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**Abstract**

This article focuses on responses of higher education institutions to governmental policy. We investigate the influence of organisational characteristics on the implementation of quality management in Hungarian higher education institutions. Our theoretical framework is based on organisational theories (resource dependency and neo-institutionalism), Allison's models on organisational decision-making processes, and also addresses some of the more specific characteristics of higher education institutions. Our empirical investigation shows that organisational characteristics matter in policy implementation of quality management in Hungarian higher education. Certain organisational variables, viz. leaders' commitment to the implementation process, the involvement of external consultants, institutional reputation, and bureaucratic and political decision-making processes have strong effects on the implementation of quality management. Characteristics particular to higher education institutions were much less influential. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Csizmadia, Tibor, E-Mail: csizi@gtk.vein.hu