, p. 148). In the case of **accreditation**, when one party may be at a disadvantage in the cases of adverse selection and moral hazard. For instance, adverse selection may take place when there is a lack of symmetric information before a deal between B-school and Accreditation body, because one party (Accreditation body) has more accurate information than the other party (B-school). Therefore, B-school with less information is at a disadvantage to the Accreditation body with more information. Moral hazard may occur when there is **asymmetric information** between two parties (for instance, B-school and Student). The asymmetry causes a lack of efficiency in the price and quantity of goods and services. Information asymmetry is a discrepancy in the information levels of managers and stakeholders, where the managers are better informed about their firms' practices (Akerlof, 1970; Kulkarni, 2000; Crilly, Zollo & Hansen (2012). Therefore, information asymmetry always present in goods and services, especially in the services of higher education, including B-schools.

The institutional theory's framework also incorporates various signalling mechanisms in the presence of information asymmetry. **First of all**, information asymmetry effects are highly present on the market for higher education sector. We do not know how B-schools perceive forces and institutional pressures, but these perceptions are likely to influence their strategic responses they formulate. Therefore, there are two important conditions: the understanding of internal conditions under decision making process (with the perceived interests in implementing policy) and the perception of environment at the industry level (with the information's discrepancy between B-schools and stakeholders). The second condition is the

most important, because decision makers who perceive opportunities in compliance with institutional pressures are interested in reducing asymmetry for their stakeholders to encourage collaboration (Crilly, Zollo & Hansen, 2012).

The main pressure to reduce information asymmetry in organisation is to demonstrate the quality of their services. B-schools, healthcare and other organisations seek accreditation (or certification) to differentiate and substantiate their institutions through external validation of their practices due to the pressures to be engaged in ongoing evaluation and performance review as a confirmation of their quality (Slatten, Guidry & Austin, 2011). In addition, Crilly, Zollo & Hansen (2012) also recommend to show the conditions for information asymmetry and stakeholder consensus into institutional pressures at the industry level. Spence (1973, p. 356) relates to the signalling power of education: *If the incentives for veracity in reporting anything by means of a conventional signalling code are weak, then one must look for other means by which information transfers take place.* The key elements of signaling theory comprise of signaler, signal, and the receiver. The emergence of this theory resulted from information economics under conditions in which buyers and sellers dealt with asymmetric information in the market (Spence, 1974).

Second, institutional theory suggests that organisations with institutional beliefs may adopt policies, practices and rules into their formal structures that are related to their activities (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). We follow the assumptions of Dawson, Watson and Boudreau (2010, p. 170) who suggest that information asymmetry may favour not only one, but other parties: organisation that want to gain legitimacy by incorporating standards and accreditation body that brings “*a large change management action*” with further signalling. AACSB accreditation is perceived not only as an indicator of quality, but also a job market signal of job applicant capabilities for employers (Kim, Rhim, Henderson, Bizal & Pitman, 1996). It is relevant to our study to check its signaling mechanism.

Third, the different costs and benefits associated with different rival categories affect firms’ propensities to engage in different modes of rival isomorphism in the presence of information asymmetry (Miller, Indro, Richards & Chng (2013). If we consider benefits and costs of isomorphism, another gap in the literature, we get a much richer and complex picture: in the presence of asymmetric information we may understand why organisations do their signalling (Miller et al., 2013). Alternative view is to look how and why organisation perceives the advantages of certain process with outcoming result of signalling (as a beneficial side) and the disadvantages as a cost side of its signalling. Information is rarely fully shared between the market participants, where signalling is one of the key approaches to the problem of information asymmetry, - when the party with the information advantage conveys meaningful information about itself to the other party (Dawson, Watson & Boudreau, 2010). Miller et al. (2013) discover a signalling paradox: there is a divergence between the firm’s view and investors’ view of rival isomorphism. A firm knows more about its quality than do investors, who possess information about the capital markets and demand for the firm’s securities that the firm doesn’t have. As a result, the investors’ perspective of the costs and benefits of different types of rival isomorphism differs from that of the firm. With the knowledge on different types of rival isomorphism, “*costs exceed legitimacy benefits*” of accreditation and “*emit a signal to outside investors*”, thus, enabling these outsiders to distinguish between superior and less-than-superior firms (Miller et al., 2013, p. 1982). Signalling theory proposes that the quality of products or services, unobservable to a customer, “*may be communicated in a variety of ways including the brand name and reputation, advertising, price and warranties*” (Walker & Johnson, 2009, p. 88). The principles of external accreditation is to exercise some impact on a service organisation or firm’s intrinsic quality and, thereby, to hold the potential to benefit customers or service

providers alike through signalling (Walker & Johnson, 2009). In our study we check the rivals' behaviour in terms of reaction on accreditation's signalling. It can be observed that the demand for accreditation status is connected with the effects from information asymmetry between educational institutions and the customers: employers, students and private donors. Often a student's transfer of credits or degrees among international universities is possible if the 'exporting' programme provider has been accredited by a recognized accreditation agency (Mause, 2008).

Fourth reason for the information asymmetries (Agency theory) is that common standards signal some quality and provide donors with information, where accreditation is designed to alleviate this asymmetry (Slatten, Guidry, & Austin, 2011). Agency theory extends to all types of transactional exchanges that occur in a socio-economic system with the presence of uncertainty, fears of opportunism, and bounded rationality leading to accreditation by reputable institutions to build trust (Pavlou, Liang & Hue, 2007). The use of accreditation also reduces asymmetry by enhancing the availability of reliable information on quality considered important by users and their agents (O' Neill & Largey, 1998). There are governmental and private alternatives to mitigate the informational asymmetry with signaling mechanisms (reputation and advertising), private information intermediaries (rankings) and certification agencies (accreditation labels): they make visible quality differences for the providers of educational services (Mause, 2008). Accreditation may reduce the difficulties by enhancing the availability of reliable information or by alleviation of the information asymmetry on aspects of service quality (O'Neill & Largey, 1998), and even encourage greater donations (Slatten et al., 2011). The use of accreditation schemes is important by service users and their agents. The firm or organisation with the information asymmetry advantage engages in signaling in order to communicate what it believes is important to the clients (in hopes of a higher price) and other stakeholders (Dawson, Watson & Boudreau, 2010). Examples of signals include posting their information privacy policy and being accredited by third-party privacy agencies and/or reputable institutions (Pavlou et al., 2007). The principal can reduce information asymmetry vis-a-vis the agent and can impose sanctions if the agent deviates from expected behavior (Sharma, 1997).

According to Mause (2010), "the quality label" can be used by the accredited entity as a signalling device in the higher education marketplace: prospective students can distinguish between accredited and non-certified institutions with the presence of higher quality. The recommendations are given about provision of quality information to students and providers of university rankings, investment of resources (time, money & effort) into a positive reputation, investment of resources into the seal of approval of a reputable accreditation agency (Mause, 2010). In accordance with Slatten, Guidry and Austin (2011, p. 117), both Institutional and Agency theories and information asymmetries "*dictate that common standards not only signal programme quality, but also provide donors with information...across a broad spectrum*". These authors say that organisations seek to acquire legitimacy with accreditation to gain greater donations. Accreditation can be misleading "*because students enrolled in unaccredited institutions are not eligible for federal student-aid funds*" (Papadimitriou, 2011). We summarise more effects of information asymmetry:

1. Positive signal in job markets (Kim et al., 1996);
2. The presence of "Quality label" (Mause, 2010), quality assurance (Hodge, 2010), quality for employer (Kim et al., 1996);
3. Seal of approval from a reputable body (Mause, 2010);
4. Standards signal quality (Slatten et al., 2011);
5. Greater funds and donations (Slatten et al., 2011);
6. International reputation (Hodge, 2010);

7. Internationalisation, attract more international students (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2015; Hommel, 2009; Ba & Pavlou, 2002)
8. Research-based standards, (Fertig, 2007); Joint research; Improved connections,
9. Increase public trust (Slatten et al., 2011);
10. Joint research, improve connection with b-community (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2015); publications in the recommended choice of outlets (Finch et al., 2017)
11. Alternatives to the ranking (Jarocka, 2015; Mause, 2010)
12. Information advantage (Sharma,1997).

The mimetic isomorphism has two mechanisms: status-driven and bandwagon (Jeyaraj, Balsler, Chowa & Griggs, 2004; Hodge, 2010). **Bandwagon model** of imitation suggests that organisations adopt **innovative** practices used by a large number of other organisations”, and **status-driven**, when “*organisations adopt practices previously implemented by prominent organisations*” (Jeyaraj et al., 2004, p. 2639). Bandwagon is a ‘domino’ effect, when there is no assessment of innovation - just its adoption (Secchi & Bardone, 2013). Bandwagon effects show similarity with mimetic change (copying competitor's behaviour) and coercive isomorphism (political influence). Leibenstein (1950, p. 189) define bandwagon effects as “*the extent to which the demand for a commodity is increased due to the fact that others are also consuming the same commodity*”. Bandwagon theories are grounded in **institutional theory**, managerial process and agency theory, where they argue that firms try to imitate their rivals regardless of value-enhancing (Pangarkar, 2000, p. 40). In organisation theory, two types of theories explain bandwagon pressures: there are institutional and competitive bandwagons. **Institutional bandwagon** – when non-adopters fear appearing different from many adopters, with a potential threat of lost legitimacy (Abrahamson & Rosenkopf, 1993; Pangarkar, 2000). **Competitive bandwagon** occurs when organisation fear to have a below average performance of adopters or to lose a competitive advantage (Abrahamson & Rosenkopf, 1993; Pangarkar, 2000). The bandwagon effect explains fashion. The reference to the **bandwagon effect** is made to bridge the two levels: its effect entails the system, while the bandwagon is referred to an individual (Abrahamson, & Rosenkopf, 1997). Bandwagons theory is important due to defining the conditions under which the management of organisation can achieve a better understanding of dynamics (Secchi & Gullekson, 2016). **Bandwagon theories** argue that firms try to imitate their rivals regardless of value-enhancing (Pangarkar, 2000). Another view for bandwagon effects is shown by Sunstein (2002), different from the perspective of “sheer number of organisations”. The bandwagon effect suggests that organisations desire to be seen more extreme (“*better*”) than others, and the group can use “*cautious shift*” to shift to another position (Sunstein, 2002). There are few reasons for bandwagon – presence of ambiguity (ambiguity of organisational goals, environment or possible outcomes/relations), stakeholder pressure and the presence of organisational slack. Ambiguity can affect organisations’ decisions to adopt an innovation in both early and late stages of diffusion (Abrahamson & Rosenkopf, 1993). If organisations with a higher reputation adopt an innovation, the bandwagon pressure will be stronger on non-adopters who will be less likely to do a cost/benefit analysis, although according to Shibley (2004), cost and benefit analysis is implemented in the US universities. They will trust the judgement of those adopters simply because of their reputation (Hodge, 2010, p. 25). A bandwagon effect is “*a benefit that a person enjoys as a result of others’ doing the same thing that he or she does*” (Rohlf, 2003, p. 1). Abrahamson and Rosenkopf (1993) show that innovation is adopted due to peers’s pressure. The institutional theory’s literature tends to separate bandwagon effects (Pangarkar, 2000; Hodge, 2010). Bandwagon effect is seen when organisation adopt innovation based on the knowledge that its competitors have adopted similar innovations

(Jeyaraj et al., 2004). But bandwagon effects (BA) are present in the global era in organisational conditions. Bandwagon refers to the diffusion of a thought, behaviour, or practice, as a result of its popularity (Secchi & Bardone, 2013, p. 521). When competitors adopt popular management practices with a perception of “best practice,” this may cause powerful bandwagon effects that pressure other firms to adopt it as well (Abrahamson, 1991; 1996). Bandwagon effects are diffusion processes whereby organisations adopt an innovation, not because of their efficiency or returns, but because of its pressure caused by the sheer number of organisations that have already adopted this innovation (Abrahamson & Rosenkopf, 1993; Tolbert & Zucker, 1994, Hodge, 2010). Thus, **Proposition (P4) is: B-schools acquire more isomorphic changes** (bandwagon & information asymmetry) **as a result of accreditation. P4a:** B-schools seek accreditation as a result of bandwagon effects; **P4b:** B-schools seek accreditation to reduce information asymmetry’s effects.

Sunstein (2002) refers to the bandwagon, when the group “causing” the shift. The shift may or may not take place, but popular practices become “normatively sanctioned” (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) and motivate organisations to bring them, where the efficacy of the practice is “taken for granted” (Meyer and Rowan 1977, p. 344). Abrahamson and Rosenkopf (1997, p. 291) show three types of bandwagon process depending on profitability (under uncertainty, similar to mimetic isomorphism), informational (incomplete information) and social pressures (threat of lost legitimacy). They resemble each other– all adopters in each cycle experience pressures to adopt innovation because of its price, efficiency or legitimacy, where the network structure influences the strength of bandwagon pressure (Abrahamson & Rosenkopf, 1997). The emphasis is made towards “social pressures” and the “network structure”, where introduction of innovation can trigger the partial diffusion of innovation via networks. The practice of Ichikawa, a Japanese famous scholar of TQM was diffused through extensive social networks of Japanese industrialists, whom he convinced (Abrahamson & Rosenkopf, 1997). The idea of accreditation is TQM practice: bandwagon is spread as a virus, infecting community in a “mindfulness” manner:

1. A large number of organisations adopted it (Jeyaraj et al., 2004);
2. Best practice with no clear “efficiency” (Abrahamson & Rosenkopf, 1997);
3. A practice “taken for granted”, more strategic (Istieulova & Peljhan, 2015);
4. A presence of ambiguity or organisational slack (Abrahamson & Rosenkopf, 1997);
5. Stakeholder, information & network pressure (Abrahamson & Rosenkopf, 1997);
6. “Automatic pilot”, mindlessness of this process (Secchi & Gullekson, 2016);
7. A fear for below average performance compared to competitors (Pangarkar, 2000);
8. A fear to appearing different from many adopters (Pangarkar, 2000);
9. Competitors adopted similar innovation (Jeyaraj et al., 2004);
10. Threat of lost legitimacy/competitive advantage (Abrahamson & Rosenkopf, 1993)
11. Social networks, domino effect (Secchi & Bardone, 2013)
12. Others do not have it (this innovation) (Istieulova & Peljhan, 2015)

Proposition (P5) follows from signalling as a result of information asymmetry (in P4): **Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to stakeholders.** Therefore, at the country level, institutional change will include all changes, (formulated in P3) including the mechanism of signalling (as stated in P4). The logic brings **Proposition (P6): Institutional change occurs through the mechanisms of isomorphic organisational changes with bandwagon and information asymmetry’s changes.** It’s possible to separate the isomorphic changes in practice (Papadimitriou & Westerheijden, 2010), in the Table 18, and isomorphic effects listed in 1.4.2.1 & 1.4.2.2 – in Table 19.

Table 18. Review of Isomorphic change

Authors	NO	CO	MI	BA	IA	Accredited	Effects	Other Forces	Future research in Management
1.Istieulova & Peljhan, 2015	+	+	+	+	+	AACSB/Equis/Ceeman	A. on IC in Baltic	Isomorphic, IA, BA	how/why BS apply for A in CEE
2.Datney et al., 2014	+	+	+			Institutional	Private/public	Positive for public only	Public vs. private
3.Raffaelli&Glynn, 2014	+	+	+			new practice	Leader, org.infrastr.	II, a tailored &turnkey	Why leaders – in its adoption, effects
4.Weber, 2013	+	+	+			AACSB	graduate/employer	Market/political/societ.	How curricula lead to IC
5.Miller et al., 2013			+	+	+	Certif./Accred	+ Performance	Institutional pressures	Rival isomorphism, IA,benefits & cost
6.Rasche, Gilbert & Schedel, 2013	+	+	+	+		AACSB, EQUIS	Adverse, student, Longitudinal effects	Instit. (internal/external) from A. Agencies	Conflict b/n rise of external force for legitimization&impediments to change
7.Barman&MIndo, 2012	+	+	+			Accreditation	Environ. dynamics	Isomorphic, institutional	Validity of these findings
8.Tseng &Chou, 2011	+	+	+	+		service	bandwagon, size	institutional, social	Relationship b/n performance & imitat.
9.Nikolaeva&Bicho2011	+	+	+	+		Associations	pressure	Public image, market	Outcome of standards' adoption
10.Masrani et al., 2011	+	+	+			Aacsb/Equis	homogeneity	Mimicry force	'Legitimacy' by professional bodies
11.Slatten et al., 2011	+	+	+			AACSB/etc.	social value, inst.	Institutional isomorphic	Qualitative study: explore A
12.Hodge, 2010	+	+	+	+	+	Aacsb/Equis	IA & BA	Regulat., normative, cult.	BA & IA effects, stakeholders
13.Ashworth et al., 2009	+	+	+			Accreditation	Org. culture	Institutional force	External environment, performance
14.Long, et al, 2008	+	+	+			AACSB	Adverse, direct,	individual personalities	The assessment of changes; legitimacy
15.Fernández-Alles, & Llamas-Sanchez, 2008	+	+	+	+		Professional associations	Institutional pressures	Institutional, social	Analysis of institutional change in public sector, organisation'legitimacy
16.Terlaak & King, 2007	+	+	+	+		ISO, accred.	Local adoption, BA	Multiple	Beliefs on adoption patterns
17.Tuttle&Dillard, 2007	+	+	+			AACSB	reputation	Institutional, market	Effects of homogenisation
18.Pavlou et al., 2007					+	Accreditation	e-commerce effect	Market	Buyer–seller relations as agency ones
19.Djelic, 2006	+	+	+	+		Accreditation	political imperfect	Market, coercive	Progress of marketization
20.McKee, Mills, Weatherbee, 2005	+	+	+			AACSB	A. as a strategic tool for change	Change: social practice resource dependencies	+ Performance & CO. Benefits in the context of the pressures of II.
21.Dacin et al., 2002	+	+	+			Associations	CO & NO	political, performance	Contribute to IT and I. change; IC
22.Lao, 2001	+	+			+	Accreditation	anticompetitive	Market, anticompetitive	Process of change, elite A.
23.Casile&Davis-Blake, 2002	+	+	+			AACSB	social, professional	Market, specific forces	Adoption patterns in private BS. Why BS join AACSB? Stakeholders view
24.Dacin, 1997	+	+	+			Associations	Institutional	Institutional forces (IF)	Microenvironment level, isomorphism
25.Sharma, 1997	+				+	Institutional	IA, knowledge	Force of legal system	Peer/social order. Agency theory
26.Goes & Park, 1997			+	+	+	A.agencies	interorganisational	Institutional forces	Interorganis. links beyond inst. ties

Source: compiled by author

Table 19 compare 5 types of Organisational change vs Quality Performance. It can be utilized to derive relationships between change and effects based on the old and new research.

Table 19. Types of organisational changes with its effects

Organisational changes with effects (MI, NO, CO, BA, IA) vs. Quality Performance (PE)					
Organisational change with Isomorphic Effects (IE)			other Isomorphic Effects (IE)		Quality Performance
MI	NO	CO	BA	IA	PE
Mimesis	Attraction	Power-political	Environment.	Information	Productivity
<i>Non-strategic managerial pressures, taken-for-granted assumptions</i>		<i>Cultural, export activities</i>	<i>Peer, social or regulatory</i>	<i>Pressures to present quality</i>	<i>Customers' pressures</i>
1.Uncertainty: copy successful peers, popular practices	Professionalisation (similar edu), structuration, attend A. seminars	Hard/soft power, ideology Legitimacy, Power imbalance	Strategic decision; 'domino' effect	Information advantage; Seal of approval;	Best teachers, Improved faculty with achievements
2. International benchmarking; best practice	Local market's norms & values,	Invitation to collusion from powerful nation	External value on Regional/ Nat. market	Access to Int. market; visible at industry lev-1	Normative Hofstede's cultural value
3. Formalisation of quality assurance	Interaction via associations (with their networks)	Change of values, mission, goals, policy, cultural expect.	Awareness on quality; might lead to damaging effect	Quality label; higher quality assurance;	Increased quality of articles: in top journals
4. Competitive advantage; compete effectively	Being "one of accredited", member of club, a special group	A tool 4 change (students, staff, curriculum), how to move	Legitimized practice in other countries	Job market signalling mechanism;	Enabled alignment of goals
5. Setting up accepted quality standards	Conformation to standards; social life's standard	Change due to spec.A standard (Curriculum)	Long-term protection	Standards signal quality	Best students; their support
6. Networking; to improve competitiveness	Brand, which enhances control of networking	Inter-organisat. network, cultural embeddedness	Facilitation of relations with others;	For improved connections & recruitment;	A very high quality staff
7. Status-driven mechanism & little evidence of performance	Get connections, Involvement of faculty in research;	External tool for promotion, vehicle for change; Lobby	Process review from the value-added point	Joint occasions (ex.: Research), Greater funds	Improved institution with better performance
8. A framework you follow; Set up units, structures	Differentiation of school, Acknowledge as reputable school;	Decision by change agent, Soc. obligation, certification	Good organisations have it <i>Automatic pilot</i>	We want to compete; we are more advanced; Internationalis-n	External tool in improved development
9. It put you on map, Credibility, Visibility, Recognition;	Improvement of visibility and reputation.	Prestige; New generation of Leaders, "change agents"	Fear to be different vs. adopters	International reputation, improved marketing,	Enabled faculty involved in development
10. Feedback from peer review; process	Satisfaction, a cultural understandings	Compliance with partners & facilitation,	Gaining a trademark	Newcomer on market (become the first)	Improved b-faculty with results
11.Creation of academic programmes	Entrance requirements; Connection with B-community	Adjustment of structures, procedures/strategies. RedQueen effect	Checking who else doing it; mindlessness	Alternative to the ranking; market component	It made us the best B-school in...
12.Some estimate of cost; as an alternative	An additional argument for resource	Matthew effect: access to funds obtain resource	No formal cost-benefit analysis;	Create a point of difference (credibility)	Reduction in teach. load; high salary

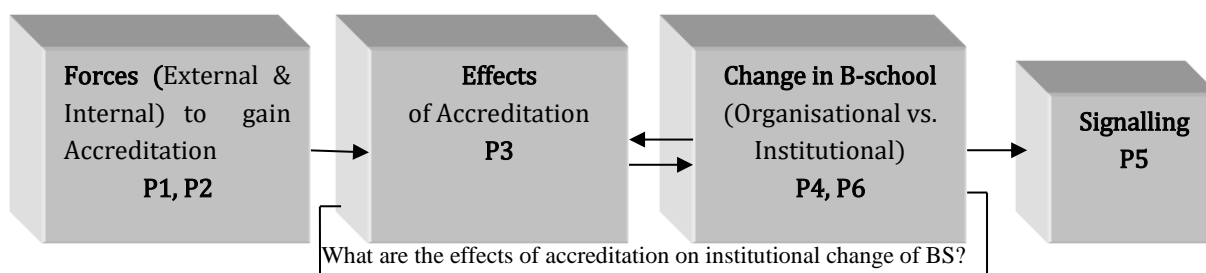
Source: Developed by Author based on Literature, Abbreviation: A: accreditation MI:mimetic; NO:normative; CO:coercive; BA: bandwagon; IA:information asymmetry; PE:Quality Performance, IE-isomorphic effects

Based on the 21st century’s global changes as result of accreditation practices, we advance theory in Table 19 with important contribution about the differences in organisational changes (5) with their effects (12), in total – 72 (with quality performance). It serves the basis for our content analysis. Type of change links to the context of B-schools’ interviews.

1.4.2.3 Conceptual Framework and Propositions

Parahoo (2006) defines that ‘**theoretical framework**’ should be used when research is underpinned by one theory, and a ‘conceptual framework’ draws on concepts from various theories and findings to guide research. The **conceptual framework** is helpful in ensuring the research is given order that could clearly be communicated to readers (Green, 2014). The framework presented in Figure 5 (**Note:** after the results, the framework is corrected and adjusted in Figure 12) is an application of the Institutional theory with an explanation of isomorphic changes related to the accreditation processes in organisations (second & third boxes). The thesis makes analysis of the history of institutional accreditation related to organisational changes and effects to explain the development based on the key lenses of institutional theory. Besides the coercive, normative and mimetic changes with their effects, we also include resource dependence theory (expanding coercive change and its effects), as well as bandwagon and information asymmetry (inside the second & third boxes), with its signalling mechanisms (fourth box). The inter-field theories explain the reasons why and how B-schools apply for accreditation (in propositions). Thus, our conceptual framework uses Institutional, Information Asymmetry and Bandwagon theories with Resource Dependence theory (effects of coercive change). It is a matter of interpretation as to when concepts become interrelated enough to be deemed theories, explaining why the two terms are used interchangeably in frameworks (Green, 2014, p. 35). “*Good theory*” emerges when assessment uses the concepts, framework, or propositions (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 548). The findings from the literature indicate the following research gaps and topics which are not covered: Forces for international accreditation; Effects of accreditation; Change (organisational and institutional); and Signalling from accreditation. They are present in the “boxes” of our conceptual model, with the main building blocks of Institutional theory. The author’s contribution arises from the theoretical foundations proposed in a conceptual model (propositions insert explanations) (Webster & Watson, 2002), depicted in Figure 5:

Figure 5. A conceptual framework for Institutional Accreditation



The external and internal forces (in sub-chapter 1.1 on “**Global forces in business education**” and presented in the block 1 “**Forces**”) push B-school to gain accreditation. On the one hand, accreditation produces the overall effects (“**Effects of Accreditation**” set in the block 2) on faculty body, students, research, internationalisation process, etc (1.3); but on the other hand, according to theory, it has isomorphic effects (1.4: *in 1.4.2.1, 1.4.2.2*) such as coercive, normative, and mimetic (1.4.1). The all-inclusive change is outlined in the block 3 (“**Change in B-school**”) which incorporates both organisational and institutional change with isomorphic and additional effects (bandwagon and information asymmetry).

Classical definition of **institutional change**, a change that occurs through three mechanisms of isomorphism: coercive, mimetic and normative (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). We argue that in the 21st century under the accelerated forces of globalisation and technological revolution, institutional change occurs not only through mechanisms of isomorphic change (eg.: mimetic– when it copy the practices of successful organisations, normative– when staff has a similar training, coercive - via the law, powerful bodies which affects access to resources), but also through the additional mechanism of information asymmetry (pressures to demonstrate quality associated with certain practices) and bandwagon trends (for instance, a fear to lose a competitive advantage). According to theory (information asymmetry), organisations gain accreditation in order to send certain signals to the various stakeholders, which are resulted in the block 4 “**Signalling**”. We encourage problematisation with clarifying research questions as Alvesson and Sandberg’s (2011) methodology that are likely to lead to more influential theories, and re-allocate our main RQ in building blocks.

The **first building block “Forces”** for accreditation answers *How and Why* questions:

RQ1: How do CEE’s B-schools perceive international accreditation?

- What are the values of accreditation?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages?

RQ2: Why do B-schools in the East seek international accreditation from the West?

- What are the forces that push B-schools to seek accreditation? (External Reasons)
- How do B-schools make decisions about accreditation? (Internal Reasons)

The **second building block “Effects & Changes”** comprises RQ:

RQ3: What are organisational changes in B-schools as a result of accreditation in CEE?

RQ4: What are the effects of international accreditation process in B-schools of CEE?

The **third building block “Signalling & Change”** in B-schools includes RQ:

RQ5: Do B-schools with accreditation send any signals to their stakeholders?

- Does accreditation of B-school have impact on the stakeholders?
- What is opinion of the global accreditors about accreditation in CEE B-schools?

RQ6: What is an institutional change (IC) in B-schools that takes place in CEE?

Change in various areas, as a result of accreditation is a trigger of organisational change; how organisations react to change, when organisational change turns into isomorphic, and when it becomes an institutional one: we need to explain the practices according to theory.

The reasoning for propositions comes from theoretical explanations for “why”, past empirical findings, and experience (Webster & Watson, 2002, p. xix). Based on our RQ, literature review and the exploratory research by Istileulova and Peljhan (2015) that suggest the similar propositions in organisational settings of CEE B-schools for explanatory research, we develop the following propositions (P) to be tested in our study:

P1: Perception of accreditation values in B-schools is relatively more important than perception of accreditation cost; **P2:** B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy;

P3: B-schools enhance three organisational isomorphic changes (mimetic, normative, coercive) as a result of accreditation;

P4: B-schools acquire more isomorphic changes (bandwagon & information asymmetry) as a result of accreditation;

P4a: B-schools seek accreditation as a result of bandwagon effects;

P4b: B-schools seek accreditation to reduce information asymmetry’s effects;

P5: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to stakeholders;

P6: Institutional change occurs through the mechanisms of isomorphic organisational changes with bandwagon and information asymmetry’s changes;

2. METHODOLOGY

We use the term ‘methods’ to refer to techniques and procedures to obtain and analyse data; and the term ‘methodology’ which refers to the theory of how this research is undertaken (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 3). This chapter includes the explanation why the multiple case approach is employed as the research strategy, the methods we apply to test propositions, and a description of our research settings. The international accreditation in B-schools is the nature of the phenomenon examined (ontology) and knowledge (methods) for understanding it (epistemology) through the various forms of research: positivism, relativism, pragmatism, and realism (Van de Ven, 2007). We use Yin (1994) recommendation for positivist approach: theory is “developed” at the beginning of study and subsequently tested in case setting. The descriptive and exploratory research for CIS and CEE regions by Istileulova and Peljhan (2013, 2015) also serve a basis to test similar propositions in explanatory fashion.

The complex phenomenon of change is studied in a unique manner: with a variety of data: from the semi-structured interviews, observation, archives and the developed Questionnaire enabling additional verification for capturing the context with replication logic using a case study protocol. **Qualitative research** is used in management research and education (Myers, 1997, 2013; Merriam, 1998; Verd, 2004; Gephart, 2004; Patton, 2005; Briggs, Morrison & Coleman, 2012; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014) as a research strategy that emphasizes words (Bryman, 2008) to study phenomena not available elsewhere (Silverman, 2006, p. 43), with the effects of events on people or developments based on people’s opinions (Polit & Hungler, 2003). Qualitative research is used for theory building (Sutton & Staw, 1995) “to describe a ...phenomenon and how it changed over time in a ...context, emphasizing processes that underlie it” with “respective changes” (Gephart & Richardson, 2008, p. 36).

Case study is associated with the qualitative paradigm (Yin, 1994) with a flexible approach for methods, enabling it to generate quantitative data (Vallis & Tierney, 2000). The **purpose** of case study in business is to use empirical evidence from real people in real organisations to make an original contribution to knowledge (Myers, 2013). Case study research should be understood more as a research approach or strategy rather than a method (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; p. 169). Out of the most common *inquiry approaches or research strategies* (Saunders et al., 2011) - from the grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) up to case study, we use the multiple-case study. Quantitative methods are insufficient to investigate a phenomenon involving multiple levels, with dynamic and symbolic components, and a multiple case-study design is needed (Vohra, 2014). The case study offers an example from which others understand a problem (Thomas, 2011). Eisenhardt (1989) says that case studies are particularly suitable to new research areas where existing theory seems inadequate. It is essential to develop a conceptual framework to guide the collection and analysis of data to undertake a case study effectively (Yin, 1994; McDonnell, Jones & Read, 2000). The sub-chapter (2.1) explains case studies research and its setting (2.2).

2.1 Case studies research

First, the case study approach is selected, because of ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are explanatory leading to the use of case studies which are generalizable to theoretical propositions (Yin, 2003, 2009). **Second**, Yin (1994) defines the case study as an empirical inquiry investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; **Third**, in organisation and management research, where experiments are difficult to conduct, a case study approach is presented as an alternative to a survey, bringing a different kind of knowledge of a phenomenon (Lövstål, 2008, p. 65), with a strong case-study tradition in the management field (Lee, 1989). **Fourth**, building theory from case studies is also a strategy

to create theoretical constructs, propositions or midrange theory from case-based evidence (Eisenhardt, 1989). Explanatory studies especially need propositions (Rowley, 2002). In addition, conceptual analysis of the situational context can be applied (George & Bennett, 2005; Yin, 2009). The findings on conceptual grounds from case studies are tested, revised or withdrawn (Radley & Chamberlain, 2012). **Fifth**, according to Burnett (2009), their advantages are: depth of exploration; managing constraints; the use with other methods; and comparison with other research. An important practice in the analysis is the return to the propositions: first, this practice leads to a focused analysis; second, exploring rival propositions is an attempt to provide an alternate explanation of a phenomenon; third, the confidence in the findings is increased as propositions are addressed, accepted or rejected (Baxter & Jack, 2008). **Sixth**, multiple cases are preferred over single-case designs: the analytic conclusions from more than one case are more powerful (Yin, 2012); the analytic benefits may be substantial (Yin, 2002). The multiple case studies, are even more powerful due to credible results, and the analytic conclusions (Yin, 2012). Multiple-cases are defined as being investigations of a particular phenomenon at a number of different sites (Stewart, 2012, p. 69): they are valuable when relationships are considered between organisational structures, management processes and outcomes. **Seventh**, multiple cases create robust theory because the propositions are more grounded in empirical evidence (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 27). Yin (2009) argues that case studies are generalizable in relationship to theoretical propositions rather than to populations, with a goal to expand and generalise theories; when “*a previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study*” (Yin, 2009, p. 38). Compton-Lilly (2013, p. 61) says: “*well-argued case studies ...will identify the type of information and insights that extend beyond a particular case*”. The role of theory in designing and doing case study is important.

Yin (2003) proposes three types of case study that can form the conceptual framework: **exploratory, explanatory and descriptive**. The previous **descriptive** comparative study analysis of CIS countries for B-schools with accreditation and the **exploratory** pilot study in CEE by Istileulova & Peljhan (2013, 2015) helped refining the conceptual framework and stipulating rival theories in **explanatory** phase. Selection of the cases followed the logic to have exemplary instances of the phenomenon of international accreditation being studied, as well as contrasting conditions. The screening process of AACSB, EQUIS and CEEMAN accredited members identified an array of cases. Criteria for selecting cases had the practical constraint that only a small number of cases could be the subject of study with top-accreditations like EQUIS and AACSB. Multiple cases were required, but only a small number could be studied, leading to the use of a replication logic to select the final cases. In using the replication logic, the first selection criterion was that every case had to demonstrate the occurrence of exemplary outcomes. A second criterion was the required preliminary arrangements with the letters to deans, preliminary permission of rector and negotiations with the top-management of B-schools. A third criterion was that the cases covering various sub-regions and countries of CEE region with different economic and other conditions.

The explanatory case study method enables generation of exhaustive data on accreditation effects to yield insightful theories to be further the basis for study. An investigator can move from cross-case comparison, back to redefinition of research question, with new ways of the data's understanding and convergence on a theoretical framework (Eisenhardt, 1989). Explanatory multi-case makes greater use of theoretical frameworks (vs. exploratory one) (Stewart, 2012). The quality of research is based on four tests relevant to case studies (Kidder & Judd, 1986; Yin, 2009), with construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability (Saunders et al., 2011), listed in the Table 20.

Table 20. Four tests relevant to case studies

Tests	Definitions/Use	Case Study (CS) Tactic	Phase of research	How to meet the test
1. Construct validity	Identifying correct operational measures for the concepts being studied. "Change" is a common CS topic	-use multiple sources of evidence; -establish its chain; -have key informants review, draft case study	data collection data collection composition	Type of changes to be studied in concepts; identify measure of changes
2. Internal validity for explanatory/causal study	seeking to set up a causal relationship, where certain conditions lead to other conditions	- do pattern matching ; - do explanation building; - address rival explanations - use logic models	data analysis data analysis data analysis	How&why event x led to y; problem to make inference
3. External validity	defining the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized. Survey research rely on statistical generalization, case studies -on analytic generalization	-use theory in single-cases; - use replication logic in multiple-case studies; Threats to validity: history, testing, instrumentation, mortality, maturation. causal direction ambiguity	-research design -research design	In analytical generalization, the investigator generalizes a set of results to broader theories
4. Reliability	demonstrating that a study operations (ex.: collection of data) can be repeated, with the same results	-use case study protocol -develop case study database, Threats: Subject/participant bias; observer error & bias	data collection data collection	A case study protocol, and the development of a CS database

Source: *compiled based on Yin (2009, p. 41), Kidder and Judd (1986), Saunders et al. (2011, pp. 156-157)*

The **validity** of a research is, to a large extent, evaluated on the criteria of its propositions: for internal validity, propositions provide information regarding precision of factors, definitions, measurements; and for external validity, propositions form the premise for the deduction of inferences (Avan & White, 2001). Problems of making inference relate to the possibility of drawing conclusions or/and about the underlying theoretical constructs. As a result, inference in content analysis confines itself to features of external and internal validity. The major threats to construct validity are twofold. First, those created by bias either through the process of observing itself or bias introduced by the observation method.

In this thesis, the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaire were carefully constructed with questions to elicit information required to investigate research questions and as such, it is assumed that **construct validity** is high. When undertaking our case study, multiple sources of evidence were used with a chain of evidence. The notion of **external validity** for case methodology relates to the generalizability of the results to the underlying institutional theory through its propositions. **Internal validity** determines whether the event "accreditation" led to the events of "changes", where we also relied on our theoretical propositions. From a study of B-schools` accreditation in the US and the Western Europe, followed the proposition that B-schools apply for accreditation because of legitimacy and not because of its quality. Besides, the process of accreditation is resulted in a pattern of organisational changes (**outcomes**). The use of multiple sources of evidence enabled verification through triangulation, the strength of case research (Noda & Bower, 1996). The use of multiple sources helps for the purpose of validating specific details, and for deepening the coverage of events (Stewart, 2012, p. 79). Comparing multi-case methodology, the **reliability** needs to be addressed, connecting research design, data collection and cross-case analysis (Stewart, 2012, p. 80). The relevant ethical issues are taken into consideration. An interview protocol (see Appendix A) ensured that the same themes were covered with each interviewee. Interview data were continually cross-referenced with other data sources and cross-checked with the chronology of events that took place during the study. This form of triangulation enhanced the internal validity and reliability of the case study material. The

operations of a study (e.g. data collection procedures) can be repeated, with the same results, demonstrating reliability. We recorded what interviewees allowed, providing transcripts. An interview protocol ensured that the same themes are covered with each interviewee from B-schools of different countries. Interview data were cross-referenced with other sources and checked with the activities with a triangulation increasing the internal validity and reliability. The operations of this study (e.g. data collection) can be repeated, with the same results to meet reliability. A pattern-matching logic suggested by Yin (2003, p. 120) is to analyse the data by building an explanation about the case to strengthen its internal validity. The goal of a special type of pattern matching is the data analysis of cases, presented below.

According to Ghauri (2004) the next stage after the first stage of analysis or a ‘story-telling’ (histories of organisations) is a sifting process. It includes rearranging the data into more conceptual categories through coding and categorisation: classifying and break them down, conceptualising, putting together and presenting them to interpret and relate the information to questions and frameworks. Data triangulation is suggested by Flick (2008) to studying the same phenomenon at different times, in various locations and with different persons. Triangulation is a concept that is often taken up in qualitative research when issues of quality are discussed with the use of more than one method (Flick, 2008, p. 37). As Kohlbacher (2006) explains, when we use a qualitative content analysis in case study research, triangulation takes place on two different levels.

On the first level, data is triangulated by integrating different material and evidence often collected by the use of various methods - integrating quantitative and qualitative steps of analysis. A qualitative content analysis of experts (top-management, quality managers, accreditors, and faculty) is used as a method of examination of data material. Text analysis and content analysis techniques are powerful research methods for extracting and interpreting the meaning of articles, speeches, and interviews. Comprehensive triangulation in a systematic model is presented in Table 21. Content analysis includes an interpretation of text documents (especially the transcripts of qualitative interviews in terms of the types of change) which has been integrated into the data analysis in this thesis.

Table 21. Comprehensive triangulation

Elements of triangulation	Definitions	Contributions	The use of elements in this PhD
1.Data triangulation	It uses time, space, persons. use the same phenomenon at different times, in various locations with different people.	Allows to reach a maximum of theoretical profit from using the same methods	2013-14; 4 countries; 44 Interviews/ 34 Questionnaire 4 groups: BS, rivals, employers, accreditors
2.Theory triangulation	More than one theory in the interpretation of the phenomenon	Promotes progress in theory, research by a comparative assessment	Institutional theory, Bandwagon, Information asymmetry (sub-fields) with signaling
3.Methodological triangulation - within methods - between methods	more than one method to gather data: interviews, questionnaires, documents, and observations	Provides a full picture, comparing various approaches; the levels: practice, knowledge, background	Interviews, Questionnaire, Documents, Reports, Observations
4.Systematic triangulation of perspectives, data	Combining methods that capture structural aspects of a problem with a focus on the features of its meaning for participants. The use of an interpretive approach	Allows understanding subjective meanings, a description of practices; analysing viewpoints, meanings beyond a current situation.	Content analysis, based on B-schools’ interviews

Source: *developed based on Denzin, 1978 and Flick, 2008*

The main idea of this concept developed by Mayring (2000) was to preserve the advantages of quantitative content analysis and develop them to qualitative-interpretative steps of analysis. A content analysis “comprises techniques for reducing texts to a unit-by-variable matrix and analysing that matrix quantitatively to test hypotheses” and the researcher produce a matrix by applying a set of codes to the written texts of qualitative data, because the codes of interest have been described beforehand (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p. 785). Hsieh & Shannon (2005) describe 3 types of content analysis depending on the ways how the codes are developed: conventional (codes are derived from data), directed (from theory) and summative analyses (keywords are derived from review of a literature).

A brief summary of CEE’s business environment, followed by results gained from interviews of B-schools, competitors, employers and accreditation bodies with a brief summary of country’s environment. At the beginning, it was a convenience sample. Yin (2016, p. 334) defines that convenience sample is the selection of participants or sources of data to be used in a study based on their accessibility or availability. Initially, it included all B-schools with the required accreditation who agreed to participate in this research by the end of 2012, and finally, it ended up with the consecutive sample. Consecutive sampling is very similar to convenience sampling, but it seeks to include all accessible subjects. This sampling technique is considered to be the best of all non-probability/non-random samples because it includes all schools that make a better representation of the entire population. Finally, by 2014, this sample included all B-schools (2 public, 3 private) with institutional accreditation in CEE. B-schools are selected from Central Europe (Slovenia), Central and Eastern Europe (Poland), South-Eastern Europe (Croatia) and Eastern Europe (Russia).

On second level, triangulation takes place by applying a method of analysis (qualitative content analysis) to a research design (multiple case study). There are several strengths of qualitative content analysis. *First*, it covers the complexity of the business situations examined, where the material is analysed in a step-by-step process: summary, explication and structuring reducing complexity. *Second*, it leads to a theory-guided analysis, when a theory fits the data. *Third*, it covers integration of context (how & why) and the evidence (theory-guided method for analysing interview transcripts of experts). Moreover, moving in further at the stage of trying to generalise from the findings of case studies, having an emerging theory beforehand might point to how and why the findings might be expected to be relevant to other similar conditions. *Forth*, there are issues of methodology recommended by Suddaby (2010). “*Institutional theory has failed to retain methodologies that are consistent with their need to attend to meanings systems, symbols, myths and the processes by which organisations interpret their institutional environments*” (Suddaby, 2010, p. 16). The research methodology’s first recommendations are about return to the rich case studies of organisational institutionlists (ex: Selznick, 1996). The research methodology in Selznick's institutional approach is that of the case study, with an emphasis on adaptive change where an institutionalisation is a means of instilling value (Scott, 1987, p. 494).

The other recommendation is related to four areas: a) categories (distinction between public and private property), b) language (to analyse the role of language in processes, effects, institutional change), c) work (to examine the processes directly, with a perceptual component at the level of individuals), and d) aesthetics (activities in organisations, and how isomorphic activities are interpreted when adopted) (Suddaby, 2010). To test quality in research setting (2.2), we need to show validity, internal validity (implying to explanatory case studies (Baškarada, 2014) as well as external validity, and reliability (Kidder & Judd, 1986; Gibbert, Ruigrok, & Wicki, 2008; Yin, 2009; and Saunders et al., 2011).

2.2 Research setting

When undertaking case study in our research setting, multiple sources of evidence are used, establishing a chain of evidence. The preliminary descriptive research on CIS countries and exploratory one - on CEE region by Istileulova and Peljhan (2013, 2015) also suggested to test theoretical propositions whether “accreditation” led to certain “changes”. A complete modern theory has four elements with “What” (Organisational change), “How and Why” (How and why do B-schools in CEE perceive international accreditation?) - the subjects of theory, and “Who-Where-When” (Whetten, 1989) (B-schools of 4 CEE with accreditation). According to Mair (2008), when comparing multiple cases, the object of study (“what-is”) should be functionally equivalent across cases: B-schools with EQUIS, AACSB and CEEMAN. Our multi-case studies are in essence comparative of the ‘snapshot’ time horizon of 2013-14, showing how a quality control criteria are used empirically in Table 22.

Table 22. Quality control in study

Stages	Criteria	Applied empirically in PhD Thesis
1. Research Design	1. Research Questions	Why & How B-schools apply for West’s accreditation
	2. Propositions	P1-3: Institutional theory; P4-6: New global practices
	3. Unit of analysis	The ‘case’ is B-school, the unit of analysis: Public and Private B-schools in Slovenia, Russia, Poland, Croatia
	4. The logic of the linking data to the propositions	‘ <i>Pattern matching</i> ’: a pieces from the same case may be related to theoretical proposition;
	5. Criteria interpreting findings	Authenticity, coherence, reciprocity, typicality
	6. The logic model (based on literature review LR), conceptual framework	Inputs: Staff; Employers, Competitors, Accreditors Activities: processes for AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN Outputs: awarded (re)-accreditation in CEE B-school; Outcomes: Changes and Effects in recent global process
	7. Research design’s Rationale	A multiple case-study design; Time horizons: 2013-14
	8. Explanatory Approach	Followed by exploratory case: Istileulova & Peljhan 2015
2. Data collection	1. Data collection: Valid data	B-schools: 44 experts; Employers-11; Accreditors-3; Competitors: 6 - based on Case study protocol
	2. Use summary tables	Key informants - 44 representatives of 5 B-schools; Total Informants: 64; Survey: 34;
	3. Data triangulation	Crafting instruments (multiple data – interviews, observations, archival sources, Questionnaire)
3. Data analysis	1. Description of the methods, procedures	Propositions and conceptual framework. Deductive approach: framework leads to the propositions
	2. Shaping propositions	Search for ‘why’/how behind relationship for internal validity; logic across cases – confirms, extents and sharpens theory; Rival explanation.
	3. Chain of evidence	Within case analysis; cross-case pattern search
	4. Use preliminary data analysis (developed in LR)	Table 19 is a basis for content analysis according to its 100 year’s analysis of LR; Context is applied (Table 19)
	5. Quotes	From interviews
	6. Compare findings	Based on Propositions (P1-P6). Public vs Private

Sources: adopted from Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 533, Rowley, 2002; Dubé and Paré, 2003; Staehr, Shanks & Seddon, 2012, p. 460, Sangster-Gormley, 2013, Yin, 2009, Saunders et al., 2011

The semi-structured interviews and questionnaire were constructed with the questions to retrieve information for research questions that construct high validity (see Appendices).

The information was based on responses to a semi-structured interview of about 45 - 60 minutes, using a formal instrument and a survey Questionnaire. The information was based on responses to a semi-structured interview (45 - 60 minutes). The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. Coding is applied sorting data according to concepts and themes. Non-random samples began from convenience sample (B-schools agreed to participate in study by 2012) and ended up with the whole population for B-schools with institutional accreditation AACSB, EQUIS or CEEMAN in CEE by 2013-14. The study is based on five cases of B-schools with accreditation and their profiles summarised in Table 23.

Table 23. General Profiles of B-schools with accreditation

Units	B-schools with international institutional accreditation from CEE				
B-schools	1.FELU	2.KU	3.ZSEM	4.GSOM	5.IMISP
Country	Slovenia (CE),	Poland (CE)	Croatia (SEE)	Russia (EE, CIS)	
Ownership	Public	Private	Private	Public	Private
Institutional Accreditation Awarded	<i>EQUIS</i> (2006) AACSB (2010)	AACSB (2011) EQUIS (1999) CEEMAN (2001)	AACSB (2013)	<i>EQUIS</i> (2012)	CEEMAN (1999)
Comparison	Compare 1&4	2&3	3&2	4&1	2&5
Faculty members	<i>Faculty members: 141;</i> <i>Adm. staff: 103</i>	<i>Faculty members: 400</i>	<i>Faculty members: 47;</i> <i>Part-time: 50;</i> <i>Adm. staff: 27</i>	<i>Faculty members: 64;</i> <i>Part-time: 10</i> <i>Adm. staff: 115</i>	<i>Faculty members: 19;</i> <i>Part-time: 25</i>
Data on B-schools; N of students	UGS: 2181 MBA*/Mr:1984 PhD: 69	UGS:2483 MBA*/Mr:3156 PhD: 136	UGS: 1021; MBA/Mr: 168;	UGS:2483 MBA*/Mr:3156 PhD: n/c*	Evening form MBA*-139 Up to 1000

Sources: *B-schools, 2013-2014*

Abbreviation: CE-Central Europe, SEE-South-East Europe, EE-Eastern Europe, CIS-Commonwealth of Independent States; FELU-Faculty of Economics, Ljubljana University; KU-Kozminski University, ZSEM – Zagreb School of Economics and Management, GSOM-Graduate School of Management St. Petersburg University, IMISP-International Management Institute of St. Petersburg

Table 24 specifies interviews with 6 rivals, 11 employers and 3 accreditation bodies (Acc).

Table 24. Interviews with Stakeholders

Case 1. FELU	Case 2. KU	Case 3. ZSEM	Case 4. GSOM	Case 5. IMISP
<i>EQUIS, AACSB</i>	<i>AACSB-EQUIS-CEEMAN</i>	<i>AACSB</i>	<i>EQUIS</i>	<i>CEEMAN</i>
Compare 1&4 (EQUIS)	Compare 2&3 (AACSB)	Compare 3&2 (AACSB)	Compare 4&1 (EQUIS)	Compare 2&5 (CEEMAN)
Competitors (Rivals): Interviews with competing B-school(s)				
Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Maribor, Dean, (ACBSP, ECBE)	Warsaw School of Economics, WSE; (CEEMAN) Management Faculty, Univers. of Warsaw Dean (AMBA)	University of Zagreb, Faculty of Economics and Business, EFZG, ViceDean (Resear.) (EPAS)	International Management Institute of Saint Petersburg, PhD Dean (EQUIS, EPAS, AMBA)	GSOM, Graduate School of Management; Rector (CEEMAN, AMBA)
Employers: Companies interviewed				
Trimo, Pristop	Sante, IKEA	Croatian Telecom, PBZ, Podravka	Citi Bank, McKensy	Tranzas Technologii, Sang
Accreditors: One representatives from each Accrediting bodies (AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN) interviewed				
Competitor: 1 Employers: 2 Acc: EQUIS	Competitors: 2 Employers: 2 Acc: AACSB, Ceeman	Competitor: 1 Employers: 3 Acc: AACSB	Competitor: 1 Employers: 2 Acc: EQUIS	Competitor: 1 Employers: 2 Acc: Ceeman

Second, we compare and discuss the B-schools for making cross-case comparisons based on the experts' opinions (top-managers, accreditation team, faculty and administrators) shown

in Table 25 with the number of informants and 44 interviews. Third, multiple study is of a positivist form with deductive approach. Fourth, criteria are the alternative views of stakeholders (employers, competitors, accreditors). Fifth, the anonymity for B-schools is provided based on the code given to each individual. In addition, the experts' opinions are also coded based on the content analysis of opinions according to Institutional change of (see Table 19). The reason for defining the initial code is the use of analytic rationale of this theory reflecting the meaning of coercive, mimetic, normative, bandwagon, performance or information asymmetry to interpret and relate the data to our questions and frameworks.

Table 25. Interviews with the informants of five B-schools

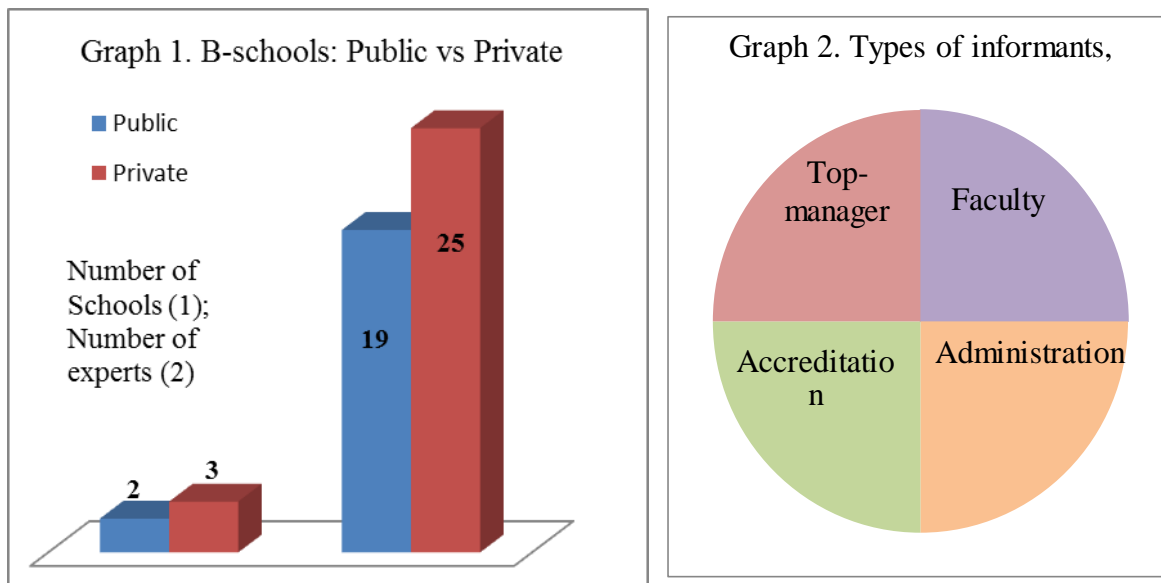
1.FELU	2.KU	3.ZSEM	4.GSOM	5.IMISP
Case 1: Public	Case 2: Private	Case 3: Private	Case 4: Public	Case 5: Private
Compare 1&4	Compare 2&3	Compare 3&2	Compare 4&1	Compare 2&5
1.Dean	1.President	1.Dean	1.Dean	1.Rector
2. 1 st AACSB AT	2.Rector	2.Managing Director	2.Vice-Rector	2.Vice-Rector, AT
3. 2 nd AACSB AT	3.Vice-rector, Int.Relations	3.Head of Intern.office,	3. Accreditation Manager, AT	3. Ext.Affairs Development Director
4. 3 rd AACSB AT	4.Coordinator for International Accreditation, AT	4.Assistant administrator	4.Ex-Deputy Dean, AT,	4.Accreditation Expert
5. 1 st EQUIS AT	5.Director of Int.Relations,	5.Lecturer, AT,	5.Advisor to Vice-Rector, Director of Int. Relations, AT	5.Head of Research
6. 2 nd EQUIS,	6.Member of AT, Accounting dep.	6.Lecturer, Co-ordinator of MBA	6.Director of Post-graduations pr.	6.TQM,Lecturer
7. 3 rd EQUIS, AT,	7. AT, Director Center for Games Simulation	7. Lecturer	7.Deputy of Post-Graduation	
8. Quality Assurance	8. AT, Financial	8. Lecturer	8.HR Manager	
9.Ex-Dean	9. Director, Scientific support		9. Director of Magistrature, AT	
	10. Research inf.team		10.Ex-Director of MA/Faculty	
	11. Department of Int. Management			
Total: 9	Total: 11	Total: 8	Total: 10	Total: 6

Abbreviation: AT- Accreditation Team

Table 25 is indicated in Figure 7 by the share of schools' experts, units of analysis (5), one representative from accreditation bodies (3), competitors (6), and employers (11). B-schools are compared on the types of entity and accreditation. Additional evidence for cases is based on the complementary sources: archival records/documents, direct observation, and a Questionnaire. The answers are examined based on the question-and-answer format, thus, enriching the understanding of a cause-and-effect. The B-schools have the structure presented in Figure 6: 19 experts of public vs 25 experts of private schools. The perception about each accreditation (EQUIS; AACSB and CEEMAN) is given by B-schools' members,

competitors and employers. On the other hand, accreditation bodies express their opinions about B-schools in the CEE regions, characterising B-schools and their own values.

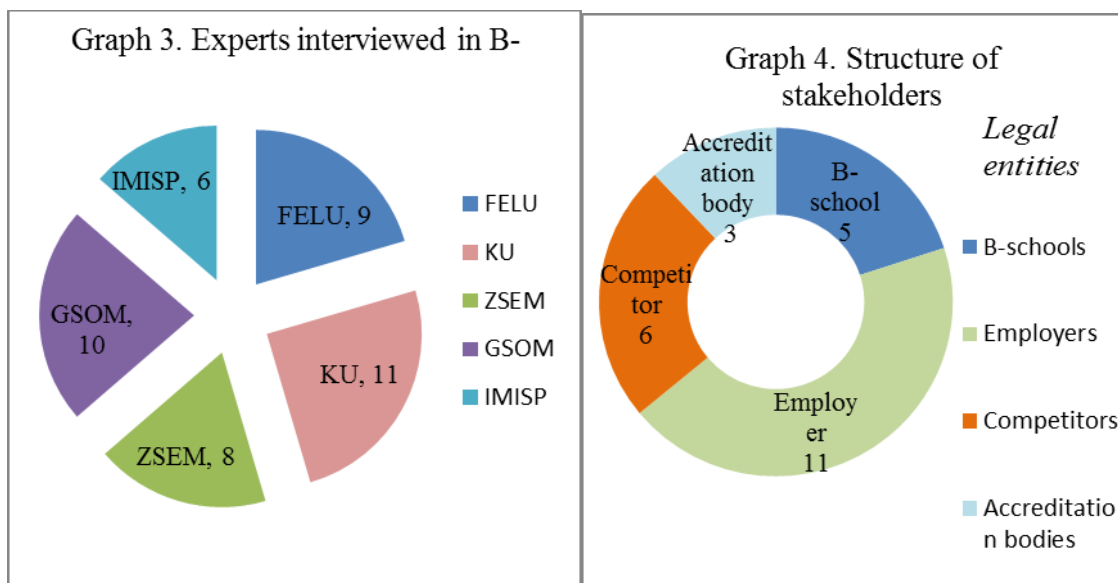
Figure 6. Structure of B-schools with the types of informants



Source: internal data on experts of B-schools

Figure 7 indicates the number of experts interviewed in each B-school and stakeholders' structure with the units of analysis, 5 B-schools with stakeholders.

Figure 7. Structure of informants in B-schools and among stakeholders



Source: internal data on all stakeholders

The competitors (6) are defined by the Eduniversal, a university ranking business, founded in 1994, with the goal to provide a tool for students on the Best Business Schools, located in Eduniversal's geographical regions in the 5 continents. The methodology of Eduniversal is classified in terms of Palms and Ratings, issued from the Deans' votes, sorted by reputations and international ambition. It is also verified by the B-schools' opinions.

The next one is the Chapter 3 which presents the results obtained for each B-school, defining each 'case' addressing levels of B-school, national and, finally, the regional (CEE) level.

3. CASE STUDIES RESULTS

The findings are organised around research questions (RQ) according to methodology and research setting (Chapter 2), with 44 interviews and 34 Questionnaires collected from the Faculty members of 5 B-schools, in line with the stakeholder's opinions (from 11 Employers, 6 Competitors, 3 Accreditors). After the results are provided in this chapter, the comparison between B-schools with the comparable accreditations will be made based on the suggested Framework with Propositions in the next chapter of Discussion. The summary on CEE's environment is presented below, to remind why this region is important.

The collapse of communism in 1989 created a new group of countries in CEE, with the transition economies committed to strengthening market mechanisms through encouragement of private enterprises. These emerging economies are progressing in a widely different ways (Hoskisson et al., 2000). As Pologeorgis and Overbaukh (2011) note, globalisation had a dramatic effect on the role and the form of higher education in CEE as global forces placed new demands on the quality and outcomes of educational services. The institutional analysis can be used to shed new light on the nature of change in postcommunist Eastern Europe, especially those changes associated with globalization (Campbell, 2004). The number of students is presented in Table 26 for the starting date of research to reflect the total number of students for comparison in each country of CEE in EU.

Table 26. The number of Tertiary Education Students (thousands) in 2013, CEE

	CEE countries in EU	Short-cycle	Bachelor	Master	Doctoral	Tertiary - total
1	Bulgaria	n/a	195.6	83.0	5.4	284.0
2	Czech Republic	1.0	267.7	133.5	25.2	427.4
3	Estonia	n/a	44.8	17.0	3.0	64.8
4	Croatia	n/a	102.8	58.2	3.6	164.6
5	Latvia	17.3	63.3	11.3	2.5	94.5
6	Lithuania	n/a	124.5	32.5	2.7	159.7
7	Hungary	37.0	237.6	77.0	7.3	359.0
8	Poland	10.9	1266.5	583.0	42.3	1902.7
9	Romania	n/a	409.6	187.2	21.4	618.2
10	Slovenia	13.4	54.9	25.8	3.6	97.7
11	Slovakia	2.9	120.8	74.9	11.0	209.5
	CEE country not in EU					
12	Russia Federation	n/a	5 646.7*		4.6**	5 651.3

Source: Eurostat (2015), selected data from EU-28;

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Tertiary_education_statistics; Source*: Rosstat (2015, p. 13); selected data for Russia http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/doc_2015/rus15.pdf Education in Russia (Образование в Российской Федерации**, 2014, p. 23), <https://www.hse.ru/primarydata/orf2014>

In respect of enrolled students in tertiary education, among the countries included in the study, Russia has the highest number– 5 651.3 thousand students in CEE (not in EU-28). Poland incorporates the highest number of students in EU (1902.7), followed by Croatia (164.6) and Slovenia (97.7). The specific development of CEE shapes the political, industrial, social and cultural environment underlying economic institutions. Discrepancies between Eastern and Western perceptions still remain a challenge.

First, traditional management paradigms in transitional economies in the late 1980s and beginning of 1990s have been replaced by the market economy, and the post-communist countries set up B-schools to teach the new paradigm to the future managers.

Second, as it is reflected in the Map of differences (Table 4), B-schools in CEE are different from those in the United States or Western Europe: they are united by similar Slavic languages, cultural traditions the ex-communist past and higher education, as well as the typical 25-years history with management-training needs from a centrally planned to a market driven economy. However, in the higher education they are less homogeneous. The new laws and regulations have been frequently applied to higher education, and these countries in CEE joined the Bologna in 1999, and Russia (CIS)– in 2003.

Third, the recent transition experience implies CEE’s B-schools are less caught in the ideological web of shareholder value maximization; they are more capable of contributing to an intellectual rebuilding effort than their Western counterparts (Hommel, 2009).

Fourth, Tixier (2000) lists exaggerated centralisation, unsuitable internal organisation, risk aversion, lack of HR and conflict management where management is influenced widely by foreign styles, but the imposed models are rejected due to the specific managerial culture with local features.

Fifth, the expansion of the private education of an unknown quality is too extensively established, and the public higher education is exposed to more dynamic and unpredictable market, where B-schools are forced to compete for students with new non-traditional suppliers (Jurše & Mulej, 2011). The state still plays an important role in HE management, and the public universities are affected by the money by opening for-profit courses (Dakowska, 2015).

Sixth, cheap labour resources and new sources of raw materials with globalisation create huge profits for foreign capitalists and government officials in CEE with adverse effect for standards of living (Pologeoris & Overbaukh, 2011).

Finally, political, economic, or social upheavals are unforeseen with little data available requiring for more qualitative information on the values and business culture of these countries (Tixier, 2000, p. 311).

These features may impact B-schools in answering the following research questions (RQ) with encouragement of problematisation for RQ1, RQ2 and RQ5 that may lead to more influential theories.

RQ1: How do CEE’s B-schools perceive international accreditation?

- What are the values of accreditation?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages?

RQ2: Why do B-schools in the East seek international accreditation from the West?

- What are the forces that push B-schools to seek accreditation? (External Reasons)
- How do B-schools make decisions about accreditation? (Internal Reasons)

RQ3: What are organisational changes in B-schools as a result of accreditation in CEE?

RQ4: What are the effects of international accreditation process in B-schools of CEE?

RQ5: Do B-schools with accreditation send any signals to their stakeholders?

- Does accreditation of B-school have impact on the stakeholders?
- What is opinion of the global accreditors about accreditation in CEE B-schools?

RQ6: What is an institutional change (IC) in B-schools that takes place in CEE?

A sample of B-schools with institutional accreditation in CEE consists of 2 public and 3 private B-schools in the 2013-14 academic year presented in Table 27.

Table 27. Profiles of B-schools with Accreditations in CEE, 2013-14

Units	FELU	KU	ZSEM	GSOM SPbU	IMISP
Country/ Region	Slovenia (CE), South-east/ Central Europe	Poland (CE), Central Europe	Croatia (SEE), South-east Europe	Russia (EE), a transcontinental country in Eastern Europe, Asia, also related to CIS region	
Population	2.06 mln.	38.53 mln.	4.25 mln.	143.5 mln.	
Students, HE	0.09 mln.	1.90 mln.	0.16 mln.	5. 65 mln.	
Ownership, Foundation	Public, 1946	Private, 1993	Private, 2003	Public, 2007 (1993)	Private, 1989
Accreditation: <i>Institutional</i>	EQUIS (2006) AACSB (2010)	EQUIS (1999) AACSB (2011) CEEMAN(2001)	AACSB (2013)	EQUIS (2012)	CEEMAN (1999)
Accreditation: <i>Programme</i>	AMBA (2016)	AMBA (2008)		AMBA (2008), EPAS (2008)	AMBA (2006)
Eduniversal, Rank/Dean's rate in 2013	4 Palms, 1 Rank, 233%	4 Palms, 2 Rank, 225%	3 Palms, 1 Rank, 109%	5 Palms, 1 Rank, 304%	4 Palms, 2 rank, 135%
The number of students in BS, 2013-14	UGS: 2914 MBA*/Mr:2376 PhD: 94	UGS:2483 MBA*/Mr:3156 PhD: 136	UGS: 1021; MBA/Mr: 168;	UGS:744 MBA*/Mr:381 PhD: n/c*	Evening form MBA* - 139 Up to 1000

Sources: data provided by B-schools and Eduniversal (2013), <http://www.eduniversal-ranking.com>

Abbreviation: UGS – undergraduate students; MBA/Mr – MBA and Master students; MBA* - including Executive MBA; n/c – non comparable due to the fact that the form of “*aspirantura*” (candidate of sciences – 3 years of study with the following doctoral degree study) has been changed into PhD (4 years of studies)

The experts' data are analysed with content analysis testing institutional, bandwagon, information asymmetry as well as resource dependency and signalling theories, with the cross case analysis provided in discussions. Five cases of B-schools are analysed in parallel with the perceptions of Employers, Competitors, and Accreditation bodies. In 3 cases (GSOM, IMISP, and KU) B-schools provided the access to their employers, and the personal search has been undertaken in 2 other cases (FELU, ZSEM).

3.1 Case study 1: Faculty of Economics, Ljubljana University, FELU

Slovenia has 5 universities: the University of Ljubljana; the University of Maribor; the University of Primorska, University of Nova Gorica and EMUNI University in line with 28 independent higher education (HE) institutions (Udovič & Bučar, 2015). The enrolment in HE has increased significantly in the last decade from 83,816 students in 2000 to 114,391 in 2010 (Bučar, 2013, p. 22). Significant pressure is felt by university B-schools in Slovenia, due to government policies that restrict the budgetary financing of HE, and private B-schools have been criticised as being pragmatic players (Jurše, 2011). Copying U.S. models stopped 20 years ago, and B-schools in Slovenia develop own approaches for education, but there is a lack of the qualified academicians in line with the industry-academy cooperation (Tekarslan & Erden, 2014, p. 52; Purg, 2009). A very limited research was done prior to 2009 that accreditation in Slovenia has impact on student enrolment, quality and ranking, but the sample was small (only two respondents) (Zablackè, 2009).

Our first case is Faculty of Economics of the University of Ljubljana (FELU). As follows, we highlight the key periods of the Faculty of Economics which is part of the University of Ljubljana founded in 1919 as a public university. These data are present in Table 28.

Table 28. Key periods of the FELU

1946	The Faculty of Economics (FELU) was established as a part of the University of Ljubljana
1950	The Business Faculty is renamed into the Faculty of Economics
1954	Introduction of a PhD study programme
1961	Introduction of the first two Master degree study programmes
1962	Start of international cooperation with the Indiana University, School of Business, USA
1967	The first Executive education courses are offered
1969	Establishment of the FELU Research center. Introduction of the first Master degree in Business
1989	Introduction of Master degree programme in English
1991	Introduction of the Undergraduate degree programme
2005	The new Bologna type undergraduate and graduate programmes are launched
2006	EQUIS accreditation is awarded
2008	Introduction of the Bologna Doctoral study programme
2010	AACSB accreditation is awarded
2011	Establishment of the Beta Gamma Sigma Chapter (BGS)
2012	The place for the Central Economic Library is open The FELU is given the role of coordinator for the Erasmus Mundus project “Euro-Asian Partnership for Excellence and Advancement”
2013	TedQual certification is renewed, Agreement with OECD

Source: *Annual Report of FELU, 2014-2015*

At the time of the research, the FELU has been an internationally double-accredited school since 2010 with European EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System) accreditation, which was gained in 2006 and American AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) accreditation since 2010. The number of higher education students in the year 2013-2014 is 79,333, including 70,031 public and 9,302 private students, according to the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of Slovenia (2015, p. 41). The FELU holds a TEDQUAL Accreditation for tourism programmes, Quality in Internationalisation (CeQuINT), the certificate from the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) for the Master programme in International Business. The FELU is a founding member of the ACE (Alliance of Chinese and European Business Schools) strategic association. The mission, slogan, values and vision are (Faculty of Economics, Ljubljana University 2014, p. 5):

Mission: *To develop principled leaders for work in a globally competitive business environment by combining economics and business education with innovative research while creating and disseminating knowledge in a global society.*

Core Values: *Integrity, Cooperation, Responsibility, Knowledge and Academic Freedom*

Vision: *To rank among the top business and economics schools in the world by 2020.*

In 2016-17 the mission and vision have been updated under the impact of accreditation, which shows its influence. The FELU’s focus now is on global markets, and the school is positioning itself in the strategic group of globally recognised schools with Triple Crown accreditation. During the interview process, the B-school is described as: “*We are a big fish in a small pond*” (source: Respondent 0071, where the number is a code of respondent).

3.1.1 Results of B-school FELU

The results are provided from interview process with the internal Faculty staff (Top-managers, Accreditors, Faculty staff and Quality manager) about both AACSB and EQUIS (under the code’s number for each respondent). The first perception about accreditation is: *Our Faculty professor suggested to pursue international accreditation at the Senate in 1998. It was a crazy idea to get a top American and European accreditations in our field! Our internal idea was about improvement* (Respondent 0032).

The first set of questions is about general perception of accreditations. Table 29 (a, b) provides comments on the values of EQUIS and AACSB. We differentiate between **value** (Value = Benefit – Cost) and **advantage**. A competitive advantage enables accreditation body to create value for its clients, and B-school perceives its set of values from each body. An advantage exists when the accreditation body is able to deliver the same **benefits** as a competitor, but at a low cost, or bring benefits that exceed competing products or services.

RQ1: How does FELU perceive international accreditation?

- a: What are the values of accreditation?
- b: What are the advantages and disadvantages of accreditation?

Table 29a. Values of EQUIS Accreditation in FELU

Value of EQUIS:
0034: We can select the best partner-schools, we can exchange professors. All of a sudden, you become the special group of schools. This is the major change. We started working more on research, really a crucial part. The guests are coming to speak, before the guest speakers – we used to pay them, now they do it for free. The reputation of school has improved.
0033: EQUIS has two purposes: corporate relations and internationalisation. Good schools should be international, with corporates clients, and programmes, thus, two accreditations are complementary, - we gained from both of them.
0068: International and quality. EQUIS has fixed standards - It is kind of politics. EQUIS accreditation has become like an ISO standard, it is sort of competitive advantage, legitimacy.
0031: EQUIS is about benchmarking against the best schools, content of processes, opened for cooperation and joint programmes, and from teacher perspectives, much easier to cooperate with internationalisation. There is a better service, and a whole improvement.
0032: The FELU changed significantly during these years - we had a new set of goals, formally we wrote the mission, vision, strategic plan, we did have some strategic mission, several organisational changes, re-organized few activities, new set of strategic goals. It was a benchmarking tool, and it motivates.

Source: *Interviews in FELU, 2013*

The following quotes are typical for the EQUIS accreditation’s values:

- All of a sudden, you become the special group of schools.* (Respondent 0034)
- Good schools should be international, with corporate clients and programs* (Respondent 0033)
- EQUIS is benchmarking, content of process and joint programmes* (Respondent 0031)

Table 29b. Values of AACSB accreditation in FELU

Value of AACSB accreditation:
0035: Visibility, Framework, diversity and standards of AACSB are skeleton you should follow.
0033: AACSB has a focus on the quality, the constant improvement of programme, and high quality and the minimum faculty through their intellectual contributions.
0068: AACSB adopts for the local needs more (than EQUIS). AACSB asks to clearly define goal, mission.
0029: I do not think that students have an impact of AACSB accreditation itself. They may have the quality improvement through accreditation. During the last few years of trying to get accreditation, it has helped in a stronger impact on the quality of teaching, and the quality of research. The students have the benefit in the process, by us, teachers, how could we improve the teaching with the modern curriculum.
0071: Accreditation definitely has a value because it puts you on the map.
0032: Both accreditations (AACSB and EQUIS) are the vehicles of change. Actually, we had the quality system, ISO. We just had something to benchmark against it.

Source: *Interviews in FELU, 2013*

With regard to RQ1, EQUIS is associated with the values which incorporate reflection of normative (NO) change (“*all of a sudden, you become the special group of schools*”; work more on *research, improvement of reputation*), mimetic (MI) trends (standards, programs, benchmarking) as well as some bandwagon (BA) effects (all “*good schools*” should be...). In addition, values are perceived as an improvement in performance (PE) (“*a better service and...improvement*”), coercive (CO) change (*we had a new set of goals, mission*) as well as information asymmetry effects (“*cooperate with internationalisation*”).

AACSB values are associated with “the skeleton you should follow” (MI), improvement of programme (NO), high quality with the minimum faculty (PE), the inclusion of ideological change – in goal, mission (CO). It is noted, that AACSB doesn’t make any direct impact on students, but only on Faculty through change in curriculum (teaching & research) (CO).

The most cited advantages of EQUIS are:

Legitimacy is in the form of EQUIS (Respondent 0068).

The benefit is linking to...internationalisation and benchmarking (Respondent 0031)

A culture of institutions...This is the culture of changes (Respondent 0033)

At the same instant, the disadvantages (cons) are seen through the lens of cost involved (in a broad sense, including non-monetary valuation), or an amount that has to be paid or given up in order to get accreditation. The cons of EQUIS are listed as:

Stress to everyday life, it is financially quite expensive...(Respondent 0031)

The monetary cost – it is rising, the cost of the infrastructure (Respondent 0032)

EQUIS didn’t accept (our) strategy, we thought we have more freedom (Respondent 0034)

The Table 30a shows EQUIS accreditation through its advantages and disadvantages related to RQ1b, and Table 30b – shows AACSB correspondingly related to RQ1b.

Table 30a. Pros and Cons of EQUIS Accreditation in FELU

Advantages (Pros)
0068: Legitimacy in the form of EQUIS 0031: You are focus on quality, you are the member of the Club, you get the benefit linking to this. Internationalisation is much easier. Benchmarking. 0032: It is benchmarking, and it motivates. It is the vehicle of change 0033: We build a culture of institutions. This is the culture of changes, a process itself. 0034: Special group of schools. The reputation of school has improved
Disadvantages (Cons)
0031: It adds stress to everyday life, it is financially quite expensive, it may be used for proposing something not to be questioned. 0032: The high cost, monetary cost, you have to pay - it is rising, the cost of the infrastructure. You have to run producing the reports all the time; labour cost, changed standards, adding resources. Constantly it is a money and effort. We imposed loosely written EQUIS standards, interpreted in one way or the other, but the consensus was that we pursue them. 0034: EQUIS didn’t accept strategy - and it was badly accepted after 2006. We thought that we have more freedom, may be it was PRT. It is very costly. Another specific is the regulatory conditions: we cannot ask foreigners “how we should employ”? To avoid the law we put 18 professors on contract, no more than 5% full-time; it is impossible to put 10%. 0033: A lot of resources, tedious tasks, organizing data, collecting information, very difficult to have processes in place, supported in informatics, computer programs, that would enable you an automated data, a lot of manual work. Professors are very much burdened with information, data. Cost of A. not only to the organisation, but producing reports, so definitely, many resources to produce.

Source: *Interviews in FELU, 2013*

With reference to RQ1b, the advantages of EQUIS are perceived as legitimacy (LE), culture for change (CO), benchmarking (MI) and a certain status, when B-school is becoming to be “the members of one Club” (NO). It seems that EQUIS is more difficult to implement, because it includes more criticism involved from B-school, “EQUIS is more demanding”, and the requirements on the issues of regulatory environment connected with the internationalisation of faculty and a strategy are “*badly accepted*” by EQUIS team (it is impossible to put more than 5% of foreigners). It shows that in some cases, the perception is very much divided between FELU and EQUIS teams on the issue of internationalisation: EQUIS is not happy about the level of internationalisation, but the local team insists that it cannot be more than 5%. At the same time, the comments of new faculty refer to observations that the faculty members are “*with a very high level of inbreeding*”. Improvement in internationalisation is reached on the account of foreign professors coming to the summer or short-term courses. The Table 30b shows AACSB’s pros and cons:

Table 30b. Pros and Cons of AACSB accreditation

Advantage of AACSB	Disadvantage of AACSB
0035: Visibility and diversity of ideas. You set up your own standards. It is your framework (AACSB standards), they are open. 0068: Easiest way for re-engineering school. 0029: You have an external push to do this change, getting legitimacy. Better connections, more foreign students, it is quite difficult to estimate how much we need it as cash inflows. 0071: Visibility, it reduces information asymmetry, make steps easier. AACSB cherishes diversity, standards that accommodate different schools and cultures, it is explicit shift.	0068: It is expensive; the results are questionable for the competitive position of school. EQUIS is demanding. 0029: A lot of human, financial resources. It is costly, we can recognise only the case outflows, and where are cash inflows? 0071: A stress of the faculty and staff, because it requires times and efforts to collect the data, cost. Here is an article from the US, - they talk about accreditation, and this is the paper that shows the disadvantage of accreditation. It is also an external push to make changes in school, when people argue less; if it is externally required, then people have less resistance

Source: *Interviews in FELU, 2013*

The advantages for AACSB include a visibility, better connections (both - IA) and a change for diversity (CO) with school’s re-engineering (CO). In respect of RQ1b, the advantages of accreditation for both AACSB and EQUIS accreditations are perceived, first of all, as the legitimacy mechanisms (LE) and second, a push for change (CO). The results of Tables 35a and 35b show that EQUIS and AACSB accreditations have two common changes perceived as an advantage: improvement of reputation – which is normative change (NO), both accreditations became the vehicles for change – coercive change (CO). Disadvantages for both accreditations are cost, time, human resources, efforts and stress.

In connection with Proposition P1 to RQ1, despite its cost, the perception of **EQUIS values** (*sort of* legitimacy, reputation, special group of school, benchmarking) and **AACSB values** (visibility, constant improvement of programme, vehicle of change) with their advantages is still much higher. Therefore **P1 is confirmed**: Perception of accreditation values to enhance the legitimacy from quality labels is higher than the perception of accreditations’ cost, because the factors of legitimacy are directly listed in both cases of accreditations together with benchmarking and reputation.

RQ2: Why does FELU seek the international accreditation from the West?

- a: What are the forces that lead B-schools to seek accreditation? (External Reasons)
- b: How do B-schools make decisions about accreditation? (Internal Reasons)

The following quotes reflect some reasoning behind accreditation:

We approached EFMD in 1999. We had possibilities to go for the European Quality Improvement programme, and in 2004 we sent Eligibility Application, in 2005 - got the eligibility; report - in 2006, in May 2007 we had a peer-review team (Respondent 0032).

We had already been in the process of EQUIS accreditation at that time. We thought that we will still manage to get AACSB, because it does not have the emphasis on internationalization (Respondent 0029).

Tables 36a to 36b include the general perception of all experts of B-school about the external forces and internal reasons about each accreditation with the coded textual interpretation based on Table 19. Types of organisational change with its effects (see Section 1.4 Institutional Theory Framework: Relevance).

Table 31a. Reasons for EQUIS Accreditation

Forces for EQUIS	Decision about EQUIS
0031: uncertainty (MI); more about positioning (IA), to make us more visible (IA); internally recognised (NO); external pressure (CO), the issue: competition (IA); 0032: in line with the best quality schools (IA); it was a differentiator (NO), and now it is the differentiating factor (NO). Legitimacy (LE) - because it is a quality label (IA); 0033: external pressure for internal change (CO) ; 0034: a way to differentiate us from others (NO); now - how many A. do you have (IA)? B-schools have to label themselves (IA) like producer & supplier; 0068: It came as a tool (CO), EQUIS needed one from Eastern Europe (CO); Total: IA-7, NO-4, CO-4, MI, LE	0032: Original decision came from a Senate (CO). 0068: Because of the nature of school, it was impossible to get EQUIS due to the share of international students, and we applied for... (MI). 0034: The idea was brought by Tea Petrin, the leader (CO) Total: CO-2, MI
IA-7; CO-6; NO-4; MI-2; LE -1	

Source: *Interviews in FELU; 2013*; Abbreviation: MI – mimetic, CO – coercive, NO – normative, IA – information asymmetry; BA (Bandwagon), QU – quality, PE – performance; LE - legitimacy

The internal “change agent” (the informal leader, former Economy Minister) brought the original idea about EQUIS accreditation; and the forces for EQUIS refer to positioning and visibility (IA) directly connected with the legitimacy (LE), as well as pressures for change (CO) and differentiation (NO) shown in these statements:

It is more about positioning, making us ...visible (0031) in line with the best quality (0032) It came as a tool, and EQUIS needed someone from Eastern Europe (Respondent 0068). For the best schools, they asked you to have it, if you don't have it, - it is really differentiate upon, but it is legitimacy (Respondent 0034).

Table 31b. Reasons for AACSB Accreditation

Forces for AACSB	Decision about AACSB
0029: AACSB was the other way of getting another international accreditation ... (MI); a potential to be recognised in other markets (IA); ...it does not have emphasis on internationalisation (MI); 0035: The AACSB issue was raised by the Dean for two reasons: quality (QU) and eligibility (at that time we were not sure about EQUIS accreditation) (CO)	0035: It was an internal decision (NO) 0029: It was an offer to be recognised on other markets (CO). We thought we are not able to get EQUIS. At the beginning, we didn't think that we can get both - we thought it would be easier, to get AACSB (MI).
MI-3; CO-2; IA-1; NO-1; QU-1	

Source: *Interviews in FELU, 2013*

The forces of information asymmetry (IA) and coercive (CO) changes are dominated in the case of decision making for EQUIS, and mimetic (MI) with coercive (CO) changes - for AACSB accreditation. AACSB is selected as the other way to get accreditation (MI), and it was easier, because the decision about EQUIS had been uncertain, AACSB didn't make emphasis on the internationalisation (MI) with "an offer to be recognised on other markets". The legitimacy (LE) for EQUIS is associated with quality perception, but performance is not even mentioned. The forces for differentiation, labelling, visibility and internationalisation are prevailing over its qualitative performance, confirming **proposition P2** for **AACSB** and **EQUIS**. On the one hand, it is "potential" (IA), on the other hand, - "an offer" to be recognised on other markets, or "invitation to join" to "collusion" (CO).

Therefore, B-school seeks accreditation to achieve legitimacy rather than quality performance (P2) in both cases (EQUIS and AACSB). To further reflect the findings on change, we ask the RQ3 and RQ4 questions:

RQ3: What are organisational changes in FELU as a result of accreditation?

RQ4: What are the effects of international accreditation process in FELU?

The most obvious changes are cited here:

Change is visible for the students' internationalisation, research emphasis and executive MBA programme (Respondent 0100)

It is a re-engineering of a school: new departments, assessment, programs, methods, services, more administration, restaurants and library (Respondent 0068).

The answers to RQ3 and RQ4 on changes and effects are in Tables 32 (a, b). The Table 32a demonstrates that the most obvious changes for EQUIS are taking place in the areas of strategy, infrastructure and networking activities without effects of EQUIS on students, except their internationalisation. Other effects are profound on all areas of school.

Table 32a. Isomorphic Changes and Effects of EQUIS Accreditation

Change as a result of EQUIS	Effects of EQUIS
0034: research (NO); a mind-set (NO); Administrators were more aware; in 2006 – it was a surprise that we got it; a perception was changed (NO). 0031: The areas to improve: 1) strategic area was not clear (CO); 2) Completion rate (PE)- 3) Internationalisation (IA) 0032. Better infrastructure of activities (MI), partner networks (MI), much higher quality schools (PE); Better relations with the businesses (IA) due to a Steering committee (EQUIS requirement), where B-members are present (CO); 0100: Change is visible for internationalisation (IA), research emphasis (NO) and executive MBA programme (MI); structures (MI) 0034: 'Best school in the Balkan' – and we never objected this statement (related to (PE), but not connected with Accreditation)	0029: at the beginning, no any effect on students; quality of research & teaching (how we do things) (NO); healthy competition, accredited Diploma (NO), a lot of administrative requirements (CO); effect on stakeholders –they see we are trying to be better (NO); 100-Leadership for both A (CO); 0034: on Strategy (didn't like it) (CO). The ambition has grown (NO); additional pool of money (CO): we charge for 'renome' (NO), higher amount of professors, consultants and product (NO). A perception of school about the product has changed (NO). 0034: Visible - % of foreign professors and students increased (IA); 0099: Labelling effect (IA); 0033: 1 - internationalisation as a result of EQUIS & AACSB (IA); 2 - quality of research (PE); 3 - change of programs (MI); 4 – attitude (NO), 5 - services for students (MI); 0068: Processes, infrastructure (2MI), org. culture (NO). It is a reengineering (CO)
NO-4; MI -4; CO-2; IA-3; PE-3	NO-9; MI – 4; CO-5; IA-3; PE-1
NO-13; MI-8; CO-7; IA-6; PE-4	

Source: *Interviews in FELU, 2013*

The effects of EQUIS lead to the organisational changes of more normative nature in line with mimetic and coercive change. In the case of AACSB accreditation there are more changes and effects that are linked to coercive change, demonstrated in Table 32b.

Table 32b. Isomorphic Changes and Effects of AACSB Accreditation

Change as a result of AACSB	Effects of AACSB
0032: It is both organisational and cultural (CO); how you act/address towards stakeholders (NO). It changes the attitude towards research (CO), you have to show you are in line with school (NO) 0035: Internationalisation (IA) , the research quality (PE), quite systematic improving process (NO) 0029: The recommendations were to get a strategy updated, to include stakeholders, - we did so (2CO). Progress on reported publications (NO); emphasis on research, more administration (MI). 0071: the labelling effect (NO); The process of strategizing has been changed it affected school at the strategic level.(CO) 100: the effects are on strategy (CO), and the learning objectives (NO). 0068: AACSB required we evaluate the learning goals for each programme (CO); Atmosphere about research (NO); A competition in terms of research output (IA)	0033: - internationalisation as a result of EQUIS & AACSB (IA) 100: the strong effect is on research (IA); leadership (for both A.) (CO); 0032: The major contribution of AACSB - the learning goals over the years (NO), - we know now what we want to achieve (NO) 0032. there is a pressure from AACSB on programme (CO) and the faculty (CO) 0035: Effect on Employers : Students are becoming open-minded (CO), Employers need such students (<i>Cultural expectations in the society</i> – CO) 0071: it put you on the map (MI), the assurance of learning (NO) - the quality loop is added to day-to day-job (PE)
CO -12; NO-10; MI-2; IA-4; PE-2	

Source: Interviews in FELU, 2013

The effects from AACSB are connected with future employment of students, learning goals of programme and visibility of school. The effects of AACSB on students also lead to the evidence that “*Students are becoming open-minded*” interpreted as a coercive change (CO) due to the cultural expectations (Table 19. Types of organisational changes with its effects). The statement that accreditation “*changes the attitude towards research*”, is interpreted as “*a response to accreditation mandate*” which is coercive (CO) change (Table 12 on Institutional Isomorphic Change). The statement “*How you act towards stakeholders*” is interpreted as “*facilitate relations with others*” (BA) according to the same table. Both accreditations promote the process of internationalisation and the leadership of this B-school, but don’t have any effects on salaries of the Faculty staff. The isomorphic effect (organisational change) is present due to normative, mimetic, coercive changes in cases of EQUIS and AACSB. This confirms **Proposition P3**.

The effects of Information Asymmetry (IA) is present in EQUIS and AACSB (FELU), but not bandwagon trends. Thus, Propositions 4a is not confirmed - bandwagon effects are not present, and Proposition 4b is confirmed. **Proposition 4** is only **partly** confirmed (**4b**).

As regards RQ4, related to the general effects of accreditation, we may see the impact on the various factors. The effects of both accreditations are collected from Questionnaire, used for three purposes: to get the standardised data, to combine rich data collection for our case studies – from the structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and archival data and to ensure that we don’t miss the various possible factors mentioned in the literature on accreditation. Thus, the effects of both AACSB and EQUIS accreditations collected from Questionnaire are shown in Table 33. The results on effects collected from the Questionnaire indicate the mean and the standard deviation, with the reflection of effects from EQUIS and

AACSB on the listed factors in FELU. The letters from A (Programme) to I (Mission) in the first column means the corresponding effects outlined in the second columns with their means and deviation.

Table 33. General Effects of Accreditations in FELU (n=9)

FELU (Slovenia)	Effect of accreditations on:	Mean	Std. Deviation
H	Strategy	4.89	0.20
C	Faculty	4.78	0.35
I	Mission	4.78	0.40
E	Leadership	4.44	0.62
A	Programmes	4.00	0.22
D	Teaching	4.00	0.22
G	Competences	4.00	0.22
B	Students	3.67	0.59
F	Increase in salary of Faculty members	1.78	0.86

Source: *Questionnaire, FELU, 2013-14;*

5 – strongly agree, 4 – agree, 3 – neither disagree nor agree, 2 - disagree, 1 - strogly disagree

Table 33 shows that accreditations don't provide the increase in Income of faculty members, but they do have effects on the following elements of the school: on its Strategy (H), as well as equally on its mission (I) and the Faculty members (C). From the interview process, we know that the effects of accreditation on Faculty members are mainly reflected through the changes in their **values** (through mission, vision, and strategy), focus on the increase of international research publications and their quality, and a change in curriculum. The Table 34 contains the Questionnaire`s list of 15 changes as a result of accreditations. The table is used as a reference table for the following results of all B-schools.

Table 34. List of Changes necessary for Accreditation

1	A review of the school's mission statement
2	Review of the mission from stakeholders (faculty, students, employment)
3	A substantial increase in the quality of publications of Faculty
4	Share of full time employees needs to be increased
5	Student-faculty ratio is too high to assure the quality of teaching
6	Our entrance requirements need to become stricter
7	Internationalisation of our students body
8	Internationalisation of our Faculty members
9	Determining the learning goals of the programme
10	Introducing the measurement whether the learning goals of the programs are achieved
11	Introducing systematic process in curriculum management in order to incorporate feedback into improvements of courses and programmes (closing the loop)
12	Improving the connections with the business community
13	Strengthen our financial resources in order to be able to carry out planned activities and improvement efforts that are needed to reach the accreditations' standards
14	Sharing of knowledge
15	Improved quality of teaching

Source: *Developed Questionnaire*

The same nine respondents of interview process answered Questionnaire. We are interested to know how many of them rank the listed changes implemented in B-schools – shown in Table 35a and the changes that still need to be done – presented in Table 35b.

Table 35a. Changes implemented in FELU

Changes	Change implemented N respondents agree
1	9
2	9
11	9
3	7
9	7
10	7
12	7
13	4
15	4
5	3
14	3
6	3
7	3
8	3
4	1

Table 35b. Changes expected in FELU

Changes	We still need to do it. N respondents agree
6	6
7	6
8	6
5	6
13	5
14	5
15	5
3	2
9	2
10	2
1	0
2	0
4	0
11	0
12	0

The changes already implemented as result of both accreditations are ranked by the mission statement (1), its review stakeholders (2), introducing the measurement whether the learning goals are achieved (11); a substantial increase of the quality of publications (3), determining the learning goals (9), introducing the measurement of the learning goals (10) and improving the connection with b-community (12). The changes for the entrance requirements - to become stricter (6), internationalisation of students (7) and faculty (8), and the student-faculty ratio to be reduced for teaching quality (5). The changes still needed to be implemented in B-school are: strengthening the financial resources (13) and sharing knowledge (14). Table 36 is a list of differences between AACSB and EQUIS accreditation.

Table 36. Summary table on differences b/n AACSB and EQUIS

DIFFERENCE	EQUIS	AACSB
1.Emphasis	Emphasis: on sustainability issues of PRME (Principles for Responsible Management Education). Corporate social responsibility	More collaboration surveys b/n the reports (with the partners-accredited institutions). Learning objectives
2.Orientation	More institutionally oriented	More programme-oriented
3. Areas	Areas of excellence	More quality-based check
4.More attention	to corporate connections & infrastructure	Curriculum& learning assessment
5.New global directions	A lot of B-schools are accredited in China, and other parts of the world (Middle East), and not so much in Europe	Scholarly Academics (SA), Practice Academics (PA), Scholarly Practitioners (SP), Instructional Practitioners (IP).
6. Trends in Europe	1. Enlargement of B-schools: they are merged to acquire each other's accreditations (e.g. FBS). 2. Increased competitiveness among associations : European Consortium for Accreditation in HE (ECA) became an association with an emphasis on quality (EFMD, Mar.27, 2014, Hans de Wit)	AACSB&EFMD are important stakeholders in addressing objectives of sustainability, social responsibility, and ethical leadership. They have joined together for a second strategic alliance agreement in 2012, to improve the effectiveness/efficiency of accreditation
7. Peculiarities	Submitted self-assessment reports (b/n visits)	sends Questionnaire (BSQ) b/n visits
Addition of Table 36: to be continued (standards from 2013 year)		

Standards (from 2013 year)	After 2013 the areas of Financial performance were expanded. The amount of EQUIS chapters has been decreased, but the actual items that you need to address - increased. It used to be 100 items, now – 250 items. With this new reshaping, it means that the complexity is rising. EQUIS does not count the local issues, but now I’ve heard, it started counting (Source: 0032).	After 2013: 15 standards in 2013: Standards added areas of innovation, teaching and engagement, but in terms of quantity reduced from previous 21 standards. 21 standards. The association adopted revisions to the B-standards in 1991 & 2003: Strategic management, Participants, Assurance of Learning.
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Sources: *Quality assurance expert (0030)*; *analysis of standards* (www.aacsb.edu; www.efmd.org)

Table 36 is based on interviews with experts and representatives of the Quality Assurance Office: it includes differences in seven directions. In the first place, EQUIS is institutionally oriented whereas AACSB is programme-oriented. Next, EQUIS is making emphasis on PRME and social responsibility, whereas AACSB is more about learning objectives. Last, EQUIS pays more attention on the internationalisation, corporate relations and infrastructure, and the focus of AACSB is on strategy, learning assessment and curriculum.

3.1.2 Results on Competitors

According to Halal (2005), institutional change has a broader meaning, because it transcends organisational change on entire class of similar organisations. In this sub-section we look at the signals that B-school with accreditation send to its rivals. The perception and understanding of how competitors respond to your actions is considered to be a critical component of a strategic decision making. Therefore, the next question is

RQ5: Does FELU with accreditation send any signals to their stakeholders?

This approach pertains to a competitor’s response to a certain strategic move. This move will depend on few options and answer the following sub-questions: Does competitor react on accreditation of its rival or not? If it does, then which decision does competitor make? Is there any change in competing school as a result of rival’s accreditation? By answering these questions, we also see whether the behaviour of a rival leads to changes in strategy of competing B-school. Therefore, if there are changes not only at the level of B-school with accreditation, but also at the level of its Competitor as a result of accreditation signalling, then accreditation may impacts the changes of the community of B-schools (i.e. institutional change). The source of Eduniversal B-schools ranking (Table 37) shows that Faculty of Economics and Business of the University of Maribor (FEB) is a main competitor to FELU.

Table 37. FELU and its competing B-schools in Slovenia

B-schools in Slovenia, representatives	Eduniversal	Dean’s recommendation rate 2013	Rank by Palmes league	Accreditation
University of Ljubljana Faculty of Economics (FELU), Dean	4 Palmes - TOP BS	233%	1	Institutional EQUIS, 2006; AACSB, 2010
University of Maribor Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB), Dean	3 Palmes - EXCELLENT BS	61%	2	Programme accreditation ACBSP, 2012; ECBE, 2008

Source: <http://www.eduniversal-ranking.com>, 2014

Out of two B-schools, IEDC Bled B-school and the University of Maribor, Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) are mentioned as the possible competitors on Slovenian market, the IEDC Bled B-school has not been considered as a close rival as it is a private small school. According to the Dean of the Competing business school (24.06.2013): “*We somehow compete with FELU, but we are not direct competitors*”. As stated by Eduniversal ranking (Table 10), - schools are quite comparable. For a start, these B-schools are ranked as the first and the second by its league in Slovenia. Further, they are both public ones and they both teach and do research in the areas of economics and business and both schools offer degrees at various levels – undergraduate, master and doctorate. Lastly, they are very similar in a path to achieving accreditations from business accrediting bodies – European and American ones - the European Council for Business Education (ECBE), the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) and membership in AACSB. Table 38 provides the competitor’s view on comparison between FELU and FEB in terms of regional differences, students and the approaches towards accreditations.

Table 38. Competing Business School about FELU

Competitor	University of Maribor, FEB (0050)
Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Maribor	We are regionally presented, and we have students from Maribor, Celje from the area which is north of “Trojane” (b/n Ljubljana and Celje). We compete with FELU, but we are not direct competitors, In terms of research, consulting – it is more about persons. Graduates are competing, but when the job is announced, companies take students from both universities. We got ACBSP in 2009, and decided for 3 accreditations: ECBE (2008), AACSB (members).
About competition	When job is announced, the companies usually take graduates from both competitive schools. If the jobs are in the areas, for instance, in Ljubljana, both graduates apply – then the selection is done based on the quality of the students. In terms of comparison with FELU, we also have undergraduate education, Master and MBA (Bologna programmes), we have also doctorates. We have 800 students of Bologna master and 1500 undergraduate ones. The quality of students is comparable. Our focus is undergraduates and masters. We are not focusing on executive education, and EQUIS is not our focus
Advantages	Accreditation does not mean an advantage for school. If you talk to government, they do not care. It makes sense when it is usable with other international universities (IA) . EFMD is not our goal. We didn’t want to approach EQUIS : it is more about executive education. It’s too expensive for us to fulfill requirements on foreign professors: we do not need it. We decided to approach AACSB (BA) . But ACBSP appeared: we went for it (BA). We applied for AACSB: we’ll have American & ECBE (BA). No any advantages for accreditations. It makes sense when A. is used with other international universities.
Differences b/n accreditations	Difference between AACSB and ACBSP is more or less in the research standards and the pedagogical areas. Is it for legitimacy ? It is more for quality (MI) . We decided for structure within the school. We are tracking the area of the business education, new methods of teaching. We don’t want to imitate anyone.
Signalling	Accreditations are about the impact and the internal processes organised (MI). It is a systematic way to structure the knowledge level, - the impact on the programmes. We analysed AACSB accreditation, and we don’t need to adapt much - we can use what we prepared for ACBSP, to formalize the quality management (MI) and assurance of learning (IA), it is more AQ/PQ (MI). 90% of our professors correspond to AQ/PQ. It will take about 3 years.
	MI-4, BA-3, IA-2

Source: interview with the Dean of the Rival B-school, 2013 and its content analysis

The specific on competition (“we are not direct competitors”) is related to the particularity that Slovenia is contingently divided into two parts, and employers take graduates from both parts: FEB has more students from Maribor, Celje, Koroška and Murska Sobota. FELU has more students from Ljubljana, Gorenjska, Notranjska and Primorska.

First of all, the perception of competitor about accreditation is quite different from FELU being summarized as “*accreditation doesn’t mean there is any advantage for school*”. Despite FEB doesn’t see any advantages, but it prefers following the accreditation path

reflecting the bandwagon and mimetic trends. The Dean adds: “*For the future we will decide, whether we need to have all three AACSB, ACBSP and ECBE accreditations*”. Second, in terms of accreditation, it decides for different European partner. The strategic decision for the EQUIS is not supported due to three arguments: its high cost, a focus on executive education and the requirements on foreign professors. This school makes a decision to gain accreditation from the European Council for Business Education (ECBE), an international educational organisation, which is committed to supporting academic and professional learning institutions in business fields. Third, with regard to American accreditation, FEB used to be oriented for AACSB, but it changed its preference and gained ACBSP with mimetic trend (the other alternative, because ACBSP approached with better cost estimates). Fourth, FEB is still focused on both American accreditations – AACSB and ACBSP. According to the Dean, the main reasons for that are similarities and easiness in adopting processes: “*we do not need to adapt much*” and the difference between AACSB and ACBSP is “*in the research standards and the pedagogical areas*”. The Dean also added that “*the process for ECBE accreditation took one year: PRT came from UK and the Netherlands, it is more for quality*” (with less time, money and resources). It is about a systematic way to structure the knowledge, formalization of quality management and assurance of learning. All listed reasons here are about “*quality formalisation*” (which reflect the mimetic trends), easiness in adopting standards and their similarities, also portraying homogeneous trends with isomorphic change. Thus, with reference to RQ5, the answers to our sub-questions are:

RQ5. Does the FELU with its accreditation send any signals to competitor? If competitor reacts on accreditation, it means that yes, it does (other signals, but not quality signals). **P5** is **partly confirmed**: it sends signals, but not a quality one. Thus, the international accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends signal to the professional market. The options the competitor consider: *First*, Competitor does react on accreditation: FEB reacts on accreditation by responding to its rival in its strategic decisions with bandwagon effect in gaining American and European accreditations. *Second*, there is a deviation from its initial decision (to move from AACSB to ACBSP, a rival body to AACSB) with two options: creating a differentiated value proposition oriented towards the new methods of teaching and restoring its position quicker. It allows reducing a gap and compensating the time in a temporary lost competitiveness. *Third*, decision to follow European ECBE (a rival to EQUIS) is made. *Finally*, decision on gaining AACSB is made. Bandwagon is present in the rivals’ actions. Competitor does it in favour of signalling for legitimacy: on the one hand, FEB doesn’t see any obvious advantages; on the other hand, it says those accreditations are introduced because of quality. FEB follows accreditation, moreover, in both American and European trend; around the time when FELU got EQUIS (2006).

Competitor receives not only the signals on legitimacy, but these signals also influence on the strategic decision making process and lead to change in competitor’s behaviour. In terms of change, FEB demonstrates implicit mimetic isomorphism (MI) present through American structures and practices normatively sanctioned at school’s level according to Mizruchi and Fein (1999). Mimetic (MI) trends are also present through formalization of quality and standards in compliance with American accreditors. B-school has intention to apply for AACSB accreditation, but accepts “other” accreditation – ACBSP, using it “as an alternative” case typical for mimetic trend (MI). Bandwagon (BA) is seen through the diffusion of practice as a result of popularity (Secchi & Bardone, 2013). The decision to follow AACSB (with ACBSP) has been made around the time when FELU gained it, as a result of pressure to adopt innovation (BA). Competing school has a direct impact on rival’s behaviour. Signalling does impact the behavior of competitor which is resulted in changes:

a change in responded legitimacy (LE), easier to acquire with bandwagon (BA) and mimetic (MI) changes. It partly answers the **RQ6** on institutional change. The accreditation leads to the organisational change not only in one B-school, but in the community of organisations with behaviour's adjustment. **The P6:** Institutional change occurs through the mechanisms of coercive, normative, and mimetic organisational changes with information asymmetry effects **is partly confirmed (without bandwagon)**. The only condition (proviso) is that the bandwagon may not be present due to the position of "being the first": the first-mover among schools in the region. **P5** (quality signals) and **P6** (without bandwagon) are to be adjusted.

3.1.3 Findings from Employers

The employers are among the stakeholders of B-schools. Therefore, it is important to know how the quality of B-schools' graduates is perceived from the lens of companies-employers. **RQ5:** Do B-schools with accreditation send any signals to their Employers? and if yes, which signal does it deliver? Table 39 demonstrates the opinions of two employers.

Table 39. Employers about FELU and its accreditation

Employer 1 (E1)	Employer 2 (E2)
The Senior Consultant of Pristop (0067) 30.05.14	HR Manager of Trimo , 09.04.13
Strategic advice on marketing, organisational; consulting, advertising and PR with new models. It is positioned here, in Serbia, in Brussels, Croatia. The digital part is a Swiss group.	Trimo has been developing original and complete solutions for building, steel constructions and modular space solutions.
How does FELU interact with your company?	
We initiated the research on what is the Marketing practice in Slovenia - how we are in line with the trends, or we are lagging behind, - how we are cooperated? We invited professors (prof. Zabkar) to help us to structure our knowledge. She helped up with Questionnaire, from the methodological view, interpretational data analysis. FELU invites us on the regular basis to speak on different topic	Business development activities, research studies, workshops, education. We have cooperation on various case studies, connecting practical work with theory through seminar papers, and other type of activities, connecting through Trimo research rewards and lecturing at the faculty.
What is the quality of FELU graduates? Which skills FELU graduates are still lacking?	
FELU and Maribor – they are equally good standards – the best students. Others – from Koper, from private schools - we usually do not have them. From Bled - they are different, with 5-10 years' experience, for managerial positions. Students have knowledge, but the knowledge is "too boxed"- they know boxes, but do not know how to connect them. Marketing is about the number, Finance – to be able to prove to calculate the investment. What do I get in return? When they do it, they have a business case.	We hire each year for our company about 15-20 graduates. 20% are coming from FELU. The graduates of other B-schools are from Koper, Bled. I would say that the graduates are the same quality. The graduates of FELU are missing some more practical trainings, practical knowledge, international perspective and the leadership skills.
Which signals does FELU send you with Accreditation (A)?	
International accreditation – it does not mean anything for us, because we know them. Other universities – we check it, unless it is a Stanford. A. shows standards that meet the minimum requirements. Some universities do not have it, but you can see it already by the quality of the students. You can see it by the students. You never think about it. We, for instance, became the best independent agency in the world, - we got "Gold Eagle" in Canada, basically – nobody ask you, but by communication you can already understand it.	A is the sign of better Quality, comparable knowledge for graduates from different countries. I did not know anything about A. There is no direct meaning for our company. I believe, that signals FELU sends with this message of A. to the employers of graduates are quality, comparable knowledge through all EU. I believe it is helpful for foreign companies, who are not so familiar with our education system. That way they have clear factor that shows knowledge is comparable.

Source: *Interviews with Employers (transcripts: 0067, 9413), 2013-14*

As follows, there are connections between Employers (E) and B-school: "*FELU invites us to speak on a regular basis,*" (E1), and "*We have cooperation on various case studies, connecting practical work with theory*" (E2). On the other hand, companies also invite B-school to cooperate for projects: "*we invited professors ... to cooperate on sour projects*"

(E1), and “*cooperation on various case studies...*” (E2). Both accreditations require B-schools to cooperate with Employers, and this cooperation takes place in both cases facilitating these relationship. Both employers say that the quality of graduates of FELU and other schools is equal: FELU with accreditation doesn’t present any better quality, the graduates from Maribor’s school (E1), and other schools from Koper and Bled (E2) are equally good. Both employers add about the skills missing in graduates: practical knowledge (E1), international perspectives and leadership skills (E2). The information asymmetry exists for the FELU’s Employers: first, information asymmetry remains when competitors are involved into accreditations, even if these accreditations are different or there is an insignificant time lag between competitors; second, employers are not well-informed by the FELU; third, AACSB and EQUIS accreditation do not bring immediate quality to FELU’s graduates; fourth, all institutional accreditations do not provide any specific quality to their graduate and do not differentiate their quality. Therefore, the main conclusion is that the higher quality is not particularly present in B-schools’ graduates from the accredited schools. There is also a limitation on the number of employers. On the one hand, B-school’s accreditations do not send any obvious tangible signals of quality for its employers: “*it does not mean anything for us*” (E1), and “*What does it mean for our company? There is no direct meaning*”, it may signals the “*quality, comparable knowledge through the EU and America*” (E2). Employers also understand that “*accreditation shows that school is internationally recognized, and there are standards*” (E1), when school meets “*the minimum requirements*” (E2). The answer to **RQ5**: accreditation doesn’t send any tangible signals of quality to Employers, some employers associate accreditation practices as signal on recognition and minimum standard. **P5 is not confirmed for Employers.**

To summarise, *first*, the key changes implemented by B-school with both accreditations are ranked by the mission, its review by stakeholders, introducing the learning goals with the increased number of publications.

Second, B-school will be changing in the following directions: the entrance requirements (making them stricter), internationalisation processes (Faculty and Students), reduction in student-faculty ratio, strengthening the financial resources and sharing knowledge.

Third, as far as the specific isomorphic change and effects, the dominated nature of listed effects are in normative (NO) and mimetic (MI) nature – in the case of EQUIS, and coercive (CO) and normative (NO) nature – in the case of AACSB.

Forth, accreditations have 7 general effects in Strategy, Mission, Faculty and Leadership. No effects on students and salaries are found.

Fifth, besides general effects of EQUIS on research publications, teaching, strategy, and leadership, other effects are found: on values, attitude, culture, processes, infrastructure, competition, stakeholders, students internationalisation with the *labelling effect*. The AACSB accreditation has effect on research, learning goals and visibility.

Sixth, EQUIS is associated with the values for benchmarking – associated with mimetic change (MI); a special group of schools – with normative change (NO) and internationalisation (IA). The advantages of EQUIS are seen as a gained legitimacy (LE), culture for change (CO), benchmarking (MI) and being “the members of Club” (NO). The processes respond to the external forces for differentiation, labelling, visibility, recognition and internationalisation required by the accreditation bodies.

Seventh, FELU sends signals to competitors on its legitimacy, which influence the strategic decision and change rival’s behaviour. Employers are not fully aware of accreditation: they think that the qualities of graduates are the same for all B-schools in Slovenia.

3.2 Case study 2: Kozminski University (KU).

Higher education (HE) of Poland is a product of liberal policies of the early 1990s comprised of public HE institutions and private one that created under the new law, and even expanded due to the inflow from tuition fees (Szkudlarek & Stankiewicz, 2014). After the stable growth in the number of HE institutions from 112 (1990) to 460 (in 2010), it becomes the biggest private HE system in CEE, with the decrease in private schools from 2011: 49 non-public universities were closed down until 2013 (Sojkin, Bartkowiak & Skuza, 2015). “The EU directive on quality assurance was given in 2003, but the regulations on university accreditation in Poland emphasised “quality control, not quality cultures” (Szkudlarek & Stankiewicz, 2014, p. 41). The state intervention in accreditation has coexisted with the increasing market sector, but representatives of the private sector were barely present in accreditation groups (Dakowska, 2015). In Poland, the number of students decreased from 1.9 million in 2006 to 1.5 million in 2013 (1,549.9 thousand) and the private sector enrolments decreased from 660.000 in 2007 to 399.000 in 2013, and in the public sector - from 1.3 million to 1.2 million (EC: Poland, 2016). In 2013, Poland has 450 HE institutions (ICEF Monitor, 2013). The Ministry’s register shows 379 private HEIs in 2015, where 287 are active (Kwiek, Antonowicz & Westerheijden, 2016).

In our study, the analysed case is the Kozminski University (KU). Origins of KU “*date back to 1989*”, when faculty at the University of Warsaw’s School of Management set up International Business School (IBS) (AACSB report, 2011, p. 9). From its establishment in 1993 till 2008, the University was called the Leon Kozminski Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management. Since 1998 KU has been ranked as the best B-school by Polish listings: “Perspektywy”, “Polityka”, “Rzeczpospolita”, “Wprost” (EQUIS report, 2007). Following EQUIS recommendations (2005) and stakeholders’ opinions, the School was re-branded, and shortened its name (EQUIS report, 2007, p. 18). The key periods are reflected in Table 40.

Table 40. Key periods of Kozminski University (KU)

1993	Establishment of the Leon Kozminski Academy of Entrepreneurship and Management as a non-state University; the undergraduate programme on marketing and management launched
1996	Complementary degree majoring in management and marketing.
1997	Undergraduate programme in Finance and Banking
1998	Launch of administration programme. The right for the Doctor of Economics in Management
1999	Accreditation of EQUIS. It is the 16 th B-school in Europe to be accredited by EQUIS.
2000	The status of membership in the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland
2001	A five-year master’s programmes in law; graduate Finance&Banking are launched, CEEMAN
2002	Major in administration graduate programme is launched
2003	Eligibility to higher professional studies in sociology. The rights granted for the postdoctoral degree in economics in the management science.
2004	The psychology of management and European studies programs are launched. Kozminski Academy is granted rights for doctoral studies in management.
2005	Accreditation: EQUIS, unconditional
2006	Poland’s first honorary doctorate awarded by the private University
2008	It is renamed into Kozminski University. Accreditation of AMBA for MBA programmes. The permission to grant the degree of doctor of economic sciences
2009	From 2009, KU is named after Leon Koźmiński, the founder and rector of the school. Authorization to conduct studies in economics. In addition, the Central Commission for Academic Degrees and Titles grant permission to award the degree of Doctor of Law
2011	AACSB accreditation
2013	Kozminski University obtained the rights to award PhD degrees in the field of finance

Sources: Reports (EQUIS 2007; AACSB, 2011), archival data

According to AACSB report (2011), the mission and values, were re-considered in 2008:

Mission: To teach business, management and business law combining world-class research, practice and academia in the heart of Europe.

Vision: A leading international business school with a broad profile. Centre of excellence in research and education.

Values: Personal integrity and self-development; democracy and market economy; freedom equality and mutual respect; operational excellence and highest professional standards; honesty; openness to intercultural dialog, diversity, and freedom of speech; social responsibility; entrepreneurial spirit.

KU is one of the top B-schools in CEE region with the triple-crown accreditation (EQUIS AACSB, AMBA), and IQA accreditation from the Central and East European Management Development Association (CEEMAN). The accreditation experience is characterized as “very complicated”: *“Poland, in general, is a country that enables higher education. The other markets like UK, USA, even Italy are the markets for higher education, but Poland is a socialist camp, and the only way to be “good” was to get accreditation”*. First, KU approached EFMD; it was first accreditation, conditional for 3 years: *“Some criteria were very strange to us, and it was a very hard time. The next one was CEEMAN, very similar to EFMD. Because of similarity, it was not difficult as the first one. The next one was EQUIS re-accreditation, then - AMBA, and, finally, we came to AACSB”* (Respondent 0037). Respondent 0042 illustrated the difference for AACSB accreditation in Poland: first, there is no possibility to re-take exams in Australia for AACSB accreditation, but in Poland, - it is normal: *“for that, we needed to tell AACSB, that it is a law in Poland”*. Second, Polish environment has a part-time study, there are many courses, when students prefer studying during the weekends, - it is different from the U.S. Third, there is a “habilitation process” in Poland, different from other countries. It is similar to the tenure (respondent 0038): In the US PhD are more independent, for us PhD – is the beginning stage, and we have to go additionally through the process of rehabilitation.

3.2.1 Results of B-school KU

About 70 business schools in the world hold “triple crown” accreditations, and Kozminski University (KU) joined this group in 2011 year. We look at KU’s perception here:

RQ1: How does KU perceive international accreditation?

- a) What are the values of accreditation?
- b) What are the advantages and disadvantages?

The general perception on accreditation shows view with “cons and pros”:

Fortunately, accreditations are similar. They are more or less the same. I concentrate on their internal value- this is the main push. Accreditation is the part of your brand. May be students are aware of “Three crowns”, but basically they are not (Respondent 0043);

EQUIS pushed us to improve something, in the case of AACSB – we had to force our staff regarding AQ/PQ– it was very unpleasant. It was very new, strange for us, and created some problems. In the case of CEEMAN, it was much less impact (Respondent 0039).

What is coming from accreditations is what we know we should do in terms of our changes: we didn’t have fundamental changes, receiving accreditation is a legitimization (Respondent 0044).

All accreditations are recognised as similar, homogeneous, and the part of KU's brand. While AACSB was easier to gain in FELU versus EQUIS (due to internationalisation), in KU it is a painful experience due to AQ/PQ (applied to staff). Their values are in Table 41.

Table 41. Values of Accreditations (EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN)

EQUIS (1999)	AACSB (2011)	CEEMAN (2001)
EQUIS – if you are in Europe, EQUIS is a “must”, it is a recognition (0037). The trust are built by accreditations (0044)	AACSB is known outside Europe (0037). It is more intense than EQUIS. It also pushes for research, consultancy; change in curriculum, amendment to programmes, number of programmes, objectives (0004).	CEEMAN – important in this part of the world, in CEE (0037). Our competitor is chasing us with CEEMAN (0001). It was much less impact from CEEMAN (0039)
The common values (for EQUIS and AACSB)		
Good B-school has to be international with both components: student & international faculty bodies. Both EQUIS and AACSB require rigorous quality control, control system, the assurance of learning (0037). We became innovative thanks to both A. The trust is built by these A. For us A. is a legitimastion, and policy. A. tells us which directions to follow. Thanks to them we became innovative. Right now we do not have a choice. We receive the directions for our development; it tells us which directions we follow. A. equals policy (0044).		It is a question of different markets. Every accreditation has its specific meaning. If it is international, it needs A. for different market (0037).

Source: *interviews in KU, 2013*

The most important value of EQUIS is a recognition related to mimetic trends (MI) and the legitimacy mechanism (LE). AACSB values are more associated with the push for research (NO), consultancy and the changes in the curriculum (CO). CEEMAN's value is more about the regional importance and perception at the regional and national levels (BA).

The answers to the next **RQ1b** questions are distributed in Tables 42a - on advantages and 42b – on disadvantages incorporating the common pros and cons connected with the difficulties of disentangling of one accreditation from the other one.

Table 42a. Advantages of Accreditations (EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN)

EQUIS (1999)	AACSB (2011)	CEEMAN (2001)
EQUIS push for international publications. You have to communicate to the world, good relationship with other universities (0037). Mission statement is supported (0004). The doors are open for us for conferences and events, it was way to make it more legitimate (0039). The internal value of accreditation is the main push (0043). It gave us a speed, a push strategy (0044). We can get more money from students. Procedures on quality. Help us to create the image that we are exceptional part of the world. We educate ministry (0003)	More tolerant towards local publications (0037). Super quality standards, innovation, it gives students voice, self-motivation. More investment in infrastructure is an added value (0004). It supports effective way, advocate, syllabus and suggest what would be the best way, how programme is adapted; learning efforts, quality of learning vs. the old-fashioned practice (0041) Objective: quality loop, and we also created the model. Every time you have to re-think the courses and find the way to reach students. We are getting more practical. We attract more ambitious and better students (0042).	We are learning something new from our partners from Central and Eastern Europe (0037)
The common advantages for accreditation process		
Having accreditation (A). is a good sign. It is very difficult to differentiate EQUIS, AACSB and CEEMAN. A. are different for different markets. They force BS to become the bilingual, require publications. AACSB and EQUIS requires rigorous quality control, control system, the assurance of learning, quality of teaching. Benchmarking is powerful. We are forced by our partners on high quality. Competitive advantage is quality (0037). We can get more money from students. We have procedures for quality (0003). A. make sense, when implemented, you are still advancing (0004). We are becoming the members of the network, peer review (0038). We create a value base, A. gave us “the speed”, a push strategy. They create image of luxury (0044).		

Source: *Interviews with KU's experts, 2013*

First of all, it should be noted that the first notable difference between KU from all other schools is that here, many respondents mentioned that results from accreditations are difficult to differentiate. For this reason, the tables 1 and 2 have both separate and common columns in the cases of difficulties in disentangling. The second difference is that majority of experts also confirm that these accreditations are very much similar reflecting higher homogeneous process in the private school with its triple crown and triple institutional accreditations. Third, there is a significant difference between the first accreditation (EQUIS, gained in 1999), CEEMAN (gained in 2001) and the time of interview (2013), as well as the difference with other B-schools that almost all gained accreditation at the end of the first decade of the 21st century. It should be noted, that organisational memory in this case is still very well present, because the majority of key experts are still within this B-school.

The advantages of EQUIS are push for international publications (NO), making the school more legitimate (LE), a push strategy (CO). B-school has to communicate to the world (to get access to international market) (IA), it can get more money from students - the need for resources, (CO) and procedures on quality - formalisation of quality in policy, (MI). The advantages of AACSB are seen through the tolerance towards local publications (NO), quality standards (MI), curriculum (CO) and showing the way how to move (CO). The advantages for CEEMAN, which is not perceived as an accreditation from the West, but from the region – “*learning something new from our CEE partners*” in the region (IA), assuming also the improved connections (IA). The disadvantages in Table 42b are listed in terms its time, cost, pressures, a stress and non-recognition of the local publications.

The proposition (P1) is confirmed (for AACSB/EQUIS): Perception of accreditation values to enhance the legitimacy from accreditation is higher than the perception of the accreditation cost. According to the informants, each accreditation covers its own different market, and therefore the more accreditations, the higher the legitimacy of B-school by embracing markets and students: *If you are in Europe, EQUIS is a “must”, AACSB is known outside Europe, CEEMAN important in this part of the world* (Respondent 0037).

Table 42b. Disadvantages of Accreditations (EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN)

EQUIS	AACSB	CEEMAN
Local publications are not recognised (0037). A lot of pressures to increase internationalisation, representation, strategic structure, financial requirements. The constant change is learning (0004). A lot of efforts (0038). The fundraising which is normal for church is a very new tradition for Poland, it doesn't fit to our environment (EQUIS requires it) (0003)	You might lose your vision, being involved into standards. It puts pressures on me (0004). It creates some bureaucracy which is annoying. It was a long process – 3 years (0041). No possibility to re-take exam – contradict Polish law (0042). You are forced to do changes (0043). Huge time (0044), AQ/PQ is the not difficult (0044)	CEEMAN is just a smallest part compared to AACSB and EQUIS. The students are to be aware about three crowns, but basically, they are not (0043).
Everything comes at cost, you need to have resources - human, financial. If you do not have it, you are not good. Your revenue is not sufficient you are not capable to attract students. The whole process is very risky. Because we are subject to all 4 accreditation (triple Crown and CEEMAN), it is very difficult to differentiate them and their impact (0037). We have to comply with AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN and Polish law, and all accreditations are rigorous and demanding (0042). Every year we have re-accreditation – it is a problem: it is a mass, all the time people are involved, and if the organisation all the time is involved into the change, where we can find the time to do something? It is a stress. Accreditation is significant sum of money (0043)		

Source: *interviews in KU, 2013*

In the case of regional CEEMAN, its value is not clearly demonstrated and proved. Therefore, **P1 is not confirmed, nor denied** (for CEEMAN).

The following questions are expanding the reasoning for accreditations:

RQ2: Why does KU seek the international accreditation from the West?

a: What are the forces that lead KU to seek accreditation? (RQ2a)

b: How do B-schools make decisions about accreditation? (RQ2b)

The key reasons about the Western-type accreditation are quoted here:

In 1999 we were number 16 in Europe, because at that time EQUIS was just taking up. We wanted to compete on equal grounds with Western European.. The only way “to be good” was gaining accreditation. We knew that at the beginning of 2010 we will face a demographic downturn. In order to compensate it, we needed the international students, and in order to get them, we had to have the international accreditation (Respondent 0037)

Private universities are considered as a worst one, the most established are the public ones. After 1999 a lot of the private schools were open. For us, accreditations were the way to differentiate us from other private universities (Respondent 0038).

There are few forces listed for gaining all accreditations: demographic downturn, the factor of competition and the access to external funding. Thus, “the only way to be good is to get accreditation” (BA), access to the international students (IA), to compete (IA), to get the external funding (CO) and to differentiate school (NO). The Table 43a shows forces for accreditation with the dominance of coercive and information asymmetry reasons.

Table 43a. Reasons for Accreditations (forces for EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN)

EQUIS (1999)	AACSB (2011)	CEEMAN (2001)
EQUIS pushes for international publications more (NO). If you have world-class research, you have to communicate to the world (MI) (0037). Network with other schools (MI) was created, and communications with the big old universities (NO). CEE is not the best place to learn management, but accreditation (A.) makes it better (NO), and working internationally (IA) is important (0038). A. is a part of brand (NO). It was not a change for good, it was imposed (CO) (0043);	We wanted to compete with the West (IA), to use it as a tool (CO), We are also forced (CO) for high quality of the international partner-institutions (BA) (0037). AACSB is a reputation (NO), quality assurance (MI) (0004). AACSB was something new (BA) (0038). Accreditations were the way to differentiate us from other private (NO) schools, and compete with public ones (MI) (0038). AACSB is more tolerant towards local publications (PE).	Each association has its meaning and its market (from its trademark) (BA). CEEMAN in this part of the world is important, standards are in compliance (MI) (0037). It is a challenge to combine all accreditations (BA) (0038). it is similar to EFMD (0039) (ISO), it extends activities to other continents (BA);
Results for EQUIS (RQ2a)	Results for AACSB (RQ2a)	Results for CEEMAN
NO-4, MI-2; IA; CO	NO-2; CO-2; IA-1; BA-2; MI-2; PE	BA-3; MI; ISO
We wanted to compete on equal grounds with the Western B-schools (IA). A. as a promotional tool (CO). We wanted the similar recognition (MI) and prestige (CO), which would give us better chances for the external funding (CO) and to recruit better students (IA). The demographic downturn is also the reason (CO). We had to recruit the international students using accreditation (IA). We were using A. as promotional tool (CO), but it worked with considerable delay, and the whole process is very risky, plus funds to support your claims (CO). Poland was a socialist camp. The only way “to be good” was A. (BA) (0037). Both A. induce the specific change: they impose standards (CO) and requirements (CO) that have very powerful impact. I wouldn't call them ideological, it is a pragmatic shift (BA). They are becoming homogeneous (ISO), there are very strong similarities b/n AACSB and EQUIS (ISO), and it is possible that they will merge. It is very difficult to differentiate them (ISO). Both AACSB and EQUIS are on the assurance of learning (NO-2) with quality control (NO), and control system (NO) (as a structuration process). That is why we are trying to attract them (message on Quality: (BA). Benchmarking is very powerful tool (CO) (0037). Better chance to receive the external funding (CO) and to bring international students (IA). EQUIS and AACSB are becoming homogeneous (ISO), it is possible that they will merge (ISO) (0037).		
The general reasons for all A.: CO-10; IA-4; NO-4; BA-3; ISO-5; MI-2		

(to be continued in Table 43b)

The Table 43a answers to RQ2a question in the part related to forces. Externally, in terms of forces, KU is directly influenced by each accrediting bodies (CO) with the impact on the leader of school, who is, in turn, becoming the agent of change.

In order to incorporate the part related to the decision process, we include the Table 43b with the final results for RQ2: Why does KU seek accreditation from the West?

Table 43b. Reasons for Accreditation (decisions for EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN)

EQUIS	AACSB	CEEMAN
EQUIS is known in Europe. I had hands on experience with EQUIS (CO). I was aware that it will become very important (BA). There was no other option (BA). I was a member of EFMD board (0037) (CO) (EFMD member of Accreditation Committee till 2008)	I became the part of the AACSB Task force for internationalisation (CO) (member of AACSB International Committee) (0037) AACSB is known outside Europe (no one had it here) (BA).	Each accreditation has its market, (it was strategic) (0037) (BA). Mr. Kozminski is an Honorary Vice-President of CEEMAN, member of EFMD, and AACSB, external funding (CO).
Results RQ2b: BA-2; CO-2	Results RQ2b: CO, BA	Results RQ2b: BA, CO
Results RQ2a: NO-4, MI-2; IA; CO	Results RQ2a: NO-2; CO-2; IA-1; BA-2; MI-2; PE	Results RQ2a: BA-3; MI; ISO,
The Final Results for RQ2 (a+b): External Forces and internal Decision		
NO-4, CO-3; BA-2; MI-2; IA;	CO-3; BA-3; NO-2; MI-2; IA-1; PE	BA-4; MI; CO, ISO

Source: interviews in KU, 2013

With regard to the internal decision (RQ2b), it is strategically made by the leader of the private B-school (CO) with the intention to apply the new practice (innovation) based on the bandwagon effects – a strategical decision without any cost-benefit analysis. In terms of the accreditation specifics, for AACSB and EQUIS there is a full spectre of all isomorphic changes. The most interesting trend here is the following: the internal decision making process by the same scenario with bandwagon effects and coercive trends, despite the decisions in favour of accreditation are made in different years (being received in 1999 - for EQUIS; in 2001 – for CEEMAN; in 2011 – for AACSB). At the same time, the external forces for each accreditation are all different: the change in public perceptions about private universities and the need to differentiate school from others (NO), the factor of competition, the access to external funding (CO) with and a forecasted demographic downturn that should be compensated by external students (IA) (internationalisation process) in line with “*the process which is imposed*” (CO) with the bandwagon trends “the only way to be good is to get accreditation” (BA).

As far as **RQ2** is concerned, “Why does KU seek international AACSB accreditation?” there is a spectre of forces (for each). First, AACSB accreditation, gained in 2011 was the reason for KU, to use it as a tool (CO) with “quality assurance” mechanisms (MI) with “a reputation” of AACSB (NO). Second, despite other accreditations, AACSB was the new one, as innovation for private schools in the CEE (BA), and it was already introduced by public FELU in 2010. It also allows competing with the West (IA). The perception on AACSB is a way to “*differentiate us from other private schools*” (NO). Third, B-school is forced for “*high quality*” (PE) by the international partners (BA) with AACSB being tolerant towards local publications (PE). **Proposition 2 is confirmed** (all accreditations).

Table 49 provides answers to **R3** and **R4** related to changes and effects for each accreditation (EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN). The same table includes the additional column on the general effects of accreditations, because it is difficult to differentiate them.

Table 44. Changes and Effects from triple Accreditations in KU

EQUIS	AACSB (2011)	CEEMAN
RQ3: What are organisational CHANGES as a result of accreditation?		
Chain in mission statement (CO) corporate relations (NO), ranking (IA) and research (NO) (0004); differentiation (IA) (0044). It is a part of the brand (NO), it is more important for international recognition (IA) and international market (IA) (0043). We change strategy of actions (CO). Right now we do not have a choice (BA). We receive the directions (CO) (0044)	Standards (MI) change the way how to operate (CO); became bilingual school (NO); research & publications requirement (NO); quality control (MI), assurance of learning (MI); improve quality of learning (MI), teaching (PE); forced for high quality of the international partners (CO), learning from partners (CO) (0037); AQ/PQ was new (CO); it is about publications, be academically qualified (2NO) (0038); Parallel change in HE: the same as A.(CO) (0039); evaluation of courses, curriculum (2CO) (0041); re-think all courses (CO) (0042); cultural (NO), stretch strategy (CO), institutional (ISO), international rankings (3CO), more consultancy & research (2NO), we were not internationally exposed before (IA) (0043); more innovative (NO), but do not have a choice (CO) If you want this promotion, it is better to do A (BA) (0044); investment in infrastructure (CO). More learning objectives (NO) (0004).	The next one was CEEMAN, and it was very similar to EFMD (ISO). Because of similarity (ISO), it was not so difficult as the first one.
IA-4; CO-3; NO-3	CO-14; NO-9; MI-4; PE, IA; BA, ISO	ISO-2
RQ4: What are the EFFECTS of international accreditation process?		
The trust is built by accreditation. It is legitimisation (LE) (0044). EQUIS push us to improve smt. (IA) (0039). Thanks to EQUIS we are innovative (NO). It was a way to make us more legitimate (LE) (our university without references (0039), Accreditation is a part of your brand (NO) (0043). Accreditation tell us which directions we should follow (CO) (0044) Accreditation equals policy (CO),(0044).	Similarity b/n AACSB and EQUIS, homogeneous (ISO) international faculty and students (IA); benchmarking (MI); (0037); differentiate from private (NO), compete with public (IA); networking (MI); compete with business consultancies, with trainers (2IA); more publications in certain journals (PE) (0038);the only way to be good – to get A. (BA); strategic, but complicated process: 7 years (BA); doors are open for all conferences (IA); positions in rankings (IA); effect on HE (CO); students & teaching goals (NO) (0039); the process is evaluated (PE); Quality of students, alumni (2BA), bottom-up evaluation (PE) (0041); better students (PE); comply standards (NO); we became international university (IA) (0042); strategy (CO); more international, more research (2 IA); re-accreditation – every year (CO); thanks to AACSB we are innovative (NO); Employers are talking about KU (IA), it builds reputation (IA) (0043); assurance of change – the biggest (ISO); similarity (ISO); more recognition (MI); rankings (IA), publications in Eng. (NO); push strategy (CO), image of luxury (CO); legitimization (LE), brand (IA); publish more (NO) (0044)	We said that for this accreditation it should be not 3 men for 3 days, but 1 man. In case you got all three accreditations, it is much easier (BA). CEEMAN process is similar to EQUIS (0039) (ISO)
LE-2, IA, NO-2, CO-2	ISO-3; IA-13; MI-3, NO-6; PE-4; BA-4; CO-3; LE	BA, ISO
The general effects for all accreditations		
Increase internationalisation (IA), strategic structure (CO), raise results (PE), improve financial regulations (CO) both on tuition fee and other sources (grants from the government, other institutions). Cooperation on the board (NO). Financial transparency (NO). Learning is a constant change, where teacher is more engaged (NO). Re-accreditation brings even more changes. You search for the right partners (NO). It gives voice to students (0004). The local publications are ranked at C1 or B2 levels, - not highly ranked (NO). We are evaluated for “quality” (0038) (a message outside on quality) (BA). We can use the arguments of accreditation to push the staff to change (0044) (CO). Brands (of accreditations) create your credibility (MI). It gives us more self-confidence (NO) on the global market (0044) (IA). It gave us a speed (NO)		
NO-7, CO-3, BA, IA-2, MI, PE		
RQ3+RQ4 for EQUIS	RQ3+RQ4 for AACSB	RQ3+ RQ4
CO-6; IA-5, NO-5, LE-2	CO-17; NO-15; IA-14; MI-7; PE-5; BA-5, ISO-4; LE	BA, ISO-3

Source: Interviews in KU with the content analysis, 2013

As it was mentioned before, many respondents make comments that with Triple Crown and CEEMAN it is problematic to differentiate change and effects for each accreditation. In the case of CEEMAN, it was also mentioned, that it is similar to EQUIS, in addition to EQUIS is identical to AACSB. For that reason, the general effects are added in Table 49. Therefore, we consider that **P3** with CO, NO, MI- **is confirmed** due to the merged effects of all accreditations (more clear for AACSB, - summarised there for all). However, **P4** for EQUIS **does not show clear trends of bandwagon** (BA), but because of the merging effects from other accreditations – **P4a are neither confirmed nor denied** (-/+). Thus, **P4 can be confirmed only partly** for EQUIS with IA (+), neither confirmed nor denied with BA (+/). As a result, **P4 is neither confirmed nor denied** (-/+) for EQUIS in KU.

For CEEMAN, all features are merged (ISO), **P3** is isomorphic (without possibility to disentangle change). **P4a is confirmed** (+), but there is no clear IA, **P4b is not confirmed** (-). Therefore, **P4 is neither confirmed nor denied** for CEEMAN. For AACSB - **P4** is clearly **confirmed** (with both **P4a, P4b**). The explanations for AACSB are listed:

The most significant change is in our higher education system –it changes at the same direction as accreditation. For AQ/PQ - we had to force our staff– it was very unpleasant (Respondent 0039).

Standards like AQ/PQ were imposed. When it is imposed, we are more similar to other schools. May be it was not a change for good. It may be artificial, - it is a foreign idea (Respondent 0038).

AACSB put more emphasis to support effective way, advocate, learning efforts; quality of learning, to be compared to post-socialist old-fashioned and problematic (Respondent 0041).

We are somehow on the position of driving Ferrari (Respondent 0044)

In general, accreditation makes effects on internationalisation, strategic structure, cooperation on board, financial transparency, learning, and teaching, as well as voices to students. The arguments of accreditation are also used as a tool to push staff to change. It provides more self-confidence. The results of Questionnaire are present in Table 45.

Table 45. Effects of accreditations in KU (Poland) (n=7)

KU (Poland)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mission	5.00	0.00
Strategy	4.86	0.24
Programmes	4.71	0.49
Faculty	4.71	0.41
Teaching	4.57	0.49
Leadership	4.57	0.49
Competences	4.57	0.61
Students	4.43	0.49
Increase in salary of Faculty members	3.00	1.14

Source: *Questionnaire from KU's respondents, 2013*

The process of accreditations makes a strong effect on the following factors (ranked in the order): (1) Mission (I); (2) Strategy (H); (3) Programmes (A) with Faculty and Teaching.

The changes already implemented by KU are shown in Table 46a – implemented changes and Table 46b – Changes that are still needed. The implemented changes are the following: review of the B-school’s mission (1), its review by school’s stakeholders (faculty, students and employers) (2), determining the leaning goals of the programmes (9) and introducing its measurement (10). However, the B-school still need to introduce the following changes: sharing of knowledge (14), a substantial increase in the quality of publications (3), to make entrance requirements stricter (6), and improve the connections with the b-community (12) that show the predictable future change in B-school’s plans in these directions.

According to Table 34 (List of Changes necessary for Accreditation), the implemented changes took place in terms of mission statement’s review (1), its review from stakeholders (2), as well as determining the learning goals of the programme and introducing its measurement (1). The changes that are still needed are: sharing the knowledge (14), a substantial increase in the quality of publications (3), entrance requirements have to be more strict (6) in line with the improving the connections with business community (12).

Table 46a. Changes implemented in KU

N of Change	Changes implemented, Respondent, agree
1	7
2	6
9	5
10	4
4	3
5	3
11	3
3	2
7	2
8	2
13	2
15	2
12	1
6	0
14	0

Table 46b. Changes expected in KU

N of Change	Changes still to be done, Respondents, agree
14	7
3	5
6	5
12	5
7	4
8	4
13	4
15	4
5	3
11	3
10	2
2	1
1	0
4	0
9	0

As far as changes EQUIS is more about ranking, differentiation, recognition, (which are more IA reasons), as well as the strategic choices (more CO reasons). AACSB accreditation makes more emphasis on normative features (research, learning objective, cultural change, academic qualification). CEEMAN accreditation has more isomorphic features, based on similarities to EQUIS.

3.2.2 Results on Competitors

The purpose of this sub-chapter is to receive a perception from competing B-schools about KU with its triple accreditations. During the interviews with KU we got the idea that “the three crowns probably “do not send the signals to students”, but KU certainly it is “international university” with “the increasing importance” (0042) (IA). Therefore, we would like to check signals sent towards stakeholders – competitors and employers. First, we would like to know the opinion of competitors related to RQ5.

RQ5: Does KU send any signals to their competitors?

The meeting with Warsaw School of Economics (WSE) took place on 16th of April, 2013 and the meeting with the Faculty of Management Warsaw University was held on 19th of April, 2013. From Eduniversal's ranking, we can assess the ranking from the table 47.

Table 47. KU and its competing B-schools in Poland

B-schools in Poland, representative	Eduniversal	Dean's recommendation rate in 2013	Rank by Palmes league	Accreditation
SGH -Warsaw School of Economics (WSE), Vice-Rector for International Cooperation	1	209% Competitor 1	5 palms	www.sgh.waw.pl/en CEEMAN (accredited in 2011)
University of Warsaw Faculty of Management (FOM), Director of International Studies	1	268% Competitor 2	4 palms	http://www.ibp.uw.edu.pl AMBA, wz.uw.edu.pl
Kozminski University, KU, top-management	2	227 %	4 palms	AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN, AMBA

Source: <http://www.eduniversal-ranking.com/>, 2014 year.

Comments: The data is compared for the year of 2013, which were published at the end of 2014. However, the data for 2013 shown in 2016 are different (palms and recommendations' rate).

The opinion of both competing B-schools, public - Warsaw School of Economics (Competitor 1) presented by the Vice-rector for International Cooperation and the Faculty of Management, Warsaw University (Competitor 2) presented by the Director of International Studies about the perception of KU's position on market had been taken with the results provided below. Competitors provided their opinion about KU, their perception about accreditation for their schools and education's environment in Poland.

WSE, Competitor 1 (Respondent 0040). Description: *As the oldest school in Poland, we were considered as a best school for students. But 3 years ago we discovered: in order to be the strong school and to make our position stronger in the longer term, - we should also have an accreditation.*

Specific of Environmental regulation: *Under the previous law it was very difficult to fire the person who does not comply to the requirements, because it should be two or three negative opinions provided, and nobody wants to do this. It is much more difficult to restructure the B-school to give it more business oriented character in the public sector.*

Accreditation of Competitor 1: *In the case of public universities, unfortunately, it is a problem to meet the standards of Ministry's requirements which were required until recently (end of 2012). In Poland, accreditation is very important for B-schools in order to attract the best students: the foreign students and the best Polish students. In order to have good students, it is important to have an accreditation to get a good applicant. I am asking the students from different countries: why they decided to apply for our b-school? They first found on the internet that we are the best school, and later on that we also have the CEEMAN accreditation. In our case, for example, we can say that our B-school is a best type, but when*

you go to details, you can see that it is much more difficult. It was also difficult from organisational point of view, because the flexibility was very limited: for instance, to introduce business standards (until the new law was introduced). We couldn't establish typical business programmes, because we had to meet the requirements set up by the Ministry that dictated us which type of majors, and which courses. In terms of financial means, we also should have funds. From organisational point of view, the rector was probably not strong enough to set up an independent team to be prepared for good research, being responsible for Faculty members who should prepare at least one or two peer-reviewed papers for good journals. In general, it was more difficult to restructure the school and to give it more business character's orientation because of the legislation. We do have some research perspectives and strategy, and everybody is assessed every 2 years, but these requirements are not strong enough.

Perception about KU from Competitor 1: *as a flexible and the best private school out of all other private schools.*

Signals from KU: *the flexible and the best private school (PE) with prestige (become a member of elite club (NO) and good connections (NO) (from interview)*

FOM, Competitor 2 (Respondent 0047). Description: *We are the oldest university's business school established in 1972 accredited with AMBA. From the very beginning, we have the most important partners - the Harvard Business school (HBS), and later - with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. We are the only one who has this cooperation, our diploma are approved by the US' Department of Education. The intensity of partnership is very high, for example, with the University of Florida). We have there a joint Global MBA programme ranked as the 3rd in this part of Europe in Eduniversal ranking. Students go for 2 semesters to these universities to pass some courses, they are given two diplomas with the joint European and American MBA.*

Competition and specifics of environment related to the national and international ranking from Competitor 2:

FOM have 40 majors, it is the highest number compared to our competitors like KU. About the position in the ranks, it depends on ranks. Many years ago, at the beginning, in the local ranking where the majors were ranked, WSE was the first, FOM - the second, and KU was located in the long distance from us. In the case of "Perspekywy", the national rank, the most famous and the most important one, there are 3 ranks, not one: 1st rank - for all universities, all HEIs are included— where the Warsaw University as a whole one is ranked as number "1", and KU, is number "14", WSE is number "9 or 10", 2-nd rank – for Economics and Business (we were at the 2nd place, KU was at the 3rd), 3rd – is only for MBA. In the case of "Polityka", there are no new ranks, and in the case of "Wprost" – they have changed the methodology, it is not clear. At the CEE's level, we are the third, after Graduate School of Management, St. Petersburg and the Prague School of Economics.

There is another ranking, - Eduniversal. The WSE was 2nd or 3rd two years ago, and now we are on the 3rd place in CEE. Because of its brand, and the level of networks, Warsaw University already has 400 bilateral agreements with the partners, and there is a support from business. We are assessed quite well on the Polish market, and the alumni find jobs quicker than graduates from other schools. We have more courses. We also have a good experience coming from HBS's curriculum, how it should look in the real term. We have

the richest curriculum compared to other schools; there are 20% more programmes compared to KU and WSE, because we have 40 majors. It is a huge advantage.

Perception about KU from Competitor 2: It is “light” competition with KU: *It is so hard to talk about KU, because prof. Kozminski was a founder of our faculty, and he was a Dean of this faculty for many years. Many of us know him very well, and the level of cooperation, so that is why our competition is very friendly. We have sort of “light” competition with KU, because prof. Kozminski was the Chair of Management and the founder of Executive MBA programme with Illinois Urbana Champaign University.*

Table 48 presents brief summary of Competitors (WSE and FOM) and their differences and the answers to **RQ5** on the signals that are sent by KU with all accreditations.

Table 48. Summary of rivals about KU

Competitors	Warsaw School of Economics, WSE. Respondent 0040	Faculty of Management, FOM; Respondent 0047
Environment	Public B-school, a best school in terms of students	Public, the oldest university’s B-school in this part of Europe, including Russia
	WSE – with CEEMAN, Other: EFUP, EUA, AMBA, Students first found that we are the best school, next – information that WSE is accredited	FOM is accredited with AMBA (2010), started AACSB, members: EFMD, CEEMAN. Accreditation changed the strategy& mission, in 3 years we can assess our change
Competition	3 years ago we discovered (IA)- in order to have stronger position, we should have accreditation (BA)	We have sort of “light” competition with KU, because prof. Kozminski used to be the Chair of Management
Advantages of KU	Flexible (IA), small. KU is a best private school out of all others (PE)	Due to KU campaign (IA), our Faculty recognized the problem - recently we lost the partnership with Manheim University that requires a triple accreditation (BA)
Signals sent by KU	The best private school with accreditation (MI), the prestige (CO), good connection (NO), become a elite club mem. (NO) & connections (NO)	We have applied for AACSB (BA), and by the end of 2014 we plan to go with EQUIS (BA) - all good schools have it;
	NO-3, CO, IA-2, MI, BA, PE	BA-3, IA
All signals from KU: BA-4, IA-3, NO-3, CO, MI, PE		

Source: *summary of interviews with competitors in Poland, 2013*

To summarise the results on RQ5, both competitors react on accreditation of its rival. KU sends the signals to Competitor 1 about being the best among the private schools reflecting quality processes (MI) and becoming the member of elite club - normative (NO), with good connections (NO). KU sends Bandwagon (BA) signals to Competitor 2, thus pushing them to join EQUIS accreditation (thus, BA is taking place at the national level). Moreover, accreditations in KU (AACSB or EQUIS) stimulate rival (FOM) to bandwagon its behaviour, pushing other schools to follow accreditation trends, reducing its information asymmetry. **P5 is confirmed** for competitors (AACSB/EQUIS), but besides quality, there are other positive signals different from “quality” ones. **P5** is neither confirmed nor denied for CEEMAN. **P5** is to be **re-written: The international accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools with a positive signalling to professional market.** As for RQ6, accreditation pushes rivals to jump to some bandwagon (BA) trends to apply for accreditation and the institutional change takes place (for AACSB/EQUIS), but it is not clear for CEEMAN.

3.2.3 Results of Employers

KU as a private B-school has the longest experience with the listed institutional accreditations – EQUIS, AACSB and CEEMAN (the first private B-school in CEE involved into accreditation). One of the KU’s respondent mentions that: “*Employers are talking about the KU, and accreditation builds its reputation* (0043). In this sub-chapter, we ask the employers’ opinions about KU’s accreditation. The answers about interaction between university KU and employers, quality of graduates and RQ5 are in Table 49.

Table 49. Employers about KU accreditations

Employer 1	Employer 2
Sante (Local Polish company)	IKEA (International company)
Export Manager	HR Deputy Director, and HR specialist
Type	Type
Sante is founded in 1992 by Andrzej Kowalski’s brothers. Its specialization - health food products: The company launched the first muesli product “Surówka Piękności Kleopatry” (Cleopatra’s Beauty Salad). In 2000 Sante became the sole brand distributor	The story of IKEA began in 1943 in the small village of Sweden, when Ingvar Kamprad, the founder, was just 17. Since then, the IKEA Group has grown into a global retail brand Scandinavian modern style <i>furniture</i> and accessories. 7 stores in Poland. The visited site is just a recent establishment in Warsaw.
How does KU interact with your company?	
We do not have them in our department, but we are extending in our company, and it is growing. We would like to have the educated employees from KU, who speak few languages. We need the employees with the broad level of knowledge: export and import, marketing, and young talents with a good basis of knowledge. I am sure that the graduates of KU can develop themselves on a Polish market, contributing to the local market, but we also provide an international practice. By attracting these graduates it means in the eyes of “Sante” that our company has also reached a certain level of recognition, and it is the place for the growth of future employees in export, import, marketing.	IKEA contacted with KU in November, 2012 and recently IKEA proposed the apprenticeship for 3 students of KU. We are ready to propose the contracts for its graduates. We appreciate cooperation with KU, because the students are really active , and we have to admit that KU is very active institution with Employers . KU organized a day when students could meet our company, they did pre-selection of 20 students or so, we got the chance to present us as an Employer. . KU does a lot of things to help us, and we think about expanding our cooperation Special web-page was given to us on the students – we still have to do it, but in any cases, we are planning to continue this cooperation. KU is a private university, and it is usually associated in Poland with the lower quality of teaching, but KU is in some cases are even better than public schools , and it is a very professional, business-oriented
What is the quality of KU’s graduates?	
We do need to have graduates from universities like KU, who can see the trends, and specifics of different markets.	Open-minded; focused; high-level; ambitious, friendly. They also would like to get the positions of much higher levels, the positions that start from the middle management’s level
Which signals does KU with its accreditations send to your company?	
It is a signal for the level of internationalization (IA) of school, the level which is accepted internationally. It also means that the graduates have the knowledge not only in theory, but in practice (NO).	Strong school. It makes the university more professional (NO) for us, and if when we see that they have accreditation from international bodies from abroad, it means that policy for the students (CO) and their learning goals and higher quality students (IA) are very important, it is also important for us.

Sources: *Interviews with Employers in Poland, 2013*

As for **RQ5**, KU’s triple accreditation sends some signals to both Employers associated with internationalization and professionalization (IA, CO, NO). Even in the case of local company, which does not employ graduates of KU, it still recognizes signals. KU sends the signals to Competitors on quality with mimetic (MI) and normative (NO) trends. **P5 is confirmed for employers** that they have a positive signalling from KU with accreditations.

3.3 Case study 3: Zagreb School of Economics&Management, ZSEM

Brajkovic (2016) says that the Western Balkan, a region of Southeast Europe (Albania; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Croatia; Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Kosovo; Montenegro; and Serbia) with a population of 22.7 million, has remained underresearched for its private HE, where private institutions represent a second choice for those students not admitted to public universities. The transition to a market economy in HE is combined with a rapid increase in student demand. Central and Eastern Europe is a general term for the countries in Central Europe, Southeast Europe/the Balkans, Northeast Europe/the Baltics, and Eastern Europe, usually meaning ex-communist states in Europe.

As many other countries of CEE, Croatia declared its independence in 1991, acknowledged by the international community in 1992. The first years of independence were dominated by the Yugoslav war, and the real transformation process began after its end, in 1995 with the process of European integration as priority after 1999 according to Orosz (2008). Croatia became a member of the Bologna process in 2001, and since 2003 has been under its intensive reforms. If we look at the system of higher education, old state universities are sclerotic, while many small new universities offer rather low quality education, mostly for the private sector (Koprić, 2013). According to Koprić (2013), there is gradual development of the supply side in Croatia, while the demand side is not developed due to a strong politisation of public administrators, the old state universities are sclerotic, and many small new universities offer low quality education usually for private sector. As Šćukanec (2013) highlights, around 20% of all students enrolled in professional studies attend private institutions, and the private sector initiatives are not unwelcome, but many private study programmes in business and economics represent an imbalance.

In 2013-2014 academic year the sector of higher education institutions of Croatia consists of 87 higher education institutions: 7 universities (six public and one private university), 72 components of public universities (faculties, academies and departments), 4 high schools (two public and two private) and four public colleges, and the public research sector include 25 research institutes and 70 research units (Račić & Švarc, 2015). In terms of demand, the number of students was about 150 000 or 33 students per 1000 inhabitants (compared to 39 in EU-27) in 2010 (Švarc, 2014, p. 8). The University of Zagreb, established in 1669, is the biggest and oldest university in Croatia with the total number of about 65 000 students. In terms of supply, a total number of academic staff in higher education institutions has increased significantly in the last 15 years as a general increase of 38.6%; but it does not follow the increase in the number of students (Turk, 2013; <http://www.herdata.org/in-focus/higher-education-in-croatia-introduction/6>).

As Lučin and Samaržija (2011) noted, the Croatian HE was influenced by the next factors:

(1) the opening up of CEE for cooperation with countries; (2) the visible growth of HE; (3) the national system's discrepancies; (4) the competencies that didn't meet the needs of labour market; (5) motivational barriers with negative attitudes toward mobility and (6) a certain resistance to the Bologna reforms caused by institutional and socio-cultural reasons.

The HE system is a mixed system, comprising professional education offered at polytechnics, independent schools of professional higher education and universities, on one hand, and academic education conducted solely at universities, on the other (Marčetić et al., 2013). The results of Aristovnik and Obadić (2011) show that the high public expenditure per student in Croatia could have resulted in a better performance, but Slovenian higher education is shown to have a much higher level of efficiency.

Mission of ZSEM: *to transfer values, knowledge, and skills that students need for long-term success in a globalized business world undergoing constant technological and market transformations.*

The history of ZSEM is reflected in its key historical events summarised in Table 50.

Table 50. Key periods of ZSEM

2002	ZSEM enrolls its first generation of a hundred students in the undergraduate program in Economics and Management.
2004	Admission to the AACSB
2007	First generation of graduates receive their diplomas
2008	Eduniversal proclaims ZSEM the best business school in Croatia
2011	Eduniversal include MBA specialisations of ZSEM as the best 200 in the world
2012	the President of the Republic of Croatia and the country's Prime Minister visit ZSEM
2013	ZSEM earns its AACSB accreditation

Source: *various selected facts from ZSEM brochure and web-site, 2014*

There are only two cases of private institutions in the post-communist countries of CEE that received AACSB accreditation: Kozminski University, KU (Poland), and Zagreb School of Economics and Management, ZSEM (Croatia). From the interview with the Dean of ZSEM, it is described as “a small school in a small population”.

3.3.1 Results of B-school

The results are provided from interview process with the Faculty (consisting of Top-managers, Administration, Faculty and Staff involved into the accreditation). The interviews were provided in October, 2013. The specific of this school is shown in comments, including comparison with Kozminski University (Poland):

Compared to Kozminski University, in a big country, we are a small school with a small population. Our curriculum is similar to the curriculum of American best schools. We have the same courses, and we use methodology, we use simulation (Respondent 0063)

ZSEM is a one of many private B-schools with a lot of competition. Students can choose between seven universities at which they can study business ... (Respondent 0611)

We can be flexible. During the year we have around 110 international students every year, and most of the students are coming from partner universities. Our undergraduate programme costs 5400 Euro by year, master programmes - around 9000 Euro. It is comparable (with EU), but it is expensive for the Croatian market (Respondent 0064)

ZSEM was awarded with AACSB accreditation in June, 2013. The first set of questions is about ZSEM's perception of its values in line with pros and cons included into Table 51.

RQ1: How do CEE's B-schools perceive international accreditation?

- a: What are the values of accreditation
- b: What are the advantages and disadvantages?

The interesting insight which is different from all other schools is that from the beginning of this school's foundation, it was already founded with the idea of American accreditation:

We are the members of AACSB from the very beginning. After 6 years when we had two

groups of graduates, we had an eligibility to apply for accreditation. We had a clear goal – to be accredited. It is about how our curriculum should look like (MI) (Respondent 0063)

The most typical comments in ZSEM for AACSB’s values are: internationalization, quality and brand. Thus, they are associated with brand (NO), quality (PE), international image for international students (IA), as well as mission and vision (CO), with partners who can work with B-school (for improved connections) (IA).

Table 51. Values, Advantages and Disadvantaged of AACSB

Values of AACSB	
<p>0072: Brand, it helps us to develop our brand;</p> <p>2310: Our private B-school became associated with Quality from 2008.</p> <p>3300: International image for the international students.</p> <p>0611: AACSB accreditation can testify to the school’s quality. It can help all of the involved parties (students, faculty, and administration) to work on things that b-community considers important and with that to enhance its own specific strengths and qualities.</p> <p>0064: It is very important to know the mission and vision. This accreditation brought better orientation. I wanted to have agreements (while we were in the process of accreditation), and later, when the partners asked the same question, and got the positive answers, they said that they, finally, can work with us.</p>	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>0072: I see only advantages: now the recognition is very high. We improve the level of our services.</p> <p>0033: The advantage is that we achieved the international image, we are capable to do exchange, and our teachers go to teach to other schools. In terms of some procedures, it really helps a lot, - but for the international students.</p> <p>0066: I think that from the beginning, I like the way how AACSB set up standards, you know what the school has to go through to achieve accreditation, and we had a mentor. Students with effects of learning. Advantage is a standard that every school needs to acquire. Every Faculty member had to be dedicated to this role. Assessment of learning and we created the culture of organisational learning, and during the every cycle of management we implemented the change – which is a big advantage. From the very beginning, the faculty members were employed to do the academic part, - everything worked in our school. Even if the professor is practitioner, we were involving him/her into the publications (to involve into academic – in AQ/PQ) to do both academic and professional. PQ for us were professionals with master degree, and CEO positions.</p> <p>2310: One of the greatest advantages of AACSB according to my opinion is transparency. School became more transparent in its dealings with all of its stakeholders by going through accreditation. School wants to be recognized and have a connection with the rest of the world. When you have standards, you know what the schools have to go through to accomplish the standards, the way of the teaching</p>	<p>0063: We spend a lot of time, resources, but this is the way how we operate.</p> <p>0064: Cost is disadvantage; it also takes time, and involves people. But it is important to get this accreditation. All universities will follow the same path, and we need to be prepared for this. The important step - is to introduce the courses all in English language. There is no way to start internationalisation without it. 0033: Negative – it might be expensive. I do not see the cons, but the AACSB is not well-known, for the Croatian students it is not a selling point, or strong differentiation factor.</p> <p>0611: I was the member of the accreditation team, and the accreditation process lasted for about six years, but I do not remember the official start date.</p> <p>0066: Disadvantage is a long process – we did it for 5 years (it is quite short time), except for the period and hard work I don’t see the big disadvantage.</p>

Source: Interviews with ZSEM’s respondents, 2013-14

The advantages perceived from AACBS accreditation are associated with the international image (IA), recognition (NO) and improvement of services (PE), standards (in compliance with international ones) (MI), “we created the culture of organisational learning” (as the cultural expectations and pressures to conform it) (CO).

Disadvantages are inherent in cost, long period of time, including assessment and involvement of human resources.

In respect to P1, the perception of accreditation values to enhance the legitimacy from AACSB accreditation is higher than its cost. **Proposition P1 is confirmed.**

RQ2: Why does ZSEM seek the international accreditation from the West?

a: What are the forces that lead B-schools to seek accreditation? (External Reasons)

b: How do B-schools make decisions about accreditation? (Internal Reasons)

Content analysis starts from the following sets of questions, placed in Table 52 – on the reasoning: Tables 52a and 52b on external forces and internal decision for accreditation.

Table 52a. Reasons for Accreditation: Forces (for ZSEM)

Forces for AACSB
<p>0063: From the beginning, we followed the American model of B-school (BA). We were trying to compete on quality, and our quality is based on accreditation (BA). It is reflected in our curriculum (CO) – it is very similar to the American best schools (MI). We also try to compete for the small population (MI). For global economy we need a global education, with the same standards – everywhere, in Europe, America, and Croatia (MI). The best schools follow the same models (BA).</p> <p>2310: Our school has not been associated with Quality until 2008, and we then changed the situation. School wants to be recognised (IA) and have a connection with the rest of the world (MI).</p> <p>0064: There was a strong competition on the market (MI). AACSB is a stamp of Quality, which means that “good schools” can work with us (BA). All universities will follow the same path (BA).</p> <p>0072: The main decision was made by the visionary Dean (CO); he wanted to distinguish our school (IA). It is good for the school: our quality will be improved in the future (NO).</p> <p>3300: We pursued the AACSB, because it has existed for many years (MI), and the European accreditation EQUIS has just recently appeared (IA).</p> <p>0611: I think that school applied for accreditation in order to compete on the market, and to ensure schools survival. It was a need for legitimacy (LE), besides other things. Accreditation was one of the ways to prove quality. We had to separate itself from other private B-schools (IA). It was done with quality standards testified by AACSB accreditation (MI). AACSB accreditation can testify to the school’s quality (MI), and it can help all parties (students, faculty, and administration) to work on things, that B-community considers important (NO). School applied for A. to compete on the market (MI), and to ensure schools survival (LE). It was a need for legitimacy, besides other things (LE). Accreditation was one of the ways to prove quality (IA). The international community knows and recognizes AACSB (NO). In SEE there are only two AACSB accredited schools (NO).</p> <p>0066: It was the vision of the dean to go internationally (CO). We had a President prof. Gomzales, who was from the professional community of Croatia, who lived in the US (CO). Now we are more independent and are much advanced (IA). From the beginning, it was a vision of Dean to follow, it is the leader’s role (CO)</p>
Reason (Forces): MI-9; IA -6; BA-5; CO-5; NO-4; LE-3

To be continued in Table 52b

Thus, the dominant external forces are associated with mimetic, information asymmetry and bandwagon effects as well as coercive reasons for accreditation, where the normative force is present in a lesser degree. The factor of legitimacy is directly recognised as a main reason and external force to gain accreditation.

Next, we check the internal decision about accreditation in Table 52b. We can see that the accreditation decision has been more stipulated by bandwagon, mimetic and coercive forces presented in Table 52b.

Table 52b. Reasons for Accreditation: Decision (for ZSEM)

Decision about AACSB
0063: We had a very clear goal from the beginning – to be accredited (BA). The Dean made a decision (CO) to follow the American model with good curriculum (MI), and the best business schools follow the same model (MI). If you want to survive, you have to have a people with top quality. Second, if you have international business community, the international community knows and recognizes AACSB (BA). For us, AACSB – is a top quality (MI), and only our school has this accreditation, in SEE (BA). Third, accreditation helps to make a community...If they are professors from AACSB-schools, and it is good for us (MI). Then, the management with a strong competitive advantage (MI)...In SEE there are only two AACSB accredited school (BA)
2310: It was a vision of our Dean (CO) to go internationally (IA). We had very good connections in US (CO), and after we had a first generation we applied for AACSB (BA).
0064. We are based on the fee from students (CO), and we do not have any other donation or support, and we are also expensive for Croatian market (CO).
0066. From the beginning we were using accreditation standards of AACSB (MI) thanks to the good connection with the US (CO).
0072: The main decision for accreditation was made by Dean (CO).
0066: Officially applying for the AACSB, I spoke to many other people, and when you have top-management, Vice-dean, and everything, - it can work, if it is the leader’s role (CO).
3300: We wanted to differentiate our school (NO), and the only accreditation available was AACSB (BA), it existed for many years. EQUIS just recently appeared (IA). EQUIS is probably the next step (MI). AACSB work with programmes, and this with EQUIS it would be strategically enough in positioning of top-schools (BA).
0611: As far as I know, the decision to join AACSB was one of the goals from the very start (BA). The decision has been made by the dean (CO) and faculty members. .
Decision (3b): BA-8, MI-7; CO-7; IA-2; NO-1
Forces (3a): MI-9; IA -6; BA-5; CO-5; NO-4; LE-3
Total 3a + 3b: MI-16; BA-13, CO-12; IA-8; NO -5; LE-3

Source: *interviews with ZSEM’s respondents, 2013-14*

The case is interesting due to the fact that from its opening, the B-school followed American model (MI), and set up the purpose from the beginning to apply for American accreditation. Thus, the answer to the question **RQ2** reflects a strong mimetic isomorphic change in line with the bandwagon and information asymmetry’s effects and coercive change dominate here. The legitimacy is listed as a main reason for accreditation.

Propositions P1 and P2 are confirmed: perception of values is higher than cost and B-school seek for its legitimacy rather than performance. Moreover, the internal reason to follow AACSB was made from the opening of this B-school, and it was a coercive reason due to the partnership (the access to the prominent professor from United States was named here, who seems to be from the Croatian community). We move to the specifics of organisational change and effects in ZSEM under the impact of AACSB accreditation, and answer the following RQ3 and RQ4 questions.

RQ3: Which organisational change is observed as a result of accreditation?

RQ4: What are the effects of international accreditation process in ZSEM?

The specific organisational change in ZSEM occurs through the introduction of American courses as in “the best American schools”, the methodology used in the USA, as well as the American standards and adjustment of policies and structures. Thus, the organisational change is observed as a purely isomorphic – with the dominant mimetic, coercive and normative change. The mimetic change (MI) is still dominated through the American curricular and adapted standards: “*From the beginning of our school in 2002, everything what we did, we had a goal to reach AACSB accreditation*” (Respondent 0063).

Table 53. Isomorphic Change and Effects of AACSB Accreditation

Changes as a result of AACSB
<p>0063: We have the same courses (as American best schools) (MI), use the same methodology (MI), and we use simulation (MI). We constantly improve (PE). Our school started its operations in 2002. From the beginning of our school, everything what we did, we had a goal to reach AACSB accreditation (BA). Changes are – good standards (MI), we adapted standards well, and in June, 2013 we became accredited (NO).</p> <p>0072: AACSB distinguish us (NO), our competitors (IA) to recognize us as AACSB-institutions (IA). There are only 100 students from abroad (IA), and it is very important for us that they are coming to us (CO).</p> <p>2310: We are much advanced what is required by the Ministry, and we are much higher level (NO).</p> <p>0072: The most visible change is that we have all courses in English (MI). The most important for the international students – they can choose the most interesting for them (NO). All courses have the goals (NO). We also started measuring the goals (NO). We started realizing how it is important for our students. It is important to publish papers as well (NO).</p> <p>0033: The major changes are in the policies (CO) and structures (MI), and how we assess the courses (MI). Assessment of learning was the main change. Another big change was a research (MI) – how much we publish (NO), and in which journals we publish (NO) and exchange of students (IA). In addition, the changes were in measuring all the time the processes of the school. Changes took place mostly in the structure (MI) and in some of the policies (CO) of ZSEM.</p> <p>0066: We adjusted the learning outcomes (CO) and mission (CO), the curriculum (CO), and the courses (CO). We need to adjust to the new standards with AACSB (MI). Now there are 4 categories, which are divided (no AQ/PQ any more - MI). The school’s goal is to have more quality publications (PE), more international students (IA) coming and going, links to community (NO), and projects (CO). We have 3 new engagements (CO) – to become more innovative, more in business community, and in executive education.</p>
RQ3: Changes: MI-11; NO-10; CO-9; IA-5; PE-2; BA;
Effects of AACSB accreditation
<p>3300: The major effect is seen through students , they were brained-washed with AACSB (IA) at the time of being accredited (CO). We did research with alumni –objective, and everybody was included into this process (CO). When we were doing accreditation, everybody had to understand what it means (CO) – the goals, the objectives of learning, even now we are not required to measure it anymore, but our people are still doing it. It is very systematic for the faculty and good for students (NO) and applicable tools to structure (CO).</p> <p>0611: The accreditation process contributed to improvement of faculty (PE), especially in the area of publications. The effects of accreditation are the help for our improvement of programme (NO), and faculty (PE), and distinguishing us (NO). 0064: Legitimacy (LE), besides other things. Accreditation was one of the ways to prove quality (MI). Competitive position (MI). Students can choose among seven public universities at which they can also study business administration (and choose ZSEM) (IA): those schools are free of charge or charge extremely low tuition. In order to compete, ZSEM had to separate itself somehow from other mentioned schools (NO). It occurs with high quality standards (MI) testified by AACSB accreditation (MI). ZSEM is the only B-school in Croatia accredited by AACSB (IA).</p>
RQ4: Effects: CO-4; NO-4; MI-4; BA, PE-2; IA-3, LE
RQ3+RQ4: MI-15; NO-14; CO-13; IA-8; PE-4; BA-1; LE

Source: interviews with ZSEM’s respondents, 2014

The mimetic change (**MI**) is still dominated through the American curricular, adapted standards: “From the beginning of our school in 2002, everything what we did, we had a goal to reach AACSB accreditation” (Respondent 0063).

The following effects are visible from this obvious isomorphic change: more research publications and papers of the Faculty members, more courses in English for students in line with the student's internationalisation (they are coming from abroad) and more active engagement of community organisations and projects. Bandwagon (BA) trend is stimulated by the "brained washed" campaign (about the idea of AACSB accreditation) through its students (CO).

Thus, ZSEM enhance CO, MI, NO changes and confirm proposition P3 with legitimacy recognised (LE) in line with bandwagon (BA) and information asymmetry effects confirming **Propositions P3, P4a and P4b**. In addition, there are performance reasons that are noticeable here.

Table 54. Effects of AACSB accreditation in ZSEM (n=7)

ZSEM (Croatia)	Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation
C	Faculty	4.71	0.41
I	Mission	4.71	0.41
A	Programmes	4.57	0.49
B	Students	4.57	0.49
D	Teaching	4.57	0.49
H	Strategy	4.43	0.65
E	Leadership	4.29	0.61
G	Competences	4.00	0.86
F	Increase in salary of Faculty members	2.86	0.78

Source: *Questionnaire from ZSEM's respondents, 2014*

In the case of American AACSB accreditation, it makes general effects in ZSEM (Croatia) on the following most important factors:

1. Faculty (C) and Mission (I)
2. Programmes (A), Students (B) and Teaching (D)
3. Strategy (H)

At the same time, under the impact of AACSB accreditation the Faculty members do not inquire competences (G), but as it seen from interviews, the change is connected with the goals, teaching curriculum and publications.

Other relevant comments include the following:

In this semester we had 110 students in exchange. There are no EQUIS-accredited schools, only one ZSEM is AACSB-accredited. Our competitor has 12000 students, but we have the same percentage of international students, and in our case the percentage is higher. (Respondent 0064)

If we talk about the Central Europe, we are more flexible. We can provide 100 international students with better contacts than other schools. EQUIS is the next step, I think. AACSB-accredited is strategically enough to place itself among other schools. (Respondent 0066)

In terms of changes already implemented, in Table 55a and Changes that are still required to do, in Table 55b we can see the changes that have already taken place and are to be expected.

Table 55a. Changes implemented, ZSEM

Changes	Changes already implemented
9	4
10	4
8	3
11	3
12	3
13	3
14	3
15	3
1	2
2	2
3	1
4	1
5	1
6	1
7	1

Table 55b. Changes required, ZSEM

Changes	We still need to do it.
3	6
6	2
5	1
7	1
11	1
1	0
2	0
4	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
12	0
13	0
14	0
15	0

The changes already implemented in the schools are associated with determining the learning goals of the programme (9), introducing the measurement whether they are achieved (10), internationalisation of Faculty members (8), introducing systematic process in curriculum management (11), improving the connections with business community (12), strengthening financial resources to be able to carry out the planned activities (13), as well as sharing of knowledge (14) and improved quality of teaching (15). The changes that are still required to do are linked to the substantial increase in the quality of publications (3), and with the entrance requirements for students (that need to be stricter) (6).

Thus, in the case of AACSB accreditation in ZSEM B-school, there are more isomorphic changes - mimetic trends (MI) in line with the coercive (CO) and normative (NO) reasons. Moreover, there are also changes reflected on the performance trends (that are more frequent here). The fact of legitimacy which is provided by AACSB International accreditation is directly recognized.

3.3.2 Results on Competitors

The preliminary information about ZSEM and its competing B-school (EFZG) is provided in Table 56 based on Eduniversal ranking. The competitor of ZSEM is University of Zagreb's B-school with a public ownership.

The Vice-Dean on Research & Administration (Respondent 0065) answers **RQ5** on the rival's perception on ZSEM as of 24.10.13 about signaling of ZSEM with AACSB accreditation.

Table 56. The best B-schools in Croatia

Indicators/B-schools	Zagreb School of Economics and Management (ZSEM)	University of Zagreb Faculty of Economics and Business (EFZG)
Year of foundation	2002	Established in 1920
Ownership	Private	Public
Eduniversal Ranking: Excellent B-schools	3 palms	3 palms
Accreditation process	AACSB (2013)	EPAS (2011)
Rank by Palmes League	1	2
Dean's recommendations rate	179%	140%

Source: *Eduniversal, 2014*

<http://www.eduniversal-ranking.com/business-school-university-ranking-in-croatia.html>

In the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Economics and Business, the interview was taken place as of 24.10.2013 from the Vice-Dean of EFZG. According to the Vice-Dean, Eduniversal is “*mixing the apples and pears*”, because ZSEM is not related to schools which are under the umbrella of the Universities (like we are), and therefore ZSEM is not our competitor in this sense. We do wish them the best, and it is also good for Croatia as a society. They got a distinguished membership, after a long adaptation it is good for them” (Respondent 0065). In Table 57 we present the opinion on ZSEM by EFZG informant.

Table 57. Competing B-school about ZSEM

Competitor (EFZG):	ZSEM might be a competitor, but from the different perspectives. It is good for all Croatian institutions to be involved into various kinds of internationalisation.
Impact of accreditation	Our school applied for the national accreditation, and then it pursued programme EPAS. B-school also considered to pursue AACSB and EQUIS accreditations. There is a strong effect of accreditation on strategy and the mission of the school, programmes, faculty, teaching and competence skills
Advantages for ZSEM	Improved reputation of the school on the international market. The competition on the markets on which we offer study programmes is strong and international accreditation would distinguish our school from the competitors. It is also a signal strategy for the students that the school is of high quality, thereby attracting students. Accreditation also provides new partnership with top-ranked schools. Pursuing accreditation is a way to introduce a quality improving strategy. Disadvantages of accreditation are the time-consumption, a lot of human resources and investments. The process also requires additional investments for technological process, and the changes in organisational structure. The process is also a long one.
Differences b/n accreditation	There are 10 people who are working over 3 accreditation processes. Besides EPAS, we are in the working process with AACSB and EQUIS accreditations - devoting more than 20% of its time. It means getting a better students, better operations, mobility of our staff and students. We are strongly committed to sign the agreements with international students. We are also the members of EFMD and we involved into the best practices' generation regarding the business practices – economics and business.
Signals sent by ZSEM with its AACSB	The signals that ZSEM sends us with the AACSB accreditation are to get the better students (IA), and generate more internationalisation (IA). Through the procedures we are going to improve all institutions (to generate external value, BA) - it is the beginning process for ZSEM, and for us in order to improve the institutions through EQUIS (MI) and EPAS standards

Source: *interview with the competing B-school EFZG, 2013*

By answering on RQ5, the competitor of ZSEM does reacts on AACSB accreditation of ZSEM, its rival (not the direct one, because it is a private B-school and it doesn't seem to be

recognised as a direct competitor) by saying that they also decided to “*pursue AACSB and EQUIS accreditations*”.

As a consequence, there are two decisions to follow both American and European accreditations, in order to compete with ZSEM (with more accreditations), but more on the normative basis (competition based on accreditation).

From the side of ZSEM, few experts made comments about the related signals that ZSEM sends with its accreditation to its stakeholders, related to the implied quality (IA):

Signals that we send to our stakeholders: we want to provide a very high level. We also send the signals to the Competitors: we are better than they are, and the students are coming to us (Respondent 0072).

There are a lot of schools where you can study the business, but we are the only one with the accreditation. It is one of the reasons for us – we are with quality (Respondent 0033).

It is the best, and internationally recognised. We are the only one who is accredited on the market (Respondent 0066).

Thus, the signals that are sent by ZSEM to Competitor have the nature of information asymmetry (IA): internationalisation (to generate it) and to have better students. At the same time, the Competitor doesn't want to recognize any quality signals, but interpret them as signals of “distinguished membership”, the normative (NO) nature.

P5 is confirmed, but partly (without quality signals): the international accreditation is a legitimacy tools for B-schools that sends various (positive) signals to its professional market. The same as in the case of KU, **P5** is to be *re-written*: **The international accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools with a positive signalling to professional market** (of B-schools). **P6** is confirmed with the signals from AACSB accreditation to be sent to the public school that will follow AACSB practice.

3.3.3 Results of Employers

The set of RQ5 questions is now related to the stakeholders' opinions: employers. We ask this question for the representatives of 3 Employers, - the companies of Podravka, Privredna Banka Zagreb (PBZ) and Hrvatski Telekom DD (HT) with the results placed in Table 58. From Table 63, we observe that the signals sent by ZSEM with AACSB accreditation to its Employers are accepted in various ways:

“Accreditation is not a big deal, because AACSB is a US market” (Employer 1, Podravka);

“The graduates “are above average”...I got the knowledge about accreditation from the brochure ...ZSEM distributed” (Employer 2, PBZ);

“We understand accreditation as a certification of good quality” (Employer 3, HT)

The signals about accreditation are weak, where the channels of distributions are indirect ones (for instance, ZSEM's brochure, in the case of 2-nd Employer). In two cases out of three, accreditation is associated with some quality (a message outside on quality (BA) with “the graduates are above average“ (PE) level. One company doesn't consider it relevant, because the accreditation is American one, and the market where they work is CEE region. Thus, we examined association between signals sent by the ZSEM to its Employers and Competitors. The proposed constructs also show some hidden information and action through the logic of signals. We find that the signalling activities lead to quality separation in higher education recognised by the competitor. Employers associate accreditation with

some quality mechanisms, but they are not informed directly or have a very occasional knowledge about it.

Table 58. Employers' Perception about ZSEM and its accreditation

Employers		
Podravka	Privredna Banka Zagreb, PBZ	Hrvatski Telekom DD.
Marketing Director, member of the Management Board	Director Training and HR Investments, Human Resources Division	2 experts: Recruitment and selection HR expert; Senior Expert for Corporate Risk& Insurances, Capital Market & Risk Management.
Type: Food products	Banking activities	Telecommunication
How does ZSEM interact with your company?		
We do not have strong relationship with ZSEM. We only had 2 students hired: one student from ZSEM employed in 2009 related to the internship. He then switched to other position. After 2 years he went to work in Slovakia in 2010, and he became the Director of Marketing from 2012. Each year we make a call for 8 young fellows, and there is a strong competition for places.	We got good cooperation with ZSEM. Cooperation: internship, good cooperation, career days and lecturing, in-house training programme, management and cooperation, high standards they meet. PBZ is a leading industry, group of San Paolo of Italian bank working in Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary, Russia, Egypt, and Romania. Last few years, we had an international rotation, external employment, but we still hired 4 more people from ZSEM.	ZSEM has several types of cooperation with Telecom: we announce positions for their graduates, arrange job fairs, they invite us for the lectures on cloud technologies, something specific for our sector. I would say that the quality of graduate is quite excellent. ZSEM & Rochester Technology Institute are the best and equally good. We do not have any agreement to hire them, but it is in the process
What is the quality of ZSEM graduates? Which skills graduates are still lacking?		
The major source for our graduates or from University of Rijeka or the Faculty of Economics (Zagreb), or Croatian private university of applied sciences. There is a problem in the Bologna reform to adopt the salary system. Reality is different. Entrepreneurship is missing in students.	General quality – higher quality than average thanks to the individual approach, requirements. There is a broad cooperation with ZSEM: we have 13 graduates from ZSEM. The students are more exposed to the international practices, to wider inside. I wish them more practice specific to banking.	Our specialization is technology; it is seldom we have vacancies in Economics. For us the Rochester TI is a preference, where qualities of candidates are very good. When we seek junior proactive with project management skills, we call to ZSEM. I would say I miss the experience and fine communication skills.
Which signals does ZSEM send with AACSB accreditation?		
Podravka is a very conservative. For us an accreditation is not a big deal. We send our employees abroad. A. is not a criteria that helps out in a better position. AACSB is a US market, where its benefits are considered, and we are in CEE, and b-cases should be considered in this environment.	I know accreditation: I got this knowledge from the brochure ZSEM distributed to us, emails sent from different departments. I know that new postgraduates – they invite us. We never did the research how much they better than other, but we can see it on the yearly appraisal which is above average	We think it as certification of good quality.

Source: interviews with the Employers of ZSEM, 2014

Thus, signals sent by ZSEM are interpreted as a “distinguished membership”, with the normative (NO) nature. The signals sent to Employers are non-informed and much weaker signals with some accreditation on quality (BA) and PE level. One company doesn't recognize any signals because they are not related to CEE market. **P5 is confirmed partly only** (mixed signals, and without signals). **P5** should be adjusted accordingly.

3.4 Case study 4: Graduate School of Management, GSOM

The full name of school is Saint Petersburg University, Graduate School of Management (GSOM). During the Soviet era, the access to higher education was restricted, because the admissions were very competitive: students were fully funded by the state, they received stipends, free dormitory accommodations, jobs were available for all, there was no unemployment in the country (Osipian, 2012). At the same time, the notion of a 'research university' was exotic in the Soviet Union, because research was concentrated at the Academy of Sciences (Froumin, 2011). For most of the twentieth century, the traditions in business education and the phenomena of B-schools had no systemic reason to be emerged in Russia (Katkalo, 2011). As a result of its planned economy, Russia had a system of 'state orders' with the introduced programmes for training specialists and uniform curricula in higher education (HE), and despite its rich traditions, it "had long remained in isolation from the world community" (Chuchalin et al., 2009). HE in the Soviet Union geared towards communist goals between 1922 and 1991, with tradition of state-directed, compulsory reform (Zajda, 2003). Evans and Birch (1995) make a reference that it was applicable to Eastern Europe, and "*apart from providing the personnel needed for the country's economy, the educational system endeavours to provide a communist upbringing and the inculcation of communist values and Soviet patriotism*" (Reshetar, 1989, p. 275). As a result of downsizing, the state has shifted previous functions to random, often external agents in the HE reforms in the regions of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the former USSR with creation of a quasi-market - the market of market reforms (Tomusk, 1998). The rise of the first B-schools in Russia occurred at the beginning of 1990s. At that time, the American and European funds (ex.: USAID and Tacis projects) set up various projects for B-schools of CIS, including Russia. Thus, the first B-schools appeared here as a sign of change and a transformation from the ex-communist government to a capitalist society, from the collectivistic society with socialist values to a more individualistic society with market values.

There are three types of B-schools in Russia: the first is represented by B-colleges housed in traditional universities; the second one is represented by B-colleges set up in technical universities; the third one represents separate large universities, specialized in business (Mechitov & Moshkovich, 2006). GSOM was set up as a B-school housed in traditional university (first type). By the end of 2012, there are 150 business schools in Russia, with 12 Russian B-schools that are accredited by AMBA and 5 - by EPAS, and in terms of institutional accreditation, there are half a dozen B-schools with CEEMAN accreditations, and 5 B-school programmes are accredited by AACSB through their Western partners by the year of 2012 (Myasoedov, 2012, pp. 12-13). According to Lapidus, Tarkhanov and Razumovskaya (2015), more than 50% B-schools are located in Moscow and about 10% - in St. Petersburg, and 63% of corporate employees have one training in average per year. The first state accreditation decision was taken in April 1997 and it was established as a system before the Bologna Process (2003) with quality assurance and accreditation procedures (Motova & Pykkö, 2012, p. 29). During the last 20 years, there has been a boom in the field of business education with an emergence of different private B-schools on local markets. There were a launch of different-quality MBA programmes on a market, and now B-schools in Russia are trying to get an external international programme accreditation to raise a reputation. B-schools of Russia are actively introducing programme accreditations mainly from European EPAS (European Programme Accreditation System) and AMBA (Istieulova & Peljhan, 2013, p. 23). There are practically no full-time MBA programs, there is a strong preference for part-time degree programs, because customers are unwilling to leave their

jobs, and “unlike the Western world, Russia’s business education market does not have a top-executive training segment” (Myasoedov, 2013). Besides the common Russian language that plays its role in business practices, other factors also matter - culture, mentality, and the ways how practices are organised and negotiated, because Russian and CIS managers approach problems in a different fashion from their Western counterparts: teaching should be relevant to the specifics of the Russian situation (Czinkota, 1997). In contrast to the West, in Eastern Europe, there are many part-time students and part-time faculty with some of the private institutions operated for profit (Abell, 2012, p. 34). Business education is a part of the higher education sector in Russia, and the Table 59 reflects the number of HEIs and students in 2013.

Table 59. Public and private HEIs in Russia in 2013

HEIs in Russia	Public and municipal HEIs		Private HEIs	
	2013	in % to 2012	2013	in % to 2012
Number of HEIs	578	94.9	391	89.5
Number of students, th. People	4762.0	92.6	884.7	95.1
Admission, th. People	1066.8	96.0	179.7	96.3
Graduated students, th. People	1060.0	94.0	231.0	85.0

Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Science, Russia (2014), selected data from http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b13_01/IssWWW.exe/Stg/d12/3-5.htm

Saint Petersburg University Graduate School of Management (GSOM) was established as the first B-school as a part of a major national university in partnerships with Haas School of Business, UC Berkeley and several companies, led by Procter & Gamble. GSOM was founded at the oldest university of Russia (1724), a leading national center of education and science (GSOM, 2015). After 19 years of dynamic growth GSOM is the leading, and the internationally recognised Russian B-school, with strong support from the Russian government and national and global business communities. The Table 60 reflects most significant events up to date:

Table 60. Key periods of GSOM

1993	GSOM is created with Advisory Board and Bachelor of Management Programme launched
1995	Public Administration Programme with Stockholm University and Executive Education started
1999	First ECTS-based Master in International Business Programme in English started
2000	MBA programme started
2002	Inaguration of the new building complex through global fundraising campaign
2003	Launch of the Russian Management Journal (Russian-language research quarterly)
2004-05	Joined AACSB, International Executive MBA programme (in English) with HE Paris and others
2006	Joined EFMD, CEMS (The Global Alliance in Management Education) and EABIS (European Academy of Business in Society)
2007	New Advisory Board is formed
2008	Accreditations: 3 years EPAS for Bachelor of Management & 5 years AMBA for EMBA
2009-10	The special status by the President of Russia; International CEMS Master programmes with HEC
2011	Accreditation: 5 years EPAS received for Bachelor of Management
2012	Accreditation: 3 years EQUIS; New partnership with CITI, IBM and Rusnano for programmes
2013	The international ranking Financial Times 2013 “Master in International Business” programme offered at the GSOM featured in top-70.

Source: *EQUIS Datasheet, 2012* and <http://gsom.spbu.ru>

In November 2009, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed a law granting St. Petersburg State University the special status of “*a unique scientific and education complex, an oldest institution of higher education in Russia being of a great importance to the development of the Russian society*”. The right of giving its own diplomas with the official symbols of the Russian Federation has also been granted to University (Source: <http://www.masterstudies.com/universities/Russia/SPBU/#.UUrpTVfM9fs>). The new law on Education also specifies that Saint Petersburg State University and Lomonosov Moscow State University and are the leading classical universities in Russia, and the peculiarities of this legal status are defined by the special federal law.

The center for Executive Education conducts three types of educational activities: customised short and long-term programmes tailored to specific needs of a client, open programmes and re-training programme in health care management, a 550-hour programme designed by GSOM (EQUIS Datasheet, p. 6). The development of international faculty and research potential are priorities in its competitive strategy.

The mission of GSOM is a creation of Russian business school of the international level for the preparation of the national managerial elite that provides a high global competition in the economy of Russia of the 21st century (Katkalo, 2008; Strategic Plan of Development of GSOM SpbU, 2008-2012).

The obvious feature of this B-schools that makes it different from other schools is commented by the informant of this school:

“There are only 2 universities in the Russian market of higher education, that got the Special status, - we are, GSOM (in 2011), the part of 13 thousand people of University and the Moscow State University (MSU)” (Respondent 0055).

3.4.1 Results of B-school

There are 4 groups of managers participated in the interviews: top managers, administrators, accreditation managers and faculty members. The general opinion about EQUIS accreditation was expressed in the following way:

Accreditation was legitimacy at all levels. This is a very pragmatic and conscious process, the experience working in a team which is very important from organisational memory point of view (Respondent 0052).

Despite we are the school of Russia our focus is the international level. It was a vision of our Dean (prof. Katkalo), who was our leader. All steps were undertaken, and it was logical process. We had a push towards a development; we did not change our principles. If we didn't get accreditation, we would do something, it was coordinated at the focused level, and all worked as one team (Respondent 0060).

RQ1: How does FELU perceive international accreditation?

a: What are the values of accreditation?

b: What are the advantages and disadvantages of accreditation?

The values of EQUIS are reflected in Table 61 to answer the RQ1.

Table 61. The Values of Accreditation (GSOM)

Values of EQUIS
0052: Legitimacy. Very pragmatic, conscious process, the experience in the team, which is important from the point of organizational memory; The value was a confirmation we are good.
0053: Value of EQUIS is an influence of ideology. To win in Russia, we need to get recognition at the international level.
0054: In terms of values, we are getting the internationally recognized school, meeting standards
0058: The value of EQUIS is internationalization. It became very clear, it is difficult process, resource consuming, but it is an enormous and tremendous gift for institution..
0059: The strong tool of internal development, faculty member look at it as the tool of development, orientation for the best practices.
0060: Accreditation is a quality. It allowed improving what we have, and it is a sequential process. It is high level and the approach towards our partners.

Source: *Interviews of GSOM respondent, 2013*

Answering RQ1, the value was just a confirmation that we are good (NO), becoming the internationally recognized school (IA) and meeting standards (MI). The values are listed as well in the form of an ideology (CO), recognition at the international level (IA), and a tool for development (CO). Accreditation allowed improving school (we became better school, improvement of institution) (PE).

The interesting point was mentioned, that it is important from organisational memory’s point of view (which can be related to the cultural values, therefore, to coercive change, but it has to be explored further). Table 62 explores both advantages and disadvantages:

Table 62. Advantages and Disadvantages of EQUIS accreditation

Advantages of EQUIS	Disadvantages
0054: The high standards are an advantage. Advantages with delicate matter, and they do not demonstrate their supremacy, it is a democratic process.	0058: Disadvantage is internationalisation – the level is very high which is set up, which makes it very difficult to gain. Here is a different culture.
0055: A teambuilding is an advantage, a big push, a better attractive internationalisation, and a “Quality sign”. It is a permanent process, which is needed to be proved every time, internationalisation of faculties, international publications.	0054: Disadvantages of EQUIS (Cons). It does not bring a heavy value – not much value to Diploma, less famous, and may be less sustainable. 0057: If we do accreditation only because of accreditation, it is then would be difficult.
0057: If it is an investment project, that the school just hire the tops and that’s it.	
0058: Pros – are huge, because everyone works very hard, in order to meet the goal, you have to read, to go through, critically think, and everything has to be translated. Some years ago the system of encouragement to work towards publications was introduced. EQUIS also thinks that it is necessary to have an international profile that the school needs.	
0060: I can see only advantages. The objective – we will have to keep it, and we have to work harder on the processes. The level we wanted to reach, - and we have reached it.	

Source: *Interviews of GSOM respondents, 2013*

Internationalisation is simultaneously viewed both as advantage due to internationalisation of faculties, publications and international profile and disadvantage, because it is difficult to gain the required percentage of foreign faculty and students in the Russian market. In addition, the advantages are seen in the standards and a teambuilding and a quality tool or a sign of Quality. Therefore, **proposition P1** is confirmed that perception of accreditation values to enhance the legitimacy from accreditation is higher its accreditation cost.

The content analysis starts from the following set of questions:

- RQ2: Why does GSOM seek the international accreditation from the West?
 a: What are the forces that lead GSOM to seek accreditation? (External Reasons)
 b: How do B-school make decisions about accreditation? (Internal Reasons)

Table 63 includes the forces and decisions made about EQUIS accreditation:

Table 63. Reasons for EQUIS accreditation

Forces for EQUIS (External Reasons)
0051. Legitimacy (LE) and competition (IA) 0052. It is important to show to the market of our corporative partners that we conduct the systematic processes that are confirmed externally (NO). It was legitimacy (LE) at all levels. 0053. There are two forces for accreditation: competitiveness (MI) and legitimation (LE). There are two reasons: an international recognition (IA) and increasing our quality (PE). It helps us to better sell our programs, and we use it as a sales tool. There are two ways – to get those medals to be recognized school: First, if you are recognized in the world, you are recognized at home (LE). Second, in terms of quality – we change the system of management, to correspond to the better standards. Quality improvement – we really got it (PE). We improved our performance indicators, and our graduates can prove it (PE). 0054. Forces of competition . We do compete with Moscow programmes for Bachelors’ degrees. Accreditation makes a difference in the moment of preparation and the purpose is to move towards re-accreditation of EQUIS and to gain AACSB (to gain trademark, BA). Accreditation does not bring any change; - we are changing during the process of preparation. 0059: The school was designed as a European school. If our partners have it, it should be... (BA). We had very strong partners, accredited, and we needed to show and to be in compliance with partners (CO), and to show that we are not worse than they are (being one of the accredited, become a member of a club - NO). From the beginning, the reason was to set up European school, is to deal with our European partners (NO). We were trying to base on the best experience of our partners (Californian university), and we cooperated with Northern European schools (MI).
LE-3, NO-3, PE-3, IA-2, MI-2, BA-2, CO
Decision about EQUIS (Internal Reasons)
0051. Participation in EQUIS was included into the Strategic Plan of Development (CO). 0060. The big role of leader, the Dean (CO). He made the decision which is important. He actively participated in EFMD (CO). We started from accreditation, which lead to the internationalization (IA), and it allowed putting the niche up to the 50%, allowing our partners to perceive our school as an equal partner (NO). 0053. Our goal is to get a Crown accreditation (IA). 0058. Decision was made before my trip; I was here in 1999, because GSOM and CBS were partners. The primary reason – if GSOM wanted to be an international programme (IA). EQUIS was one of the big tools to do it (CO). 0059. The decision is made in 2006, when the GSOM got the support of government, and got funding (CO), at this time we were developing the strategic plan of development. It was also a participation in the ranking systems (MI) to be included, and apply for AACSB – 2014 (BA). When we started the process in 2010, we realized we will first get EQUIS, then AACSB.
CO-5, IA-3, NO, MI, BA
Total: CO - 6; IA-5; NO-4; MI-3; BA-3; LE-3; PE-3

Source: *Interviews with GSOM respondents*

There is a Coercive-dominated reasoning with information asymmetry effects. Experts also recognise that legitimacy is the main factor in line with competition. Proposition **P2 is confirmed**.

The findings for the next two RQs are summarised in the Table 64.

RQ3: What are organisational changes in B-schools as a result of accreditation in CEE?

RQ4: What are the effects of international accreditation process in B-schools of CEE?

Table 64. Isomorphic Changes and Effects of EQUIS

Changes brought by EQUIS (R3)
<p>0057. The key changes are the emphasis for publications, recruiting foreign Faculty, and English language – this is 3 global changes in the processes, it is rather supporting the culture. We just confirmed for our partners that we can do it (BA). The Long-term expectations for change are: raising internationalisation of students body (IA), faculty (IA), publications (PE) in peer-reviewed journals; quality, resources. Changes are required: 1. more International Faculty (IA), 2. Raising internationalisation (full-time foreign students); (IA) 3. Improving international research (PE) 4. Financial issues (PE).</p> <p>0055: Emphasis on publications (NO), recruiting foreign Faculty (IA), English language, processes supporting the culture (MI). The new departments are set up: the careers' center, alumni Association, and international law. (MI)</p> <p>During the next 3 years we should have assurance of learning.</p> <p>The expectation: internationalization of faculty, foreign students (IA). Additional structures: careers' center, alumni Association, international law department (MI) in 2 languages;</p> <p>0058: EQUIS process help to legitimate (LE) - it is necessary to do (BA).</p> <p>0059: We are the first business school (BA) who introduced the alumni Association, Resources center of cases, Career center (NO) that works as the integrated system;</p> <p>0060. The number of students who pay became much higher (resource dependency, CO), and we attracted more students (IA). International publications for Faculty to publish 2 papers a year (approved our Scientific Council), with the teaching load and responsibilities (NO)</p>
IA-7; NO -3; MI – 3; CO-1, BA – 3; PE-3; LE
Effects of EQUIS accreditation (R4)
<p>0052: The effect on admission's increase for Bachelors and post-graduation courses (IA). Effect on research which is a plus (NO);</p> <p>0053: There are 3 levels of effects – on individual level, a personal with additional responsibilities. The programme level – the same responsibilities; and at the University level and for other HEIs of Russia (on the external market), when you can tell that our practice is recognized (MI). We know better how to do it, than any university or school. It is the stage of becoming an adult (NO)</p> <p>0055: The new structures/departments were created (MI): Team-process became quasi team-building.</p> <p>0058: Reputation (NO), continuous approach;</p> <p>0060: The effects are for Faculty members, students, programme courses, the system of evaluation, and research, research grants (CO) and planning. Students go abroad to universities. We have students from regions, who cannot support themselves and we provide them with a financial support (PE). It was a financial support for students – we put it at the normative basis, we kept it as a standard. Internationalisation of Faculty – to increase the Foreigners' number (IA). 30% of foreign students are on programme (IA). We started to invite them on a full time basis – there were few, but it was necessary to do (NO). There are Internships in Harvard university, professional training, and the last one was in Bocconi (NO).</p> <p>0059: The strong tool of internal development for faculty members (CO); orientation for the best practices (MI)</p>
NO-5; IA-3; MI-3; CO-2; PE
The total result (R3+R4): IA-10; NO - 8; MI - 6; CO – 3; BA-3, PE-4; LE

Source: *Interviews with GSOM respondents*

The isomorphic change related to **RQ3** is to be concentrated in the following directions – the general internationalisation of B-school and internationalisation of Faculty (teaching of programmes in English and recruiting the English-speaking professors), research (emphasis on research and publications in English) and financial issues:

We got the feedback from the peer-review team. We realised that we have four areas of improvement, the changes needed to be implemented in regard to international Faculty members, internationalisation, research and financial issues (Respondent 0050).

There are more comments related to the specifics and the most difficult issue of internationalisation:

We do have a lot of exchange students, but they are not full-time foreign students. We do have a good statistics on the Bologna process, thanks to our elite partnership: we send students to our partners-schools and accept from them their students. However, there is a political restrictions based on legislation – we cannot accept the students with the three-years of training, because it requires four years. The Ministry does not provide diploma’s nostrification in this case (Respondent 0050).

There are dominated information asymmetry (IA) effects (**RQ4**) with normative changes. IA is related mainly to the internationalisation of Faculty and increase of foreign students. All isomorphic effects are present (NO, MI, CO) in line with the general bandwagon and predominant information asymmetry effects that meet propositions **P3**, **P4a** and **P4b**. Thus, **P3** and **P4** are confirmed. However, the peculiarity here is that BA (P4a) trends are **minimal**, and they are coming not from the local market, but from GSOM’s **peers** (outside), oriented to foreign markets, reflecting different trend from other schools.

The Table 65 also reflects the isomorphic effects that are closely connected with homogeneous change – in normative (NO) directions (research, reputation) with information asymmetry (through internationalisation) and creation of structures and departments with mimetic effects (MI). The Table 6 reflects the general effects of accreditation on the various factors which are ranked from the most important to the least important that reflect the similar trend of faculty, strategy and programmes. The results of survey show that in GSOM (Russia), the EQUIS accreditation makes effects on the following factors:

Table 65. Effects of EQUIS accreditation (n=9)

GSOM (Russia)	Mean	Std. Deviation
C: Faculty	4.44	0.49
H: Strategy	4.44	0.62
A: Programmes	4.33	0.74
G: Competence, Employee skills	4.33	0.44
E: Leadership	4.22	0.69
D: Teaching	4.11	0.59
I: Mission	4.00	0.67
B: Students	3.56	0.49
F: Increase in income	3.11	0.40

Source: *Questionnaire from GSOM respondents*

Based on the Table 65 the effects of EQUIS accreditation in GSOM (Russia) are equally visible on the following factors:

the Faculty members (C) and the Strategy of this B-school (H);
programme of this school (A) and the skills of employees (G).

In terms of levels, there are few levels of effects that are mentioned: individual/personal, programme level; and University's level and the external market's level. There are listed effects on the students' admission which has been increased (IA), the new structures and processes (MI); teaching faculty members, students, research grants (CO) and internationalisation (IA).

The case of GSOM represent the coercive isomorphism due to first, its elite partnership with foreign B-schools, who expect that their partners are "in the same elite club", and second, due to expectations from its "special status" granted, thus, expressing the need for additional legitimacy from international partners. At the same time, it seems that the bandwagon effect is presented here because of the social and economic pressures, and also connected with the expectations coming from the professional society, bringing the normative isomorphism associated with professionalisation. Mimetic isomorphism is presented due to the fact, that partners are successful institutions with accreditations.

3.4.2 Results on Competitors

The specific of Russian business education is different from the rest of CEE market due to its big size and number of B-schools. B-schools compete on various programmes and Russian markets, - mainly in Moscow and St. Petersburg. There are 19 competitors, pointed out by Eduniversal, in Table 66 below, where we point out only 4 competitors, including IMISP. GSOM and IMISP are considered close competitors at the time when IMISP had its bachelor degree students, and it is still reflected here.

Table 66. The list of top B-schools in Russia, 2013

5 Palmes Of Excellence: UNIVERSAL B-school with strong global influence	Rank by Palmes league	Dean's recommendation rate 2013
GSOM - Graduate School of Management, St. Petersburg University.	1	304%
Lomonosov Moscow State University B-school (MSU)	2	191%
4 Palmes of Excellence: TOP B-school with significant international influence	Rank by Palmes league	Dean's recommendation rate 2013
Moscow International Higher Business School (MIRBIS)	1	167%
IMISP - International Management Institute of St-Petersburg	2	135%

Source: *Eduniversal, 2014*; compiled based on: <http://www.eduniversal-ranking.com/business-school-university-ranking-in-russia.html>

There are various comments on EQUIS signaling by GSOM informants:

We send the signals to our competitors that we are better and to our students – they know it. the Russian employers do not understand these signals so far. (Respondent 0055).

Prior to EQUIS, we already have 2 EPAS and we got AMBA. We send signals to the Higher School of Economics (who is, more or less, our Competitor) (Respondent 0056).

I think that EQUIS is a strong signal, initiating a certain kind of development, to those who are participating in the process - to different political decision makers: the government and Ministry - to introduce some changes (Foreign Respondent 0058).

Therefore, we show the answers to the question **RQ5** in the Table 67.
RQ5: Does GSOM with its accreditation send any signals to their stakeholders?

Table 67. Competing Business School about GSOM

Competitor	IMISP (0061, 0022, 0024)
Environment	At this time, when government leaves the regulation, accreditation will have more meanings. Clients are not aware of CEEMAN. It should be popularized. At the same time, it is less than 1% of people who are interested in accreditation.
About Competition	We feel how market reacts, and we cannot allow the scale promotion. We have a lot of programmes, we can get around 2000 clients. We know how our students select us as a provider. They put us with the competitors – St. Petersburg GSOM and Vlerick B-school (the autonomous Belgium B-school of Ghent University with AMBA programme, once a year with mixed Faculty). Vlerick deals with MBA programme, and our prices are comparable, and in Moscow – they are comparable with MIRBIS. Our relationship with St. Petersburg State University is delicate and strategic for future growth. Too much autonomy would mean a loss of academic and political support for us, too little autonomy would harm us financially and intellectually.
Advantages of Accreditation	The status of equal business partner – we participate in this club. It is the presence in the environment to understand the development, it is kind of legitimization. We had few calls with questions: Can we consider CEEMAN as an international diploma? We say - No, it corresponds only to certain criteria.
Differences between CEEMAN and EQUIS	Both CEEMAN and EQUIS accreditations do not mean anything for our clients. From the community of business education, it matters, but from the market point of view, it does not.
Signals with EQUIS	In our market, GSOM itself sends a very clear signals of quality to us

Source: *Interviews with IMISP respondents*

Besides its highest ranking, GSOM sends clear and tangible signals of quality to B-schools, it just re-confirm its quality. Since it has been the very first B-school not only in Russia, but in the whole CIS market, it is quite preliminary to talk about institutional accreditations. There is a difference from **P5**: GSOM sends its **re-confirmation** about its quality to professional market with EQUIS accreditation (it is more addressed to peers outside local market). GSOM is also comparable with FELU, and FELU has also been undertaken few attempts from 2014 to cooperate with GSOM on various projects (example: programmes, funded by EU Bologna projects on internationalisation, but FELU didn't win the tender).

3.4.3 Results of Employers

First of all, GSOM respondents also reflect the view of employers on EQUIS accreditation.

Not all understand signals with EQUIS. Once a year, there is a commission, where we should explain the essence of accreditation to the top-managers of companies-Employers. We invite them once a week, we tell them how we prepare for accreditation and what we do. Our corporate clients work with us, because they hire our students (Respondent 0060).

In terms of signals, it is difficult to explain EQUIS to the Russian clients, because EPAS was promoted as the best accreditation. Now it is difficult to persuade that EQUIS is even better. We have the information sessions and seminars to explain it to students. For students it is also new information, and it is difficult for them to understand. As for the

corporate clients, our partners do know and understand it, because basically they are the foreign partners (Respondent 0059).

As far as our Employers, - the companies take our graduates with pleasure, they are worth to be hired according to the level of wages for our potential Employers (Respondent 0056).

Table 68 includes the opinion of Employers about EQUIS accreditation below:

Table 68. Employers about EQUIS Accreditation

Employer 1. Citibank	Employer 2. McKinsey
Citibank began its operations in Russia in 1992, when it was one of the first international banks to enter the Russian market. Today Citi is one of the largest banks by capital and assets.	McKinsey & Company is a leading global management consulting. McKinsey has been working here with leading companies since 1993, serving clients, from oil and gas companies to banks and retail networks
How does GSOM interact with your company?	
We participated in the meetings with the EQUIS delegation, and also followed its results. We participate in the Board of Trustees, students' internship, guests lectures, joint programme for "Master in Corporate Finance", study programme for social entrepreneurs under the support of Citi Foundation.	Hire students for the part-time from GSOM, deliver the guest lectures on soft skills, and provide recruitment for alumni. We actively interact with the alumni from the priority programmes like MBA. Last year we provided business games for programmes, and training and workshops for theory and practices. Last year – we did HR conference on bets practices in GSOM
What is a quality of GSOM graduates?	
In general, better than other universities. We hired about 20 graduates for the last 5 years. We hire them mainly from International Financial Management Faculty. Their quality correspond and confirm the quality of its education.	We have the best students. We also hire the highest quality students from the other city with comparable quality: from Higher School of Economics, Moscow State University, MGIMO, Bauman Technical university, and Financial university. The lacking skills are problem solving, leadership and ability to set up high goals.
What are signals of GSOM with its EQUIS accreditation?	
The intention of school to develop further and to continue internationalization. It confirms the quality of its education, and its values that correspond to the dynamic and client-oriented companies and international orientation of its alumni	That school has always been the top-one, and got additional prestige award. It is the signal for us that it really corresponds to its quality and requirements at the international level.

Source: *Interviews with Employers*

The signals submitted to Employers are to develop further (NO) and improve internationalisation (IA) (1-st Employer), and signals on quality practices (PE) (2-nd Employer). Competitors do re-confirm the quality with EQUIS accreditation and Employers recognise the signals with EQUIS as a quality-involved signals. However, both companies are the foreign companies - international companies are aware of accreditation practices. At the same time, it is noticed by IMISP, the Russian companies are not aware of the practices of international accreditation, but they know about the good reputation and image of GSOM, which is re-confirmed. **P5 - information accreditation is a legitimacy tool that sends re-confirmation about school's quality (for Competitors & Employers).**

P6 – Institutional change occur through the mechanism of isomorphic organisational changes with BA and IA is **not yet confirmed**: the practices of EQUIS are not spread on the local market and do not show this trend). The accreditation doesn't show the immediate effect of bandwagon spread to other schools. GSOM does it for the external partners (peers) located abroad and due to the special status of B-school. The Russian and CIS partners are aware of GSOM's high quality, the school re-confirms it with EQUIS accreditation. **P5** should be corrected in terms of its quality signals, and **P6** – for bandwagon spread (see Discussion).

3.5 Case study 5: International Management Institute, IMISP

International Management Institute of St. Petersburg (IMISP) is a pioneering venture in the Russian management education. The predecessor of IMISP (LIMI), was established as an international joint venture by Università Luigi Bocconi and Leningrad State University in 1989 (CEEMAN Peer Team Visit Report, 1999). The case of the private B-school from Russia with the institutional Central-Eastern European accreditation CEEMAN (from Slovenia) is described based on the interviews, Questionnaire and archival data. The MBA market in Russia, as in many European countries, currently seems to be underdeveloped. MBA is neither formally accredited by the national educational system nor systematically accredited by the international agencies. However, many of the Russian MBA programs are run according to the same principles as they are in Anglo-Saxon countries where MBA programmes are accredited as graduate degrees. A new trend among B-schools seems to be offering tailor-made, customized courses that meet the specific needs of companies, where the pioneers are: Stockholm School of Economics and International Management Institute of St. Petersburg, IMISP (Kivelä, 2006, p. 17). Although non-existent before the 1990s, today the private sector represents roughly half of Russian HE (Mechitov & Moshkovich, 2006). Puffer and McCarthy (2011, p. 22) consider that the defining characteristics of Russian business is “*the weak legitimacy of formal institutions, which fosters dependence on informal institutions such as culture and ethics*”. A good brand name and solid reputation are essential in this market (CEEMAN Peer Team Visit Report, 1999, p. 4).

According to the CEEMAN Peer Team Visit Report (1999, p. 5), IMISP as an educational institution has a clear market driven mission:

Mission: IMISP prepares professional managers for Russian, foreign companies and organisations by combining theory, practice and on the basis of advanced teaching methods.

By the time of interviewing (2013-2014), IMISP reconsiders its mission and it is in the process of new strategy's preparation, which is commented as:

The future development of IMISP is with AMBA and CEEMAN, but we do not want any new accreditations. We will remain, the niche, the expensive one being targeted 50% at the corporate clients (Respondent 0061).

The directions of the future changes in schools are quite significant and different from other B-schools in CEE (but not in Russia) due to the different group of the main clients, thus providing the specific features of Russian market:

The Portfolio will be changed. We want to sell a franchise for certain programmes. We have a client – and you can buy the right to realize the programme, co-branding and we divide money. This is a surrogate of development through the royalty and a franchise.

We are the niche business school. Our niche is somewhere between 25-30% coming from the open market. The rest – are corporations. This year, we prepare a new strategy, where we target for more than 50%, of the corporate companies...we know how we can meet this need in contrast to the majority of schools in the market (Respondent 0061).

Due to the fact that the first accreditation was taking place in 1999, the history of IMISP events was prepared in Table 69 based on the interviews and some archival data.

Table 69. Key periods of IMISP

Year	The periods of IMISP
1989	The first B-school founded in St. Petersburg in 1989, 20 th of July, one of the firsts on the territory of USSR. It was established as a partnership of Leningrad State University (USSR) and the Bocconi University (Italy) to train qualified management personnel.
1989-1992	The first period, “Italian period”, when there was a post-perestroika” in USSR, the categories of <i>management, accounting standards, etc.</i> have been defined. The new name IMISP was given. 1990: member of RABE, Russian Association of Business Education
1992-1995	The second period of “free market”. Tacis grant was received through the partner, - Bocconi University. The first core young faculty was trained in different European universities, and due to this fact this time was called “the Golden period”
1996	69 programmes of MBA/EMBA started. There was a first MBA programme launched together with Gazprom in 1996; 2/3 of clients come from international companies
1999	The first school in Russia accredited with the institutional IQA (International Quality Accreditation) from CEEMAN, body for the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)
1996-2002	The third period, the first product of Bachelor degree’s programme was launched, -1994 till 2000, when by the strategic decision this programme was closed. The difficult period in terms of relations’ reconsideration with partner. More local clients.
2002-now	The fourth period started from 2002 and continues till now is: from the time of moving to this new own building, our own building. The transformation from extensive to intensive growth in terms of clients’ portfolio, the renewal of processes.
2006	AMBA accreditation, the first accredited school in St.Petersburg (four BS - in Moscow)
2007	The new strategy of IMISP till 2009 year.
2011	September, 2011 - Reaccreditation of MBA/Executive MBA till 2016 year; The client’s profile: men - 78 %, women - 22 %, average age – 33.5 years
2012	IMISP actively participates in formation of the national accreditation mechanisms (MBA), included into “The first list of RABE” for the accredited 54 institutions
2013	4 Palms Top Business school, Eduniversal rankings, Dean’s recommendations 135%

Source: *Compiled based on the interview with the Director of Development and External Relations of IMISP (Respondent 0021) and the facts from <http://www.imisp.ru/about/> (2014).*

IMISP defines itself as “an independent B-school which is separate from the University, and oriented for adults, not for children” (Respondent 0061)

3.5.1 Results of B-school

The results provided below are based on interviews, questionnaire and archival data. The analysis of these data show that there is a growing disagreement between IMISP and CEEMAN on ideological issues and changes to be implemented by IMISP on strategic positions. It results on a growing gap in opinions from 1999 up to the period of 2013-2014. The general perception of CEEMAN is perceived with some criticism:

IQA positioned itself as an accreditation focused at B-schools in emerging economies, by respecting local peculiarities and bringing a world class expertise. It is a good statement, but it doesn’t work due to the following reasons: the potential candidates are not informed about IQA (absence of annual IQA seminars likes EFMD or AACSB), knowledge and appreciation of this label is quite low; and limited human and financial resources dedicated to IQA (half-amateur approach) (Respondent 0022).

Table 70 inserts more information on its values, its pros and cons shown below after RQ1.

RQ1: How does FELU perceive international accreditation?

a: What are the values of accreditation?

b: What are the advantages and disadvantages of accreditation?

Table 70. Values, Advantages and Disadvantages of CEEMAN

CEEMAN (IQA accreditation)
RQ1: What are the values of accreditation?
<p>0061: CEEMAN does not bring a heavy value: not much value to Diploma, less famous, and may be less sustainable. Accreditation in Russia is the signal that school is accredited by the certain system, and this quality is confirmed by certain pool of professional experts. The availability of accreditation for our students are of secondary importance. We are the local school oriented for the local students, not international ones.</p> <p>0023: The more confirmation of accreditation, the better it looks like. Now, when government leave the regulations, the accreditations will probably have more meanings. All accreditations mean absolutely nothing for our clients. From the community of B-education, it matters; but from the market point of view, it does not.</p> <p>0025: Our all clients are interested in the Diploma of “state pattern”. When it is cancelled, all B-schools will then join AMBA to promote their mini-MBA programmes, and according to new legislation, it will probably happen. Clients do not know about CEEMAN – it should be popularised</p>
Advantages and Disadvantages of IQA (CEEMAN)
<p>0061: Advantages – with delicate matter, and they do not demonstrate their supremacy, it is a democratic process, to be included in the process. It is general with the overall-all-included-elements.</p> <p>0023: I have been working at IMISP since 1990, being involved into both CEEMAN and AMBA accreditations. Advantages are the advices for practice, and some of them were accepted. Second, we got the sign of quality which brought more weight to the institution. There was no serious importance, because it is very relative significance, and it is at a much lower level than in other countries. Accreditation brings the special meaning when there is international students’ society and international Faculty, and when we have to compete with the schools from other countries who cannot survive without international students.</p> <p>0022: IQA positioned itself as an accreditation focused at B-schools in emerging economies, by respecting local peculiarities and bringing a world class expertise. This statement doesn’t work due to the following reasons: the potential candidates are not informed about IQA (absence of annual IQA seminars likes EFMD or AACSB), knowledge and appreciation of this label is quite low; and there is a limited human and financial resources dedicated to IQA (half-amateur approach). There are 3 problems. First, it is just a stamp, a label rather than a tool for improvement. Second, there is a problem with the CEEMAN’s positioning. Third, there is a globalisation or joining of CEE to EU. Finally, there is a problem with resources at CEEMAN, it is impossible to build up something viable and long-standing on half-amateur basis.</p> <p>0061: Does it corresponds or not corresponds to our ideology? CEEMAN – if the West is oriented towards progress. If we refuse from the progress, yes, Russia’s growth is coming from conservatism, and it has to be connected with the standards. In general, I am the globalist, but in some aspects we have to be anti-globalist. We have to earn more; we have to be more-shaped according to our standards. Yes, we have to change, OK. We should attach AMBA and CEEMAN accreditation. Do these accreditation act? AMBA and CEEMAN do not promote themselves. CEEMAN does not do anything to become famous, but AMBA is much more famous on the market. AMBA and MBA – they are few times more famous, than CEEMAN. Our clients do not know anything about the CEEMAN. Let’s look at our clients – we have to earn money and look from the position of clients. Strategy of B-school - AMBA and CEEMAN. We do not want any new accreditations. We will remain under our niche, the expensive one, targeted at corporate clients – 50/50. Now we are in the good conditions in terms of our portfolio. We want to update ourselves and replace the Faculty with the new teachers. We will develop our faculty – we have a reserve – 25-30% clients. We will deal with general management, competence areas. Finance block will be reduced. We put too many efforts towards Finance, in the proportion we have to increase the other skills connected with personal development. Finance – has the same load. The Portfolio will be changed. Franchising – we want to sell a franchise for certain program. We have a client – and you can buy the right to realize the programme and co-branding, - and we divide money. This is a surrogate of development – through the royalty and a franchise.</p> <p>0024: We talk about CEEMAN accreditation- we talk about it during our presentations. But it is a very small percentage of people who are interested in it (less than 1 % of market).</p>

Source: *Interviews with IMISP*

The perception about CEEMAN accreditation is much weaker compared to AACSB and EQUIS. In Russia “*it is at a much lower level than in other countries*”. It doesn’t bring a visible value as accreditation – it has “*a relative significance*”, “*no serious importance*”, and “*just a label*” reflecting some problems with its positioning (CEE versus Europe) and a “half-amateur basis”. Moreover, the main message is that it has either “*secondary importance*” or it means “nothing” from the market point of view (clients), but it has a meaning only for the community of B-education. **P1 is neither confirmed, nor denied.**

Thus, CEEMAN accreditation looks much weaker (compared to AACSB and EQUIS) due to its narrow positioning. Its early adoption in 1999 came as business opportunity (where earlier adapters are usually the winners). Content analysis starts from research questions:

- RQ2:** Why do B-schools in the East seek CEEMAN accreditation?
 a: What are the forces that lead B-schools to seek accreditation?
 b: How do B-schools make decisions about accreditation?

The following quotes reflect some external reasoning behind accreditation: *CEEMAN came with the project, and as the project,*” – it shows that the accreditation was brought outside as a coercive (CO) opportunity into the new environment, where the first decision has been made outside to offer it as an opportunity. It is brought from the East (not West), being perceived as a normative opportunity (NO) and a kind of legitimacy (LE). The forces and decisions about CEEMAN accreditation are summarized in Table 71.

Table 71. Reasons for CEEMAN accreditation

Forces for CEEMAN (External Reasons)
0023: Other accreditations were quite problematic to get (MI – as an alternative). Compared to them, CEEMAN was more flexible and realistic (as an alternative) (MI). CEEMAN also played an active role (CO). 0021: There was a range of factors, - to gain the opinions of external experts (NO), to look at the market component (IA), as well as self-esteem (always being the top) (PE). 0023: For us it is more important what does our market tell us? We see the signals that it has demand from some industries, some internationalisation (IA). 0061: We had our icon – Business School Lausanne, a private B- school located in Lausanne, Switzerland (MI). Its dean is our friend – he is consulting us. We wanted to look like this school (MI). But accreditation and this orientation didn’t have any common goals.
MI-4, NO-1, IA-2, CO, PE
Decision about CEEMAN (Internal Reasons)
0023: CEEMAN emerged in the second half of the 1990s. Because our rector is an active participant of CEEMAN, the decision is made to participate in this event (CO). 0061: CEEMAN came with the project (CO), and as a project (CO), - as opportunity (NO). I started the process of CEEMAN in 1998 year, I was writing report. I also was the main host. I was a project manager of CEEMAN accreditation. We prepared ourselves for 1.5 month. When we had re-accreditation – we modified the process. We were accredited in 2009 for the second time. When we went through accreditation process? From 2010, we started re-accreditation and got it in 2011 years for 6 years. What was the motivation? To do accreditation, we had only two motivations: first, the status of equal business partner in order to participate in this club (NO). It is the presence in the environment to understand the development (NO). Probably, it is kind of legitimization (LE). It is more about the suit that you will be allowed to get inside (MI). The second motivation was more about competitors (IA). We wanted to differentiate ourselves (NO).
NO – 4; CO-3; MI; IA; LE
MI-5; NO-5, CO-4, IA-3, PE, LE

Source: *Interviews with IMISP, 2013*

Basically, at that time there were no chances to gain other accreditations, they were “quite problematic to get”, and CEEMAN played a “very active” role being perceived as “*kind of legitimization. It is more about the suit that you will be allowed to get inside*”. There is a prevalence of mimetic forces (MI), normative forces (NO) and coercive decision (CO) for IMISP – to accept it due to the active role of CEEMAN in the past and involvement of “agent of changes”. CEEMAN accreditation is not known to the Russian clients. The decision about it was made as a project opportunity, and the reason behind was to gain a status of equal partner and the desire to differentiate the school from other competitor. The legitimacy is a reason (LE), but performance is equally important. **Proposition P2 is neither confirmed, nor denied. There is no clear results that legitimacy is perceived higher than performance (both are mentioned equally).** To further reflect the findings on change, we ask the RQ3 and RQ4 questions:

RQ3: What are organisational changes in FELU as a result of accreditation?
RQ4: What are the effects of international accreditation process in FELU?
 Table 72 elaborates more on effects and changes of CEEMAN accreditation:

Table 72. Effects and changes of CEEMAN accreditation

RQ3: What is organisational change as a result of CEEMAN accreditation?
0061: The recommendations – we are not enough international. This criterion is very high. Our strategy does not allow us to move towards internationalisation (CO) We got the new ideas, new possibilities (NO) – it is the fact (for our Rector, for our person who is working with the CEEMAN - accreditor, Mr. Kolchanov. 0023: No obvious changes take place with CEEMAN (no any PE component) 0061: We expected this opportunity to be included in this environment. When we got it, we have also changed (MI). Every year we go to Bled – our people study there on content, administration. This is our inclusion at the horizontal level (NO)
NO - 2, CO; MI (no PE component)
RQ4: What are the effects of CEEMAN accreditation?
0061: Effects are the local ones. It is between AMBA and what we do for AMBA, and it is also included into CEEMAN, it does not contradict. They have additional component. But it is easy version of CEEMAN, and we have justification for peer group (formalisation, MI). We make conclusion about the elements – how to deal with that. In terms of the content of programme, we probably know better how to do it. We are trying to put the standards in order to be oriented (MI). 0023: Any accreditation provides discipline, structural approach (NO) and the fresh look from outside. However, it cannot change the school radically – it is wrong opinion, because the employees understand the problems deeper than outsiders. We had been re-accredited in 1999, 2004, 2011, but the process didn't bring any direct effects. 0024: We did have few the questions like: “Can we consider CEEMAN-accredited school as a school with an international diploma?” We say: “No, you cannot. It only corresponds to certain criteria” (MI). 0025: On our web-site there is the information about all accreditations. It is a label of Quality (IA), and we promote these labels. From September, 2013 we have the new law, and we have to follow the Ministry's requirements. CEEMAN has to popularise itself, and we probably need to do it on our market.
MI – 3, NO, IA
Results: MI-4, NO-3, IA, CO

Source: Interviews with IMISP, 2013

Table 72 demonstrates that there are dominated mimetic and normative changes (MI) and (NO) mentioned here in the summary results. **Proposition P3 is confirmed** (with NO and CO trends), although mimetic change (MI) in P3 is minimum, because accreditation is brought without market demand). Other changes (NO, CO) and effects (MI, NO, CO) are present. The programme accreditation (AMBA) is gained in IMISP (with the market demand for programme accreditation), but its additional impact is not studied here. **Proposition 4 is partly confirmed (P4a – bandwagon is missing, P4b is confirmed)**. Although, in P4b there is only one observed effect of IA with limited confirmation. It seems that there are only “local” effects, and there are no many obvious changes that would be recognised by IMISP in interviews. Moreover, there are ideological disagreements with CEEMAN on ideology (mission, strategy, positioning), research and internationalisation:

Our mission is quite different, and we want to put the bridge between the points that were broken. We were trying to avoid our research, and we are very rough, we are blamed in utility, we do consulting with the “light research”. But we always tell – this is not the research. This is a strategy, and we do the practical things, we are not research-oriented. We recognize, we do not have it: yes, we do not, but we live with it. Our first disagreement is in terms of research. Second disagreement: we recognize, that we are not enough international, but we do also quite adequate positioning, because we are focused towards our local market (Respondent 0061).

According to CEEMAN Report (1999), “the audit team feels that there are certain issues that require strategic attention and policy discussions”. The comments are made towards the following directions in 1999: strategic one, governance structure, facilities and financial resources. The representative of CEEMAN (in interview) said: “IMISP is

something that market appreciates, and clients were satisfied with. Once they start accreditation, they need the sufficient number of research being published to start improvement process”.

The current changes required at this stage are to improve the quality of publications of the Faculty, and to increase the internationalisation of Faculty members. In the case of IMISP, despite disagreement b/n management and PRT, accreditation made some effects on strategy and mission, and didn't make any effect on programme. It is shown in Table 73:

Table 73. General Effects of CEEMAN accreditation (n=2)

IMISP (Russia)	Mean	Std. Deviation
H: Strategy	4.00	0.00
I: Mission	4.00	0.00
C: Faculty	3.50	0.50
D: Teaching	3.00	0.00
E: Leadership	2.50	0.50
F: Increase in income	2.50	0.50
B: Students	2.00	0.00
G: Competence, Employee skills	2.00	0.00
A: Programmes	1.50	0.50

Source: *Questionnaire for IMISP*

CEEMAN accreditation makes effect on the following most important factors of

- (1) Strategy (H) and Mission (I);
- (2) Faculty (C);
- (3) Teaching (D)

Accreditation still makes an influence on ideological values of B-school linked to strategy.

3.5.2 Results on Competitors

We consider IMISP and GSOM B-schools as competitors due to the following reasons: first of all, in terms of the same business location, - St. Petersburg. Second, both IMISP and GSOM are competing for the various business programmes for the big corporations and companies. For instance, GSOM lead the “New Energy of Leadership” programme for the banking top-managers of 1.5 year’s duration in 2014 and IMISP are organising the 1.5 executive MBA IMISP programmes. Third, IMISP maintain excellent relations with its founder, the St. Petersburg State University: there is a delicate balance between these organisations (IMISP and GSOM) (CEEMAN Peer Team Visit report, 1999, p. 5). Forth, both schools are awarded with the first international institutional accreditations in Russian market (IMISP – with CEEMAN IQA in 1999, and GSOM – with EQUIS in 2013). In addition, IMISP itself recognises two B-schools – GSOM and the Vlerick Business School (“Vlerick”), Belgium project as close competitors:

Our competitors deal with MBA programme. There are only two actors-competitors (GSOM&Vlerick), because our prices are comparable. If we compare IMISP with Moscow, our competitor is MIRBIS. For Moscow we do not compete with many schools, only 3-4%. For Corporate clients, they put together regional clients, and we face together

in different tenders in ad hoc. Our clients come to us, not because we have accreditation; it is not the main factor. Many schools have accreditations. (Respondent 0061)

Besides, as pointed out by Eduniversal (Source: Eduniversal, 2014), the B-school IMISP is a competitor to some of the GSOM programmes not only in the past, but also during the present time. In order to answer **RQ5**: Does IMISP send any signals to its competitors with CEEMAN IQA accreditation?, we summarise the answers from the competing GSOM in Table 74:

Table 74. Competing B-school about IMISP

Competitor	GSOM
Environment	There are only 2 universities in the Russian market of higher education, that got the Special status – we are, GSOM (in 2011), the part of 13 thousand people of University and the Moscow State University (Respondent 0055).
Accreditation	The Russian employers do not understand it (accreditation) (Respondent 0055).
Competition	I can say that IMISP was our competitor, when we set up our B-school. Now, unfortunately, it is not true anymore, and we are much more ahead. For Bachelor programme, we have different situation: we compete by the price (best one or free) and by the number of entrants, best students based on the Unified State Exam (from 2009) (Respondent 0057)
Signals with CEEMAN	No signals. It is a different level of accreditation, different to EQUIS. National and regional accreditation should exist - like CEEMAN and RABE (Russian Association of Business Education). Even EQUIS is not known, - accreditation is known only to our partners, - for instance, RABE (Respondent 0057) We do send some signals – we already have 2 EPAS and we got AMBA (prior to EQUIS): we send signals to the Higher School of Economics (Respondent 0056). EQUIS is a strong signal to those who are participating in the process – to different political government decision makers – the government and Ministry (Respondent 0058).

Source: *Interviews with GSOM*

P5 is not clearly confirmed here for **Competitors**. CEEMAN is known to business professional societies of the Russian Association of Business Education - RABE, but it is still not clear which signals it produces to other schools: in the case of GSOM – it does not (more research is needed on Moscow market). The attitude towards rankings in Russia varies – it is different from CEE markets, with more critical views towards rankings. IMISP management, has serious criticism of Eduniversal ranking with the comments:

Some time ago, our school was given the “Palm rating” by Eduniversal based on our full-time MBA programme, but we never had any full-time MBA programmes, we had only part-time programmes. Therefore, we have to be very careful towards various ratings (Respondent 0022).

3.5.3 Results of Employers

The adult employees of the local companies are the main clients of schools. At the time of CEEMAN accreditation (1999), there are two different groups of students: First, the programmes directed to managers working in companies (part time MBA, executive programs, in-company programs), who are Employers; and second, the more academic BBA program directed to young people without prior higher education or work experience. These strands require different marketing approaches, different pedagogical, accreditation policies, and, to some degree, different attitude towards research (CEEMAN Report, 1999). 15 years later, IMISP is focusing only on the first group of students (managers of companies) who are also the representatives of Employers. Table 75 includes the interviews from both companies about the perception of services and accreditation.

Table 75. Employers about IMISP and CEEMAN accreditation

Tranzas Technologii	Sang
Representative	Director on Development
International Manufacturer, one of the leading manufacturers of high-tech hardware, software and system integration to the marine industry.	FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) sector, very specific with a distribution market which is 2% of market share
How does IMISP interact with your company?	
"Tranzas" covers more than 35% share of the global market electronic chart and navigation systems (ECDIS), about 25% of the number of installations Vessel Traffic System (VTS) and more than 45% of the world market of marine simulators	Our company pays 50% for MBA programme, but so far none of the employees used this opportunity
What is Quality of IMISP programmes? Which skills graduates are lacking?	
There are positive opinions from the participants of programmes. IT would be desirable to include the HR practical elements on E-staff, SAP, 1Cm HR Outlook, SharePoint2. We would like to get a connection with IT market. We can recommend the Club of engineers from the Business clubs that work in IMISP.	The programme is useful. Tenders do not include the requirements on accreditation, therefore, it is not a competitive advantage. The programmes should include: "Finance for non-financial managers", "Structural approaches in management", and structure for faculty should be changed. Consulting is needed, and there is a demand for one-day consultations.
Does CEEMAN accreditation send any signals to Employers?	
The company does not know about CEEMAN accreditation. This information is not important for us. At the same time, I think that the programme accreditation can be more important than the institutional one.	Company is not aware of CEEMAN accreditation. The wish is expressed towards the formation of MBA culture, explanation on accreditation. It should be some explanations why the accreditation is needed. The vision is that this information will be needed in the future, but not now.

Source: *Interview with Employers*

In terms of signaling **RQ5** for Employers, the answer is that companies do not recognize any signals from accreditation: this information is not important for them, they consider the only factor which is a reputation of school. **P5 is not confirmed for Employers**. Despite IMISP was a first B-school with foreign accreditation in Russia in 1999, accredited with CEEMAN IQA, it does not send any tangible signals to employers. This is confirmed by the following quotes from the interviews about, the portfolio of services (programmes) and clients:

Our employers said they came to IMISP due to reputation, but the fact of accreditation did not mean anything. Do those signals are recognized on the market? I see two sides of problem. Market is not known to CEEMAN and AMBA. The movements are only at the level of our segments (Respondent 0061).

Portfolio of our products - we are directed towards the corporate clients. Probably, from the limited resources situation, we are balanced now. We have more than 100 programmes from this year. The portfolio is quite big, we consider the marketing tool. We feel how market reacts, and we cannot allow the scale promotion: we have many programmes, and we can get around 2000 people (Respondent 0023).

The majority of our clients are from the business, and the other part - consulting fields. The requirements are the Diploma's project (not dissertation). The requirements are similar to AMBA accreditation according to the new law from 2013. There is a current discussion, and the main criticism that the programmes are accredited in certain directions, but the clients' requirements are different: for new client, we introduce new components (Respondent 0025)

The Peer Review Team (PRT) Visit Report outlined few key issues. From the international exposure's view, an English-language MBA provides a platform for internationalisation of students and faculty. Attention to professional development and opportunities for

international exchanges are essential, in terms of human resources. Facilities were constraining IMISP's development. Given the economic turbulence, the heavy dependence on annual tuition fees is very risky. The full self-governance would potentially lead to tensions. The disagreement of PRT on these directions is provided in the quotes on strategic, governance directions, facilities as well as resources: HRM and financial.

Strategic directions: The BBA program has potential for growth, but it may cause concerns: the potential drain on IMISP's faculty and financial resources. The competitiveness requires serious investment in academic research (PRT Report (PTPR), 1999, p. 21)

Governance: Although IMISP's international governance structure has been pioneering and very efficient there are certain issues that have to be treated very carefully. The independent outside representatives of international academic institutions and leading companies are essential for quality and market. The audit team feels that full self-governance would potentially lead to tensions. The relationship with St. Petersburg State University is delicate and strategic for future growth. Too much autonomy would mean a loss of academic and political support, too little -would harm financially and intellectually (PRTR, 1999, p. 21)

Financial: IMISP has successfully attracted both private and corporate clients. The finances have been run skillfully and responsibly. However, given the economic turbulence, the heavy dependence on annual tuition fees is very risky. An increase in the scale of programs either at IMISP or through alliances in other regions would help to cover fixed costs, while attracting more sponsors would directly improve the margins. PRTR, 1999, p. 21)

Facilities: Facilities are constraining IMISP's development, and this issue has to be addressed soon (PRTR, 1999, p. 21). Human resources: The IMISP faculty and staff are of high calibre and very motivated. Given the high teaching loads and environmental uncertainty there is a risk of burn-out and lack of intellectual self-renewal. Attention to professional development and opportunities for international exchanges are essential (PRTR, 1999, p. 22)

In its turn, IMISP provides its disagreement with PRT with the following arguments:

Why do we need to have the programmes in English? We are the Russian market, and we prepare for the Russian market. English provides the good basis for exchange, but if you want to work in Russia – you need to go to Russia. It is not the London B-School, not Harvard B-School, and to consider the Harvard case studies is an absurd, because here is a “different planet”, and these cases are not possible to apply here and they will never be applicable here. There is a view here (which is not only mine), that accreditation is a way of earning money. Our clients come not because of accreditation: it isn't the main factor. We never know –many schools have accreditation.

From the 1st of September, 2013 market in Russia all B-schools commenced defining standards and programmes themselves. There are no programmes in terms of “one standard” any more: such requirements for degree programmes are removed. The notion of “degree” disappears. MBA programme is not a “degree programme”, it is a post-degree. All programmes are now non-degree ones in Russia. There are currently ten associations on the market, such as RABE (Russian Association of Business Education) which may probably formalize these programmes. However, at the time of research, 2013-2014 there is no clear sign that the B-schools in Russia are moving towards its Institutional Change. There are no clear bandwagon trends, that other schools try to gain accreditation. EQUIS experience in Russian market is the first one, which is not yet bandwagoned by others (but might be a factor of time or regulation). Although some schools are with CEEMAN (which is long-standing with more than 15 years), but IMISP results confirms only **P3**.

There is **no Institutional change** in the market of Russia at the time of research neither for EQUIS nor for CEEMAN accreditation. **P6 is not confirmed**. It is also true, that EQUIS has been awarded recently, and the factor of time may play role in its spreading.

3.6 Perception of Accreditation Bodies on CEE B-schools

In this sub-chapter we present the opinions of AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN about their institutional accreditations in CEE B-schools. *First*, the alternative way to study B-schools is through the opinions of their stakeholders such as their competitors, customers, national governments, and accreditation bodies (Pettigrew & Starkey, 2016). In the context of global uncertainties, it is very important to examine the consequences of the changes in B-schools for the various stakeholders, especially those upon whom its legitimacy ultimately depends.

The response to the systematic evaluation of HEIs in Europe during the 1990s under the pressures of governing authorities with increased internationalisation and a competition led to the needs for the development of national accreditation systems, especially in countries in Eastern Europe (Prøitz, Stensaker & Harvey, 2004). *Second*, already during 1997-2001 years, the organizational change indicates the degree of future ‘uniformity’ in this field given in a number of EQUIS accreditation reports (Prøitz et al., 2004). *Third*, the development of accreditation agencies within the HE sector is still a growing phenomenon (Cret, 2011), especially in CEE business education. Therefore, why and how HE’s organisations change is one of the major concerns of many research scholars in the organisational field (Clark, 1983; Kezar, 2001; Kezar & Eckel, 2000; Kondakci & Van den Broeck, 2009). Moreover, there is evidence in favour of establishing professional networks as structural and cultural features of organisations. This idea is explained by the proponents of accreditation agencies, summarized by Bandelj and Purg (2005, p. 6) in the next statements why professional networks important in CEE region. B-schools do not know anything how exactly the professional networks in higher education operate, but they just think that they are useful. As a result of this perception, organisations start their networking activities just for the sake of networking, and not for their tangible benefits. This phenomenon might be used for the organisations, where criteria of effectiveness and efficiency are hard to establish. In fact, the first experiment to create a Western-type management school is implemented in Hungary (in 1988) by philanthropist George Soros and entrepreneur Sándor Demján with the foundation of IMC (International Management Center), former CEU (Central European University) B-school. The similar attempt in Russia failed due to the lack of political support for “innovation” from the environment. Bandelj and Purg (2005, p. 13) demonstrate that American style management goes against of the former system’s doctrine, where network connections in form of political alliances to domestic elites are key in determining their creation in line with resources from abroad. The other side of the coin illustrates the example of Enron Corporation (the bankruptcy of an American energy company, and dissolution of Arthur Andersen) due to “*the over-reliance on stating the advantages of networks and alliances [in B-schools’ curricula]*” (Bandelj & Purg, p. 22).

Thus, we compare the results collected from the Questionnaire on the general effects of institutional accreditation on all investigated CEE B-schools. Besides, we are very keen to know the opinion of EQUIS, AACSB and CEEMAN about the reasoning of B-schools from the East to seek accreditations. Second, we show the comparison between the stakeholders - accreditation bodies (where EFMD presented by institutional EQUIS, representative of AACSB in Europe and CEEMAN for “recently emerged and emerging economies”). Third, we reveal the perception of each accreditation body about the B-schools located in the region of CEE, and ask the same key questions on the reasoning or forces that push CEE schools for accreditation (that cover RQ2 and partly, RQ1 with P1 and P2 propositions). We adhere to P3 and P4 propositions about the key organisational change) that takes place in these schools from the viewpoint of accreditation bodies. At the end, we unveil the future changes of global EQUIS and AACSB accreditors in line with the Eastern-based CEEMAN.

3.6.1 Effects of Accreditations

Each accreditation (EQUIS, AACSB, CEEMAN) makes certain effects on each B-school. The survey Questionnaire in schools (N=34) shows overall effects from accreditations on schools: public with EQUIS and private with AACSB and CEEMAN accreditations shown in Table 76. In this sub-chapter we also present the opinions of representatives of accreditation bodies about their accreditations in CEE region. The alternative way to study B-schools is doing it through stakeholders' opinions: such as competitors, customers, national governments and accreditation bodies (Pettigrew & Starkey, 2016). In the context of global uncertainties, it is important to examine the consequences of change in schools from stakeholders upon whom the legitimacy ultimately depends on.

Table 76. The effects of accreditation on all B-schools

GS OM			FE LU			ZS EM			K U			IMI SP		
	Mean	Std. Dev		Mea n	Std. Dev		Mean	Std. Dev		Mean	Std. Dev		Mean	Std. Dev
C	4.44	0.49	H	4.89	0.20	C	4.71	0.41	I	5.00	0.00	H	4.00	0.00
H	4.44	0.62	C	4.78	0.35	I	4.71	0.41	H	4.86	0.24	I	4.00	0.00
A	4.33	0.74	I	4.78	0.40	A	4.57	0.49	A	4.71	0.49	C	3.50	0.50
G	4.33	0.44	E	4.44	0.62	B	4.57	0.49	C	4.71	0.41	D	3.00	0.00
E	4.22	0.69	A	4.00	0.22	D	4.57	0.49	D	4.57	0.49	E	2.50	0.50
D	4.11	0.59	D	4.00	0.22	H	4.43	0.65	E	4.57	0.49	F	2.50	0.50
I	4.00	0.67	G	4.00	0.22	E	4.29	0.61	G	4.57	0.61	B	2.00	0.00
B	3.56	0.49	B	3.67	0.59	G	4.00	0.86	B	4.43	0.49	G	2.00	0.00
F	3.11	0.40	F	1.78	0.86	F	2.86	0.78	F	3.00	1.14	A	1.50	0.50

Source: Questionnaire's results collected in each B-school

Therefore, the most important effects of accreditation in Public B-schools (in the rank order) with EQUIS accreditation are observed on the following indicators:

Case 1. FELU: H – Strategy; C - Faculty, I - Mission, E - Leadership, A – Programmes. The less important effects (descending order) are: D - Teaching, G - Competences, B - Students, F – Increase in salary;

Case 4. GSOM: C – Faculty; H – Strategy; A - Programmes; G – Competences; E – Leadership. Insignificant effects (continuing in decreasing) of EQUIS accreditation are listed in: D – Teaching; I – Mission; B – Students; F – increase in salary.

In both public schools – Strategy, Faculty (mainly, faculty's internationalisation and research), Programmes and Leadership are the most important factors (despite the difference in time for obtaining accreditation). Mission (for FELU) and Competences (for GSOM) are factors that subsequently important. The accreditation does not have any evident impact not only on the increase in salary, but also on teaching and students in these public schools. Because of the longer duration of EQUIS accreditation and its re-accreditation in FELU (gained in 2006 compared to GSOM accreditation awarded in 2012), the presence of additional AACSB accreditation in FELU, as well as additional factors of preferences and development in both schools, it can make some distortion in terms of additional effects, however, the effects are quite similar on majority of indicators.

Next purpose is to compare if there are any differences regarding the influence of accreditation on public and private B-schools. Proliferation of private B-schools led to the overall perception that private institutions represent a second choice for students compared

to public universities' B-schools. Therefore, we compare the private schools with institutional accreditation (with the presence of AACSB in Case 2 - KU and Case 3- ZSEM) and CEEMAN accreditation in Case 2 - KU and Case 5 – IMISP. Despite, it is impossible to untangle the impact of these accreditations; we look at the general effects of institutional accreditations on the listed indicators of private B-schools.

The most important effects of accreditation in Private B-schools (in the rank order) with institutional accreditations are observed on the following indicators:

Case 2. KU: I – Mission; H – Strategy; A – Programmes; C – Faculty; D – Teaching; To a lesser extent (in lower order), the indicators are related to E – Leadership; G – Competences; B – Students; F– increase in salary

Case 3. ZSEM: C – Faculty; I – Mission; A – Programmes; B – Students; D – Teaching; To a lesser degree (descending order): H – Strategy; E – Leadership; G – Competences; F– increase in salary

Case 5. IMISP: H – Strategy; I – Mission; C – Faculty; D - Teaching; E - Leadership; To a lesser degree it is reflected on F– increase in salary; B – Students; G– Competences; A – Programmes. Thus, we summarise all effects of accreditation in one Table 77:

Table 77. The common effects of Accreditation in B-schools

B-schools	FELU	KU	ZSEM	GSOM SPbU	IMISP
Country	Slovenia	Poland	Croatia	Russia	
Ownership, Foundation	<u>Public</u> , 1946	Private , 1993	Private , 2003	<u>Public</u> , 2007 (1993)	Private , 1989
Accreditation A.: <i>Institutional</i>	EQUIS (2006) AACSB (2010)	EQUIS (1999) AACSB (2011) CEEMAN(2001)	AACSB (2013)	EQUIS (2012)	CEEMAN (1999)
<i>Programme</i>	AMBA (2016)	AMBA (2008)		AMBA (2008), EPAS (2008)	AMBA (2006)
Effect of A. on	Strategy	Mission	Mission	Strategy	Mission
	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty
	Programmes	Programmes	Programmes	Programmes	Strategy
Additional:	Leaders	Teaching	Teaching	Competences	Teaching
	Mission	Strategy	Students	Leaders	Leaders

Source: *Questionnaire for all B-schools, 2013-14*

The effects of accreditation are observable on two key factors - Faculty (more related to their internationalisation) and Programmes (with the only exception of IMISP with CEEMAN accreditation). These effects are present for both public and private schools without difference in accreditation - KU, ZSEM, FELU, GSOM. In connection with **public schools**, the strongest effects of accreditation (EQUIS – in both B-school, and AACSB in FELU) are reflected on strategy, faculty and programmes. With regard to **private schools**, despite the differences in institutional accreditation labels and their number (AACSB, CEEMAN, and all three with EQUIS), the effects prevail on the matching factors of Mission, Faculty and Teaching. The private B-schools of KU and ZSEM (with common AACSB) also have the effects for its Programmes in common. The effects of IQA accreditation from CEEMAN are not reflected on the programmes of private IMISP, and there is a slight influence on leaders. Thus, the only evident difference between private and public schools is the presence of effects on Strategy factor for public, and Mission factor for private B-schools. For all B-schools the accreditation doesn't make any effect on the increase in salary, and students (with the exception of ZSEM).

Thus, with 5 B-schools, we can make various distinctions and analysis here: *first*, with regard to the common effects of accreditation in schools; *second*, effects of each accreditation; *three*, accreditation process of B-education in each country (in conjunction with rivals - 9 B-schools); *fourth*, the effects of top-accreditations (EQUIS and AACSB); *fifth*, the triple Crown; *sixth*, the effects of the mixed institutional with programme; *seventh*, identical effects; *eight*, identical effects in public and then private schools; *ninth*, comparison in countries with common factor: schools from countries with identical effects on Strategy, etc. Our preference is to understand why and how B-schools gain certain accreditation from the opinion of each accreditation body, presented in Table 78, not covered in research.

Table 78. Forces for AACSB, EQUIS and CEEMAN accreditation

EQUIS representative Representative 0049	AACSB representative Representative 0062	Ceeman representative Representative 0036
The force to push B-school to apply for accreditation is a brand . If you succeed, -you get the elite job. It is like 1st league, 2nd league or the 3 rd league. I think that market forces are important, and then you sell it for legitimization . Quality is important and recognition of quality is accreditation. The EQUIS tasks are to force CEE schools to be international .	The force that pushes B-school for accreditation is to give an external visibility of their performance . The accreditation is directly linked to the competition on the market. There are very few schools, where there is no competition – Germany, Italy, Sweden. UK and France - are the most competitive markets. They have to convince faculty, institutions that you are good. If you want to show that you are good , an accreditation is one of the ways to show it. It helps you to show your future mission. Students think: I go to accredited school, it will continue to improve. Accreditation is nothing else, but the continuous improvement process . It is a contract by which you accept that you to look at process, which is continuously improving. External assessment of your performance is helping you to show your future mission. Accreditation is not a medal; it is contract by which you are accepted .	There were 3 forces for accreditation. Management was a new topic in CEE countries, and B-schools started mushrooming , they needed the management expertise. Another need was to develop the new generation of business leaders . The new issues were also related to the transition to the market economy (CO).
RQ1 (additional): How do accreditation bodies perceive their accreditation in CEE schools? RQ2 (additional): Why do B-schools in the East seek international accreditations from the West?		
Brand (NO), legitimacy (LE), recognition of quality (MI), internationalisation (IA)	Visibility of performance (MI), competition, “ <i>you are good – if you are accredited</i> ” (BA) (contract by which you are accepted), the improvement process (MI)	Differentiation from others (mushrooming schools) (NO), the new leaders’ generation (CO)
NO, MI, IA, LE	MI-2, BA	NO, CO-2
P1: Perception of accreditation values in B-schools is relatively more important than perception of accreditation cost; P2: B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy;		

Source: *interviews with representative of EQUIS, AACSB and CEEMAN*

From EQUIS view, B-schools should seek legitimacy associated with the value of EQUIS brand, its recognition of quality and internationalisation. AACSB opinion is that B-school seek for visibility and improvement, and CEEMAN – to be differentiated from others and to move to market “capitalism”. The next step is to compare how accreditation bodies view themselves in the region of CEE, what their priorities for B-schools from each accreditation’s point, partly, covering **RQ3** and **RQ4** in Table 79. For the EQUIS, the effects of internationalisation and globalisation are the most important ones, with a big intellectual debate with networking through its marketing tool of brand. B-schools with EQUIS tend to work only with EQUIS-accredited schools, distinguishing them into one club. As far as AACSB, it is a mission-driven accreditation that promotes the experience of diversity, and mission. AACSB penetrates new markets, adopting changes as well: it abandoned uncomfortable AQ/PQ standards that were difficult for understanding for many B-schools in CEE, introduced the new standards and pushed the corporate social responsibilities (CSR).

CEEMAN reflects the environment of CEE region, and, therefore, it calls itself as “*a change agent*” for B-schools: it is oriented towards politics and business needs rather than teaching. The effects are seen in comparison between accreditation bodies.

Table 79. Comparison of AACSB, EQUIS and CEEMAN

EQUIS Representative 0049	AACSB Representative 0062	CEEMAN Representative 0036
<p>The big difference of EQUIS from others is an importance of internationalisation and globalisation. EQUIS continuous improvement process has four advantages: Process and advice, recognition of your brand, networking, continuous improvement process. The first advantage: it is a unique opportunity of school to look at quality at school, look at all these processes, to think why they are, where & how they are, and may be to revise processes. Then you receive the advice, from experts coming from different background and countries. This is a marketing tool – it is a brand which is known. It is increasing the value of your brand, and then it is networking, you have effect that you are EQUIS schools go with EQUIS schools, and EPAS schools go with EPAS schools. It is a continuous process. Second, it is a market force. Third, it is legitimisation. You can get a big intellectual debate. It is quality which is important, but accreditation is recognition of quality. You end up that you say that you improve your quality in such a way that you got the recognition of quality, because accreditation is recognition of quality. When you get accredited – it is a marketing tool, a well-known brand. It does increase your brand, recognition of your school, to establish more networking.</p>	<p>There are two main institutional accreditations: EQUIS and AACSB. AACSB has a long experience of its accreditation and experience of diversity from more than 660 institutions that are accredited – small, big, professional, academic and diverse schools from about 45 countries. First, AACSB experience of diversity can help. Second, this accreditation is mission-driven; which means that what school has to do is to compare itself with its mission. The question is: do you really employ your mission as you promise to do? Third, the prospect-led of school, there is a prospect that school is led, mentors - they are after each of your step, you have a statement to make your step; when you have achieved one step, you are prepared for the other one. Yes, standards did not suit to schools in Russia, or in CEE. AACSB changed it twice, in 1997, and this year (2013) we have the new standards. Now they accept diversity, now the standards are ready to accept all types of schools. That is why now there is a big wave of Asian schools. We show now we are ready to work for all types of schools. At the moment, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a part of the expected priorities, but it is framed in a specific standard. It is a strategic question: "What do you do in terms of innovation, impact, and engagement (4 better world)?"</p>	<p>Why don't we have our own accreditation in the region of CEE that respects this complex environment? 1. This is about the markets B-school covers (local, regional, etc.); which mission B-school serves, which kind of knowledge, impact you make for your students? 2. CEEMAN is also the first international accreditation that incorporated the principles of responsible management education. 3. Accreditation is a business; you lose the clients if you don't understand their needs.</p> <p>Both AACSB and EQUIS become like a cliché: if you want accreditation you have to meet the standards. Then you give a signal – you are in the process, and everyone works on research. Teaching is becoming like the waste of your time. Accreditation creates a model of business education which everyone needs to follow.</p> <p>B-schools of CEEMAN contribute a lot, because they are the learning partners from transition, who act as change agents. In the United States, B-schools didn't have this need. But in many countries, like Russia or Kazakhstan, Latvia, Slovenia, Poland - B-schools were creating the first generation of leaders: previously these countries had bureaucrats, but not leaders. The b-schools become the responsible agents of change. That is the reason why CEEMAN was established.</p>

Source: *Interviews with the representatives of Accreditation bodies*

B-schools showed results seeking EQUIS for the same values, but the preferences are different for schools, except legitimacy. The forces for AACSB is visibility, competition, improvement and the accepted contract. The factor of competition are “unknown B-schools of CEE”. The key is “*you are good if you are accredited*”, with legitimacy provided. In the case of CEEMAN, it is more about conformity to the market economy. In this case it is differentiate school from others, and it also provides some legitimacy in local market.

3.6.2 Change of B-schools with Accreditation

We consider the organisational change in B-schools of the region, and ask each body **RQ3**: What are organisational changes in B-schools of CEE as a result of accreditation? The viewpoints of each representative of accreditation body are placed in Table 80.

Table 80. The main change for B-schools with accreditation: Viewpoint

EQUIS	AACSB	CEEMAN
Representative 0049	Representative 0062	Representative 0036
<p>The main changes are internationalisation, (IA), globalisation (IA), and the flow of students (IA).</p> <p>Despite the quality of the B-school is good, if you don't take the international component (CO), you cannot gain accreditation, you should take this seriously (CO). Your faculty need to be international (CO); they have to publish in the international journals (CO) with dissemination of quality research (NO). With accreditation B-schools say: "we are in recognition (MI), we are good, good students come (IA) to us, companies are coming to us (NO), help us, and give us some money (CO)". Even in CIS countries, accredited schools got a lot of support (in St. Petersburg). You can approach your company, and you can ask for support (IA) – to get it for accreditation. The standards tend to be global (MI). Social responsibilities - I do not think they are different - giving back society. The important is to give back. Sustainability issues are becoming important (CO), and all B-schools need to educate for the responsibilities of companies (CO).</p>	<p>The main change is to do the process of accreditation within the broader perspectives (CO).</p> <p>Everywhere in the world the accreditation is the structuration process (NO), and the way to define the future and to organize its future process (CO). The CEE B-schools are in the situation when the Western European B-schools were probably 40 years ago. They can go for accreditation if they want, or they do not go, if they do not want. Accreditation is not a goal itself; it is a step to achieve a strategic objective (CO), to work on its vision (CO), before accreditation asks you to look at the future, and to have a vision. Accreditation is based on documentation and reporting (MI). People call it "bureaucracy" (MI). It obliges schools to run the school what they do (CO) and don't – to see it at the mirror.</p>	<p>The main change is that B-schools go through the self-assessment process which is a fantastic experience (NO)</p> <p>For many B-schools for the first time, a major aspect of B-education, what is the content, what is the process, what are the participants, who are students, professors, what are the institutional arrangement, technology, other resources? How do you position yourself today? Where do you need to improve? How to improve?</p>
CO-7, NO-2, MI-2, IA-5	CO-5, MI-2, NO	NO

Source: interviews with the representatives of accreditation bodies, 2014

The listed changes in Table 80 are the results of forces from each accreditation body dominated in the B-schools in CEE. If we summarise the forces listed in Tables 78 and 80, we can see that European **EQUIS** presents the most powerful change to CEE B-schools out of three accreditation bodies (all isomorphic CO, NO, MI), reduce information asymmetry (IA) with more bargaining power. The change from EQUIS for CEE B-schools is presented by dominated CO and IA pressures linked to internationalisation's components. From the opinion of **AACSB**, the changes are coercive (CO): strategic objective of school and its vision. AACSB display predominantly coercive change (CO) with its forces on the future strategy and prospectives with some mimetic (MI) bureaucratic changes and normative (NO) change. AACSB expresses the opinion that B-schools of CEE region fell 40 years behind from the European B-schools. Strategic objective can also be related to two things: it is either strategy that should be important which is recommended by accreditation body or accreditation as a strategic decision (both related to the Coercive change (CO)). **CEEMAN** detects not only normative change connected with the self-assessment in CEE B-schools more related to performance aspects (Table 80), but also coercive one (Table 78).

Table 81 presents the viewpoints of accreditation bodies about CEE and CIS B-schools.

Table 81. CEE B-schools: perception by Accreditation Bodies

EQUIS	AACSB	CEEMAN
Representative 0049	Representative 0062,	Representative 0036
<p>1. The CEE best schools are moving quite fast towards the international standards. It is true that they are not open.</p> <p>2. The internationalisation is the main issue for CEE and for Russian schools, because if you teach Russian, you will not get many students. 3. The second is the international level – I mean it in terms of disseminating research, publishing in global journals, doing international quality research.</p> <p>3. EQUIS push faculty to become international, to publish only in the international journals, and not at the local journals. They should move fast towards international standards, they are not open, you need English. If you know Russian – nobody will read it. The best schools are moving fast towards international standards. If you want to internationalise, you need English. If you are looking to Russia, you see that faculty of 50-55, they are not good in English. The B-schools are now much closer to markets than they were 20 years ago. If you look at the countries, like China – from the regime they moved very rapidly to EQUIS accreditation. They are catching very quickly, but they are coming from the same regime. The top-Chinese schools in 3 years' time, I think it would be 8-9 EQUIS-accredited schools. It is the question of time. It means that they rely on the faculty – they know English, probably some of the Faculties are coming from the Western- schools</p>	<p>1. CEE B-schools like to say they are different from others (for instance, in Russia). I recommend you not to say so, because they are not. They have buildings; they have faculty, students and programmes. If they would be different, they would have no faculty, no building, or no programme.</p> <p>2. There is a difference in prospect. They are in entrepreneurial phase. 3. There are very few institutions in Eastern Europe that have accreditation. Slowly you will have more and more schools.</p> <p>4. It is very distinctive to be accredited in CEE. It is really great visibility and great distinctiveness. Spectrum, - in the US - When you have 460 schools accredited in US, there it is no sign of distinctiveness, it is just a conformity. If you are not accredited it is problematic. Here you have exactly the opposite. There are 13 000 and only 5% of schools accredited. You have 95% that are not accredited – and they have a good life. There are difficulties – which are not specific to Eastern Europe. Schools are not in the culture of reporting, management of school does not report to any authorities. Accreditation – it is for the first time, they have to write; second point is that school does not have a systematic strategy. They are opportunistic; they do not look at the strategy. Big difficulty is about the faculty, which is not always the quality faculty, because nobody knows what the qualifications are. Often, management does not use the principles of academic qualifications, research and publications. Nothing shows what is rigorous. Problem of the school is an isolation to show that. The final issue is a teaching and learning. The problem of school is an isolation of faculty. The learning efficiencies, - and there are very few places that institutions measure what students learn, and accreditation asks to do it; there are very few places, where schools measure what students learn what they have to learn. But you have to do it.</p>	<p>1. Low level of internationalisation is the first feature of CEE B-schools. 2. Language is similar. 3. Participants are coming with different background. 4. Countries of CEE have a demographic change. In order to survive, schools like Lithuania and Latvia need to get students from China.</p> <p>5. B-schools in CEE compete b/n each other with educational and business challenges.</p> <p>6. Some CEE at the end of 1990-s applied for accreditation like EQUIS. But you have some schools which achieve excellence in teaching without their home research. Ok, they apply for accreditation, but they do not have research, and EQUIS is deaf to the arguments. 7. The reality is that CEE B-schools don't like change. B-schools in CEE usually don't want to share information, but now they are getting better. There is a huge need of cases which are relevant for these countries. Now there is a change in the environment: teaching, research, consultancies to companies; institutional capacity.</p>

Source: *Interview with representatives of Accreditation bodies, 2014*

Third, we would like to compare all three institutional accreditations based on different parameters – the perception of B-schools about these networks and what these accreditation bodies say about themselves, their values and advantages for B-schools in CEE. Since these organisations represent the global leaders in the business education, therefore, we are also interested about their future changes in this industry. The last point is to address whether

each of the accreditation bodies – AACSB, EQUIS and CEEMAN will change in the near future, and if yes, then how and why. This point will also provide the future change of B-schools, which in their turn, will be changing according to the new spiral of change. Not only B-schools, but accreditation bodies themselves working with B-schools are also subject to various future changes presented in Table 82.

Table 82. Accreditation bodies: future change

EQUIS	AACSB	CEEMAN
Representative of EQUIS	Representative of AACSB	Representative of CEEMAN
EQUIS is moving to become more and more global – to Asia (the office in Honk Kong will be open by the end of this year, the office will be also be open in Miami, in the US). The fact is that you need to be more active locally. Only 6 or 7 years the EQUIS was European, and now it is already 50/50. Now it is a Europe and the rest of the world, we are in North America, we in China. We try to expand outside of Europe. I think that EQUIS in the long-term we will have different kind of accreditation systems, including regional ones. The US office will be open very soon.	The future phases are probably to continue to improve the business education by improving the quality of the schools with accreditation and overall general quality of business education. In the future, AACSB will have the bigger role: 1.with improvement; 2. students will more study elsewhere and they will need accreditation; 3. they will then need a certification. It could be also ranking, but the problem with ranking is that it addresses a very little number of schools – just 100; 4.you will need another signal or indicator, telling to the rest of the world that you have gone through the process.	We had few stages: 1st stage was - Learning from others, 2nd - Learning from each other; gradually came to the 3rd stage – relevant for others and share with the others. It is related to the phenomenon of the change due to the redefining the role of management education. We are not any more for transition countries. We are now the international association for dynamically changing societies. Who are they? The whole world with economic, social transformation.

Source: *Interview with the representatives of Accreditation bodies, 2014*

To that end, EQUIS is moving from Europe towards other markets to accredit them, whereas AACSB plans to expand in further activities, including certifications and ranking. In addition to transition countries, CEEMAN plans to expand its activities to dynamically changing societies. Finally, all accreditation bring their own effects to B-schools in CEE region. CEE region (Slovenia, Croatia, Poland) has its own trends with AACSB and EQUIS accreditations. In smaller countries AACSB start from public schools, in bigger countries like Poland – from private ones; and EQUIS starts from public schools. The regional accreditation CEEMAN might be relevant to the region, but it is weaker in bargaining power. We cover the gap in research literature about the perception of accreditation bodies towards B-schools of this region. Next, we move discussing our findings in the light of our propositions in Chapter 4.

Before we move to this Chapter, we outline some assumptions and limitations.

There is an assumption, that organisations embody multiple logics. Multiple logics are reaffirmed in B-schools’ mission, its strategy, identity, and work practices represented among members, with no clear hierarchy between logics (Besharov & Smith, 2014). Therefore, our key assertion is that the implications of logic multiplicity depend on how it is supported within each B-school. We follow DiMaggio and Powell (1991) view, who establish the theoretical bridge between individual understandings and organisational structures. There are following limitations in this research. First, we do not consider the effects from programme accreditations, despite they can make impact. Second, we focus on public schools with EQUIS and private – with AACSB or CEEMAN, because the more accreditations, the more changes, and the more difficult to detach effects of each, especially in the case of Crown. Third, we do not consider students as stakeholders. Fourth, we do not make analysis of regulation, but include opinions of stakeholders about its impact.

4. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss our findings in the light of propositions that reflect the underlying theory. Propositions are presented in the Conceptual framework (**Figure 12**) adjusted to our empirical results in order to advance the institutional theory's framework. Our propositions (P) for B-schools with **international institutional accreditation** are:

- P1:** Perception of accreditation values in B-schools is relatively more important than perception of accreditation cost;
- P2:** B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy;
- P3:** B-schools enhance isomorphic organisational changes (mimetic, normative, coercive) as a result of accreditation;
- P4:** B-schools acquire more isomorphic changes (bandwagon & information asymmetry) as a result of accreditation;
- P4a:** B-schools seek accreditation as a result of bandwagon effects;
- P4b:** B-schools seek accreditation to reduce information asymmetry's effects;
- P5:** Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to stakeholders;
- P6:** Institutional change occurs through the mechanisms of isomorphic organisational changes with bandwagon and information asymmetry's changes.

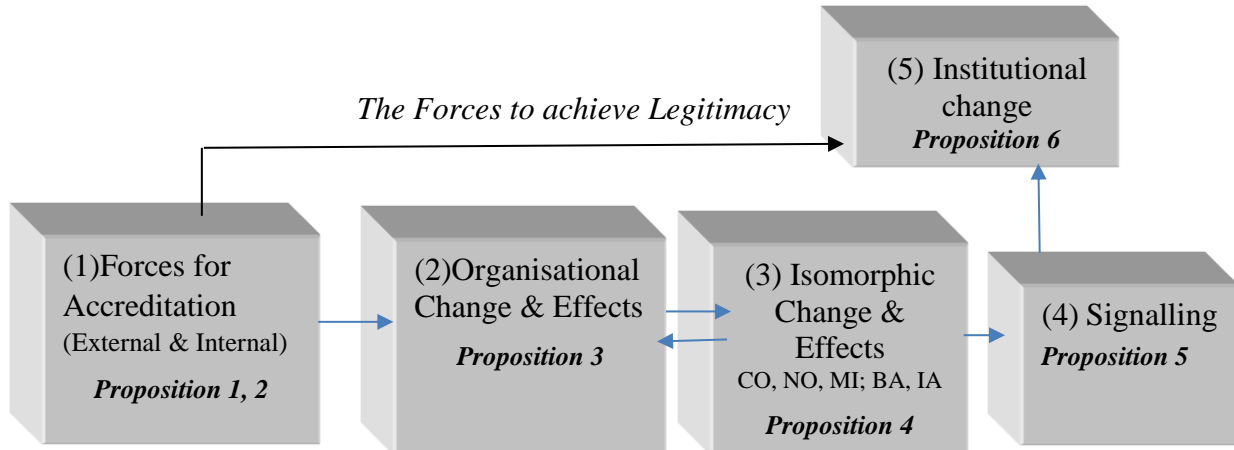
First, we consider the propositions **P1** and **P2** discussing the Forces for Accreditation (box 1 in Figure 12) for public and private schools. Second, we compare the General Change and Effects (box 2) with the Isomorphic ones (box 3) around propositions **P3** and **P4**. Third, we analyse the signals for stakeholders looking at how the organisational change transforms into the institutional one at the national level (boxes 4 & 5) with **P5** and **P6**. The institutional system should address the discussion of problems at various levels: university, inter-university, local, and national (Chirikov, 2013). We address it here with micro-level (experts), meso-level (organisation and state – with stakeholders), and macro-level (regional and international) with the increased value of cases and more implications for stakeholders.

The rapid transformation of CEE's newer capitalisms are posing new theoretical challenges with very important implications, especially in the light of latest publications: Miles, Grimmer and Franklin (2016) recommend focusing on how the various stakeholders value EQUIS and AACSB brands. We do it here with the perceptions of B-schools, their rivals and employers about these brands and reflect the various forces with their contexts. Pettigrew and Starkey (2016) showed a clear need in research on the legitimacy of B-schools embedded in their social, economic, political and professional contexts, "*portrayed as parts of an institutional field*" with multiple levels of analysis. The relations between institutional fields might explain the institutional change, where the mutual dependence of fields increases the changes of institutional theory in terms of explanation (Furnari, 2016).

Our cases test the advanced institutional theory and therefore, the discussion is organised around this theory's propositions based on the comparison of public schools with EQUIS accreditation, then private schools with AACSB and CEEMAN accreditation. Finally, it is also a comparison of public versus private schools. Our basic theoretical framework (Figure 12) is the Institutional theory's framework (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). We advance it by adding the inter-related complementary fields of Resource Dependence theory (for Coercive change inside of 2nd box) and expand changes for Institutional Asymmetry and Bandwagon (inside of 3rd box) because of the external forces, including the 21st century's phenomenon of global accreditation. The institutional system addresses the discussion and resolution of problems at various levels: B-signals are sent to various stakeholders, and this process may impact the behaviour of competitors with different effects, but may or may not influence

employers. If accreditation makes the impact with effects, it means that the institutional change is taking place at a higher level, the national level of b-education, which might spread its effects to the region. We add this level of b-education market, increasing the value of case studies with implication for various stakeholders. Therefore, the additional level of “Institutional change” in Figure 12 is located higher than other boxes. Our re-organised framework as the Conceptual theory’s framework for accreditation is presented in Figure 12.

Figure 12. Institutional Accreditation’s Framework in Organisations



Compared to a previous conceptual framework in Figure 5, Figure 12 is adjusted in the second and third boxes for organisational changes with effects (2nd box) and their corresponding specific isomorphic “coded” changes with effects (3rd box). These corresponding changes are coded as mimetic MI, normative NO, coercive CO, asymmetric IA or bandwagon BA change (Table 19) according to institutional theory. This accreditation framework is mainly based on institutional theory, and it is suggested to be considered not only for B-schools but also for other organisations in higher education as well as the firms/companies that apply for the similar processes of certification or licensing related to the quality assurance practices. An alternative theory of Management fashion’s development with the reflection on practice suggested by Abrahamson (1996) also reveals a position of B-schools covered with institutional theory (in mimetic practices and bandwagon processes).

The process of institutional change among organisations described in the thesis reminds the process of management fashion’s development by Abrahamson (1996) in a four-fold fashion-setting process (show-business, musical and literary circles). First, cultural innovation is created; second, it brought by talent scouts to penetrate these artistic circles, organisations; third, fashion setters process this innovation to the market to which they are targeted; fourth, fashion setters attempts to disseminate the product they have developed. Thus, the process of management fashion in B-schools has resulted in a similar framework: Creation (forces, in our framework), selection (organisational process), processing (institutional change) and dissemination (“Quality stamps” with a signalling and bandwagon process to diffuse it). The innovation may or may not become a mass fashion: it depends on the ability of members (change agents) and the preferences for “cultural innovations”.

If the institutional change takes place in the business education of CEE countries, it may be recalling a spread of a mass fashion. We conclude by summarising the implications of findings, in brief, explaining why this study is important for researchers and in practice, providing suggestions for further work. Comprehensive theories of resource dependency, bandwagon, information asymmetry, agency theory complement the key Institutional theory. The logic linking the data to the propositions reflects the analytic rational which is provided by Institutional theory framework in the Literature review section.

The **next sub-chapters** are linked to Forces for Accreditation (4.1), Change and Effects in B-schools (4.2), and signalling to Competitor, Employers and Accreditation Body with Institutional Change (4.3). In the following discussion, the code given to each informant provides a certain anonymity to experts; and their opinions are interpreted based on the context of change grouped and systematised in Table 19 (Types of organisational change).

4.1 Forces for Accreditation

Based on the findings of Chapter 3, this discussion is based on our propositions P1 and P2 to be tested for the Forces for Accreditation of B-schools in CEE region (box 1 in Figure 12). Forces for accreditation are pressures incorporated in P1 (with certain values, their pros and cons) and P2 (with external forces and internal decisions) for public and private schools. In Table 83 we compare the results of **P1** and **P2** propositions for public schools.

We discuss **Proposition (P1)** in the light of values: **Perception of accreditation values in B-schools is relatively more important than the perception of accreditation cost.** As it was explained, we differentiate between value (Value = Benefit – Cost) and advantage. Each accreditation body creates its own value, and B-school perceives this value (set of values) through some advantages for faculty or student bodies, employers or different stakeholders. An advantage exists for B-school if accreditation body delivers the same benefits as a competitor, but at a low cost (or benefits exceed services of a competitor). Miles, Grimmer and Franklin (2016) recommend research to focus on how stakeholders such as faculty, donors and employers value the brand of EQUIS and AACSB accreditation. Value is important because the culture in education is the values, beliefs, and attitudes common to a group (Dimmock & Walker, 2000).

First, we discuss public schools with EQUIS accreditation in Table 83: we include forces that are expressed through the isomorphic changes. In theory, legitimacy is a generalised perception linked to the socially constructed system of values, norms and beliefs (Suchman, 1995), and, therefore, we start from discussing values (P1). We compare values vs. cost (**P1**) and the external and internal forces (**P2**). We also outline the findings discovered for the first time with the most striking peculiarities for B-schools.

PUBLIC B-schools (P1). We see the emergence and structuration of organisational fields as a result of accreditation “infused with values” as explained in theory (DiMaggio & Powel, 1983). *First*, values in public FELU with EQUIS are linked to the reputation (confirmed by Temponi, 2005), and public image (Palmer & Short, 2008), and the values of AACSB – linked to quality and visibility (Mause, 2008). EQUIS values are grouped as a *special group of schools, research as a crucial part, reputation, “good school which is “international, with quality”, content processes and two complementary accreditations, EQUIS standards as an ISO, benchmarking tool, competitive advantage and legitimacy.* FELU follows the new values that remind “ISO standard” (Brown, 2013) for its improvement, confirming similarity of EFMD to the industrial certification ISO model (Sciglimpaglia et al., 2007).

Second, EQUIS vs AACSB values can be compared in terms of “soft power” in theory (Nye, 1990). EQUIS and AACSB values have only two common elements at FELU: it is a benchmarking and an ISO similar standard. If EQUIS values are more about reputation, the AACSB values are associated with quality and visibility: *framework and quality, visibility, diversity, put you on a map, vehicle of change, and again, quality.* The trend with more attention towards the American values is traceable in FELU (mission-driven), with the new set of goals, mission, vision, strategy and activities (AACSB emphasis), benchmarking tool (AACSB benefit). FELU might have a preference towards AACSB, because it is a much stronger brand in the perception of local environment mentioned by Miles et al. (2016). The

most important advantage of AACSB from the perception of FELU is that it doesn't have an emphasis on internationalisation compared to EQUIS (source: 0034).

Table 83. Propositions P1 & P2 for Public Schools (EQUIS)

Results	FELU (EQUIS, 2006)	GSOM (EQUIS, 2012)
P1	Perception of A values is relatively more important than perception of A. cost .	
Values	Selection of best partners , exchange of professors; special group of schools; research, guests come to speak (for free); reputation; Internationalisation ; like ISO standard; kind of politics; Quality ; competitive advantage, legitimacy ; better service, improvement; new set of goals, mission, strategy, organisational change; corporate relations, benchmarking tool	Legitimacy , Pragmatic & conscious process, experience in the team (from organizational memory), confirmation that we are good, influence of ideology, recognition at the international level, internationally recognised school, meeting standards; Internationalisation , tremendous gift for institution, tool for internal development, orientation for the best practices; Quality , it is sequential process, high level; Approach towards our partners
Pros	Focus on quality , member of the club, Internationalisation , benchmarking; vehicle of change, culture of institutions, process; special group of school, reputation; Legitimacy	High standards; advantage with delicate matter: “not demonstrate their supremacy”, democratic process, teambuilding, international publication, internationalisation of faculty: a big push, quality sign, everyone works very hard, everything has to be translated, critically think, international profile, level to reach, investment project
Cons (Cost)	Stress, expensive, may used for smt. else, high cost & it is rising, cost of infrastructure and labour, changed standards, adding resources, money and efforts, loosely written standards; not clear interpretation; impossible to 10% internationalisation : we thought we have more freedom; foreigners say how we should employ; a lot of resources, tasks, data, information, supported programmes, data, internationalisation of faculty (local regulation); manual work, professors are burdened, cost of A is organisation, producing reports and resources	Disadvantage is internationalisation – the level is very high and it difficult to gain. Different culture, it doesn't bring a heavy value to Diploma, not much value; Less famous and less sustainable; in the case or if we do accreditation only because of accreditation
P2	B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy.	
External force (key)	Legitimacy, because it is quality label, visibility, to be in line with the best schools; As a tool, external change	Legitimacy, competition, international recognition, sales tool; internationalisation; to be in compliance with partners
Forces (F)	IA-7, NO-4, CO-4, MI, LE	LE-4, NO-3, PE-3, IA-2, MI-2, BA-2, CO
Internal decision	The idea was brought by the leader, then original decision came from Senate. We had possibilities to go for the EQUIS, and approached EFMD in 1999;	Participation in EQUIS was included into the Strategic Plan of Development, the big role of leader (Dean), actively participated in EFMD
Decision (D)	CO-2, MI	CO-5, IA-3, NO, MI, BA
Total (F+D)	IA-7; CO-6; NO-4; MI-2; LE -1	CO- 6; IA-5; NO-4; MI-3; BA-3; PE-3; LE-4

Sources: *Content analysis of FELU (Tables 29a, 30a, 31a) and GSOM (Table 61, 62, 63) interviews*

A resistance to EQUIS is present for its internationalisation: “no more than 5% full-time professors to reach, 10% is impossible”. It proves Hawawini (2005) view for FELU, that faculty and internationalisation can be the most challenging criteria, showing cultural change on internationalisation by public schools (Lejeune & Vas, 2009), with the perception of accreditation as a competitive advantage (Ghooi, 2005). The emphasis at FELU has an orientation towards the research knowledge developed in the context of practice,

recommended by AACSB reports (Banerjee & Morley, 2013) and evaluation of research (Verhaegen, 2005). Involvement of the Dean of GSOM (agent of change) in EFMD activities, and, therefore, makes the choice of school for the European EQUIS.

Third, the actions of public B-schools confirm the imposed ‘Western’ neo-liberal educational and management values (Collins, 2015). Public B-schools with EQUIS accreditation have few common values in both schools: to be international, *quality and legitimacy* in both B-schools, but their essence is different. The essential distinction is that GSOM links its values with “*orientation for the best practices*” done for its “*outside partners*”, while FELU emphasizes the choice of “*best partners*” associating accreditation with the “*special group of schools*”. FELU gained accreditation much earlier compared to GSOM, and their characteristics are different, being transformed with the cause of time (6.5 years) or lifespan development. Institution is reaccredited by EQUIS, where the “*output and process*” standards usually tend to be only directly assessed (Prøitz et al., 2004). The local market is aware of the quality of GSOM (with or without EQUIS), but GSOM’s 2020 programme, rankings, and the new regulation stimulate it for publications with partners.

GSOM perceive values as those connected with *organisational memory, influence of ideology and recognition, tool for internal development, orientation for the best practices* (considered as a tool for development and quality being part of “a sequential process”), *high level* and *approach towards partners* as a *pragmatic process*. For GSOM it is legitimacy for its outside partners, rather than for its internal market, it is a new and unknown accreditation for the local market (except competitors and RABE). The internationalisation for students and professors in GSOM are priority tasks, confirmed by the internationalisation model in Europe (Job & Sriraman, 2013). Profit over quality” is a driving force of globalisation where forces show the imperative for internationalisation and ranking (Thietart, 2009). Both public schools see the normative academic values confirmed by Lejeune et al., (2015), quality standards (Marconi, 2013) and differentiator (Nigsch, Schenker-Wicki, 2013). The majorities of values are diverse in public schools, but remain relatively more important than accreditation cost (associated with the stress, time, efforts and money). GSOM doesn’t mention the cost factor, but FELU experts show that accreditation cost is rising.

Fourth, advantages under both accreditations are also identical to the listed values. Advantages of FELU (**P1**) are the focus on quality, and the sense of belongingness to the special “club” with its culture of institutions, where legitimacy. For GSOM advantages are “high” standards; democratic process, teambuilding, international publications advantage with delicate matter, without “their supremacy”. Internationalisation is both pros and cons (**P1**). *Internationalisation* is also a *disadvantage* for both B-schools, because it is highly demanded by international bodies (“*impossible*” to reach 10%), but it is “*dictated*” for FELU. GSOM thinks that it’s difficult to gain the required internationalisation level. On the one hand, the cost of internationalisation is a burden for both institutions: in FELU - for faculty staff and in GSOM –for students. On the other hand, EFMD pays a lot of attention to diversity (Prøitz et al., 2004). This value, “*a distinctive feature of EQUIS related to its European origin*” and “*appreciation for diversity as a source of richness*” (Urgel, 2007, p. 78), is missing from both schools (in *internationalisation* of faculty). GSOM staff has a foreigner on the managerial administrative position, and it tries to recruit new foreign lecturers on a full-time/daily basis. FELU does not have foreigners in administration and the full-time teaching lecturers (only the short-term visiting professors).

Fifth, cost is seen as a perception about the evaluation of efforts, time, resources, and risk. On the one hand, cost in FELU is perceived as quite significant (including the infrastructure, stress, labour, money, resources and a burden for professors), it is still accepted. On the other

hand, the the perception of top management and faculty can be different (even if the formal cost benefit analysis is made), and the logic multiplicity depends on how it is supported within B-schools. Hypothetically, even if the financial and non-financial costs exceed the benefits, it is believed, that Dean still would not make decision to abolish accreditation (re-accreditation) due to the legitimacy mechanisms. In the case of GSOM, the financial cost is not even mentioned, but from our results, it is usually not emphasised in the case of first accreditation both in public and private schools.

Sixth, from Miles, Hazeldine and Munilla (2004), it follows that there was a special mission in the 21st century to propose value increasing enhancements to AACSB re-accreditation standards and processes. These changes were based on goals related to quality assurance, an imperative for continuous improvement, and stakeholder management. We find a confirmation in FELU's set of values (**P1**): quality *"like ISO standard"*, *improvement, corporate relations, and new set of goals related to mission, strategy and organisational change*. If it is a formally written mission under the EQUIS, it will becomes *"clearly defined"* with the goal under the AACSB accreditation. AACSB process, is also similar to the industry's ISO 9000 and ISO14000 by purpose (Miles et al., 2004). It proves Romero (2008), who showed a new demand to universities similar to the industry demand for quality assurance (e.g., TQM, ISO). Indeed, the change is accelerated in the 21st century, because the previous goal of AACSB was to make *"all schools with similar missions and resource bases"* within 10 years of lifespan, later changed to 5 years *"periodic review and assessment of strategic plan"* with the switch from *"outcome driven"* to *"process driven"* with *"accreditation mission and resource base"* (Miles et al., 2004, p. 30). EQUIS might have the same purpose due to competitive strategy for accreditations (with coercive change) or it can adjust a market behaviour due to its competitors (with bandwagon or mimetic changes).

Seventh, EQUIS accreditation reports (1997–2001) are also indicating the degree of future *'uniformity'* in this field (Prøitz et al., 2004). Prøitz, et al. (2004, p. 744) show that *"autonomy from the state"* is something the EQUIS review group views as a considerable advantage. It is also an *additional confirmation*, that the role of the state and its state institutions are to be abolished (under the power of globalisation), and, therefore, the old values are also to be gradually replaced with the new value (**P1**) accepted already as a norm of *"being independent from state"*. The issue of autonomy is raised only by Russian B-schools: by public GSOM and private IMISP on the relationship with the St. Petersburg State University: *"We would like to be independent B-school, independent from the St. Petersburg State University"*. Therefore, the process of separation from the state (for public universities) confirms that the processes of globalisation are spread through the practices of accreditation, even when B-schools do not perceive them in this way.

Eighth, the listed values and competitive advantages (**P1**) of EQUIS in both public B-schools are considered according to Antunes and Thomas (2007, p. 390) as *"a new European order in management education"* due to the Bologna Accord (1999) and the influence of European accreditation agencies (EQUIS – in Europe), because it will *"upset the balance of power"* between the EU and the United States. Cultural values and advantages (differentiation) in B-schools are now being eroded: accreditation bodies are a major factor homogenizing management education around the globe (Thomas, Billsberry, Ambrosini, & Barton, 2014).

Ninth, B-schools perceive accreditation as a certain set of values (**P1**), it is different set of values for each school (with few common features) in public schools. The perception about the set of values and accreditation advantages are more important than its cost. GSOM emphasises the EQUIS legitimacy only for its foreign partners, reducing information asymmetry in outside markets. Its quality is recognised by local competitors and employers, despite the the number of organisations and competitors in population is very high.

P1 is confirmed for Public Schools that the perception of **accreditation values** in B-schools is relatively **more important** than perception of **accreditation cost**.

Proposition P2: B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy (rather than quality);

First of all, the factor of **legitimacy** (P2) for **public** B-schools is associated with external force. On the other hand, legitimacy is also a generalised perception of values and beliefs (Suchman, 1995) or practices infused in values (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). One of the main forces (**P2**) was the Bologna process: Slovenia and Poland joined the Bologna in 1999; next, Croatia joined the process in 2001, and Russia - in 2003. The Bologna strengthened quality assurance, that is why accreditation emerged in 1999. The same order we observe in the practices of gaining accreditation: Slovenian and Polish B-schools are first who apply for accreditation, then Croatian, and the last one - Russian school.

Second, when FELU applied for EQUIS in 2006, the main reason for its legitimacy (**P2**) was associated with *quality, visibility and best schools* (**P1**). From the other hand, EFMD was also interested in bringing its legitimacy, because it needed “*someone from Eastern Europe*” to grant EQUIS (0068) which can be explained by institutional theory. It can also be explained by the idea of neoliberalism, “*indicative of the political character of contemporary Westernisation: it pursues liberalisation but merely acknowledges democracy, where the path to legitimizing the credentials is to use corporate paradigms for evaluation and accreditation in higher education*” (Boyd, 2011, p. 247).

Third, the key forces (**P2**) that push public schools for accreditation are mainly connected with information asymmetry (FELU). Forces for GSOM are the legitimacy for its peers (GSOM) and competition, where performance is important. When FELU gained EQUIS (2006), B-school was not quite known to the external markets. Differently from FELU, GSOM was looking for legitimacy for its international peers that knew B-school already (BA trends are revealed for international partners), and they were sending the strong coercive pressures (CO) for GSOM to gain accreditation for close cooperation. The ideological values are in coercive change (Paccioni, 2008). GSOM refers to “performance”, where accreditation is a legitimacy with “*external signs of quality*” (Bryant, 2013).

Fourth, re-accreditation process (**P2**, external & internal force) in EQUIS accelerates organisational change, or, alternatively, re-accreditation accelerates organisational change and number of reaccreditation processes will bring more changes (with the factor of time). There is a confirmation from EQUIS reports that organisational change in B-education will be “*indicating the degree of future ‘uniformity’ in this field*” (Prøitz et al., 2004, p. 736).

Fifth, in the case of both EQUIS and AACSB (**P2**, more legitimacy) McKee et al. (2005) point out that organisational field is operating in the same domain by the similarity of services offered, with similar structures, activities, facing similar competitive pressures. FELU has both accreditations, and the environment where it operates has similar trends associated with rivals’ bandwagon trends in accreditations. GSOM is the first organisation among B-schools, who introduced the first EQUIS accreditation which is unknown to market. Russian market favours the programme accreditation AMBA or EPAS (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2013). The additional AACSB accreditation in FELU also brings its own impact.

Sixth, the decision for not acquiring AMBA under one Dean, is changed into the favour of Crown accreditation under the new one (*agent of change*). The GSOM is prepared to go further towards triple accreditation as, that proves the legitimacy trend - more accreditations, higher legitimacy. FELU experts also bring critics towards EQUIS accreditation in terms of strategy, regulation and the issues of freedom by FELU. Despite criticism, FELU plans to retain both EQUIS and AACSB accreditations.

Seventh, GSOM gains accreditation “*more for partners*” (coercive change) and believes that accreditation brings higher quality and better performance. It is explained by DiMaggio and Powell (1983, p. 148): “*Early adopters of organisational innovations are commonly driven by a desire to improve performance*, in the case of the first adoption (GSOM case), which is true here for public schools (private schools are more sensitive, need more survival depending on the sources of profit). It is interesting, that GSOM doesn’t do it for legitimacy (P2) purposes for local market, but only for its foreign peers (justified by employers and rival). However, strategies that are rational for individual organisations are not rational by higher number of organisations according to the Institutional theory: “*as an innovation spreads, a threshold is reached beyond which adoption provides legitimacy rather than improves performance*” (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), which is illustrated by FELU’s competitor.

Eight, accreditation as a type of TQM with the assumed quality, is associated with the “*the performance management tool used*” in the higher education system” (HE) (Nemec, 2007). HE itself is a legitimacy (P2), and the legitimacy over its granted diploma is a *double legitimacy*. The stronger TQM tool by status and level (regional: CEE, European, American and global), the higher confirmity it is for having this status for its environment and stakeholders in this sector of HE. TQM tool from the West brought to the Eastern environment through its values (P1), standards, culture and practices would be associated with the higher legitimacy level in CEE (P1, in Europe – with EU level, in the case of the US – with more global practices, not always relevant, but more trustworthy due to its 100 years’ practices and global availability of resources (financial, scientific, professional, etc.).

Ninth, Casile and Davis-Blake (2002) suggested that public organisations are more responsive (than private) to changes in normative environment which is demonstrated in public schools in their more active involvement in research (compared to private) with more active interaction in EQUIS brand. The coercive force is also gradually transformed into normative force through the change of values, mission, policy, curriculum and standards. It is proved in the theory that “*legitimacy is maintained through value adaptation and procedural consistency*” (Durand & McGurie, 2005, p. 188)

Tenth, the internal decision mechanism is also different in public schools: internal force (P2) for accreditation in FELU emerges from the informal leader (ex-minister) and then comes from Senate, and in GSOM – it comes from the formal leader, who had previously participated in EFMD. The internal decision is brought by “the agents of change” (leaders).

Eleventh, accreditation as a recent phenomenon is still perceived at the level of CEE region mainly as a factor of differentiation and legitimacy (P2) by rivals, and never - as a factor of homogeneity. Moreover, FELU applies for AMBA programme accreditation (that has not been planned) with the new Dean which is also gained later, in 2016. GSOM recognises that “Accreditation was legitimacy at all levels” (P2), and shows that the factor of legitimacy is high (LE-4) for its outside partners, driven by external forces for legitimacy. EQUIS is new, unknown to Russian local employers (except competitors, RABE and foreign companies).

Twelfth, accreditation for FELU is perceived as a legitimacy (P2) with information asymmetry trends motivated as an internal tool for external change, and for GSOM – a legitimacy mainly “to be in compliance” with external partners with their coercive push. The dominated forces in FELU are information asymmetry (IA-7) stipulated by its positioning, visibility and coercive forces (CO-6) for its internal change with the Senate decision. A decision that GSOM is becoming an European school is made in 2006 in its Strategic Plan of Development. GSOM follows coercive forces (CO-6) with coercive funding from government and a big role of “the agent of change” (Dean). **P2 is confirmed for Public Schools** that B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy. There are only two examples of public schools in the region of CEE that gain EQUIS accreditation.

PRIVATE B-Schools with AACSB. Concerning **Proposition P1**, perception of AACSB values (to enhance the legitimacy) is more important than the perception of the accreditation cost. We compare P1 and P2 for private schools (with AACSB accreditation) in Table 84. In addition to the arguments for accreditation provided for public schools, we add the new, specific to the private ones.

First, in private B-schools we observe the same peculiarity as in public ones – a set of values is different with the same accreditation. As for AACSB, KU recognises the next practical values: *push for research and consultancy, change in curriculum and amendment to programmes*. The other set of values is important for ZSEM: *image for international students, association with quality, better orientation, brand, prestigious partners*. The value of “continuous improvement” (Miles et al., 2004) is confirmed by both schools.

Second, the diversity in values can be explained by nominal characteristics of private schools and their perceptions. The first distinction between both schools is that ZSEM was recently set up in 2003 already with the idea of AACSB accreditation (gained in 2013), and KU is much older and bigger school which gained this accreditation after having EQUIS, CEEMAN and AMBA accreditations. Second discrepancy is between the countries’ size as well as students’ population (around 2 mln. in Poland and 0.16 mln. in Croatia, “small school with a small population). The third disparity is that KU got accreditation within 3 years, and it was “*very long process*”. ZSEM was with this idea for 10 years, and got it in 2013: waiting for 5 years when it gets first graduates”, which is “*quite a short time*”. The common thing is that both schools have the American AACSB as the first one in their countries and at least, one of them shows clear priority in AACSB, despite being located in Europe.

Third, with reference to advantages, KU lists “*super quality standards*” with *more tolerant approach on local publications, adoption of programmes and syllabus*, and “*quality*” learning vs. “the old-fashioned practice”. Despite the rigorous quality control (AACSB and EQUIS), it is emphasised, the triple accreditation, or quadruple (with CEEMAN) is getting homogeneous. “*It is difficult to differentiate*”, but it gives “*the speed*” and *push strategy*.

Fourth, ZSEM see advantages of AACSB in *improvement of services, international image for students’ attraction, culture of organisational learning and transparency*. KU includes: “*Quality loop vs the old-fashioned practice; Super quality standards, rigorous quality control, Procedures for quality* as an advantages, and ZSEM assesses value of AACSB in the phrase: “*school became associated with quality*”. Many of these advantages are linked to values. In terms of cost (P1), the path toward AACSB accreditation in B-schools involves the substantial direct and indirect costs with the significant commitment of lengthy time and resources (from strategic tasks for mission development, assurance of learning, measure of progress towards the goals, “closing the loops” and other processes (Trifts, 2012).

Fifth, disadvantages are linked to the time, personnel and cost, common for both schools. KU adds much more: from general pressures, stress, and bureaucracy, up to the specifics of compliance with Polish law and AQ/PQ criteria (the most difficult for all CEE B-schools). Note: from 2013 it is cancelled by AACSB). Both schools want to retain AACSB, but in the case of ZSEM, it has a very optimistic view, because it is a first accreditation, and KU has more critical position due to its rich experience. The specifics is that both schools are the first private schools on the local markets awarded with AACSB.

Sixth, in general, KU recognises that AACSB brand is a stronger than EQUIS as suggested by Miles, Grimmer and Franklin (2016), and “*it is more intense than EQUIS*”, and more experienced, in terms of its long-term existence. ZSEM thinks that “*AACSB-accredited is strategically enough to place itself among other schools*”, where “*EQUIS is the next step...*”, and CEEMAN is not in its plans.

Table 84. Propositions P1 & P2 for Private Schools (AACSB International)

Results	KU (AACSB, 2011)	ZSEM (AACSB, 2013)
P1	Perception of A. values is relatively more important than perception of A. cost.	
Values	AACSB is more known outside Europe; Pushes for research & consultancy; Change in curriculum; Number of programmes, amendments to them	School became associated with quality; International image for international students; Prestigious partners can work with us; Brand, Better orientation.
Pros	More tolerant towards local publications; Innovation, Self-motivation, More investment in infrastructure, How programme is adapted; Learning efforts; More practical; It suggests the best effective way, syllabus; Quality loop vs the old-fashioned practice; Super quality standards; It gives students voice, Find the ways to reach students; We attract better/more ambitious students; Having accreditation is a good sign; force school to become bilingual; AACSB requires rigorous quality control; Benchmarking is powerful; More money from students; Procedures for quality; Members of the network, Peer review; We create a value base; Push strategy, Image of luxury	Recognition is now very high; Standards that every school needs; The international image; Faculty's exchange in place; Culture of organisational learning; But it is important to get this accreditation; All universities will follow the same path; Improvement of services; The international students, - it really helps a lot
Cons	Huge time; More intense than EQUIS; You might lose your vision, being involved into standards; AQ/PQ is difficult; It puts pressures; It creates some bureaucracy; It was a long process - 3 years; You are forced to do changes; It is difficult to differentiate 3 institutional accreditations; Cost, human and financial resources; The whole process is risky, difficult to differentiate impact of each accreditation; we have to comply with AACSB and Polish law; rigorous and demanding; Time & stress & significant sum of money - every year is another accreditation;	It takes time (we did it 5 years); Expensive, Cost is disadvantage, Involves people; Croatian students are strong differentiation factor
P2	B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy.	
External forces	We wanted to compete with the West (IA), to use it as a tool (CO), We are also forced (CO) for high quality of the international partner-institutions (BA). AACSB is a reputation (NO), quality assurance (MI). AACSB was something new (BA). Accreditations - differentiate us from other private (NO) and compete with public ones (MI). AACSB is more tolerant towards local publications (PE).	For global economy we need a global education with the same standards - in Europe, America, and Croatia (MI) (modelling is response to uncertainty). There was a strong competition on the market (to improve competitiveness) (MI). AACSB existed for many years (successful practise was copied) (MI).
Forces (F)	CO-2, NO-2, BA-2, MI-2, IA, PE	MI-9; IA-6; BA-5; CO-5; NO-4; LE-3
Internal decision (D)	Rector became the part of AACSB Task force for internationalisation (CO). No one had AACSB here (in this country)	We had a clear goal from the beginning - to be accredited; our curriculum is similar to the American best schools; the decision to join a Club was made from the start
Decision (D)	CO, BA	BA-8, MI-7, CO-7; IA-2; NO
Total (F+D)	CO-3; BA-3; NO-2; MI-2; IA-1; PE	MI-16, BA-13, CO-12, IA-8, NO-5, LE-3

Sources: Content analysis of KU (Tables 41, 42a, 42b, 43a, 43b) and ZSEM (Tables 51, 52a, 52b) interviews

But EFMD is gaining and raising its power, thus, becoming engaged in power bargaining over adaptations of the global order. EQUIS as its part is stronger than Central-European

CEMAN due to its powerful bargaining power in Europe. Accreditation already acts as a quality differentiator as suggested by Zammuto (2008).

Seventh, the private B-schools are becoming rivals to public schools bringing the bandwagon trends with AACSB accreditation. Both public B-schools, rivals to KU confirm that “*we should also have accreditation*” (WSE) and “*out Faculty recognised the problem - we lost partnership with Manheim University that requires a triple accreditation*”. The rival public EFZG, a rival to ZSEM recognises that it “*considered pursuing AACSB (and EQUIS)*”.

Eighth, there is an appearing trend that while the public universities have two assessments, the private universities tend to have three or four assessments (Dattey, Westerheijden & Hofman, 2014). The same case is observed here: KU acquires 4 accreditations already in 2013, while the oldest public FELU has 2 institutional accreditations at that time (AMBA comes later, in 2016). ZSEM applied for accreditation just after having the first graduates in 2008 to attract more students, because private schools are more sensitive (than public) depending on revenues from students as Casile and Davis-Blake (2002) note. Therefore, private schools tend much more than public schools to focus on gaining the institutional legitimacy and political power. According to Wilson and McKiernan (2011), it is substantially achieved through accreditation, mainly ‘triple accreditation’ (EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA) and rankings, and the higher number of accreditations, the higher legitimacy. As Bandelj and Purg (2005, p. 18) comment, “*for educational institutions in countries of transition it is a key for success to make “large-scale transformations to dismantle the centrally planned economic system”*”.

Ninth, as it was noted by KU respondents, the changes that emerge in HE are taking place in the same directions as top accreditations guide them. There is an arising trend that requirement at the national level are becoming homogeneous to the global requirements of accreditation bodies. ZSEM representative says that “*all universities will follow the same path*”, showing that it is known by the professional community, that isomorphism is the expected reality for the majority of B-schools in CEE region. It also meets the goal of AACSB to make *all B-schools “with similar missions and resource bases”* within 5 years (Miles et al., 2004, p. 30). The U.S. provides new opportunities for AACSB International as it expands its role as a source of information, training and networking for management educators (Bandelj & Purg, 2005).

Tenth, as KU respondent comments “*Our policy is to create the image of luxury*”, and accreditations help KU to build this image. ZSEM also makes reference on a very high range of prices, thus, making emphasis on a very expensive education in its schools. Therefore, the policy in private B-schools with AACSB accreditation (and may be others) are focused on the creation of the image for luxury, exceptional and exclusive services.

Eleventh, there are *three differences in values* between **public and private** B-schools. *Firstly*, private B-schools already emerged as a new type of organisation after the fall of state-socialism in post-socialist Europe compared to majority of public B-schools founded prior this break-up, therefore forming the new values. *Secondly*, as it was explained by Bandelj and Purg (2005, p. 9), creation of B-schools in Eastern Europe is “*network ties between founders of private business schools in Eastern Europe and their connections in the West*”, a necessary condition for establishment of B-schools in CEE. The close network is in place for private B-schools between the founders and connections in “West”. *Thirdly*, “*that networking is largely done for the purposes of establishing legitimacy*” (Bandelj & Purg, p. 6). In both cases of private schools, this brand brings its legitimacy in AACSB form.

Twelfth, recognition of values and advantages is more important (preferences for AACSB in ZSEM and its recognition in KU) than the attitude towards accreditation cost associated with

time and resources. Despite criticism (on AQ/PQ and other issues) in the case of KU, it plans to retain both AACSB and Crown accreditation. As Fullan (2007) notices, this process confirms the deep changes in the culture of most organisations when traditional values are changed. The Eastern business culture is in the process of gradually being replaced with the new culture, beliefs and values by “the soft power” coming from the Anglo-Saxon Western culture. AACSB perceives CEE B-schools as those who are 40 years behind their Western counterparts in its quality and performance (0062). Schools with the new cultural values are becoming a factor of homogenizing management education (Thomas et al., 2014). The perception for private schools is AACSB makes them stand at par with international standard. **Proposition P1 is confirmed** that AACSB values are more important than cost.

As for **Proposition P2**, *first*, KU experience strong coercive reasons to implement AACSB accreditation as a tool for school. ZSEM is driven mainly by mimetic and bandwagon forces (MI, BA), mainly because of the global standards used for other successful copied practices.

Second, ZSEM recognises the force and power of AACSB legitimacy: school was set up with the initial goal to be accredited: the external reasons for accreditation had dominated mimetically-based forces. The decision about accreditation was made from the moment of foundation of its school with the help of the “agent of change” (from the local side, - the owner or Dean, and from the USA, - a President of Croatian society, who supported school from the beginning in this direction. The reasons and internal decisions of KU for accreditations (AACSB and EQUIS) are normatively-based: they are associated with reputation, differentiation (AACSB) and international publications, part of brand, communication with older universities, and “accreditation makes it better” (EQUIS).

Third, quality performance (PE) is not clearly listed in ZSEM, but provided in KU. For ZSEM, it is a need for legitimacy “*to ensure school’s survival*” which drives school from the very beginning for the American AACSB. It should be noted that Croatia was not the part of the EU at the time of foundation of ZSEM. Croatia joins the European Union as its 28th member state on 1 July 2013. The analysis shows more mimetic and bandwagon-dominated reasons with the coercively-dominated decision for AACSB accreditation, and not the quality-performance. KU confirms that “*receiving accreditation is legitimisation*”. It is also important fact that the key person of KU becomes “*the agent of change*” – being invited as “*the part of AACSB Task force for internationalisation*”. Therefore, the external reasons of “*soft power*” by Nye (1990), Flesmes and Ebert (2017) is present here.

Fourth, KU is a different case from ZSEM, because it had experience with other accreditations: “*in 1999 we were already number 16 in Europe, because EQUIS was just taking up*”, and the initial motivation was “*a similar recognition, prestige which would give us a better chances to receive the external funding and to recruit better students*” (0037). Thus, besides competitive reasons of its recognition, KU is also linked to the coercive sources of funding (also associated with power), as well as ZSEM that needs to recruit international students. AACSB is a “soft power”, commercial and bargaining power in the form of legitimacy. Private B-schools seek AACSB accreditation to achieve this legitimacy.

Fifth, values are “attraction” according to Nye (1990) via “soft power”, its recognition, a value added activity to operations of B-schools (Halkias, et al., 2009). Forces of legitimacy are “associated with quality” is a factor forced by the peers from the West: it is an American AACSB accreditation which gives more prestige to KU and a factor of survival with its associated quality for ZSEM to raise image with solid reputation (Halkias et al., 2009).

Sixth, both internal decisions were made by the owners of the B-schools, in coercive way, and they that might have much deeper reasoning for AACSB decision, not necessarily

announced. *Finally*, the private organisations have much in common with market organizations, being highly dependent on student revenues with the need for higher legitimacy than public schools that confirms Casile and Davis-Blake (2002) opinion.

Seventh, all isomorphic forces are present for private schools, as well as an additional forces - with IA and BA effects. The needs in IA reduction and LE is obvious in ZSEM compared to KU, because by the time KU gained AACSB, it reduced its IA with other accreditations.

Eight, AACSB is becoming important for private B-schools in CEE and the professional stakeholders (Farmer & Abdelsamad, 2014): rival B-schools, with a mission driven focus (Everard et al., 2013) and the presence of ideology of the US (McKee et al., 2015).

Ninth, AACSB in private schools CEE seek legitimacy continuum (Giesecke, 2006), and the USA “*extends accreditation to a broader part of the continent*” (Haug, 2003) and provide legitimacy, and *bureaucratic forces competing for power and influence*” (Stensaker, 2011), to decrease the shock (Bump, 2009) with the legitimacy that influence competitors (Bitektine, 2008). **Proposition P2 is confirmed:** private schools gain AACSB for legitimacy.

PRIVATE B-SCHOOLS with CEEMAN. IQA (International Quality accreditation) from CEEMAN is the third institutional accreditation for private schools, and its values and forces are listed in Table 85. CEEMAN is related to the institutional regional accreditation by the time of research. By now, its membership has grown far beyond the CEE region. The other peculiarity is that it is not coming from the West, because it is Eastern-based accreditation, located in Slovenia (Bled), and, therefore, probably, it should be different attitude of B-schools located in the East towards this institutional regional accreditation. CEEMAN accreditation is known only to the professional community of schools, it is at regional, “*much lower level*”, than international, being associated with the lower bargaining power.

As for **Proposition P1**, *first*, both B-schools perceive CEEMAN (its IQA) as the regional Central Eastern European accreditation. Values of accreditations are linked to “*a pragmatic shift*”, important for CEE region: “*it is a question of different markets*” for KU, and “*important for the professional society of schools in Russia*” for IMISP.

Second, values of CEEMAN is only “*smallest part*” for KU, it “*doesn't bring a heavy value to Diploma*” for IMISP. Hommel (2009) refers to the fact that CEE B-schools have created a platform with CEEMAN to foster networking as an intermediate step toward AACSB and EQUIS accreditation. Therefore, value is probably contained in its networking, but B-schools might have different expectations.

Third, both private B-schools have difficulties to differentiate CEEMAN. Compared to other accreditations (EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA - for KU, and AMBA - for IMISP), CEEMAN has less impact, influence and values for both schools (at the time of its research). Despite CEEMAN is the only institutional accreditation, both values of CEEMAN and advantages are not among priorities for IMISP (“it is AMBA, that matters for B-school”). KU considers advantages of CEEMAN accreditation as “*news from partners*” and IMISP – as “*general advices*” with “*relative significance*”.

Fourth, disadvantages are that KU has “*less impact from CEEMAN*”, and “*it is difficult to differentiate it*”. IMISP see that it is just “a stamp, a label rather than a tool for improvement”, its positioning, where CEEMAN doesn't promote itself”.

Fifth, there is a growing resistance from IMISP regarding some conditions linked to internationalisation. At present, IMISP is not oriented towards students' internationalisation, because B-school is focused on the local adults working in businesses who attend courses in

the evening time, and it doesn't accept internationalisation criteria. KU doesn't approve all conditions for PRT. *Sixth*, CEEMAN positioning is not understood by private B-schools.

Table 85. Propositions P1 & P2 for Private Schools (CEEMAN)

Results	KU (CEEMAN, 2001)	IMISP (CEEMAN, 1999)
P1	Perception of A. values is relatively more important than perception of it's A.cost.	
Values	CEEMAN is important in this part of the world, in the region of CEE. It is a question of different markets. Every accreditation has its specific meaning.	CEEMAN does not bring a heavy value to Diploma, less famous and less sustainable. For our students it is of secondary importance. We are the local school oriented for the local students, not for the international ones. From the community of B-education, it matters; but from the market point of view, it doesn't. All accreditations mean absolutely nothing for our clients. Now, when government leave the regulations, the accreditations will probably have more meanings.
Pros	We are learning something new from our partners (networking) from Central and Eastern Europe. Our competitor is chasing us with CEEMAN.	The advantages are general: some advices for practice, and (only) some were accepted. Second, we got the sign of quality which brought more weight to the institution. There was no serious importance, because it has very relative significance, and it is at the much lower level than in any other country. Accreditation brings the special meaning when there is international students' society and international Faculty, and when we have to compete with the schools from other countries who cannot survive without international students.
Cons	CEEMAN is just a smallest part compared to AACSB and EQUIS. The students are to be aware about three crowns, but basically, they are not. It was much less impact from CEEMAN. It is difficult to differentiate it. Rejection of conditions for PRT	There are next disadvantages with IQA (CEEMAN): First, it is just a stamp, a label rather than a tool for improvement. Second, problem with the CEEMAN is its positioning. Third, it is a globalisation, - joining CEE to EU. CEEMAN doesn't promote itself. Our clients do not know anything about it. Finally, there is a problem with CEEMAN resources, it is impossible to build up something viable and long-standing on half-amateur basis. Rejections of conditions for internationalisation
P2	B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy.	
External Forces	Each association has its meaning and its market from trademarks, it was strategical. It is a challenge to combine all accreditations, similar to EFMD, It extend activity to other continents, demographic downturn.	It came as a project. Other accreditations are problematic to get, CEEMAN is more flexible, realistic, it played a very active role. To gain opinion of external experts, to look at the market component, a self-esteem
Force (F)	Force BA-3; MI; ISO	MI-4, NO-1, IA-2, CO, PE
Internal Decision	Mr. Kozminski- Honorary Vice-President of CEEMAN, member of EFMD (till 2008), AACSB Committees. It is a challenge, promotional tool; recruitment of better students, chance to get external funding, int. students;	Rector is an active participant of CEEMAN. CEEMAN came with a project, and the decision was made to participate. We had a Dean from Lausanne school who was consulting us. It is kind of legitimization (LE). The status of equal business partner. We wanted to differentiate ourselves from competitors at that time.
Decision D	BA, CO	NO-4; CO-3; MI; IA; LE
Total:	BA-4, MI, CO, ISO	MI-5, NO-5, CO-4, IA-3, PE, LE

Sources: *Content analysis of KU (Table 41, 42a,b,43a,b) and IMISP (Table 70, 71) interviews*

By the time of research CEEMAN moved to emerging markets, thus, leaving its CEE focus, probably it didn't explain clearly its policy. The main criticism from IMISP is about "CEEMAN's resources, its positioning and half-amateur basis": body is changed to global without the required resources and a clear tool for its visible legitimacy. The findings of

Miles, Grimmer and Franklin (2016, p. 114) suggest that as a brand, AACSB is a stronger than EQUIS, and EQUIS is stronger than AMBA. CEEMAN is not perceived as an international brand at the time of research, it is still a regional body, CEEMAN values are expected to be the regional. but its values and ideology are different:

Does it corresponds or not corresponds to our ideology? CEEMAN is the West-oriented towards progress. Russia's growth is coming from conservatism, and it has to be connected with the standards...In some aspects we have to be anti-globalists (IMISP, 0061 respondent).

I wouldn't call it ideological: you change the way how to operate, but the question is whether the different accreditations have the different impact (KU, 0037 respondent).

Seventh, the adult students in IMISP are not aware of CEEMAN, or not interested in its specifics: as working adults they are not interested in internationalisation. It is not relevant for IMISP. The awareness on accreditation might be important for the international young students in KU, but the other triple Crown already provides the inflow of the Bologna mobility students and its internationalisation. This accreditation is not perceived as an important criteria, and it has lower bargaining power (Nye, 1990) compared to other two.

Eighth, the question is why do these B-schools follow CEEMAN accreditation (IQA) if they have other, stronger accreditations? The values of CEEMAN are only half-recognised: KU follows them, because it commenced from IQA, but at present, they “resemble EQUIS standards”. By changing its nature (from regional to international) CEEMAN may incur more risks. As for IMISP, it sees more values in AMBA programme for its students, and CEEMAN values are perceived more as values with its globalisation spread (transfer to emerging markets), focusing on international students. IMISP is targeted only for Russian adults-learning groups, not foreigners and naturally resists globalisation. The expectations connected with the regulation liberalising Russian B-schools, with raising “power of accreditation bodies” also restraint school from the decision to leave CEEMAN, probably.

Ninth, both B-schools are first B-schools in their markets with CEEMAN accreditation (KU in 2001 and IMISP in 1999). The effect of “*first-mover advantage*” (FMA) might be gained initially on a local market associated with leadership, because it came as a project. CEEMAN accreditation was provided as a projects' opportunities funded by the European Union's PHARE and TACIS programmes (Lock, 1999), specially for the B-schools in transition economies. At the time of accreditation, CEEMAN was characterised as “more flexible, realistic and played active role” compared to the present. CEEMAN involved both B-schools in its activities, attracting its owners as “*agents of change*”. There is an assumption that both schools keep accreditation due to the politically-coercive reasons. Despite CEEMAN moved to emerging markets from 2013-14, its name is still associated with Central-Eastern Europe. The new law regulation in Russia (accreditation will matter more) and identical criteria in Poland (by the Ministry of higher education and law) may change the rules of the game. The role of the state and its institutions are gradually changing in line with the values and norms.

Tenth, CEEMAN itself came as an *agent of change* for CEE markets. According to Haertle and Miura (2014), the process is progressing via accreditation incorporating more values (responsibility; sustainability) to be “*eager to seek and maintain accreditation*”. Accreditation is still kept as an additional factor of legitimacy. The possible explanation is that schools keep CEEMAN due to recent change in the regulation supportive to accreditation standards (in Poland they are similar to international standards), and a need in much higher level of protection in private (vs. public) schools.

Proposition P1 (CEEMAN) is neither confirmed, nor denied for both private schools.

Proposition P2: Private B-schools seek CEEMAN to achieve legitimacy.

First, the initial dominated forces for KU are bandwagon (BA) forces, with the reasoning to be on the same market of CEE extending to other places. Forces for IMISP are also mimetically dominated (MI), because it is facilitated as a project with a chance to get opinion of experts on market.

Second, the involvement of KU top-figure as a Honorary Vice-President of CEEMAN is also stipulated by coercive reasoning (CO) with opportunities to get the external funding for project opportunities or students. The decision is provided by the normative (NO) reasoning in IMISP: it is also a consulting opportunities from a Dean of Lausanne B-school, which is also considered as a legitimacy (LE).

Third, it was a first experience for IMISP (1999-2001), and the way to get more prestige and power, with coercive reasoning for project resources, consulting opportunities and differentiation from competitors as a legitimacy. The decision about it has been made as a project opportunity, and the reason behind was to gain a status of equal partner with school's differentiation. At the present, however, CEEMAN accreditation is not known to the Russian clients, the school moved to the different segment of adults. CEEMAN values are diminishing, because it is "a stamp, rather than a tool for improvement", problem with its positioning, resources, "*it is impossible to build up something viable and long-standing*".

Fourth, KU still consider it *strategical, despite "It is a challenge to combine all accreditations, similar to EFMD"*, but because it depends on students in the time of the demographic downturn for students, it keeps it.

Thus, **P2 is confirmed** for KU (+). **P2 for IMISP is neither confirmed, nor denied** (+/-).

Accreditation body's opinion about the forces (**RQ2**) that push CEE schools for accreditation is given in Table 78. **EQUIS** accreditation is present due to the forces (NO, MI, IA, LE), reflecting demand for its brand (NO) in CEE region for legitimacy (LE), recognition of quality (MI), internationalisation (IA). **AACSB** is exposed by improvement process (MI), visible performance (MI), competition, "*you are good – if accredited*" (BA) (contract by which you are accepted). **CEEMAN** provides the view that B-schools seek accreditation to differentiate (from mushrooming schools, NO) and create the generation of leaders (CO). The opinion of EQUIS, AACSB and CEEMAN about CEE schools is a contribution not found in research, and we cover this gap here. There are the following findings:

First, top-accreditation do not list their coercive factors when they talk about forces for their accreditation (Table 78), but only CEEMAN confesses it;

Second, coercive change is becoming visible under the main change (Table 80) in CEE B-schools with accreditation, except CEEMAN,

Third, EQUIS recognises that it is a legitimacy for CEE B-schools (that also meets **P2**),

Fourth, AACSB recognises the bandwagon statement "*you are good, if accredited*".

Fifth, the global top bodies (EQUIS&AACSB) show that they have more bargaining power vs. CEEMAN (limited to normative *differentiation* and coercive *leaders*).

Sixth, top accreditations use institutional isomorphic changes (MI, NO, CO) in their forces with IA (EQUIS) and BA (AACSB).

Seventh, accreditation bodies use "soft power" (Nye, 1990) with "the ability to get what you want through attraction" rather than coercion. At the same time, the interesting feature is noticed: set of values (P1) can be different for schools with the same accreditation.

Thus, in total, **P1 is confirmed**, except for CEEMAN in both cases (it is neither confirmed nor denied), and **P2 is confirmed**, except for IMISP (with CEEMAN: it is neither confirmed nor denied).

4.2 Change and Effects

Discussion follows the same logic as in 4.1, moving to Propositions (**P3**) and (**P4**): **P3**: B-schools enhance isomorphic organisational changes (MI, NO, CO) as a result of accreditation; **P4**: B-schools acquire more isomorphic changes (bandwagon & information asymmetry) as a result of accreditation (**P4a&P4b**). In Table 86 we check the reasons for isomorphic type of change for public B-schools with EQUIS accreditation and its effects.

Table 86. Propositions P3 & P4 for Public schools (EQUIS)

	FELU (EQUIS: 2006)	GSOM (EQUIS: 2012)
P 3	B-schools with accreditation enhance coercive, mimetic and normative changes (ISO)	
RQ3	NO-4; MI -4; CO-2; IA-3; PE-3	IA-7; PE-3; NO -3; MI - 3; BA - 3; CO-1, LE
P3 Results	NO-4, MI-4, CO-2	NO-3, MI-3, CO-1
Explanation for Change:	Stakeholders, Research, Culture, Internationalisation, Strategic area	Students/faculty Internationalisation, EQUIS helps to legitimate, Attraction of resources
P 4	P4a : B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy as a result of bandwagon effects; P4b : B-schools seek international accreditation to reduce information asymmetry effects;	
RQ4	NO-9; MI - 4; CO-5; IA-3; PE-1	NO-5; IA-3; MI-3; CO-2; PE
P4a / P4b	BA-0 Missing Bandwagon / IA-6	BA-3 / IA-10
Explanation:	IA : internationalisation, competition, better relations; labelling effect; BA-0 ,	IA : Internationalisation, We are the first who introduced this accreditation; BA - min
RQ3+RQ4	NO-13, MI-8, CO-7, IA-6, BA-0, PE-4	NO-8; MI-6; CO-3; IA-10; PE-4; BA-3, LE

Source: *Summary results of FELU (Table 32a) and GSOM (Table 64)*

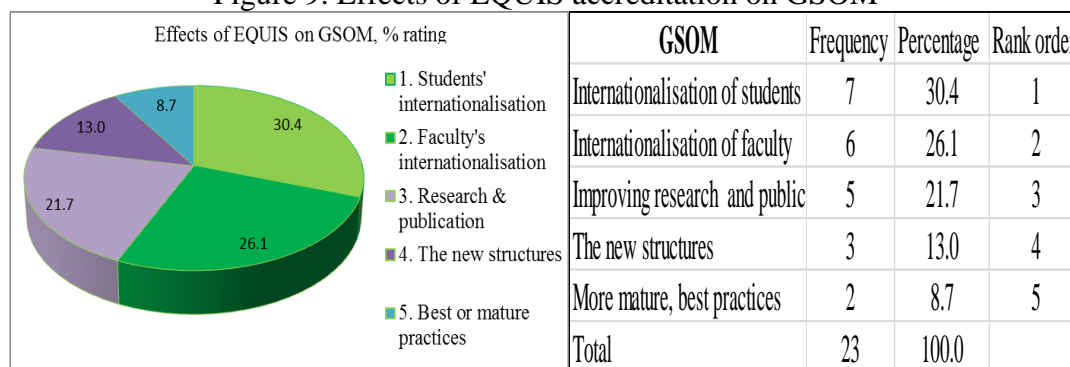
As regards **P3**, *first*, B-schools enhance coercive (CO), mimetic (MI) and normative (NO) changes of EQUIS accreditation with its isomorphic effects. According to theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), all mechanisms of organisational change (CO, NO, MI) are in place, capturing the process of isomorphism, making organisations similar. *Second*, NO trends are dominated connected to the professionalisation for research, mindset and perception in FELU (Figure 8), and in GSOM (Figure 9): the teaching load, emphasis on publications and students' career. MI trends are in partner networks, programs, activities (FELU) and the processes supporting culture (GSOM), for CO – strategic area (FELU) and the raise in the students' number who pay (GSOM) with Matthew effect. Observations for FELU show that there is an investment in the infrastructure of buildings and IT, depicting Red Queen effect. *Third*, according to theory, there are professionalisation aspects that span isomorphism – the growth of professional networks and professional associations, and in this extent, FELU is subject to higher level of isomorphism (Table 28), a higher level of change (re-accreditation), compared to GSOM. The organisational change in FELU is linked to its stakeholders, research in line with the strategic area and culture with internationalisation (faculty research). *Fourth*, Figures 8 and 9 display accreditation effects on changes in schools.

Figure 8. Effects of EQUIS accreditation on FELU



Source: *content analysis of interview, FELU, 2013*

Figure 9. Effects of EQUIS accreditation on GSOM



Source: content analysis of interview, GSOM, 2013

Both public schools place the research and publication - on the 1st place for FELU and 3rd - for GSOM (after internationalisation). Both schools do not list a factor of teaching in their preferences. The factor of internationalisation (30.4%+26.1%=56.5%) is much more important in GSOM, with the preference for students, compared to internationalisation factor (16.7%) in FELU. The mind-set and ambition of FELU is a second keyword by its frequency, more important than internationalisation. Questionnaire shows accreditation effects on strategy (1), faculty (2) and mission (3) in FELU/programmes (3) in GSOM. The same changes demonstrate the various types of NO, MI, CO change confirmed in theory. Thus, **P3 is confirmed with all three key isomorphic changes** (NO, MI, CO).

According to Institutional theory (1983), predictors of isomorphic change were defined with regard to the future change: size, technology change, centralisation of external resources. In the 21st century, when the pace of technological change accelerates, the size of organisations is changing rapidly due to globalisation and internationalisation. The modern research reveals the additional changes emerged as a result of global accreditation practices that became obvious during the last five-seven years. They are demonstrated by the information asymmetry and bandwagon trends with their produced effects (in Table 19).

With respect to **P4a**, FELU doesn't have any bandwagon (BA) effects, because the practice of accreditation was the first one on the national markets of Slovenia. Russia B-schools is another case: BA effects displayed for its foreign partners, not on the national market. There was no "fashion trends" or visible pressures for FELU (the same - for the private KU in Poland: Slovenia and Poland joined the Bologna in 1999, and the Polish KU first earned its EQUIS in 1999, without demonstrating BA effect, Table 43a). FELU approached EFMD in 1999, but earned EQUIS only in 2006. The accession process enabled Slovenia to join the EU in May, 2004 under the favourable conditions as the member state (Orosz, 2014), which was resulted in a three-cycle study structure introduced in 2004. B-school was brought to EQUIS accreditation through the European Quality Improvement project with its Eligibility Application in 2004. One conclusion can be made here: B-schools introducing their accreditation being as the first one in their national markets, do not have bandwagon effects. However, the same schools with the introduced accreditation can spread bandwagon effect to rival schools (who, in their turn, will follow this "fashion" with BA effects).

P4a is not confirmed for FELU for both EQUIS and AACSB (because this practice of accreditation is the first one on the national market of FELU). However, despite GSOM doesn't demonstrate BA trend on the local market, it demonstrates it for foreign partners, although at a minimum. Therefore, **P4a is confirmed for GSOM** (for the outside partners). In terms of **P4b**, both B-schools seek accreditation to reduce information asymmetry effects. FELU search for accreditation due to internationalisation (of faculty and students), visibility (to put B-school on the map), labelling effect, as well as the better relations with the

businesses (by the Steering committee as the EQUIS requirement). GSOM shows the trends to reduce of information asymmetry for partners, attract resources and follow internationalisation of faculty and students coming from abroad: all the information asymmetry's effects (IA). These B-schools demonstrate various effects of EQUIS, but FELU also has AACSB impact with the longer experience of accreditation practices. Therefore, **P4** for **FELU** is only **partly confirmed** (with information asymmetry, but without bandwagon).

P4 is confirmed for **GSOM**, but its bandwagon trends (BA) (**P4a**) are present at a **minimum** level (not on its market, but from its “outside” partners/network). The BA effects are demonstrated towards its outside peers due to their pressures. GSOM seeks accreditation for the information asymmetry (IA) reasons – to attract better students, to recruit foreign faculty with the emphasis on publications. In the case of the first accreditation, the bandwagon trends do not exist in the local market. However, **P4** is confirmed, because B-school has to follow the external pressures of its peers. Bandwagon practice is not in place, despite conditions (regulation, external forces, or “change agents”) are created. In this case public organisations are to be more responsive (vs. private) to changes in normative environment, as explained by Casile and Davis-Blake (2002). Leaders also use EQUIS accreditation to manage organisational changes associated with its goal (Lejeune et al., 2015). Marconi argument (2013) is confirmed about the probability to be included in rankings after AACSB or EQUIS accreditation (GSOM got FT rankings soon). Despite the differences in EQUIS effects for public schools, the results are isomorphic. **P4 is partly confirmed** for **FELU**, **P4** is confirmed for **GSOM** (although **BA** are **minimal**, for outside partners in outside markets).

Next, our discussion is moved to **P3** and **P4** for **private** schools with AACSB. Table 87 summarises the results for private KU and ZSEM B-schools with AACSB accreditation. In Table 87, proposition **P3** results show isomorphic changes (CO, NO, MI). *First*, KU with triple accreditation shows obvious homogeneous trend: it proves the theory that elaboration of professional networks and professional associations (like accreditation bodies) are important sources of homogenisation shown in KU with all changes (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). It also proves Zammuto (2008) with diffusion of accreditations as a differentiator (“the only way to be good is to get accreditation”).

Table 87. Propositions P3 and P4 for Private B-schools (AACSB)

	KU (AACSB: 2011)	ZSEM (AACSB: 2013)
P 3	B-schools with accreditation enhance coercive, mimetic and normative changes (ISO)	
Explanation for Change	Forced for high quality of the international partners; learning from them; Parallel change in HE: the same requirements as A.	Methodology of American best schools, good standards, adjusted curriculum, publishing papers
Results RQ3	CO-14; NO-9; MI-4; PE, IA; BA, ISO	MI-11; NO-10; CO-9; IA-5; PE-2; BA
Results P3	CO-14; NO-9; MI-4	MI-11, NO-10; CO-9
P 4	P4a: B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy as a result of bandwagon effects; P4b: B-schools seek international accreditation to reduce information asymmetry effects;	
Explanation	Homogeneous; similarity AACSB & EQUIS, rankings, brand, international, research; the only way to be good – get A.	International students, competition, the only school accredited with AACSB, where students are brain-washed with AACSB at the time...
Results RQ4	ISO-3; IA-13; MI-3, NO-6; PE-4; BA-4; CO-3; LE	MI-4, NO-4; CO-4, IA-3, PE-2, BA, LE
3.RQ3+RQ4 Isomorphic	CO-17; NO-15; IA-14; MI-7; PE-5; BA-5, ISO-4; LE	MI-15; NO-14; CO-13; IA-8; PE-4; BA-1; LE
Results P4	IA-14; BA-5	IA-8, BA-1

Source: *Summary results of KU (Table 44) and ZSEM (Table 53)*

Second, we observe coercive-dominated change (CO) in KU and mimetic-dominated effects (MI) in ZSEM with other changes (CO, NO). In KU, the coercive dominance (CO) is linked to the fact that “*high quality*” (associated with accreditation) is required by the international partners with the learning process (from the norms and values).

Third, in ZSEM, the mimetic change is associated with the use of methodology of American best schools, “good” standards; other changes related to adjusted curriculum and emphasis on publishing papers with policies and learning outcomes. ZSEM followed the goal to gain AACSB accreditation from the day of its foundation. This makes it different from other schools. Croatia became the 28th EU member country in July 2013, and the American AACSB was gained the same year, with the adoption of American model of management education (Thomas et al., 2014). ZSEM is the example of the only private school in Croatia that is mimicking the American B-education in the European market. *Fourth*, the private schools have similarities to market organisations: dependence on student revenues is much higher in private than in public schools (Casile, 2002), and private schools are more flexible. They are also sensitive to the competition: the number of enrollments and their market values make them dependent on international inflows, and demographic crisis reduces the number of students on markets. *Fifth*, it is interesting that Crown accreditations are pursued primarily by European institutions, whereas US school are rarely AMBA-accredited, and none has triple-crown accreditation (Kaplan, 2014). In the case of KU, it has more than triple accreditations (3 institutional and AMBA). Both private schools indicate that “soft power” of the US accreditation is raising. *Sixth*, Figure 10 indicates more change as a result of AACSB: in KU- with reputation and brand (31.6%), internationalisation, and research.

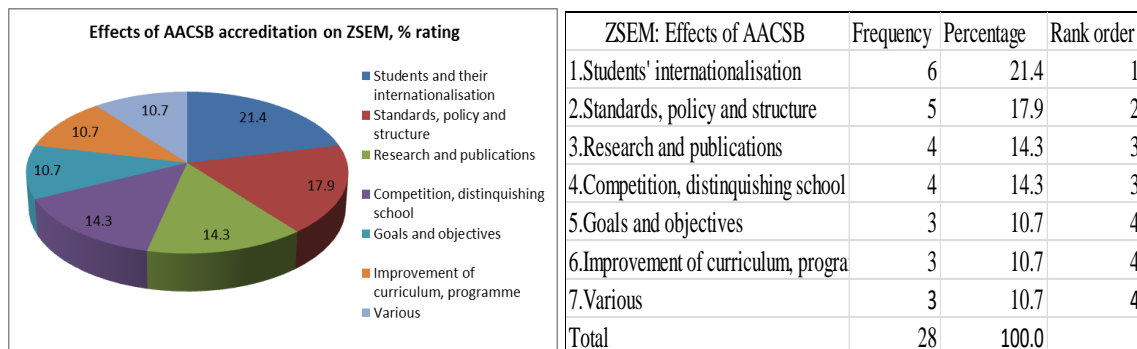
Figure 10. Effects of AACSB on private school (KU)



Source: content analysis of interview, KU, 2013-2014

Figure 11 indicates accreditation effects on ZSEM for students’ internationalisation (21.4%), standards, policy and structure and research with publications.

Figure 11. Effects of AACSB on private school (ZSEM)



Source: content analysis of interview, ZSEM, 2013-2014

Questionnaire shows accreditation impact on Mission (1), Strategy (2), Programme (3) in KU and Faculty (1), Mission (2) and programme (3) in ZSEM.

Seventh, the other interesting changes are also taking place in the environment of Poland and Croatia: it is a “*parallel change in the whole system of higher education*”, very much similar to the changes that are taking place in B-schools with international accreditation’s standards. This change is mentioned by ZSEM in Croatia: “*we are much advanced what is required by the Ministry, and we are at higher level*”. Based on the above discussion, our conclusion is that **P3 is confirmed**: B-schools enhance organisational change (CO, NO, MI) as a result of international accreditation.

P4 is linked to additional isomorphic changes in the form of information asymmetry (IA) and bandwagon (BA) effects. The results (RQ3+RQ4) reflect the spectre of isomorphic change and effects. *First*, as for **P4**, the main bandwagon (BA) trend (**P4a**) are confirmed on the experience in KU. As it is mentioned in KU, “*the only way to be a good school is to get an accreditation*”, moreover, have its “Crown” accreditation and quality students. ZSEM demonstrates BA trend with a goal to gain AACSB from its school’s foundation.

Second, the reduction of Information asymmetry (IA) reasons is present in both schools (**P4b**), but it has double effects in KU (due to the Crown): IA is reduced on the following facts in KU: it wanted to compete with public schools, consultancies and trainers, to get positions in ranking and become the international university, to be more international with more research, building reputation. *Third*, the general effects of AACSB in KU (Figure 10) are seen on more information asymmetry (IA) reasons: Brand, reputation and confidence (31.6%); Internationalisation (15.8%); Research (as well as staff and process) (10.5%). When ZSEM is the only school accredited with AACSB, competitors recognise ZSEM (reduction of IA), and when 100 students from abroad are coming to study there (IA reasons).

Fourth, the change that takes place at the national level of the Ministries both in Croatia and Poland with “parallel change” in HE similar to the changes in B-schools. As soon as “the international best practices” are introduced at the level of regulation, it means that **the institutional change** is in place (Here the other question is raised: How and why this change is introduced at the level of national regulation? Who initiated it?). *Fifth*, Polish market is more competitive and developed, because this country entered the Bologna and became the member of EU much earlier (Poland: 1999/2004 vs. Croatia: 2001/2013). There are three additional features on the market: additional mechanism of selection for B-schools like rankings (showing its importance in Poland), both for the local and international competition. *Next*, the demographic factor is important in Poland. *Last*, besides B-schools, competition also takes place at the level of consultancy and trainers.

In ZSEM accreditation makes effect on students and their internationalisation (21.4%). As a private school ZSEM depends on the financial income from students. Students probably may go to study to the US market, but it is unlikely, that ZSEM will attract many American students. There is an effect of AACSB on standards (17.9%) and research (14.3%). ZSEM is interested in attracting the students from the EU and non-EU countries (CIS), especially at the time when Croatia became the EU member. There is also an effect of “first-mover advantage” (FMA) which is gained on local and regional markets (referred to Technological Leadership) allowing to get some benefits. FMA is also reflected in ZSEM, the only B-school with the top-American accreditation in Croatian market among schools.

P4 proposition is confirmed for private schools with AACSB: there are effects of information asymmetry, and bandwagon listed among the reasons to apply for accreditation. It should be noted that **P4 is not clearly confirmed for EQUIS and CEEMAN** in KU.

Last, we move to the propositions **P3** and **P4** for private schools with the **regional CEEMAN** accreditation (IQA). Table 88 shows the results for KU and IMISP.

Table 88. Propositions P3 and P4 for Private schools (CEEMAN)

	KU (CEEMAN – 2001)	IMISP (CEEMAN-1999)
P3	B-schools with accreditation enhance coercive, mimetic and normative changes (ISO)	
RQ3	ISO-2	NO-2, CO, MI
Explanation for Change	CEEMAN (IQA) was very similar to EFMD (EQUIS). It was not difficult as EQUIS.	New ideas & possibilities, we study content and administration in Bled (2NO). Our strategy didn't allow to move to internationalisation (CO) No obvious changes with CEEMAN (no PE)
P4	P4a: B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy as a result of bandwagon effects; P4b: B-schools seek international accreditation to reduce information asymmetry effects;	
RQ4	BA, ISO	MI-3, NO, IA
P4a / P4b	BA / IA-0 (Missing IA)	BA-0 (Missing BA) / IA
Results RQ (3+4)	ISO-3, BA	MI-4, NO-3, CO, IA
Additional effects	NO-7, CO-3, IA-2, BA, MI, PE (additional effects of AACSB, EQUIS)	0 (only one institutional accreditation), and the additional effects of AMBA are not investigated
Result RQ4	ISO – 3, BA, IA-0	MI-4, NO-3, CO, IA, BA-0
	In case you got all three accreditations, it is much easier (BA). CEEMAN process is similar to EQUIS (ISO), homogeneous ISO. (<i>The effects from other accreditations present: NO-7, CO-3, IA-2, BA, MI, PE</i>)	Justification for peer group (formalisation, MI), standards to be oriented (MI , certain criteria" (MI). label of Quality (IA), We had been re-accredited in 1999, 2004, 2011, but the process didn't bring any direct effects.
Explanation	In the case of CEEMAN accreditation – it is brought as a project (CO), when market is not quite ready without any demand: this change is artificially brought (in accordance with its supply).	

Source: Interviews of KU and IMISP respondents (Tables 44, 72)

First, the most striking effects are an isomorphic effects in KU (with its “Crown” and CEEMAN accreditations), that are shown quite clear confirming that the higher number of accreditations in a B-school, the more isomorphic it is (ISO). Becoming ‘legitimate’ through the accreditation and re-accreditation process, organisational action becomes aligned with (i.e. isomorphic with) its institutional environment (Wilson & McKiernan, 2011). *Second*, under the results in KU it is difficult to show a clear differentiations with NO, MI and CO effects, because they are merged: CEEMAN is “similar to EQUIS”, and it is “not difficult to achieve”. In addition, the presence of the stonger accreditations (AACSB, EQUIS and AMBA) with more “bargaining power” influence the results for CEEMAN. It also proves the theory that it is isomorphic, without separation of CO, MI and NO changes. *Third*, it is noted in KU that “re-accreditation brings even more changes”. In both private B-schools re-accreditation took place (CEEMAN), but whether it is resulted in isomorphic trends, it is still a question. In IMISP CEEMAN influence some strategy, mission and faculty (Table 73) with a strong resistance to internationalisation, not needed for “adult group” of students, and the impact of all accreditations in KU is on mission, strategy and programmes. For IMISP there is “no obvious change with CEEMAN accreditation” related to performance (PE). KU has impact from other accreditations, and it influences the results with CEEMAN. As for **P3** for IMISP, there is minimum mimetic trend due to the absence of market demand.

Proposition P3 is confirmed for KU (indicates the merged isomorphic trends, without separation on MI, NO, CO due to impact of other accreditations), and **P3 is confirmed for IMISP** (with **minimum** MI and CO changes), reflecting less change, and bargaining power.

There are more MI, NO, CO changes in IMISP for **P4**: it is a formal justification (MI) for the label of Quality, with some IA reduction. The rational explanation is when the regional accreditation is coming to the market as project opportunity in the form of market supply,

the information asymmetry (IA) or bandwagon (BA) trends might be missing due to the absence of market demand. However, the regulation introduced in these markets from 2012-13 with more emphasis on any accreditation mechanism, will be changing market in the long-term prospective towards its institutional nature. *Second*, both schools (KU & IMISP) also have AMBA, but its impact is not studied here. Its market demand is quite strong in Russia (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2013), and it can be strong in Poland. There are other accreditations in KU. *Third*, IMISP might use the first-mover advantage in the past (in 1999-2000), but at present, accreditation has (a) weak signals; (b) other accreditation (AMBA is higher evaluated, because market recognises it as international, and the clients are coming to AMBA programmes for this reason); (c) new law is introduced with more emphasis on accreditation (from 2013). *Fourth*, there are missing asymmetry effects (IA) for CEEMAN in KU and bandwagon trends (BA) – in IMISP. CEEMAN emerged as a project opportunity in IMISP, not as a market demand, therefore, the information asymmetry (IA) and bandwagon (BA) effects might be at minimum or missing with the absence of signalling. *Fifth*, for IMISP with one institutional accreditation (and AMBA), we can differentiate NO, CO and MI changes. Weak MI changes are present for **P4** in IQA standards in IMISP (“*for orientation*” and “*certain criteria*”), with ideological disagreements with CEEMAN on mission, strategy, positioning, research and internationalisation. There is no improvement in performance (no PE), mentioned in the case of IMISP, which make organisation more similar without making then more efficient (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Despite IMISP doesn’t recognise any change by CEEMAN, accreditation does bring isomorphic processes (MI, NO, CO) in line with coercive or ideological impact supported in theory (Paccioni et al., 2008). When the purposes of schools are different, there is also a growing resistance (the target group of adult students is not oriented towards internationalisation). However, the new regulation in Russia from September, 2013 restrain schools from accreditation’s exit: “*At this time, when government leaves the regulation, accreditation will have more meanings*”.

As for CEEMAN, **proposition P4** is **partly confirmed** for **KU** (with **P4a**, without P4b: IA missing). **P4** is **partly confirmed** for **IMISP** (without P4a: BA missing, with **P4b**, at minimum IA). The institutional change may emerge (a) as a result of popular practice or (b) the regulation with this practice is in place (or hidden under “good practices”). North (1990) refers to ‘institutional change’ as a change in formal rules through a political process as a result of deliberate actions (in standards, policy and structure).

Questionnaire results show the common effects of accreditation in Table 89. The impact of accreditation in public schools is demonstrated on strategy, faculty and programmes; in private schools - on mission, faculty, programmes/strategy (in IMISP) and teaching.

Table 89. The common effects of Accreditation in B-schools on various factors

B-schools	FELU	KU	ZSEM	GSOM SPbU	IMISP
Country	Slovenia	Poland	Croatia	Russia	
Ownership, Foundation	Public, 1946	Private, 1993	Private, 2003	Public, 2007 (1993)	Private, 1989
Accreditation: Institutional	EQUIS (2006) AACSB (2010)	EQUIS (1999) AACSB (2011) CEEMAN(2001)	AACSB (2013)	EQUIS (2012)	CEEMAN (1999)
Programme	AMBA (2016)	AMBA (2008)		AMBA (2008), EPAS (2008)	AMBA (2006)
Effect on	Strategy	Mission	Mission	Strategy	Mission
	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty
	Programmes	Programmes	Programmes	Programmes	Strategy
Additional:	Leaders	Teaching	Teaching	Competences	Teaching
	Mission	Strategy	Students	Leaders	Leaders

Source: Questionnaire for all B-schools

4.3 Signalling and Institutional Change

In this sub-chapter we discuss results regarding propositions **P5**: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to stakeholders; and **P6**: Institutional change (IC) occurs through the mechanisms of isomorphic organisational (ISO) changes with bandwagon (BA) and information asymmetry's (IA) changes. In Table 90, we first summarise signals from public schools with EQUIS to their stakeholders. Based on the findings, **P5** and **P6** are suggested to be modified.

Table 90. Propositions P5 & P6 for Public schools (EQUIS)

FELU (EQUIS, 2006)	GSOM (EQUIS, 2012)
P5: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to Competitors	
Competitor (FEB)	Competitor (IMISP)
Decision: ECBE (2008), ACBSP (2009), AACSB (member). Difference b/n AACSB & ACBSP: research stand. pedagogic area: more for quality MI .	CEEMAN and EQUIS accreditations do not mean anything for clients. It matter for the community of B-education, but not from the market point of view.
It makes sense for international universities (IA). We decided to approach AACSB (BA) . But ACBSP appeared: we went for it (BA). We also applied for AACSB: we'll have American & ECBE (BA).	GSOM itself (Not accreditation) sends a very clear signals of quality to us (NO , - institution itself, not its accreditation). Our relationship with St. Petersburg State University is delicate and strategic
A.: processes (MI). We can use for AACSB what is for ACBSP, formalize quality management (MI), assurance of learning (IA), it is more AQ/PQ (MI).	Status of equal business partner means to participate in this club (NO) – (in their practices)
MI-4, BA-3, IA-2	NO
Conclusion (competitor)	Conclusion (competitor)
1.A. makes impact on a rival. 2: Quality of students are the same 3. A. advantages are not recognised. 4. Signals are other than «quality», but make impact to rival. 5. P5 different from quality signals	1.A. doesn't make impact on rival and local clients. 2. GSOM quality is recognised. 3. A. means equal status. 4 Signals are not produced: GSOM is known. 5. A is just a confirmation.
P5: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to Employers	
Employers (E1, E2 – Both local)	Employers (E1, E2 – both Foreign)
E1. FELU and Maribor - are equally good standards, but the knowledge is "too boxed" E2. The graduates are the same quality. FELU graduates are missing practical knowledge (NO -)	E1. GSOM is better than other universities. Students' quality correspond and confirm the quality E2. We have the best students. We also hire the highest quality students from the other city, Moscow
E1. Int.accreditation does not mean anything for us: we know them; E2. There is no direct meaning for us. It's helpful for foreign companies, I believe FELU with A. signals – is the EU knowledge (NO)	E1. The intention of school to continue internationalisation that correspond to the dynamic, client-oriented companies. E2. That school has been the top-one, and got additional prestige award. It is signal: corresponds to its quality, requirements (NO)
E1: No clear signal (-); E2: No direct meaning (-)	Local (-), Foreign: E1 (-): E2 (+)
Conclusions	Conclusions
1. B-schools in Slovenia are perceived by the same quality (as FELU) by Employers. Signals to Employers are produced, but they vary – from quality up to the various different signals. Therefore, P5 has to be re-formulated (in terms of "quality")	2. GSOM is recognised as the best B-school. Signals about the quality are produced w/t Accreditation. Local clients do not know EQUIS. The listed foreign companies (E1, E2) are aware of A. They also recognise GSOM quality before EQUIS and after.
P6: IC occurs through the mechanisms of ISO with BA and IA changes	
NO-13, MI-8, CO-7, IA-6, PE4	IA-10, NO-8, MI-6, CO-3, PE4, BA-3, LE
BA are missing (the first-mover)/IA-6	BA are present (for outside foreign partners)/IA-10
Signals with EQUIS to compet.: MI-4, BA-3, IA-2	Signal with EQUIS to competitor: NO (without BA)
P5 and P6 are to be corrected: P5 - for "quality", P6 – for BA spread for competitors	

Sources: content analysis of FELU (Tables 38, 39, 32a) and GSOM (Tables 67, 68, 64) interviews

P5 (Competitors, C). The Competitor of FELU (**FEB**): 1. The perception of competitor about accreditation is quite different from FELU being summarized as “*accreditation doesn’t mean there is any advantage for school*”, with the identical quality of students. Despite advantages for accreditation are not recognised by competitor - “*they are needed only for international universities*”, it applies for 3 accreditations, which means that FELU accreditations with its “*first-mover advantage*” **make impact** on FEB. The American influence is dominated in FEB: it applies for ACBSP (with less time, money and resources), AACSB membership, and European ECBE accreditations, determined by Bandwagon trends (BA); 2. Decision for EQUIS in FEB is not supported due to its high cost, a focus on executive education and the requirements on foreign professors. 3. FELU sends a strong signal with an impact on the strategic decision of FEB for “the similar rankings”. Signals are “different” from “quality signals” with MI, BA and information asymmetry (IA) trends. FELU with both accreditations sends **signalling** to Competitor on professional market. However, this signalling is not just “a quality signalling”, but with much broader signalling, we call it “positive”, meaning that it is a signalling for actions of the closest competitor.

P5 (Employers, E). Local Employers of FELU assess that FELU and its rival have equally good standards, and the graduates are the same quality, but the knowledge is “*too boxed*” (E1) and the graduates are missing some practical knowledge (NO are missing) (E2). International accreditation doesn’t have a special meaning for Employers. E2 thinks it might be helpful for foreign companies: “*I believe, that FELU with accreditation signals to the employers that its graduates are with quality and the EU knowledge*” (with NO signals). The Russian Employers (local) are not aware of accreditation practices; they trust to the reputation of GSOM which already had a high reputation on a local market prior to EQUIS accreditation, and accreditation just re-confirmed its status.

P5 (for FELU): GSOM sends re-confirmation about its quality to professional market with EQUIS (AACSB) accreditations. **P5 is only partly confirmed for Competitor. P5 is not confirmed for Employers of FELU. P6 is partly confirmed** (without Bandwagon trends). Clarifications are needed for P5 and P6, and the **new P5** and **new P6** are to be introduced.

Justification: signalling is produced by B-schools towards its external stakeholders – competitors and employers on its market. The diffusion of accreditation can be demonstrated in the general process, first of all, in professional market (for competitors): **A - BS - Signals to other BS – Change in Rival strategy** (with bandwagon trend)/or **No change in strategy**, where A - accreditation, BS - B-school(s). If change takes place at the rival school with its action in strategy on accreditation (bandwagon trend), then there is an indicator for beginning of institutional change. If there is no produced change in competitor’s strategy on professional market (with bandwagon), therefore, there is no institutional change.

As for Russian market, GSOM with EQUIS **doesn’t push its** Competitor for action. The Competitor of GSOM (**IMISP**) makes comments: 1. Accreditation doesn’t make impact on rival and the local clients: *From the community of business education’s view, (accreditation) matters, but from the market point of view, it does not*. 2. Quality of the GSOM students is recognised as “the best”, because quality of its B-school is known and recognised on market (with or without EQUIS accreditation). On the one hand, the students of both schools (by that time) are related to different “niches”, because IMISP was re-oriented to the business education of the group of adult students, and the competitive Moscow B-schools have to be additionally researched. On the other hand, the representatives of IMISP says: “*Both CEEMAN and EQUIS accreditations do not mean anything for our clients*”. 3. “*In our market, GSOM itself sends a very clear signals of quality to us*”, and signalling from accreditation is about a status of equal business partner (NO trends).

Foreign Employers of GSOM think that students' quality correspond to the high quality level (E1), and E2 also consider a top-Moscow B-schools. GSOM is recognised as a better university than others in its St.Petersburg market. The intention to develop internationalisation corresponds to the dynamic, client-oriented companies (E1). GSOM has always been the top-school, and got additional prestige award (as a confirmation) (E2). Its **signals** correspond to its quality and meet requirements (reflecting NO trends). GSOM accreditation doesn't send any obvious signals of quality to Employers (**P5**), but it reconfirms its own quality. Local employers know GSOM quality, and Foreign employers re-confirm school'quality. Thus, from the Table 90 follows that international accreditation makes impact in Slovenian B-schools, but not in Russian B-schools for their competitors. Accreditation also sends the signals in Slovenian market, but they vary much broader than "quality" signals. **P5** is **partly confirmed** for **GSOM**: B-schools send signals, but not a quality one (signals are produced, but they are "others" than quality) for stakeholders.

P5 new: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool with a **positive** signalling to rival B-schools. **Comments:** First, the findings show signals are different from "quality only"; second, "*positive*" signalling for competitor means "*signalling for actions*", when Competitor adjust its strategy for actions; third, "*positive signalling*" for employers means a positive perception.

P6 new: Institutional change occurs through the mechanisms of isomorphic organisational change with bandwagon and information asymmetry effects, under **the condition** (proviso) that accreditation practice distribute bandwagon effects among rivals.

The logic of the old propositions P5 and P6 and the new P5 and P6 propositions is provided on the example of public B-schools, as a basis of further explanations for private schools.

Conclusions on (P5 & P6) in Public schools: Signals and Institutional change

P5, P6	FELU		Local market	GSOM	Local market
Signalling to Table 90	EQUIS	AACSB	Strong signals to Competitors	EQUIS	No strong signals to Competitors
P5 old Competitor	C+	The same	It makes impact with the change in strategy	C-	It doesn't make impact
P5 old Employer	E1- E2-	The same	Accreditation doesn't send obvious signals to both local employers	E local - E1-, E2+	A. doesn't send signals to local (-), send some signals to foreign (+)
P5 new	C+, E1-, E2+	The same	C+ Make signals on professional market	C-, E1 - E1+E2+	C- No signals on professional market
P6 old Table32a:EQUIS Table32b:AACSB	NO-13; MI-8; CO-7; IA-6; No BA	CO-12; NO-10; MI-2; IA-4 No BA	P6 should be adjusted to 1. BA if it is the case of first A. on its market; 2. BA change in strategy of Competitor	IA-10; NO - 8; MI - 6; CO - 3; BA-3	BA trends are coming from foreign market only (and not from local one)
P6 new	spread	spread	Rival behaviour with BA trends	no spread	Rival behaviour without BA
	With IC (Institutional Change)			Without IC	

P6 old is partly confirmed for FELU (with all isomorphic changes, but without initial bandwagon effects), but school pushes other rivals to copy its practice with bandwagon trend with IC. **P6 new** - Institutional change occurs through the mechanisms of isomorphic organisational change (MI, NO, CO) with bandwagon and information asymmetry effects, under **the condition** (proviso) that accreditation practice distribute bandwagon effects among rivals. **In the case of first practice** of international accreditation on the market, some trends – bandwagon (or mimetic) and/or information asymmetry may be absent due to the absence of the market demand. In this case **P6 new is confirmed for FELU. P6 new is not confirmed for GSOM.**

P6 old is not confirmed for GSOM. Here, the formulation of **P6** for institutional change should be adjusted in relation to bandwagon trends: first, the initial bandwagon effects that are not present (which reflects proposition **P4a**), and the second part, when B-school pushes its rival for bandwagon trend. In Russia, it is required to take more interviews in Moscow competitive B-schools in order to demonstrate a clear impact from EQUIS accreditation. The rival B-schools in Slovenia demonstrate the informed decisions with bandwagon trends with its institutional change in b-education in **P6**, in Russia – it doesn't demonstrate an institutional change: competitor recognises quality signals from EQUIS, but this fact **doesn't make any impact on its competitive** behaviour of its rivals (or one B-school is not sufficient sample to make the judgements in such a big market, but we do not know when the next accreditation takes place, after 4 years since the first Western accreditation, GSOM is still the only school with EQUIS). In the case of institutional change, the bandwagon effects (or information asymmetry) may not always be present, when B-school is **the first-mover** for international accreditation practice among schools in the country.

P5 new for FELU Competitor **is confirmed**, **P5 new** for FELU Employers **is neither confirmed nor denied**. **P5 new** for GSOM competitor **is not confirmed**, because accreditation just re-confirm GSOM quality. **P5 new for GSOM Employers (foreign) are confirmed.**

Thus, both accreditations have the strongest impact on FELU's rival, not on the behaviour of employers. EQUIS doesn't make impact for GSOM rival and local employers, but does send some positive signals to foreign employers, mainly confirmation signals about B-school's quality. Second, bandwagon effects are present in the behaviour of competitor in Slovenia, but not in Russia. Third, EQUIS (and AACSB) accreditation produces impact on Competitor, with the institutional change in Slovenia's market, but not in Russia. We summarise these conclusions for P5 & P6 with EQUIS accreditation, adding AACSB to FELU, because American accreditation makes a strong signal for its rival.

According to the theory, rivals and outsider B-schools distinguish between superior and less-than-superior organisations (Miller et al., 2013). EQUIS is the only brand on these markets that corresponds to high reputation of both public schools, and signalling theory proposes it can be communicated in a variety of ways for brand name and reputation (Walker & Johnson, 2009). It also proves the attempts in public schools towards the long run effect to raise public image and brand awareness for its target groups (Halkias et al., 2009). Table 90 shows that accreditation emit signalling for the competitors in Public schools (Miller et al., 2013). Results do not confirm the theory that accreditation sends a clear job market signal (Kim et al., 1996): it is not obvious for the local employers of both public schools.

Next, we discuss **P5 & P6** for **Private schools** summarising signals for AACSB in Table 91. **P6 old**: Institutional change occurs through all mechanisms of isomorphism according to DiMaggio and Powell (1983) with additional IA and BA changes. According to Table 91 all changes are observed in both private schools KU and ZSEM with AACSB accreditation.

Table 91. Propositions P5 and P6 for Private schools (AACSB)

KU competitors (WSE & FOM, public)	ZSEM competitor (EFZG, public)
P5: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to Competitors	
C1: 3 years ago we discovered (IA)- in order to have stronger position, we should have accreditation (BA); KU is flexible (IA) & small. KU is a best private school out of all others (PE). The best private school with accreditation (MI), the prestige (CO) and good connections (NO), become a member of elite club (NO) & connections (NO). C2: Due to KU campaign (IA), our Faculty recognized we don't have a triple accreditation (BA). We have applied for AACSB (BA), and by the end of 2014 we plan to go with EQUIS (BA)	EFZG made a strategic decision to pursue AACSB and EQUIS (it has programme EPAS). 1. The signals that ZSEM sends us with AACSB are: to get the better students (IA) and general more internationalisation (IA). Through the procedures we are going to improve all institutions (to general external value, BA) – it is the beginning process for ZSEM and for us in order to improve the institution through accreditation (BA) and standards (MI)
1. Perceived advantage of accreditation by WSE: to get foreign students (IA); 2. Perceived advantages of FOM – good partnerships (NO)	Perceived advantages of accreditation by EFZG – improved reputation (NO), distinguish from competitor, a new partnership with top-ranked (MI)
Signals from KU: BA-4, IA-3, NO-3, CO, MI, PE	Signals from ZSEM: BA-2, IA-2, MI
Conclusion (competitor)	Conclusion (competitor)
1. Accreditation makes strong impact – at least for one (FOM) 2: Accreditation is important in Poland 3. Advantages: foreign students and partners (IA)	1. Strong effect of accreditations is recognised. 2. Advantages of accreditation are recognised; 3. Signals are strong with IA, BA, MI trends
P5: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to stakeholders	
4. Strong signals are produced for rivals with at least one strategic decision to apply for AACSB and made a plan for EQUIS (despite it has “other” accreditations like CEEMAN, EFUP, EUA, AMBA)	4. Strong signals are produced for rival school with a strategic decision to apply for accreditations (EQUIS and AACSB) - to get ahead of ZSEM
P5: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to Employers	
Employers (E1- local, E2 - foreign)	Employers (E1, E2, E3, all local)
E1. Plan to work with KU's graduate after its expansion E2. The graduates are better than in public schools, KU – a strong school	E1. doesn't have strong relations with ZSEM, preference for other graduates: from Rijeka or EFZG E2. Cooperates with ZSEM. Higher quality than other. E3. Cooperates when the skills with project management are needed, then it hires. Good opinion
E1. It is a signal for internationalization (IA), the level which is accepted internationally (PE). It also means that the graduates have the knowledge not only in theory, but in practice (NO). E2. Strong school (PE). It makes the university more professional (NO) for us, and when we see that they have A. from international bodies from abroad (IA), policy for the students (CO), learning goals (NO), higher quality of students (PE) are important (IA)	E1. Accreditation is not a big deal, AACSB – is for US, not for CEE region. (-); No obvious signals E2. Neutral (received information from ZSEM brochure (IA) (-/+), New postgraduates – they invite us (IA). We never did the research how much they better than others, but we can see it on the yearly appraisal which is above average (PE). E3. We think it is a certification (MI) of good quality (NO).
IA-3, NO-3, PE-3, CO	1.No clear signals; 2. IA-3, MI, NO, PE
Conclusions	Conclusions
Signals for Competitors: strong signals (+) with the decision making for accreditation. Signals to Employers (local – positive, from foreign company – positive and strong (+))	Signals for Competitors: strong signals (+) with the decision making for accreditations. Signals to Employers: in general are neutral (-, then -/+, and +), depend on specialisation of company
P6: IC occurs through the mechanisms of ISO with BA and IA changes	
CO-17; NO-15; IA-14; MI-7; BA-5, ISO4, PE5, LE	MI-15; NO-14; CO-13; IA-7; BA-2; PE4; LE
IA; BA are present	IA, BA are present

Source: results of KU (Table 44,48) and ZSEM (Table 53, 57) on competitors, 2013

P5 old regarding Competitors. The Competitors of KU (WSE & FOM) and ZSEM (EFZG) are public B-schools in Poland and Croatia. 1. The perception of competitors on accreditation is to follow the same path. FOM applied for AACSB and included EQUIS in

its strategic plan (2014), and WSE recognises: “*we should also have accreditation*” to make position stronger. EFZG in Croatia considers to pursue AACSB and/or EQUIS accreditation. Signals are produced with Bandwagon (BA) trends. 2. The key advantages of accreditation in Poland are the foreign students and partners, for Croatian competitors – the improved reputation and the new partners. The decision for accreditation and rankings is dictated by its environment, competition and market in Poland, by new accreditation trend – in Croatia. The impact of AACSB is stronger in ZSEM: the school has the goal to gain AACSB from its foundation. KU makes the visible effect of isomorphism with all accreditations. 3. KU and ZSEM produce a strong signals oriented on internationalisation and better students. Effects of AACSB accreditation have broader signalling and implications for B-schools.

P5 old for competitors of KU is **confirmed**, **P5 new** for competitors of KU is **confirmed**.

P5 old for competitor is **partly confirmed** for ZSEM (without quality signals), and therefore **P5 new** regarding competitors of ZSEM **are confirmed**.

P5 old for employers of KU is confirmed, **P5 new** for employers of KU is confirmed.

P5 old regarding Employers of ZSEM. Besides information asymmetry signals in both cases, there are indicators of performances and normative trends. At the same time, bandwagon trends are not present here: employers are not directly involved in this process (not like rivals). In Croatian markets the opinions are divided: one employer thinks there is no signal with American accreditation (it is nothing to do with CEE region), the other one associates it with above average performance (PE), the third one - as a certification and good quality (NO). Therefore, **P5 old** for ZSEM employers is **neither confirmed nor denied**. With **P5 new** for ZSEM employers P5 is becoming **partly confirmed**.

The change in **KU and ZSEM** demonstrates the prevalence of all five isomorphic changes and emits positive signals, pushes private and public schools for accreditation with bandwagon trends. Therefore, **IC** is present here, and **P6 old and P6 new are confirmed**, because all institutional isomorphic changes are in place (MI, NO, CO, IA, and BA). **Both private B-schools** (KU and ZSEM) also have the impacts on the behaviour and perception of other B-schools, including public ones with bandwagon trends for their rivals. Therefore, we observe the institutional change with accreditation AACSB in both countries at their national level of business-education.

Finally, **we discuss P5 and P6 for Private schools with CEEMAN**. Table 92 includes signals for with CEEMAN for competitors, employers (P5) with institutional change (P6).

Compared to “seals” AACSB & EQUIS, the regional CEEMAN with IQA is a weaker label. B-schools' preferences are AACSB/EQUIS in Poland and programme AMBA - in Russia. In the case of KU – isomorphic effects are present, similar to EQUIS. It means that CO, NO, MI changes are mixed, however, information asymmetry (IA) is missing. In IMISP case, the key isomorphic changes are present, but bandwagon (BA) is missing. IMISP pays more attention to AMBA/EPAS. In Russia both CEEMAN does not produce clear signalling (even much stronger brands like EQUIS do not send strong signals so far).

Table 92 shows **P5 results** for KU. **KU sends a signal to competitors, and competitors are aware of CEEMAN** (they are accredited or member of CEEMAN), but they refer only to AACSB or EQUIS signalling, and **not to CEEMAN signalling (therefore, we put “?” for P5, because** it is not known which types of signals CEEMAN produces. No obvious signals for competitors and no visible signals for employers, therefore– **P5 old and P5 new is neither confirmed, nor denied for competitors. P5 for employers are negative (-)**, because they are not informed about CEEMAN. **IA is missing for KU and BA is missing - for IMISP for P6. Therefore, P6 old and P6 new is not confirmed without signalling.**

Table 92. Propositions P5 and P6 for Private schools (CEEMAN)

KU competitors (WSE & FOM, public BS)		IMISP competitor (GSOM, public BS)	
P5: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to Competitors			
C1: is aware of CEEMAN. WSE is accredited with CEEMAN (Table 92). Students check – we have accreditation from CEEMAN. C2: is aware of CEEMAN, because it is its member. FOM has 40 majors, pays attention to rankings		A. in Russia is the signal that school is accredited by the certain system, its quality is confirmed by certain pool of professional experts. CEEMAN:no signals, it is different level of A. Even EQUIS-not known. Signals: to decision makers, Ministries	
Conclusion (Signals to Competitors)		Conclusion (Signals to Competitor)	
WSE: NO-3, IA-2, CO, MI, BA, PE;FOM: BA-3, IA		No signals	
P5: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to Employers			
Employers (Sante E1, IKEA E2)		Employers (Tranzas Technologii E1, Sang E2)	
E1 doesn't know CEEMAN, aware of accreditations in general		E1 doesn't know CEEMAN. Opinion_1: programme accreditation is more important.	
E1. Aware of accreditations (top)		E1 doesn't know. Opinion 2: may be need in future	
Conclusions		Conclusions	
Signals are not clear (?), mixed and dominated by stronger accreditations (AACSB, EQUIS). No visible signals for Employers		No obvious signals for competitors and no visible signals for Employers	
P6: IC occurs through the mechanisms of ISO with BA and IA changes			
BA, ISO-3/ IA is missing		MI-3, NO-3, CO, IA/ BA is missing	

Sources: for KU (Tables 44, 48, 49) for IMISP (Tables 72, 74, 75)

Further, we put all Propositions in the Summary Table with Propositions (P) for B-schools:

Propositions	FELU		GSOM	KU			ZSEM	IMISP	
	EQUIS 2006	AACSB 2010	EQUIS 2012	AACSB 2011	EQUIS 1999	Ceeman 2001	AACSB 2013	Ceeman 1999	
P1	+	+	+	+	+	+/-	+	+/-	
P2	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+/-	
P3	+	+	+	+	+(MI-)	+(ISO)	+	+	
P4a (BA)	-	-	+ partners	+	-	+	+	-	
P4b (IA)	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	
P4	-/+	-/+	+	+	-/+	+/-	+	-/+	
P5o C/E	C+ E1- E2 -	C+ E1- E2 -	C- E- E+	+	+	+/- /-	+/-	-/-	
P5n	C+; E1-; E2+		C-; E1+;E2+	C1+; C2+; E1+; E2+		C?; C? E-, E-	C+; E1-; E2+; E3+	C-; E1-; E2-	
P6o	+/-/+	+/-/+	-	+	+	??/-/-	+	-/-	
P6n	spread	spread	no spread	spread	spread	not obvious	spread	no spread	
	With IC		w/t IC	With IC			?	With IC	w/t IC

Abbreviation: + (confirmed), - (not confirmed), +/- (neither confirmed nor denied); Po – Proposition old; Pn-Proposition new, re-written; C-competitor, E-employer; w/t IC – without Institutional Change; ? – is not clear

We summarise here the key findings of this discussion.

P1: Perception of accreditation values in B-schools is relatively more important than perception of accreditation cost. It is confirmed in all public and private schools with AACSB and EQUIS. It is neither confirmed nor denied for private schools with CEEMAN.

P2: B-schools seek accreditation to achieve legitimacy. It is confirmed in all cases, except IMISP with CEEMAN – it is neither confirmed nor denied.

P3: B-schools enhance isomorphic organisational changes (mimetic, normative, coercive) as a result of accreditation; P3 is confirmed with all three key isomorphic changes (NO, MI, CO). In the case of EQUIS accreditation (in KU), MI are missing (or they could be bandwagon), which can be explained that accreditation was introduced in 1999, being first one on the market. In KU case, CEEMAN show the merged isomorphic features ISO due to the availability of four accreditations (in addition to its Crown accreditation).

P4: B-schools acquire more isomorphic changes (bandwagon & information asymmetry) as a result of accreditation; P4 is not always confirmed, because BA and IA trends might be missing in the cases when accreditation is the first one on market and brought artificially (as a project) without market demand. It includes P4a and P4b.

P4a: B-schools seek accreditation as a result of bandwagon effects; In the case of GSOM BA is not available on the local market, but it is brought by the partners (peers/networks) from outside markets.

P4b: B-schools seek accreditation to reduce information asymmetry's effects;

P5 old: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool for B-schools that sends quality signals to stakeholders;

P6 old: Institutional change occurs through the mechanisms of isomorphic organisational changes with bandwagon and information asymmetry's changes. Based on the findings, P5 and P6 are re-written into P5 new and P6 new.

P5 new: Accreditation is a legitimacy tool with a **positive** signalling to rival B-schools.

Comments: First, the findings show signals are different from “quality only”; second, “*positive*” signalling for competitor means “*signalling for actions*”, when Competitor adjust its strategy for actions; third, “*positive signalling*” for employers means a positive perception. The most important in P5 how accreditation signals to its rival school (competitor) in terms of further actions – to follow or not to follow the accreditation trends. P5 is confirmed for the rivals of FELU, KU and ZSEM with AACSB and EQUIS accreditation. P5 is not confirmed for GSOM rival (with EQUIS). P5 is not confirmed or not clear for CEEMAN.

P6 new: Institutional change occurs through the mechanisms of isomorphic organisational change with bandwagon and information asymmetry effects, under **the condition** (proviso) that accreditation practice distribute bandwagon effects among rivals. P6 is confirmed with AACSB and EQUIS except the case in Russia (with EQUIS). CEEMAN doesn't bring the obvious institutional change in the market.

Institutional theory's framework is not usually perceived as a theory of “organisational change”. It has traditionally been used to explain similarity and stability in a field of organisations through the question on why different organisations, operating in very different environments, are becoming similar. Fields of the institutional theory variety have been criticized for lacking a theory of social change, which is coming with the novel forms of organisations (Fligstein, 2013). The new advancement of the institutional theory we use here explain the forces, why organisations go through the process of organisational change, how they are becoming homogeneous, according to conformity rituals to global or bigger institutions, and when organisational change turns into the institutional change.

CONCLUSION

In this PhD dissertation, we intended to respond to a number of research questions related to change surrounded the implementation of the international institutional accreditation. The main aim of this study is to address the lack of any research evidence on what it means to gain the new practices of international accreditation in B-schools in the region of Central and Eastern Europe based on the analysis of literature review. The main gaps in accreditation knowledge are listed in Table 8 (gaps from 16 articles), Table 10 (some questions from 20 dissertations). The gaps are raised in the literature review on top accreditation and the region-specific questions are covered in this PhD thesis. The activities for literature's search (mainly with AACSB) were implemented in the library at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center (REEEC, the U.S. in 2011) with the literature and PhD dissertations' overview from 1913 till 2011 and the Slovenian electronic library of FELU (till 2018). Additional sources for this dissertation stem from the participation in the following various activities, such as:

(1) EDEN (EIASM's Doctoral Education Network) doctoral seminar (Belgium, 2012) on qualitative business research by professors *Päivi Eriksson and Anne Kovalainen* (Finland) and *Silverman* (UK); (2) lectures of the distinguished scholars in the Russian Summer School on Institutional analysis of the Higher School of Economics, Moscow (Russia, 2013) with Scott Masten (University of Michigan), Russell W. Pittman (New Economics School), John Nye (George Mason University), Eshien Chong (Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne), Danila Serra (Southern Methodist University); (3) the overview of CEE trends in the library of KU (2013) and the books gifted by Andrzej Koźmiński, professor of management and the founder of KU; (4) the course "*The Role of Higher Education in the Knowledge Economy*" by prof. Sohail Inayatullah, UNESCO Chair in Futures, Queensland, (Australia, carried out in Bangladesh, 2014); (5) theory development course of Arun Rai, Regents' Professor and Harkins Chair in Information Systems at the Robinson College of Business at Georgia State University (USA, delivered during the FELU's Summer School, 2015); (6) the materials of the Tempus seminars for HE organised by the European Commission (during 2010-2014) for Tempus/Erasmus+ national experts; and (7) the information gained from the individual accreditation project in the Oxford University (Linacre College, UK, 2001) jointly with the Institute Of Financial Services in Canterbury developed for the Tacis banking project and the Banks' Association of Kazakhstan under the great guidance, help and mentorship of *Oliver de Baer*, UK, the Cambridge University's graduate and the Senior Adviser to the EU Commission; (8) the practices of UIB's accreditation (2009-2010), being in charge of the CEEMAN accreditation process on behalf of the business school; in line with (9) the discovering and exciting research carried out on accreditation process in FELU (Slovenia, 2013-2015), IMISP (2013), KU (Poland, 2013), GSOM (Russia, 2014) and ZSEM (Croatia, 2014) - all had additional impacts on preparation of this PhD thesis. The theoretical overview of accreditation practices were prepared based on these materials, articles in English and Russian, reviews, symposia and conferences' papers, viewpoints, exchanges, conceptual papers, literature reviews, case studies, PhD theses, various reports, and the open information from selected Accreditation reports of B-schools (by GSOM, IMISP and KU; FELU didn't provide access to reports and ZSEM was not asked on report's provision).

The institutional change later may or will result to the social change as a result of globalisation imposed by "*control institutions*" (global accreditation bodies) by the order of "*power institutions*". The process starts from the convergence of governance models of higher education systems by global institutions with the abolition of national institutions. The convergence is particularly visible when looking at higher education funding

mechanisms and the number of external quality assurances agencies which has increased sharply in the last 20 years (Vincent-Lancrin & Kärkkäinen, 2009). Central-Eastern European (CEE) and the Eurasian models (Russia: CEE and CIS) are demonstrating different institutional, competitive and social capital's patterns (developed in Table 4) from the Western and American models. The new perspective is the perspective of institutional framework with the use of institutional types of isomorphic changes with a summary of 12 features for each type of organisational change. There are 72 features for 5 types of isomorphic changes and change in the quality performance in business education.

The modern organisations incorporate more organisational isomorphic changes, which include not only the mimetic, normative, coercive changes but also bandwagon and information asymmetry's effects. Mimetic force is coming with the motivation for improvement in performance by copying this practice (mimesis), normative – with the motivation on conformity with values' expectations (“diffused” attraction), coercive – with motivation for conformity with powerful constituencies (power-political and the “diffused” cultural pressures with export activities due to resource dependence by both sides). The difference from mimetic change's motivation is that bandwagon change is brought by environmental forces with social, regulatory or peer's pressures; information asymmetry is motivated by the pressures to present some quality features, and performance – by productivity's outcome stipulated by customers' pressures. The thesis shows how the isomorphic changes are divided and separated with the additional inclusion of bandwagon and information asymmetry trends in the newly accredited schools.

We also see that a power of top institutions (AACSB or EQUIS) is becoming a mechanism of institutional change from the sociological view of Beckert (2010): while it can lead to homogenization it can also support institutional change.

As a result of this dissertation, the change related to the *norms and values* is also becoming the key explanatory element in this thesis. The “effective change” in our research is, *first of all*, the key organisational coercive change; *second*, the elements which depend on the values, norms, culture, and obligations; *third*, the change agents who deliver the “change” to change recipients with the expectation of their response to change. *Finally*, when “the infused” value is becoming the norm and other similar organisations adopt it or, more precisely, *bandwagon it*, the institutional change is then emerging. The further interesting research may lead to the claim that power relations are fundamentally an ideology's matter (values of coercive character with other characteristics) which is a central claim of Marxism. Majority of authors consider accreditation as a general process without theories to be applied to the specifics of CEE organisations. The results presented in this PhD dissertation have a lot of implications for theory and practice of business organisations, in particular, in the business education sector and business organisations. We start from the conclusions below.

The new real-life phenomena described here is business organisations (B-schools) in the region of CEE, with the special characteristics (developed in Table 4, Map of differences for B-schools) in distinctive transitional economies of Europe. The key research questions of this PhD thesis are focused on the effects of international accreditation in B-schools and their perception, why and how the B-schools introduce institutional accreditation and the various changes that emerge as a result of new global practices of business education in the CEE. This process is shown on the sample of all B-schools with AACSB, EQUIS, and CEEMAN accreditations. We conclude by foregrounding some implications for theory and practice, and the directions for future research that stem from this work. This information is important given that the multiple case study analysis of private and public B-schools with the available international accreditation gained from AACSB, EQUIS, and CEEMAN have never been

studied and compared at various levels and on the various groups of stakeholders: Deans, Rectors, Accreditation managers, Faculty members involved into the proces, Administrators, Quality managers, Competitors, Employers and representatives of AACSB, EQUIS and CEEMAN Accreditation bodies in the public and private B-schools of this particular region of Europe, CEE. Thus, the general rules in accreditation are summarised here, which are becoming the key principles of the global accreditation theory:

1. The more accreditations organisation acquires, the more difficult it is to disentangle accreditation effects: they are merging, and as a logical consequence, becoming isomorphic;
2. Organisational changes with mimetic, normative, coercive, bandwagon and information asymmetry's effects are present in the cases of strong global brands (AACSB and EQUIS);
3. Bandwagon and information asymmetry's effects might be missing in the following cases:
 - a) when organisation is the first mover/earlier adapter of accreditation of strong brands in its market;
 - b) when organisation acquires "weaker" accreditation labels (eg., regional accreditations) that do not produce the strong signalling towards the professional and other actors (eg., employers) of the market;
4. Accreditation effects can be disentangled based on the content analysis of the internal interviews with the main actors of this process based on the description of organisational changes developed in the Types of organisational changes with its effects (Table 19) unless they show clearly merged characteristics (ISO) – in the cases of few accreditations (usually more than two);
5. The types of organisational changes include 6 characteristics with 12 effects, where 5 of them (mimetic, normative, coercive, information asymmetry and bandwagon) are isomorphic, and the 6th characteristic - the quality performance's organisational change is the only one which is non-isomorphic one. The 6th characteristic is the specific one adjusted to the Higher Education sector (business education) for the matter of comparison. This characteristic can be replaced and adjusted to different quality-performance characteristics pertinent to other sectors of economy (industries/services);
6. Organisational change can take place without bandwagon or information asymmetry effects in the case of the first-mover or earlier adopter of this practice,
7. Organisational change turns into the institutional change under the following condition: its practices (of accreditation) are being spread across the professional fields; other organisations in the local/regional markets copy this practice through institutional or competitive bandwagon trends (like a domino, infection/virus effects) among the professional organisations.

The B-schools considered in this thesis are the leaders in local markets of their countries. On the global market, however, they are not the leaders, but the followers. B-schools usually do not undertake a cost-benefit analysis to justify the decision about accreditation. B-schools in the region of Central and Eastern Europe take the accreditation either as a business opportunity or follow the suggestions of the formal leader ("agent of change") in their schools. B-schools with accreditation undergo through the key isomorphic change: mimetic, normative, coercive (described in Institutional theory), and additional information asymmetry and bandwagon change with corresponding effects raising as a result of global accreditation practices. After accreditation is gained, B-schools have the following perception about its values: a legitimacy, reputation, members of a club, a tool and a driver for change, international benchmarking, a better research and publishing opportunities, internationalisation of student body leading to the increased enrolments, connected with associated profit from international students. The major part of international students is coming from the B-schools of neighbouring European, CEE or CIS countries. This makes B-schools direct competitors in the conquest of these markets for students. Values are very

important for the private B-schools in their endeavours to compete in their local as well as on their CEE market: they do it quite successfully because they are more mobile and less bureaucratic in their decisions compared to public schools. The internationalisation of student body is becoming the main purpose for private schools in CEE after the legitimacy in the form of accreditation is reached. The only exception is Russian IMISP, which is not interested in internationalisation due to the different model of adult learning. The general trends revealed in the region are:

- Isomorphic effects are becoming more evident as the pathway towards legitimacy;
- The competitive rivals catch up accredited B-schools applying for similar accreditations;
- B-schools in CEE region are younger (about 20-25 years), the level of changes is higher;
- The higher number of institutional top-accreditations, the greater level of organisational change, where one accreditation is a legitimacy for local market, two - for international market and the triple – for power and legitimacy, where each accreditation and re-accreditation speed up the level of change;
- In the case of first-movers with accreditation practice, the initial bandwagon or information asymmetry might be missing, however, other isomorphic changes are present;
- The institutional change takes place in the local market at the time, when competitive schools start reproducing the analogous practices of accreditation with the bandwagon trend;
- This institutional framework is the theoretical underpinning for the accreditation theory that can be applied on other B-schools of CEE regions and business organisations.

The findings of this dissertation with the regional specifics fit well into the framework of institutional theory. While the institutional accreditation shows the general trends of creating isomorphic pressures on B-school's practices, the cases also illustrate differences within the field. This thesis is based on assumptions, that experts answer truthfully and the sample groups are representative of the whole population of B-schools with accreditation (AACSB/EQUIS and CEEMAN).

This dissertation makes **the following contributions to science:**

a. Extending knowledge in quality management practices have been rarely a subject of research on **global accreditation of b-education** presenting a new phenomenon in the 21st century. Many CEE countries are a part of the EU, but this region has not been analysed in research on accreditation practices with theoretical underpinnings. It is an original study, with a highly relevant and pioneering contribution, where the institutional analysis was advanced to the content analysis of organisational change with isomorphic effects (mimetic, normative, coercive, bandwagon and information asymmetry). The findings are based on a content analysis of the examined literature for one century (**1913 till 2017**) in the cross cultural management fields with a reality check of the current knowledge.

b. Examining and explaining the accreditations practices in the current CEE environment with a sample of a **total population** of B-schools with institutional accreditation in the 2013-2014 year is an important empirical contribution. It is a legitimate value-added contribution to current thinking, theory and practice of b-education, the Bologna system and globalisation of b-education. Besides, the comparison with competitive B-schools with other accreditations (ACBSP, ECBE, EPAS, AMBA) are included.

c. Considering **Institutional theory** as a theoretical foundation in multiple cases in line with an information asymmetry, bandwagon effect and signalling theories in the new business global practices is the value added to current knowledge. The global accreditation constitutes the domain of institutional theory as a key part of the explanation of this phenomenon of interest. The concepts of **Forces, Effects, Institutional and Organisational Changes and Signals** in a new context of global accreditation shows the applicability of this conceptual model with re-contextualization of theory. The linkages between the defined concepts

present a logically consistent explanation of the relationships between concepts on why the phenomenon occurs, suggesting the basis for global accreditation theory out of explanatory multiple cases. Signalling theory is expanded in its range of signals (MI, NO, CO, BA, IA).

d. Asking the perception of different stakeholders allow us incorporating various effects of accreditation. We are interested in why and how the B-schools introduce it and what are the changes that emerge as a result of new practices in the CEE. A theoretical contribution includes the **developed propositions** tested in an explanatory way leading to the practical applications of the proposed model. The novelty of contribution includes the idea of institutional change with various directions in theory or practice. The concept of Institutional change is depicted as $IC = F(CO, MI, NO, BA, IA) + F(BA) = F(OC) + F(BA)$.

e. Focusing on accreditation coming from the top-institutional differentiators of **AACSB** and **EQUIS** and the regional **CEEMAN** body is another contribution of the study. Besides the comparison of bodies (AACSB, EQUIS, CEEMAN), there is an attempt to understand their microfoundations that explain a change of institutions as well. The B-schools in this PhD can be classified as the early adopters of EQUIS, AACSB and CEEMAN accreditations in the European higher education's market of CEE. *First*, it is a contribution to B-schools from this region on how they can make an informed decision on accreditation. *Second*, it is a contribution to B-schools located in the EU, and *third* - to B-schools of CEE/CIS countries.

f. Emerging phenomena of global accreditation with exciting opportunities for conducting phenomenon-motivated, theory-based international management research allows developing the new interdisciplinary theories **using cross-national settings** as well as **the national and international stakeholders**. The impact of accreditation in Poland, Russia, Croatia and Slovenia covers a spectre of stakeholders: B-schools, competitors, employers and accreditors on the current and future developments.

g. Summarising, implementing a theoretical description of changes, testing a theory in a new setting of B-schools and differentiating types of organisational changes make these ideas testable in practice. The types of isomorphic changes with their effects can be distinguished conceptually in theory, but it is difficult to empirically disentangle them. **Five organisational types of changes** (with twelve features) show the whole spectre of all effects jointly with the quality performance which are developed, systematised and presented in Table 19 based on the latest research recognises some intangible differences in practices.

h. Developing "**Map of Differences**" (Table 4) also presents their cross-national comparison, where the countries of CEE and CIS are included for the first time. It also constitutes the additional contribution to differentiate the institutional, competitive, social capital and historical differences between the American, European, and CEE B-schools.

i. Considering **several levels of analysis** - the individual level of analysis, we involve the study of experts' perception; at the organisation level of analysis, - organisational culture and change; at the group level of analysis, - the study of group dynamics and norms (competitors, employers, accreditation bodies); and at the national/regional levels, we can observe an institutional change. Comparing isomorphic change with ownership (public; private) in CEE, we can observe how the institutional change is emerging in b-education.

j. Discussing the business practices as private and public organisations can be applied to the quality management practices of **business firms** and other organisations. Confirmation, application, and expansion of an existing model (evaluating the effects of a change in condition; providing an experimental assessment of a specific aspect of a model) will develop the research on business firms with accreditation, certification and global quality management practices.

k. Providing a **framework for research** on B-school accreditation, this thesis introduces a template for studying accreditation in other schools of CEE in the potential new markets of **21 CEE countries** with accreditations in competitive B-schools of this region. B-schools

would benefit from the insights of this analysis. This framework can be applied in a broader area of the quality management research.

l. Referring to methodology, it provide more research methods. It also leads to the new theory for accreditation processes in different research settings and in different countries.

m. Publishing descriptive research of B-schools in CIS countries (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2013) and providing explanatory multiple case study analysis of B-schools with accreditation in Lithuania (Istileulova & Peljhan, 2015) which have been exposed to the peer reviews prior to publication, serve the **preliminary basis for this dissertation**. There are 13 publications – articles, papers on this subject and presentation in the 12th EIASM Workshop on International Management at the Copenhagen Business School: “*The West Meets the East: Institutional Change of Business Schools*”. The website uni-lj.academia.edu/YelenaIstileulova shows more than 2,500 total views on all these publications, including the most read: “*International accreditation and university's rankings of business-education as a tools of quality assurance: comparative analysis of RK with CIS countries and the global trends*” by Istileulova (in Russian, about 700 views) and “*International accreditation of B-schools: global and regional perspectives*” by Istileulova & Peljhan (in English, more than 300 views).

n. Exploring the Central and Eastern Europe for the accrediting bodies is not an easy task due to specifics described and classified in thesis. However, the accreditation bodies will be **penetrating new markets**, including the CEE and CIS regions considering their B-schools for new membership and accreditation for the profit-making and other purposes. More countries of CEE region are also expected to become the part of the EU with the expected similar practices. The various accreditation bodies and experts will benefit from the insights of thesis, which shows the perceptions and results from all actors of a process.

Referring to the recent changes in the EU, with predictable (digital & technological change) and unpredictable one (the Brexit), the accelerated process of global competition at the levels of businesses will be leading to the occurrence of the similar homogeneous processes. These processes will occur in the field of economic, political, ideological and social areas expanding the further controls of different levels of societies. Hence, the types of changes developed here will be predicting how various organisations and firms will be changing. Further research is recommended for the organisations based on the developed changes (Table 19). We suggest that further studies are based on this developed framework.

The dissertation is subject to the following limitations: we do not consider the effects of programme accreditations, and we focus only on B-schools with institutional accreditation.

- B-schools include only top-management teams working on accreditation, and not the other groups (students’ unions, faculty members not involved in accreditation, the newly employed faculty and Alumni); the number of employers-representatives with one representative of each accreditation body is other limitation.

- Informants do not comprise students: their knowledge about accreditation is limited. Their opinions have not yet become the key factor according to the experts’ opinions;

- Accreditation reports of FELU have not been included. The reports from other schools are permitted to be accessed, the information used is related to the ‘open sources’ data;

- The possibility of a retrospective bias (as in the case of CEEMAN) exists because the informers are interviewed about the events and intentions in the past;

- In the case of Russia, the interviews have been carried out and recorded in Russian language, it may raise some slight comparative deficiencies.

The suggestions for **further research** include the B-schools with institutional accreditations from other CEE countries, Asian markets and the business firms that follow TQM practices.

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APPENDICES

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Protocol Questions (Deans, Accreditation Team/Competitor).....	1
Appendix B: Interview Protocol Questions (Employers)	2
Appendix C: Interview Protocol Protocol Questions (Accreditation bodies).....	3
Appendix D: List of Interviews with all B-schools' respondents	4
Appendix E: Questionnaire	5
Appendix F: Summary in Slovenian language/ Daljši povzetek disertacije v slovenskem jeziku.....	8

Appendix A: Interview Protocol Questions (Deans, Accreditation Team)

FORMAT:

- Maximum 1 hour scheduled.
- The questions-and-answer format
- Conversation will be recorded and some notes will be taking
- Would you please state your name for transcript identification? If clarification is required during analysis of the interview, would it be OK to be followed up by email?

QUESTIONS:

1. Please, describe B-school's position in the regulatory/competitive environment in which it operates.
 - How would you also assess the competitive B-schools?
2. In regards to Your B-school's institutional accreditation self-study:
 - a. What was your role in the process?
 - b. Define the timeline of the last accreditation self-study and the amount of time you and your staff personally invested in the self-study process
 - c. What is your overall view of values of Your B-school's accreditations?
3. How do B-school make decisions about International Accreditation?
4. What were the main factors (forces) that influenced B-school to seek accreditation?
 - Did the external environment pushed school (influence from Ministry, market-oriented economy's new trends, political influence: becoming the member of EU)?
 - Do you think that the process of accreditation was a standard response to uncertainty?
 - Was it a need for legitimacy?
 - Was the process of accreditation for quality improvement of Faculty?
 - Did your B-school have in mind any example of B-schools as an example of success?
 - Do you think that the Bologna process also had any impact to seek accreditation?
 - None of the listed (clarify, please, the other factors)?
5. What are the effects of accreditation on your B-school on:
 - Program/Faculty/Clients/Curricular/Physicalinfrastructure/Services' quality?
 - Had all recommendation from the Peer Review Team been accepted?
6. Which changes became obvious as a result of ____accreditation in B-school?
7. How the process of accreditation affects institution over time? Re-accreditation?
8. Which signals does your B-school with ___accreditation send to the outside world?
9. What are the advantages/disadvantages of your institutional accreditation?
10. Do you think that the accreditation that is coming from the Western Europe/US somehow change the values of business school?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol Questions (Employers)

Target group: General Manager; HR Director

FORMAT:

- Maximum 1 hour scheduled.
- The questions-and-answer format
- Conversation will be recorded and some notes will be taking
- Would you please state your name for transcript identification? If clarification is required during analysis of the interview, would it be OK to be followed up by email?

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

1. What is the nature and specifics of your company? In which regulatory, legislative, competitive environment your company operates?
2. In which way does _____ interact with your company?
3. How many graduates approximately you hire each year for your company?
 - a. What is the percentage of graduates coming from _____?
 - b. Which graduates of other B-schools you also hire in your company with the management skills?
 - c. How would you estimate the quality of those graduates with management skills compared to the graduates from the other Business schools? Compare them based on: (or you can do it based on your rating scale)
 - the same quality;
 - better quality;
 - not better quality;
 - worse than the graduates from other business schools
4. How is your company cooperating with _____?
 - a. on research
 - b. on sending the people from company to the training programs
 - c. other types of activity (clarify)
5. What does it mean to have accreditation like _____?
6. Is your company aware of the fact that ___ has received __accreditations? (yes, no)
 - a. If yes, how did you know about this fact?
 - b. What does it mean for your company?
 - c. Which signals does this B-school send with this message of accreditation to your company as the Employer of its graduates?_
 - d. Does this fact have any effect on promotion of B-school's graduates or any other effects?
7. Which skills your company is still lacking from the graduates? Which skills (both hard/soft) would you recommend to the future graduates to practice before they join your company?

Appendix C: Interview Protocol Protocol Questions (Accreditation bodies)

FORMAT:

- Maximum 1 hour scheduled.
- The questions-and-answer format
- Conversation will be recorded and some notes will be taking
- Would you please state your name for transcript identification? If clarification is required during analysis of the interview, would it be OK to be followed up by email?

QUESTIONS:

1. What are the primary functions of _ and the nature of the community served by _?
 - a. In what ways does ___ interact with the business schools?
 - b. How is ___ positioning itself nowadays? What does not work?
 - c. What is your role in this accreditation process for CEE (CIS's b-schools)?
 - d. Please, describe the regulatory and competitive environment CEE in which business schools operate?
2. In regards to _ accreditation for B-schools:
 - a. What is your overall view of institutional accreditation's development?
 - b. What is your vision/thoughts regarding the future of ___?
 - c. What are your strength and weaknesses?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages in CEE's b-schools from your point of view?
4. Why Western accreditation standards do not always fit in Eastern Europe/Russia?
5. What were the main forces that influence B-school in CEE to seek accreditation?
 - a. Does the external environment push school (influence from Ministry, economy's new trends, political influence: becoming the member of EU?
 - b. Do you think that the process of accreditation was a standard response to uncertainty?
 - c. Is it a need for legitimacy or for quality improvement of Faculty?
 - d. Did the Bologna process have any impact for b-schools to seek accreditation?
6. Does accreditation have the effects on b-school in CEE (CIS)?
 - a. Programs, faculty, clients, etc?
 - b. Had all recommendation from ___ been accepted by b-schools?
7. Which changes became obvious as a result of _ accreditation in b-schools?

Appendix D: List of Interviews with all B-schools' respondents

B-schools with international institutional accreditation from CEE				
FELU: 9	KU:11	ZSEM: 8	GSOM:10	IMISP:6
Case 1: Public	Case 2: Private	Case 3: Private	Case 4: Public	Case 5: Private
1. Dean, Dušan Mramor 0033;	1. President, Andrzej K. Koźmiński 0037	1. Dean, Đuro Njavro 0063	1. Dean, Kushch Sergey 0050	1. Rector, Mordovin Sergey Kirillovich 0022
2. 1 st AACSB coordinator, Patricia Kotnik 0029	2. Rector, Witold Bielecki 0039	2. Managing Director, Zoran Barac (Questionnaire)	2. Vice-Rector on Education Management, Fedotov Uriy Vasilievich, 0054	2. Vice-Rector, Ragin Fedor Vladimirovich 0061
3. 2 nd AACSB coordinator, Tomaž Turk 0035	3. Vice-rector, Grzegorz Mazurek 0044	3. Head of office International, Javier Aguayo 0064	3. Accreditation Manager, Christina Ripak 0059	3. Development Director, Pavlov Dmitriy Leonidovich 0021
4. 3 rd AACSB coordinator, Igor Lončarski 0071	4. Department of International Management Pawet Krzyworzeta 0038	4. Assistant administrator, Edda Apfenthaler (Questionnaire)	4. Ex-Deputy Dean, Baranov Igor Nikolayevich 0057	4. Accreditation Expert, Kolchanov Vladimir Borisovich 0023
5. 1 st EQUIS coordinator, Tanja Dmitrović 0032	5. Accreditation team, Center for Games Simulation' Marcin Wardaszko 0041	5. Accreditation team, lecturer Borna Jalšenjak 0611	5. Vice-Rector Advisor, Director of International Relations, Jensen Roberta Manro 0058	5. Head of Research, Shkuratov Sergey Egorovich
6. 2 nd EQUIS coordinator, Nada Zupan 0031	6. Director of International Relations, Valentyna Guminska 0042	6. Co-ordinator of MBA, lecturer, Ivija Jelavić 0066	6. Director of Post-graduations, lecturer Smirnova Mariya Mihailovna 0052	6. TQM, Lecturer Alexander Anatolievich Senko
7. 3 rd EQUIS coordinator, Adriana Rejc Buhovac 0034	7. Accreditation team, financial issues Pawet Mielcarz 0043	7. Lecturer, Katarina Milicic 0072	7. Deputy of Post-Graduation, Kuzmina Xenia Alexeevna 0051	
8. Ex-Dean, Maks Tajnikar 0068	8. Director, Scientific support, Agnieszka Stawska 0001	8. Lecturer, Ana Kustrak Koper 0033	8. HR Manager, Smorodintseva Aurelia Dmitrievna 0055	
9. Quality Assurance, Irena Kržan, 0030	9. Sylwia Rogalska Alumni relations 0002		9. Director of Magistrature, lecturer Krotov Konstantin Viktorovich, 0053	
	10. Accreditation Coordinator, Tomasz Olejniczak; Pyotr, Library 0003		10. Ex-Director of MA, lecturer Garanina Tatiana Alexandrovna 0060	
	11. Accreditation team, Accounting John Mulenga 0004			
Total: 9	Total: 11	Total: 8	Total: 10	Total: 6
The representatives of accreditation bodies: EQUIS - Christian Delporte, AACSB - Thierry Grange, CEEMAN - Milenko Gudić				

Abbreviation: AT: Accreditation Team

Appendix E: Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE: INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATIONS FOR BUSINESS SCHOOLS

In this questionnaire we ask you about experience of your business school about international accreditations. The aim of our research is to see how much they fit to the specific needs of business schools in the Central and Eastern Europe. We would kindly like to ask you to be realistic and objective in assessing your organisation. We ensure **complete anonymity** of the gathered data, which will only be presented on an aggregate level. Please provide answers to all questions even if you feel that they repeat themselves occasionally. If you feel that a certain statement is irrelevant, circle the letter "X" (do not know).

A. General data

Name of the school:

Ownership of the school:

Please circle one

Programmes offered at your school in the year of accreditation (EQUIS/AACSB/CEEMAN)

Multiple responses are possible:

- A. Undergraduate
- B. Masters
- C. MBA
- D. Doctoral
- E. EMBA

- A. State ownership
- B. Private domestic ownership
- C. Mixed, but predominately domestic
- D. Mixed, but predominately foreign
- E. Foreign ownership

Student enrollment in 2013-14 academic year

undergraduate__MBA/Master__DBA/PhD__EMBA

B. International accreditations for business schools

Are you acquainted with the requirements of the following international institutional accreditations? Please tick box

Institutional International Accreditation	AACSB	EQUIS	CEEMAN	Other (write)
Yes, we know its' requirements, because we gained it in _____ year				
We are aware of the requirements of accreditation but not in the details.				
We know this body, but we do not know the requirements				

The final decision about pursuing the international accreditations (EQUIS/AACSB) was made by: (Please circle)

- A Management of the school, together with Faculty Members.
- B Rector.
- C Dean of the school.
- D Owner of the school.
- E Board of Trustees/Steering Committee.
- F Is initiated by the Ministry of Education

Our business school: Please, circle the appropriate answer.

- A B-school considered pursuing accreditation AACSB, EQUIS (underline) because it was in the strategic plan
- B Has also considered pursuing other accreditation _____ in the past, but decided not to go ahead with it.
- C First, our B-school applied for the national accreditation, and then pursued the international accreditation
- D School started from the international accreditation without applying to the national accreditation
- E B-school also had the membership in other associations (national, regional, international), *indicate, please* ___
- F B-school has in its plan to apply for other international accreditations (besides existing), if so, indicate _____
- G B-school's decision for international accreditation was partly influenced by the Ministry of Higher Education
- H B-school's decision was partly influenced by the Bologna process
- I B-school's decision was influenced by the decision of its stakeholders
- J B-school's decision was influenced by the need to improve the quality of Faculty members
- K B-school's decision was influenced by the need in its legitimacy
- L B-school's decision was influenced by the factors of external environment (indicate _____)
- M B-school's decision was influenced by the competition (internal or external, indicate _____)

Are international accreditation issues (pertaining to AACSB/EQUIS) **reflected in organisational structure?** Please tick

	AACSB	EQUIS	other
Yes, one of our employees works on the following accreditation(s).			
Yes, we have a unit that employs more than one person, who works on			
No, we don't have staff employed just for the purpose of the accreditation.			

C. YOUR VIEW OF ADVANTAGES OF INTERNATIONAL AACSB/EQUIS ACCREDITATIONS

(ESTIMATED) ADVANTAGES OF INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATIONS AACSB OR EQUIS (INDICATE WHICH)

Please rank them by importance (1 = the most important, 10 = the least important)

	EQUIS	AACSB
1. Improved reputation of the school on the domestic markets.		
2. Improved reputation of the school on the international markets of higher education.		
3. To increase the value of our assets and brand (nationally or internationally), please, indicate		
4. The competition on the markets on which we offer study programs is strong and international accreditation would distinguish our school from the competitors.		
5. Having an international accreditation is a signaling strategy for the students that the school is of high quality, thereby attracting students		
6. Having an international accreditation is a signaling strategy for the faculty members that the school is of high quality, thereby attracting highly qualified staff.		
7. Pursuing an international accreditation is a way to introduce a quality improving strategy to the school, making it a better business school (in terms of research, teaching and other processes)		
8. Having an international accreditation provides the B-school with the increased access or eligibility for receipt of private and federal funding		
9. Having an international accreditation provide B-school with a protection from external forces		
10. Accreditation provides new partnership with top ranked		

If you are in the process of pursuing accreditation, which stage you are in (please, tick the appropriate)

- in the process of re-accreditation for _____
- just recently got the stage of re-accreditation for EQUIS/AACSB (indicate which) _____ in _____ year
- how many stages of re-accreditation of EQUIS/AACSB have already taken the place in your B-School? _____

D. SHORTCOMINGS OF INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATIONS: Your view of shortcomings of international accreditations (AACSB, EQUIS)

(ESTIMATED) SHORTCOMINGS OF ACCREDITATIONS PLEASE CIRCLE ONE CHOICE FOR EACH STATEMENTS

(1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree; X = do not know)

1. The process of pursuing the accreditation is very time-consuming.	2	3	4	5	X
2. The process requires considerable human resources to be involved.	2	3	4	5	X
3. The process requires a considerable investment.	2	3	4	5	X
4. Accreditations require very high standards of internationally recognized academic research which exceed the expectations of the school's stakeholders (students, businesses, and government).	2	3	4	5	X
5. The preparation stage of international accreditations slows down the pursuit of other goals	2	3	4	5	X
6. The process requires additional investments for technological process, changes in org. structure.	2	3	4	5	X
7. The process is long, but the outcome is uncertain.	2	3	4	5	X
8. Accreditation raises the price of tuition for B-school	2	3	4	5	X
9. Accreditation has never been able to define quality education except specific criteria	2	3	4	5	X
10. Accreditation operates as social enterprise, not in public interests, discouraging innovation, experimentation	2	3	4	5	X

E. THERE IS A STRONG EFFECT OF ACCREDITATION (AACSB, EQUIS) ON

(1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree; X = do not know)

1.	Programmes	1	2	3	4	5	X
2.	Students	1	2	3	4	5	X
3.	Faculty	1	2	3	4	5	X
4.	Teaching	1	2	3	4	5	X
5.	Leadership	1	2	3	4	5	X
6.	Increase in Income of Faculty members	1	2	3	4	5	X
7.	Competence, Employees skills	1	2	3	4	5	X
8.	Strategy	1	2	3	4	5	X
9.	Mission	1	2	3	4	5	X

F. THE NECESSARY CHANGES NEEDED TO ACHIEVE (RE)-ACCREDITATION (AACSB, EQUIS)

Please circle one choice for each of the following statements.

(A = These changes are not necessary, B = We still need to do this, C = We have already implemented this; X = do not know)

1.	A review of the school's mission statement	A	B	C	X
2.	Review of the mission from school's stakeholders (faculty, students, employers)	A	B	C	X
3.	A substantial increase in the quality of publications of our faculty members.	A	B	C	X
4.	Share of full-time employees needs to be increased.	A	B	C	X
5.	Student-faculty ratio is too high to assure the quality of teaching.	A	B	C	X
6.	Our entrance requirements need to become stricter - so only high quality graduates will be produced.	A	B	C	X
7.	Internationalisation of our student body.	A	B	C	X
8.	Internationalisation of our faculty members.	A	B	C	X
9.	Determining the learning goals of the programs.	A	B	C	X
10.	Introducing the measurement whether the learning goals of the programs are achieved.	A	B	C	X
11.	Introducing systematic process in curriculum management in order to incorporate feedback into improvements of courses and programs ("closing the loop").	A	B	C	X
12.	Improving the connections with the business community.	A	B	C	X
13.	Strengthen our financial resources to carry out improvement efforts that are needed to reach the accreditations' standards	A	B	C	X
14.	Sharing of knowledge	A	B	C	X
15.	Improved quality of teaching	A	B	C	X

THANKS A LOT FOR YOUR ANSWERS!

Vplivi mednarodne akreditacije na institucionalne spremembe v poslovnih šolah

Sheme kakovosti na področju akreditacij pomenijo nov pojav na globalnem trgu visokega šolstva v 21. stoletju. Dekani poslovnih šol so uvrstili akreditacijo kot enega najpomembnejših dogodkov na področju poslovnega izobraževanja v zadnjih 20. letih, takoj po globalizaciji. Sledi logično vprašanje, zakaj so vsi dekani poslovnih šol iz Evrope, ZDA / Kanade, Avstralije in Azije izbrali ravno mednarodno akreditacijo kot ključno temo razprav? Kljub velikemu porastu števila podeljenih akreditacij, je bilo do sedaj narejenih le malo raziskav s tega področja. Odsotnost ustreznih raziskav in nezavedanje realnosti vidnih pojavov najbolj uveljavljenih akreditacij vodi do naslednjih vprašanj:

- Zakaj želijo poslovne šole iz Srednje in Vzhodne Evrope (SVE) pridobiti mednarodno akreditacijo?
- Kako poslovne šole dojemajo mednarodno akreditacijo?
- Kakšne organizacijske spremembe se zgodijo v poslovnih šolah kot posledica mednarodne akreditacije?

Namen in cilji disertacije

Namen doktorske disertacije je prispevati h globalni razpravi o kakovosti in akreditacijah poslovnih šol v SVE, s pomočjo preučevanja več primerov poslovnih šol z mednarodno institucionalno akreditacijo ter s tem nadalje razviti institucionalno teorijo, ki je osnova našega proučevanja. Glavna motivacija za disertacijo je v razumevanju globalne prakse akreditacije, ki se hitro širi v Evropi, ter možnosti njenega pojasnjevanja skozi objektivno institucionalno teorijo s pomočjo vprašanj 'kako', 'zakaj' in 'kaj'.

Obravnavana tema je zelo pomembna zaradi pred kratkim nastalih praks uveljavljanja mednarodnih akreditacij v regiji SVE, ki vključuje tudi nekatere države Skupnosti neodvisnih držav (v nadaljnjem besedilu: SND), kot je Rusija. Regija SVE vključuje 21 nekdanjih socialističnih držav ter se razteza vzhodno od meje z Nemčijo in južno od Baltskega morja do meje z Grčijo. Države SVE so: Estonija, Latvija, Litva, Češka republika, Slovaška, Madžarska, Poljska, Romunija, Bolgarija, Slovenija, Hrvaška, Albanija, Bosna in Hercegovina, Kosovo, Makedonija, Črna gora, Srbija, Belorusija, Moldavija, Ukrajina in Rusija. V disertaciji se osredotočamo na štiri države: Slovenijo, Hrvaško, Poljsko in Rusijo, s skupno populacijo 188,34 mio prebivalcev (od Slovenije z 2,06 mio prebivalcev do Rusije s 143,5 mio prebivalcev v letu 2013). V času raziskovanja za namene disertacije so bile namreč prakse mednarodnih AACSB in EQUIS akreditacij prisotne le v javnih in zasebnih

poslovnih šolah v omenjenih štirih državah SVE. Sedanja dinamika nakazuje, da se bodo prakse akreditiranja poslovnih šol širile še naprej po regiji.

Cilji disertacije izhajajo iz njenega namena. Glavni cilj je razložiti pojavljajoče se prakse akreditacije skozi prizmo sprememb v poslovnih šolah z uporabo teoretičnega okvirja institucionalne teorije. Podrobnejši cilji so naslednji:

- raziskati trende in silnice, ki potiskajo poslovne šole k prijavam za pridobitev globalnih akreditacij;
- predstaviti ugotovitve o izkušnjah poslovnih šol z institucionalno akreditacijo;
- predstaviti posebnosti in razlike poslovnih šol iz SVE in jih med seboj primerjati;
- razpravljati o ugotovitvah glede organizacijskih sprememb v javnih in zasebnih poslovnih šolah, ki nastanejo kot posledica pridobivanja akreditacije, z upoštevanjem vidikov različnih interesnih skupin;
- razpravljati o institucionalnih spremembah, ki obdajajo uvedbo akreditacije EQUIS, AACSB in drugih (npr. CEEMAN) v praksah poslovnih šol;
- oceniti, ali so prakse uvedbe mednarodne institucionalne akreditacije v skladu s predstavljenimi teorijami;
- nadgraditi institucionalno teorijo z razlago institucionalne spremembe delovanja poslovnih šol iz SVE ter predstaviti zasnovo teorije akreditacije.

Področje in kontekst raziskovanja predstavljamo glede na naslednje dimenzije: a. perspektiva (institucionalna), b. fokus (sprememba), c. raven (posameznik, organizacija, država, regija SVE), in d. območje (Slovenija, Poljska, Hrvaška in Rusija). Raziskovalna vprašanja (RV) so navedena v analitičnem in raziskovalnem smislu vprašanj Zakaj-Kako-Kaj. Tako pričujoča raziskava z odgovori na spodaj navedena vprašanja prispeva k znanju, ki je potrebno za raziskovanje in razlaganje omenjenega področja proučevanja.

RV1: Kako poslovne šole iz SVE zaznavajo mednarodno akreditacijo?

RV2: Zakaj poslovne šole iz Vzhoda iščejo zahodno mednarodno akreditacijo?

RV3: Kakšne so organizacijske spremembe kot posledica akreditacije v poslovnih šolah iz SVE?

RV4: Kakšni so učinki procesa pridobivanja mednarodne akreditacije v poslovnih šolah iz SVE?

RV5: Ali poslovne šole z akreditacijo pošiljajo katerekoli signale svojim interesnim skupinam?

RV6: Kakšna institucionalna sprememba se dogaja v poslovnih šolah iz SVE?

Vprašanja RV1, RV2 in RV5 so razširjena z dodatnimi podvprašanji z namenom obogatitve razprave, kar z metodološkega vidika pripomore k nadgradnji teorije:

RV1: Kako poslovne šole iz SVE zaznavajo mednarodno akreditacijo?

- Kakšne so vrednosti akreditacije?

- Kakšne so prednosti in slabosti akreditacije?

RV2: Zakaj vzhodne poslovne šole iščejo zahodno mednarodno akreditacijo?

- Katere silnice vplivajo na poslovne šole, da zaprosijo za akreditacijo? (zunanji razlogi)
- Kako je sprejeta odločitev o akreditaciji? (notranji razlogi)

RV5: Ali poslovne šole z akreditacijo pošiljajo katerekoli signale svojim interesnim skupinam?

- Ali ima akreditacija vpliv na interesne skupine (konkurente in delodajalce) poslovne šole?
- Kakšno je mnenje globalnih organizacij, ki podeljujejo akreditacije, o akreditacijah poslovnih šol iz SVE?

Na podlagi raziskovalnih vprašanj (RV) in pregleda literature smo razvili naslednje propozicije (P), ki jih preverjamo v naši raziskavi:

P1: Zaznane vrednosti akreditacije so relativno bolj pomembne kot od zaznanih stroškov akreditacije;

P2: Poslovne šole zaprosijo za akreditacijo zaradi doseganja legitimnosti;

P3: Poslovne šole zaradi akreditacije vpeljejo več izomorfnih organizacijskih sprememb (mimetičnih, normativnih in prisilnih);

P4: Akreditacija v poslovnih šolah povzroči dodatne izomorfne učinke;

P4a: Poslovne šole zaprosijo za akreditacijo zaradi učinkov 'sledenja večini';

P4b: Poslovne šole zaprosijo za akreditacijo zaradi učinkov zmanjševanja asimetrije informacij;

P5: Akreditacija je za poslovne šole orodje doseganja legitimnosti, ki interesnim skupinam sporoča signale kakovosti;

P6: Institucionalna sprememba nastane skozi mehanizme izomorfnih organizacijskih sprememb ter zaradi sprememb, ki so posledica sledenja večini in zmanjševanja asimetrije informacij.

Raziskovalne implikacije pričujoče raziskave so v poudarjanju zaznave silnic, učinkov, organizacijskih in institucionalnih sprememb v okvirih institucionalne teorije ter s tem v predstavljanju osnove za teorijo akreditacije v organizacijah. Študija vsebuje tudi mnenja interesnih skupin, omejenih na konkurente, delodajalce in akreditacijske organe. Vprašanja Zakaj-Kako-Kaj so podlaga psihološki, ekonomski in družbeni dinamiki, s katero razložimo izbor konstruktov (silnice, učinki, spremembe), ki so med seboj vzročno-posledično povezani. Razlaga omenjenih povezav je osnova predlaganih propozicij in med seboj povezuje sestavne dele konceptualnega modela. Študija ima tudi praktične implikacije, predvsem za poslovno izobraževanje, saj sta AACSB in EQUIS akreditaciji že postali globalni fenomen, CEEMAN akreditacija pa se tudi vse bolj širi.

Izvirnost raziskave je v novem pristopu k študiju vplivov pridobivanja mednarodnih institucionalnih akreditacij ter k analizi posledic uvedbe globalnih akreditacij za razvoj teorije akreditacije 'tranzicijskih držav' v perspektivi institucionalne teorije. Uporabljamo raziskovalno študijo več primerov iz celotne populacije šol iz SVE v času poteka raziskave, kar je pomembna dodana vrednost raziskave z vidika vseh nadaljnjih raziskav s področja proučevanja disertacije in širše.

Vsebina disertacije

Struktura disertacije obsega naslednja poglavja: Uvod, Pregled literature, Metodologija, Rezultati študije primerov, Razprava in Sklep. Po Uvodu sledi Pregled literature (prvo poglavje), kjer v podpoglavju 1.1 Globalne silnice v poslovnem izobraževanju predstavimo zunanje globalne silnice in okolje, ki oblikuje področje visokega šolstva. Podpoglavje 1.1.1 obravnava silnice akreditacije v regiji SVE. V podpoglavju 1.1.2 razložimo, v čem so si poslovne šole iz SVE in SND podobne in različne v mednarodni primerjavi s šolami iz ZDA in EU. V podpoglavju 1.2 Akreditacija: sprememba zaradi doseganja kakovosti ali legitimnosti najprej govorimo o obvladovanju kakovosti kot o osrednjem vidiku za poslovne šole iz SVE. Poslovne šole SVE opišemo v primerjalnem kontekstu glede na poslovne šole iz ZDA in EU s pomočjo razvitega nabora institucionalnih značilnosti. V podpoglavju 1.3 Učinki akreditacije opišemo učinke posamezne akreditacije na javne in zasebne šole. V podpoglavju 1.4 Okvir institucionalne teorije razložimo nastanek organizacijskih in institucionalnih sprememb (podpoglavje 1.4.1) kot rezultat procesa pridobivanja akreditacije ter relevantnost institucionalne teorije za proučevano področje (podpoglavje 1.4.2), kjer obravnavamo izomorfne učinke (podpoglavje 1.4.2.1) ter učinke zmanjševanja asimetrije informacij in sledenja večine (podpoglavje 1.4.2.2). Na koncu kot rezultat pregleda literature predstavimo naš konceptualni model s propozicijami (podpoglavje 1.4.2.3). Sledi drugo poglavje Metodologija, kjer predstavimo kriterije za izbor poslovnih šol, ki predstavljajo študije primerov (podpoglavje 2.1) in raziskovano področje (podpoglavje 2.2) s petimi poslovnimi šolami, ki so imele v obdobju 2013-14 institucionalno akreditacijo. Tretje poglavje je Rezultati študij primerov, kjer predstavljamo izsledke raziskave po posameznih primerih šol: Ekonomska fakulteta Univerze v Ljubljani (FELU; podpoglavje 3.1), Kozminski University (KU; podpoglavje 3.2), Zagreb School of Economics and Management (ZSEM; podpoglavje 3.3), Graduate School of Management (GSOM; podpoglavje 3.4) in International Management Institute of St. Petersburg, (IMISP; podpoglavje 3.5), dodamo pa tudi izsledke, ki se nanašajo na akreditacijske organe (podpoglavje 3.6). Četrto poglavje je Razprava, ki je strukturirana po osnovnih gradnikih in propozicijah konceptualnega modela: Silnice akreditacije (podpoglavje 4.1) z razpravo o propozicijah P1 in P2, Spremembe in učinki akreditacije (podpoglavje 4.2) z razpravo o propozicijah P3 in P4 ter Signaliziranje in institucionalna sprememba (podpoglavje 4.3) z razpravo o propozicijah P5 in P6. Disertacijo zaključujemo s Sklepom.

Povzetek končnih sklepov

Skupne vrednosti EQUIS akreditacije z vidika proučevanih javnih šol (FELU in GSOM) so kakovost, legitimnost in internacionalizacija, ostale vrednosti pa se med proučevanima šolama razlikujejo. Javna šola FELU iz Slovenije dojema EQUIS akreditacijo kot neposredni dejavnik legitimnosti, ki predstavlja vrednost in prednost za šolo. Akreditacija predstavlja *'izbor najboljših partnerjev'*, *'znak kakovosti'*, posebno skupino šol, ugled, konkurenčno prednost, standarde kot smernice delovanja in orodje benchmarkinga. Kakovost je zaznana bolj *'kot ISO standard'*, izboljšava, odnosi s podjetji in nov nabor ciljev, povezanih s poslanstvom, strategijo in organizacijskimi spremembami. V šoli GSOM navajajo naslednje vrednosti akreditacije: *pragmatični proces, organizacijski spomin, vpliv ideologije in priznanja, orodje za notranji razvoj, usmerjenost k najboljšim praksam, doseganje višje ravni* (na splošno). GSOM ne povezuje legitimnosti z lokalnim trgom, ampak bolj kot *pristop do partnerjev*. Dodatne spremembe v okolju GSOM se nanašajo na nova pravila, rangiranje in *'program 2020'*, ki spodbujajo in potiskajo GSOM k mednarodnim raziskovalnim objavam s partnerji. Internacionalizacija predstavlja pomemben izziv za obe javni šoli, še posebej na področju internacionalizacije zaposlenih (FELU) zaradi posebnosti lokalne zakonodaje, ter na področju internacionalizacije študentov (GSOM). V FELU so stroški akreditacije povezani predvsem z infrastrukturo, stresom, delom, dodatno obremenitvijo za profesorje, viri in denarjem ter z več birokracije in ročnega dela pri obvladovanju dokumentacije in podatkov, povezanih z akreditacijo. V GSOM so stroški povezani predvsem z drugačno kulturo ob hkratnem upoštevanju neotipljive vrednosti diplome ter s tem, da je akreditacija manj poznana na trgu, saj je za njihov trg relativno nova.

Kar zadeva vrednost akreditacije z vidika zasebnih šol (KU in ZSEM), je pomembno poudariti, da za zasebne šole iz SVE najvišjo vrednost predstavlja AACSB akreditacija. V poljski KU zaznavajo AACSB akreditacijo kot *'odlične standarde kakovosti'* z bolj tolerantnim pristopom kar se tiče raziskovalnih objav, študijskih programov in učnih načrtov ter kot spodbujanje kakovostnega učenja v primerjavi z *'zastarelimi praksami'*. Za KU so praktične vrednosti akreditacije v spodbujanju raziskav in svetovalnega dela ter spremembe v programih in učnih načrtih. Prednosti akreditacije vidijo v *'zanki kakovosti'* v primerjavi z zastarelimi praksami, standardih kakovosti ter postopkih rigorozne kontrole kakovosti. ZSEM deluje na hrvaškem trgu, kjer je pomembno naslednje: ugled za mednarodne študente, povezava s kakovostjo, boljša osredotočenost, blagovna znamka in *'prestižni'* partnerji. Za ZSEM so to pridobljene vrednosti z akreditacijo, ki šolo *'povezujejo s kakovostjo'*. ZSEM vidi prednosti AACSB akreditacije v izboljšanju *storitev, mednarodnega ugleda za pridobivanje študentov, kulture organizacijskega učenja in transparentnosti delovanja*.

V KU povezujejo stroške in pomanjkljivosti AACSB akreditacije predvsem z ogromno porabo časa, splošnimi pritiski, stresom, birokracijo, specifikami ujemanja s poljsko zakonodajo ter izpolnjevanjem AQ/PQ kriterijev, kar komentirajo kot težko dosegljivo in v

določeni meri diskriminantno za šole iz SVE. KU dojema AACSB akreditacijo kot bolj intenzivno v primerjavi z EQUIS akreditacijo, menijo celo, da *'lahko šola izgubi'* svojo *'vizijo'*. Dodajajo, da je celoten proces pridobivanja akreditacije zelo tvegan, povezan s človeškimi in finančnimi viri in stroški. Tudi ZSEM označuje proces akreditacije kot zelo drag in dolg proces (5 let). Predstavniki ZSEM je komentiral, da *'gredo vse univerze po enaki poti'* ter da sta homogenost in izomorfizem pričakovana realnost za večino poslovnih šol iz SVE. Ugotovitve nakazujejo, da je cilj AACSB, da bi imele vse poslovne šole *'podobna poslanstva in osnove resursov'*. Uvajanje akreditacije prinaša tudi pritiske sledenja večini na trgu visokega izobraževanja.

Ugotovitve glede CEEMAN IQA akreditacije kažejo, da je ta akreditacija še vedno zaznana kot regionalna akreditacija SVE. Ima relativno manjši vpliv in vrednost za obe proučevani šoli (KU in IMISP) kot ostale akreditacije. Vrednosti akreditacije sprejemajo le na ravni SVE, povezane pa so s pragmatičnostjo (KU) oziroma pomembne za strokovno javnost poslovnih šol v državi (IMISP). V primerjavi z drugimi akreditacijami je vrednost CEEMAN akreditacije za KU *'majhna'* ter v primeru IMISP *'ne prinaša večje vrednosti diplomi'*. Obe zasebni šoli sta imeli težave pri opredelitvi razlik med CEEMAN in drugimi akreditacijami ter pri pozicioniranju akreditacije CEEMAN v obdobju 2013-14, ko je potekala raziskava. V primeru IMISP smo zaznali tudi odpor do nasvetov CEEMAN-a glede internacionalizacije. Prisotna je nenaklonjenost globalizaciji ter s tem tudi procesu homogenizacije in izomorfnih institucionalnih sprememb.

Poslovne šole, ki predstavljajo študije primerov v disertaciji, so vodilne na trgu v svojih državah. Na globalnem trgu pa niso voditelji, temveč sledilci. Kljub visokim stroškom, ki nastajajo v procesu akreditacije, šole ne analizirajo stroškov in koristi, da bi upravičile odločitve za vstop v postopek akreditiranja. Gonilo sprememb v analiziranih poslovnih šolah je osredotočanje na *'neotipljive'* koristi, kot so ugled, boljše šole in kakovost raziskovalnega dela. Legitimnost je zaznana kot ključna vrednost za vodstva poslovnih šol in hkrati tudi kot visoka prioriteta v odsotnosti otipljivih koristi. V raziskavi smo opazili, da po pridobitvi akreditacije nastanejo *'otipljive'* koristi na področju uspešnosti, ki se kažejo kot povečanje števila raziskovalnih objav in internacionalizacije študentov, kar vodi do povečanja števila vpisanih študentov in tem pripadajočih prihodkov in dobičkov od mednarodnih študentov. Večina mednarodnih študentov prihaja iz sosednjih evropskih držav in iz držav Skupnosti neodvisnih držav, kjer poslovne šole nimajo AACSB ali EQUIS akreditacije. To pomeni, da so analizirane poslovne šole neposredni konkurenti, ki privabljajo študente iz regije SVE. Za zasebne šole so zelo pomembne otipljive koristi, pri doseganju katerih so relativno uspešni, saj so pri sprejemanju odločitev bolj fleksibilni in manj zbirokratizirani v primerjavi z javnimi šolami. Pri zasebnih šolah je po doseženi legitimnosti zaradi pridobljenih akreditacij (AACSB, EQUIS in celo CEEMAN) naslednji korak v internacionalizaciji vpisanih študentov, ki omogoča zasebnim šolam preživeti v konkurenčnem svetu. Izjema je le ruska šola IMISP, ki se ukvarja z lokalnim izobraževanjem odraslih na MBA programih.

V raziskavi smo med drugim ugotovili naslednje:

- izomorfni učinki kot posledica pridobljenih akreditacij postajajo vse bolj očitni na poti doseganja legitimnosti poslovnih šol;
- konkurenčne šole dohitevajo že akreditirane šole s tem, da tudi same zaprosijo za pridobitev akreditacije;
- poslovne šole iz SVE so mlajše in bolj ambiciozne v primerjavi s šolami iz Zahodne Evrope; raven sprememb zaradi zunanjih silnic akreditacij je v teh šolah višja in hitrejša;
- več akreditacij kot ima šola, večja je raven organizacijskih sprememb; prva akreditacija je pomembna z vidika doseganja legitimnosti na lokalnem trgu, druga na mednarodnih trgih in tretja z vidika splošne moči in legitimnosti šole; vsaka reakreditacija pospeši spremembe.
- pri šolah, ki prve vstopajo v proces akreditacije, včasih ne zaznamo učinkov sledenja večini in zmanjševanja asimetrije informacij, prisotne pa so vse ostale izomorfne spremembe;
- do institucionalne spremembe na lokalnem trgu pride, ko konkurenčne šole začnejo z reprodukcijo analognih procesov akreditacije s trendom sledenja večini;
- okvir institucionalne teorije lahko uporabimo kot teoretično podlago za teorijo akreditacije, ki jo lahko apliciramo tako na ostale šole v regiji SVE kot tudi na ostale vrste organizacij.

Rezultate disertacije interpretiramo z upoštevanjem naslednjih omejitev:

- predstavljamo rezultate intervjujev z ekipami top managementa in zaposlenimi, ki so bili udeleženi v procesu akreditacije; v intervjujih nismo zajeli nekaterih drugih skupin kot na primer študentov, predstavnikov študentskih organizacij, zaposlenih, ki niso bili neposredno udeleženi v procesu akreditacije, novo zaposlenih in članov Alumni;
- študenti kot glavna interesna skupina niso vključeni zaradi naslednjih razlogov: znanje študentov o akreditaciji je omejeno in po mnenjih strokovnjakov mnenja študentov še niso ključni dejavnik v procesu akreditacije;
- raziskovalna dokumentacija ne vključuje akreditacijskih poročil Ekonomske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani (FELU); akreditacijska poročila ostalih analiziranih šol so bila dostopna, vendar omejena na odprte vire;
- obstajajo možnosti pojava retrospektivne pristranskosti (na primer v primeru CEEMAN akreditacije), saj so bili informatorji vprašani o preteklih dogodkih in namerah;
- v primeru ruskih poslovnih šol so pogovori potekali in bili evidentirani v ruskem jeziku, kar je morda povzročilo nekaj manjših primerjalnih pomanjkljivosti.

Predlagamo, da se naš raziskovalni okvir uporabi tudi v prihodnjih raziskavah študij primerov. Disertacija predpostavlja, da so odgovori vseh strokovnjakov verodostojni ter da so izbrane poslovne šole primerni predstavniki populacije šol iz SVE, na katere lahko apliciramo ugotovitve raziskave. V nadaljevanju povzemamo glavne ugotovitve preverb posameznih propozicij raziskave. Prva propozicija (P1), da so zaznane vrednosti akreditacije relativno bolj pomembne kot zaznani stroški akreditacije, je potrjena za javne poslovne šole z EQUIS akreditacijo in zasebne poslovne šole z AACSB akreditacijo. Pri CEEMAN akreditaciji, ki jo šole zaznavajo kot primerjalno manj pomembno, prva propozicija ni potrjena. Druga propozicija (P2), da poslovne šole zaprosijo za akreditacijo zaradi doseganja legitimnosti, je potrjena za javne poslovne šole z EQUIS akreditacijo, zasebne poslovne šole z AACSB akreditacijo in zasebne poslovne šole s CEEMAN akreditacijo.

Tretja propozicija (P3) pravi, da poslovne šole zaradi akreditacije vpeljejo več izomorfnih organizacijskih sprememb (mimetičnih, normativnih in prisilnih). Propozicija je potrjena v vseh proučevanih primerih. Ugotovili smo, da je v poslovnih šolah, ki imajo več akreditacij, prisotnih več izomorfnih procesov. V primeru trojne akreditacije so jasno prisotni učinki homogenizacije in izomorfne spremembe. Četrta propozicija (P4) pravi, da poslovne šole zaprosijo za akreditacijo zaradi učinkov 'sledenja večini' (P4a) in zaradi učinkov zmanjševanja asimetrije informacij (P4b). P4 je potrjena v primeru zasebnih šol z AACSB akreditacijo. V primeru šol, ki prve v regiji pridobijo akreditacijo, le P4 delno potrjena. Tako na primer propozicija P4a ni potrjena v primeru FELU. V primeru GSOM je P4 potrjena, čeprav so učinki sledenja večini zelo majhni, izvirajo pa iz partnerskih inštitucij in ne iz lokalnega trga.

Peta propozicija (P5), da je akreditacija za poslovne šole orodje doseganja legitimnosti, ki interesnim skupinam sporoča signale kakovosti, je potrjena za strokovno združbo poslovnih šol. Predlagamo preoblikovanje P5, da bi veljala za primere vseh poslovnih šol, kot sledi: Mednarodna akreditacija je orodje legitimnosti, ki ima pozitivne signalne učinke na strokovnem področju delovanja poslovnih šol. Na primeru ruske šole GSOM smo ugotovili, da je vpeljala EQUIS akreditacijo bolj zaradi tujih partnerskih šol, s katerimi sodeluje in zato so tudi učinki akreditacije bolj prisotni na tujih trgih (z višjimi uvrstitvami, ki jih dosega šola na lestvicah). Na lokalnem trgu je akreditacija ponovno potrdila že zaznano kakovost šole GSOM. Regijska CEEMAN akreditacija ima v primerjavi z EQUIS in AACSB akreditacijama veliko šibkejše signalne učinke tako na področju SVE kot SND. V Rusiji je CEEMAN akreditacija bolj poznana strokovni združbi poslovnih šol, ne pa delodajalcem. Ostale poslovne šole jo vpeljujejo zaradi njenega potencialnega vpliva na legitimnost, čeprav bi bile tu potrebne še dodatne raziskave, sploh po spremembi perspektive CEEMAN-a v bolj globalno po letu 2013. Preoblikovana P5 je potrjena za AACSB in EQUIS akreditaciji.

Šesta propozicija (P6), da institucionalna sprememba nastane skozi mehanizme izomorfnih organizacijskih sprememb (prisilnih, normativnih in mimetičnih) ter zaradi sprememb, ki so

posledica sledenja večini in zmanjševanja asimetrije informacij, je potrjena za AACSB in EQUIS akreditaciji, razen v ruskih šolah, kjer propozicija ni potrjena niti za CEEMAN (šola IMISP), niti za EQUIS (šola GSOM) akreditacijo. Ob tem je treba poudariti, da obstaja možnost, da propozicija ni potrjena v primeru, če šola prva uvaja akreditacijo. V primeru CEEMAN akreditacije nismo zaznali prednostnega učinka šole, ki prva uvede akreditacijo, čeprav je akreditacija v SND dobro poznana in obstaja že od leta 1999. Dopuščamo možnost pojava retrospektivne pristranskosti, poleg tega pa šole z akreditacijo CEEMAN nimajo veliko izkušenj. Za podrobnejšo proučitev in razlago omenjene ugotovitve bi bilo treba izvesti še bolj poglobljeno raziskavo med konkurenčnimi šolami. V primerih AACSB in EQUIS akreditacij smo opazili, da pride do transformacije iz organizacijskih sprememb v institucionalno spremembo tako na nacionalni kot na regionalni ravni. Zato je sklepna ugotovitev disertacije, da mednarodna akreditacija (AACSB, EQUIS) vodi do institucionalne spremembe na ravni poslovnega izobraževanja, rezultat akreditacije so izomorfne spremembe (prisilne, mimetične in normativne) ter spremembe, ki nastanejo zaradi sledenja večini in zmanjševanja asimetrije informacij. Pri tem je treba omeniti, da ugotovitev za EQUIS akreditacijo ne velja za rusko šolo GSOM, najverjetneje zaradi nedavne vpeljave akreditacije, zaradi česar učinki še niso vidni v popolnosti. Za CEEMAN akreditacijo predlagamo izvedbo nadaljnjih raziskav, saj na ruskem trgu nismo opazili rezultata v obliki institucionalne spremembe, prav tako ta ni bil jasno viden na poljskem trgu. CEEMAN je bolj regionalna akreditacija s šibkejšimi učinki od institucionalnih mednarodnih AACSB in EQUIS akreditacij.

Znanstveni prispevki disertacije

Doktorska disertacija prispeva k nadaljnjemu razvoju institucionalne teorije ter prakse in teorije obvladovanja kakovosti poslovanja. Globalna akreditacija evropskih poslovnih šol je bila do sedaj zelo redko predmet proučevanja v raziskavah. Zato pričujoča disertacija predstavlja zelo relevanten, aktualen in pionirski prispevek k obstoječemu znanju. Ugotovitve pomembno prispevajo k obstoječemu znanju tudi zato, ker empirična raziskava temelji na celotni populaciji poslovnih šol, ki so v času trajanja raziskave imele institucionalno akreditacijo – AACSB, EQUIS in/ali CEEMAN. V disertaciji smo razvili in preverili konceptualni model, ki temelji na institucionalni teoriji in je lahko dobra osnova za nadaljnje raziskave, ne samo na primerih vseh javnih in zasebnih poslovnih šol iz 21 držav SVE in v drugih regijah po svetu, pač pa tudi v podjetjih in drugih vrstah organizacij, ki prav tako uvajajo različne akreditacije. Dodatni prispevek k znanosti in praksi je tudi v razvoju zemljevida razlik med poslovnimi šolami v globalnem smislu z namenom lažje izvedbe prihodnjih raziskav.