

A Vision on the Evolution of Perceptions of Professional Practice: The Case of IT

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ABSTRACT

Human factor is the element that produces more deviations in the costs of information technology (IT) projects. Recently, a gap between the competences required from the IT industry and the competences taught in the computer science university degrees has been proposed as a possible explanation to it. This paper further investigates this issue following several steps. First, through a questionnaire administered to different groups of computer science students, it analyses their performance according to a set of professional competences. Then, it addresses the evolution of the students' competences from the beginning of their studies until the end. Finally, it determines the matching of the students' competences with their personal characteristics at the moment they select their major. The results obtained permit recruiting staff to identify competence stereotypes in students and their evolution as well as comparing them with studies of competence requirements included in recent curricular efforts, so that they can act accordingly.

Keywords: *Competences, Computer Science Education, Professional Stereotypes, Soft Skills, Students Evolution*

INTRODUCTION

Stereotype is one of the most familiar concepts in the fields of Social Psychology, and is applicable to almost every sphere of knowledge. Stereotypes can be defined as a set of shared beliefs about personal attributes, usually personality traits but also the behaviours of a

group of people (Yzerbyt & Schadron, 1994). Walter Lippmann (1922) first introduced the concept of stereotype in its socio-psychological sense. To Lippman (1922), stereotypes generally have strong feelings associated; they have their origins in the society and offer a way to justify relationships between groups. Based on Lippmann's (1922) arguments, social psycholo-

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