

University of Craiova

Department of Communication, Journalism and Education Science

**Center for Scientific Research in Communication Sciences, Media and Public Opinion
(CCSCMOP)**

Social Sciences and Education Research Review

Volume 3, Issue 2, 2016

ISSN 2393–1264 ISSN–L 2392–9863

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GLOBALISATION, TRADITION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN SPANISH FOOTBALL: REFLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

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Abstract

This article offers some reflections and observations on the complex relationship between the forces of Globalisation and Spanish football, posing the key question as to whether the impact of Globalisation has been a quintessentially corrosive dynamic, eroding the quasi – sacrosanct traditions of the Spanish game to fashion a distinctive post- modern pastiche of elitism and inequality based on an orgy of consumption and commodity.

Keywords: football, identity, mass populism, world cup, iconography

JEL classification: Z10, O52, H10

1 INTRODUCTION. FOOTBALL IN THE SPANISH POLITICAL AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The history of Spanish football is deeply embedded in political, cultural and sporting traditions rooted in the socio – economic changes of the last two decades of the nineteenth century (Ball, 2011). These traditions have spawned a cluster of folkloric customs, rituals and rivalries which have impacted on the development of both the rich mosaic of Spanish club football and on the complex nuances surrounding the growth of the Spanish national team, La Seleccin. The distinctive synthesis of the Spanish game has served as a metaphor for the representation of local, regional and national identities, as well as providing critical insights into the oscillating barometers of social class, cultural values and political change (Burns, 2012). Indeed, at seminal moments in the turbulent political landscape of the Spanish state, football has been the embodiment of continuity and cohesion, whilst paradoxically being in the vanguard of societal change.

In recent years, there have been increasing signs that the myriad implications of Globalisation have radically challenged the core traditions which have shaped and defined the cultural power of Spanish football (O'Brien, 2017). Some of these changes have stemmed from the seemingly remorseless pull of Globalisation itself, in which the archetypal constraints of time, space and distance, so fashioned by modernity, have been all but vanquished in the instant blur of cyberspace, to articulate layers of economic, political and cultural interdependence. Further changes emanate from the nexus of Spanish football itself, confronting the old orthodoxies which had defined the historic mores of the game and its relationship with Spanish society. Moreover, Spain itself has undergone seismic developments in the post millennium era, with the juxtaposition of economic austerity and political fragmentation giving rise to new political movements to signal the end of the consensus which had dominated the post Franco settlement in the contemporary Spanish state (Ibid).

2 THE CULTURAL TRADITIONS OF SPANISH FOOTBALL

This article offers some reflections and observations on the complex relationship between the forces of Globalisation and Spanish football, posing the key question as to whether the impact of Globalisation has been a quintessentially corrosive dynamic, eroding the quasi – sacrosanct traditions of the Spanish game to fashion a distinctive post- modern pastiche of elitism and inequality based on an orgy

of consumption and commodity; or whether the global impulses driving the Spanish game have reframed and reinvented tradition to generate interest and awareness to an audience of global consumers across multi – platform media interfaces (Llopis Goig, 2009). The focal points of the discussion consider the impacts of Globalisation on the divergent aspects of Spanish club football and the contemporary success of Spain, *La Roja*, in recent international tournaments (Burns, 2012).

The key historic traditions underpinning the Spanish football lexicon are locality and region. From the folkloric genesis of the game in the Andalusian industrial backwater of Huelva during the 1870s which witnessed the emergence of Recreavito as Spain's first club (Brentnell, 2009) the fusion of locality and region with politics, social class and ethnicity fashioned the distinctive hue of Spanish club football (Ball, 2011) the rivalries generated by these cleavages came to reflect wider tensions both within the localities and the regions themselves, and in the historic tensions between Centre and Region at the core of the contested notions of political and cultural identity in Spain (Junco and Shubert, 2005).

As the game subsequently developed within the fulcrum of the seminal socio – economic changes manifested by industrialisation and urbanisation during the 1880s and 1890s, Catalonia and the Basque Country resonated as the emergent heartbeat of the embryonic Spanish game (Ball, 2011). In this formative period, football was regional and amateur in nature, with a national, professional league not being established until 1928. Indeed, football was slower to evolve in Madrid, with Athletic being established by the city's Basque community in 1905, and Real only defining a secure identity as a club in 1920 (Ibid). In political, cultural and football terms, the centre was weak, with Spain struggling to come to terms with the loss of its colonial Empire in the late 1890s, with resurgent regionalism finding potent expression in the historic communities of Catalonia and The Basque Country (Conversi, 2000). The growth of football in these regions had already become synonymous with the articulation of separatism and alternative nationalisms by the time *La Seleccion* made its first appearance in an International Tournament with its participation in the Antwerp Olympic Games of 1920 (Quiroga, 2013).

In the game's pre – professional epoch, many of the archetypal precepts of football's Spanish iconography were crystallised to articulate its nascent folkloric roots. From the distinctive representations of Basqueness with the respective foundations of Athletic Bilbao (1895) and Real Sociedad (1909) to the mythical humble origins surrounding the birth of FC Barcelona (1899) to fashion a coherent sense of Catalanism, football eschewed wider political and cultural significance. In

Seville, Social Class rivalry was reflected in the origins of the city's two main clubs; Real Betis (1905) and FC Sevilla (1907), whilst in Pamplona, the genesis of CA Osasuna (1920) came to articulate the complexities of Basque, Navarrese and Spanish sentiments in the region (O'Brien, 2016). These patterns were reflected throughout Spain's volatile political landscape during the period 1890 - 1930; Two critical football and cultural legacies define the power of tradition most acutely in the iconography of the Spanish game and provide an insight into the historic tension at the core of contested debates around regional and national identity in the Spanish state (Burns, 2012).

Within the locality/ regional dichotomy, the notion and concept of *La Cantera* occupies a pivotal space (Endnote 1). This cherished tradition refers to the practice of the club drawing as many of its players as possible from the local/ regional community, thereby creating an academy or infrastructure in which a close bond is forged between the club, community and a feeling of ethnic identity. This practice is most clearly expressed by Athletic Bilbao, which has promoted and defined *La Cantera* as the essence of its distinctive representation of stateless nationhood, *with* the club's players, fans, values and style of play framing defining the traditional juxtaposition of football, political culture and identity in the construction of Basqueness. Whilst most of Spain's other clubs may not have adopted the practice to the same extent as Athletic, it remains a potent manifestation and symbol of tradition; a way of maintaining and projecting the link between football, community and identity in order to secure and legitimise regionalism and diversity within Spanish society.

In the framing and representation of the national team the celebrated and heroic success of *La Seleccion* in winning the Silver Medal at the Antwerp Olympics (1920) gave rise to the traditional values of *La Furia Espanola* (Spanish Fury) being associated with Spain's national side (Ball, 2011) . The values which were defined as indicative to the deeds of the 1920 team, those of team spirit, courage, physical strength and hard work came to be appropriated as key manifestations of 'Spanishness' This was particularly significant during the lengthy period of the Franco dictatorship (1939- 1975) when the mores and values associated with *La Furia* were exploited to manufacture consent and foster a sense of national unity and identity (Quiroga, 2013). In their interlocking synthesis both *La Cantera* and *La Furia* were emblematic of a set of customs, rituals and rivalries acting as a pivotal nexus of tradition. This gave Spanish football its coherence, stability and maturity in consolidating the forces of modernism to contain and express political and cultural difference. The players also reinforced this coherence and stability, being drawn *La*

Cantera, the wider domain of Spain's national and regional leagues and from '*Los Oriundi*', the Spanish diaspora from Central and South America, utilising Spanish ancestry to play for the clubs, and on occasions for *La Selecccion*. By the Franco period, football was the focal point of complex political and cultural sensibilities; from being the social drug of mass popular distraction to acting as a catalyst for national unity and a vehicle to contain dissent and potential opposition to the regime (Vincent, 2010).

3 TRADITION AND THE CHALLENGE OF GLOBALISATION IN SPANISH FOOTBALL

Spain's transition to Democracy during the late 1970s and early 1980s demonstrated the capacity of football to both act as a vehicle of national cohesion and unity at a time of political uncertainty (Moltalban, 2005) and to be in the vanguard of cultural and societal change. Not only did the strike action of players signal a break away from the shackles of the Franco era, the emergent Spain of the Autonomous Communities envisaged by the Constitutional Settlement of 1978 paved the way for the devolved politics of Regionalism, particularly in the historic communities of Catalonia, The Basque Country and Galicia. The successes of Real Sociedad, Athletic Bilbao and FC Barcelona during the 1980s gave potent cultural and political symbolism to the democratic legitimacy of the Spain of the Regions (Burns, 2011). Significant as these developments were, they were precursors to profound changes in the evolving landscape of Spanish football, which moved it away from the coherent orbit of stability and political control which had defined much of its recent history. Four seminal changes combined to catapult the Spanish game within the shifting dynamics of a democratic Spanish state towards its contemporary global prominence.

From the 1990s, the increased mediatisation of elite level Spanish football, both within Spain itself and subsequently to a burgeoning global audience across a plethora of multi- platform media, has radically altered and challenged the traditional media spaces in which it had previously been represented (Quiroga, 2013). These changes are rooted in the consequences of both the opening up of the Spanish media in the post Franco era and the impact of technological change, most markedly in the growth of cable and satellite television and in the rise of Social Media. These trends have accelerated in the post millennium period, so that the higher echelons of the Spanish game now sits comfortably within the domain of the global reach of Europe's

elite leagues, so that live broadcasts of virtually all *La Liga*'s matches to an audience of global consumers is now commonplace. This has spawned the phenomenon of global fandom, in which a small cluster of Europe's elite clubs are supported by millions of virtual fans, buying the club's merchandise, and following their team via Television, Websites, Facebook and Twitter. In Spain, this is the counterpoint to the tradition of *Penas*, or Supporters' Clubs, at the folkloric heart of maintaining cultural and sporting identity. The postmodern blurring between tradition and the global occurs at the Camp Nou or the Bernabeu, when the global fan fuses with the local supporter to manufacture the pastiche of the mega – spectacle.

As Spain's elite clubs have become ensnared in this prism of globalisation, the Spanish game itself has become more global in its orientation. The 1995 Bosman Ruling (Endnote 2) opened up the global market in players, so that the established traditions of *La Liga* were challenged by the influx and exodus of players, suggesting that cultural cohesion has become much more fluid since the 1990s. The result has been to transform players and stars into galaticos and commodities, particularly at the elite level of the European game. In the Spanish vortex, the combined impact of these developments is most clearly articulated in the transformation of the traditional rivalry between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona from one rooted in political and cultural conflict between Centre and Region, into an orgy of mass global consumerism and commodification around the farming and representation of a mediated mega spectacle (O'Brien, 2013). The market dominance and branding of these two clubs has not only produced a dominant duopoly within *La Liga*, which barring the recent notable exception of Athletic Madrid, has made Spanish football less competitive in the last ten years, such is the inequality between Real Madrid, FC Barcelona and the rest. This is in stark contrast to the preceding era, when Valencia, Athletic Bilbao, Real Sociedad and Deportivo La Coruna all won *La Liga*. More significantly, the global dominance of the duopoly has eroded the rich tapestry of tradition at the heart of Spanish football's cultural and political identities, to fashion a distorted representation in which the hyperbole of the FC Barcelona – Real Madrid axis is legitimised and reinforced as the global reference point for an understanding of the Spanish game (Ibid).

If FC Barcelona and Real Madrid form the global bubble through which the contemporary Spanish game is viewed and contextualised, its corollary in respect of the national side has been the transformation of *La Furia* into *La Roja* since 2006. With the exception of having won the European Cup of Nations in 1964, *La Seleccion* had a long tradition of underachievement and failure in international competitions (Ball, 2011). Moreover, the national team was politically and culturally

associated with the Franco Regime, and was regarded with indifference or even hostility in Catalonia and the Basque Country (Ibid). In essence its history tended to mirror the wider cleavages in Spanish society. From 2006 onwards, under the coaching of Luis Aragones then Vincente Del Bosque, *La Seleccion* enjoyed a period of unparalleled success, winning the European Championship in 2008 and 2012, and the World Cup in 2010 (Burns, 2012). This success embellished several political and cultural paradoxes. It took place at a time of economic austerity and political crisis, encapsulating rare moments of national cohesion and unity, most particularly in the response to Iniesta's iconoclastic winning goal in the South Africa World Cup (Ibid). Furthermore, the success was based largely on both the players and style of Guardiola's all conquering FC Barcelona, so that Catalanism became Globalised as a cultural force through the media profile of the team. The rebranding of *La Seleccion* into *La Roja* was not only a slick Marketing and Public Relations strategy to engender mass support across Spain for the iconic stars of the team, it also suggested that the vexed questions surrounding identity in Spanish football were even more contested, fashioning the constructions of both Dual Identity (Quiroga, 2013) and a Globally framed identity around the Spanish national team.

Spanish football at the end of 2016 is radically different than many of the traditions that shaped it. The forces of globalisation have eroded many of the most distinctive aspects of its history, or reduced them to the stuff of myth or legend, to be exploited and manipulated in the mediated reconstruction of history. This paper concludes with some concluding reflections on the contemporary impact of the tensions between tradition and globalisation on the Spanish game.

4 CONCLUSIONS: GLOBALISATION AND SPANISH FOOTBALL; A FORCE FOR GOOD OR EVIL?

The interface between Globalisation and Tradition in Spanish football presents contrasting conclusions and divergent scenarios for the future. On the one hand, to echo Churchill's apocalyptic prediction in respect of the rise of television during the 1950s, that the impact of globalisation on football has been to create a monster this will devour us all (Endnote 3). Cast in this light, the contemporary Spanish game has reinforced inequality due to the unregulated and unaccountable nature of Global Capitalism. Consequently, at the same time that FC Barcelona and Real Madrid were playing out the ritual of El Clasico to a global audience of hundreds of millions, when Real were spending a hundred million Euros to sign

Gareth Bale, a host of clubs, each with a distinctive history and tradition, lapsed into financial crisis. Most poignantly, the summer of 2016 witnessed the spectacle of Recreativo de Huelva, Spain's first club, teetering on the edge of bankruptcy. The relentless imitation of the English Premier League has produced a homogenous conformity within the major European leagues, with an incumbent loss of distinctive cultural identity (O'Brien, 2017). Within this vortex, the elite clubs control the global market in the commodity of players. The imagery surrounding absurdly paid superstars cultivating celebrity lifestyles projects the global game into the matrix of sport, business and entertainment. From this perspective, globalisation has been a divisive force in the Spanish game, projecting the excess of the mega- spectacle at the expense of the patterns of cultural and political identities which has historically defined Spanish football at all levels. (O'Brien, 2013).

On the other hand, globalisation can be considered as a vital regenerative force in introducing the Spanish game to new audiences on a global basis. In this context, not only does the impact of globalisation tend to be overstated, with national, regional and local representations still resonating as focal points of unity and divergence in the contemporary Spanish state, its orbit is more than merely accentuating the FC Barcelona – Real Madrid axis; the extensive coverage of *La Liga* by Sky Television, for example, has introduced the traditions of Athletic Bilbao, Atletico Madrid, Valencia and others to more discerning consumers of football as a global sport. This can only assist in the positive profiling of Spain within the global geopolitical space. Planet football celebrates the Global Game; Globalisation is a seminal catalyst in this process.

As the Spanish game looks ahead, will a space remain for the traditions of localism and regionalism in the survival of communities? Or will the Globalisation of the Champions League swallow up the elite clubs of *La Liga* into a prototype European League, so that the mass consumption of football becomes ever more globalised in its focus? The evidence suggests that Spanish club football will be less cohesive and more fragmented, with an increasing chasm between a small number of elite clubs and the rest. In respect of the national team, *La Roja* may well have been an ephemeral phase in the history of *La Seleccion*, with a reversion to the more traditional cleavages which have been the hallmark of its history.

ENDNOTES

1 La Cantera (The Quarry). Term used by clubs to define players either coming from their academies or from the local area or region. It forms part of the folkloric of Spanish Club Football.

2 The Bosman Ruling (1995). From the European Court of Social Justice allowed freedom of movement at end of contract for players, without a transfer fee being paid (Article 39, EC Treaty). It followed a dispute between Jean - Marc Bosman and the Belgian Football Association.

3 These comments are attributed to Winston Churchill when he returned to power as Prime Minister in 1951. His medium was Radio, and he was never able to adapt to the evolution of Television during the 1950s.

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UNIVERSITY STUDENTS GRIT LEVEL AND GRIT ACHIEVEMENT RELATION

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Abstract

Grit is explaining in Dictionary of the Turkish language Association as determination and desire to have identified the level of long-term goals. Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, and Kelly (2007) are defining it as, perseverance and passion for Long-Term Goals. In addition to stating that grit is an important factor in measuring the intelligence and the success. At the same time they have stressed that the grit is much more important predictors of success. Even Duckworth and Quinn (2009) argued that grit is more effective than intelligence scores for explaining the success. There are some studies that they are advocating grit is closely associated with self-discipline, self-regulation and goal orientation, and grit is the main factor for explaining that concepts (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). In this study, university student success and their grit's are analysed. Therefore, determining the relationship between success and grit is used for descriptive screening model. This study was conducted with 451 students in Education Faculty at Necmettin Erbakan

University in 2015-2016 academic year spring semester. In order to data collecting “Grit-S scale”, developed by Duckworth and Quinn (2009) and adapted to Turkish by Sarıcam and others (2015), was used. Datum were analysed by SPSS 16 soft ware and frequency, mean, standard deviation and regresion test were used as statistical techniques. The achievement scores of students have found a significant correlation between the grit scores.

Keywords: Grit, Achievement, descriptive model, Correlation, Regression

JEL classification: I10, Z10, A1

1 INTRODUCTION

Grit and achievement which are one of the research area of educations are substantially a learning process (Beyhan&Dilmaç, 2016). Grit can be defined as a determination and desire to have identified the level of long-term goals in Dictionary of the Turkish language Association. In other words, Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, and Kelly (2007) are describing it as, perseverance and passion for Long-Term Goals. In addition to stating that grit is an important factor in measuring the intelligence and the success. Even Duckworth and Quinn (2009) argued that grit is more effective than intelligence scores for explaining the success.

There are studies defending the grit’s relation with self-arrangement, self-discipline and goal tendency and the grit’s importance in explaining these concepts (Duckworth&Quinn, 2009; Peterson&Seligman, 2004). In these researches the grit means that whatever happens, the goal activity is continued. Also Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews and Kelly (2007) defined the grit as continuity in attitudes and determination for long time goals. Even is a person faces to troubles and stressful situations, this resistance carries on as a personal power and an effort puts forward to reach goals (Singh & Jha, 2008). Despite difficulties and unwanted judgements, the

grit goes on as a continual energy. The person with high grit never feels tired and has a tendency to struggle with situations given up by others. Determined people can behave more flexible and tolerant and also they can deal with problems with analytical view (Wilis, 2008). The grit seen as a necessary feature to pass over difficulties is defined also as a continual effort against complex missions (Ayres, Cooley & Dunn, 1990; Rudkin, 2003).

When we examine the studies in literature, it is seen that there is a relation between the grit and the academic success (Dubey, 1982, Duckworth and others, 2007, Duckworth and Quinn, 2009). For example, when we exam a student academic life to check relation between the grit and academic success, it is found that the students with higher grit are more successful in their academic life than the students with lower grit (Dubey, 1982). When students want to specialize in a new knowledge area or develop new problem solving strategy, they face to short term difficulties or their courage are broken. Despite these difficulties and broken courage, the undetermined people usually become unsuccessful (Ayres and others, 1990; Torgesen& Licht, 1983). When we look similar studies, it is seen that there is a relation between the grit and academic difficulty. The people getting the success in their tasks catch the others' because of their patient characteristic (Duckworth and others, 2007). Henry and Smith made a conclusion that the people successful in their life are more determined than unsuccessful ones and the environmental factors have an important effect on decisions about the grit. Akin and Arslan (2014) also tried to put forward the relation between success tendency and determination.

As it is known, acceleration of achievement of students is important for the school and academic area in order to increase individual and organizational performance. It is because many researchers today indicate that the grit levels of students have an important positive effect on the achievement of students.

The measurable aims of the research that analysing relation of university student grit level and achievements are as below;

1. What is the level of university students' grit points?
2. Is there a relationship between the grit and achievement of university students?
3. To what extent do the grit levels of university students predict their achievement?

2 METHOD

2.1. Research Design

According to the views of students, this research tries to determine the level of university student grits and examine the relationship between the grit and achievement levels of university students. This research is designed in descriptive method.

2.2. Research Population and Sampling

The target population of the research consists of 451 students who teach in NEÜ education faculty in Konya. In the research, "stratified sampling" technique one of the sampling techniques based on probability is chosen in order to represent the target population. The target population of the research is divided into nine stratum at the teaching branch. The list of teaching branch in nine central districts was prepared and the sampling represents the sub groups based on the rate of sub population in the general population. With the stratified sampling technique, the student numbers teach in NEÜ education faculty were taken into consideration and the calculations of sampling size, It was decided to make (Balci, 2013) an application for sampling 451 people.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

In this study, in order to determine the grit and achievement of university students, Sarıçam and the others' (2015) "Short Grit Scale", was adapted to Turkish

by Akin and others (2011) before, was used because of better reliability score. This scale consists of 8 items. And this scale, has two dimension, these are: First “The perseverance of effort” (four items, example item: I often make a goal for myself but then I prefer to run after another one.) and second “the consistency of interest” (four items, example item: Whatever job I started , I do my best to finish). The Short Grit Scale form is a five point Likert type scale (1-deffinitely disagree, 2-disagree, 3-decisive, 4-agree, 5- deffinitely agree). In linguistic equivalence study of the scale, the correlation coefficient between Turkish and English forms were determined as 89 ($p=00$). As a result of explanatory factor analysis the KMO sample coefficient was determined as 83, and as a result of Barlett Sphericity test was determined as $\chi^2= 503,877$ ($p<.001$, $sd=24$). The result of verifying factor analysis consisted of 8 items, two dimensions ($\chi^2/sd=2.06$, $RMSEA= .046$, $CFI=.95$, $GFI=.94$, $AGFI=.93$, $SRMR=.047$) and factor loads of items were seen between 42 and 77. The coefficient of repetition and reliability of test was 69 and coefficient of corrected total item correlation was between 33 and 65. After the scale , the datar were analysed by Wing degree scale. The scale has five options. The interval coefficient for four intervals in fivefold scale were (4/5) 0,80, these are; I deffinitely don’t agree (1-1,79), I don’t agree (1,80-2,59), I am indecisive (2,60-3,39), I agree (3,40-4,19), I deffinitely agree (4.20- 5).

The means of university entry scores and the end-of-term grades of the students were used to represent student achievement

2.4.The Analysis of Datas:

In this research statistical techniques, frekans, percentage, average, standard deviation, correlation and regression were used to analyse datas. The datum were analyzed with SPSS. The existence of relationships between grit and achievement was examined with the use of correlation analysis. A regression analysis was performed to predict achievement (dependent variable) using grit scores as independent variables.

3 FINDINGS

3.1. First sub-Problem:

The first sub-question sentence is “What is the level of university students’ grit points”. In table 1, the means and Standard deviation values of students’ grit points are given;

Table: 1. The descriptive statistical data about students’ grit points.

Items	n	M	SD
1.New ideas and new projects confuse my mind about old ones	451	2,96	1,12
2.Difficulties can never daunt me.	451	3,81	1,10
3.For short time, I concern about	451	2,58	1,01
4.I am hardworking	451	3,54	1,05
5.I often make a goal for myself, but then I prefer to run after another one.	451	2,46	1,15
6. I have difficulties about focusing on long time Project to complete	451	2,75	1,27
7.Whatever job I started, I do my best to finish	451	4,22	0,94
8. I am persevering and skillful	451	4,03	0,97
Total	451	3,30	0,42

Students showed highest participation on the question 7 with 4,22 mean and lowest participation on the question 5 with 2,46 mean. When we examine the average of total grit points, it is seen that 3,30 mean score is obtained. The opinions of students generally came together on option “I’m indecisive” (2.60-3.39). Students did not display a determined attitude.

3.2. Second sub-Problem:

The second sub-question sentence is "Is there a relationship between the grit and achievement of university students?" The means of university entry scores and the end-of-term grades of the students were used to represent student achievement. In order to answer the question, method of simple correlation has been done and the values of the analysis are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlations matrix of grit for student achievement

		student achievement
Student grit	<i>r</i>	,42**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.002 level (2-tailed).

According to the results on Table 1, it is observed that there is moderately a positive significant relation between university student achievements and their grits ($r=0,42$, $p<.01$). In other words, the more their grit develops, the more their achievement affects in positive way.

3.2. Third sub-Problem:

The third sub-question sentence is "To what extent do the grit levels of university students predict their achievement?". In order to answer the question Linear Regression method (simple linear regression) has been done and the values of the analysis are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Prediction of grit for student achievement

	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1,328	,112		11,825	,000
Azim	,076	,069	,42	1,096	,002

Note: $R = .42$, $R^2 = .17$, $F(1-451) = 1,202$, $p = .002$

On Table 2, the results of regression analysis are given which are related to predicting student achievement of their grit's sub-dimension. When analyzing correlations between dependent variable and predictor variable, it has been estimated that there is a positive and moderat relation ($r = .42$) between university student achievements and their grits ($R = 0,42$, $R^2 = 0,17$, $p < .05$). Student grits predict approximately the 17% of student achievement's total variance.

4 CONCLUSION

When students want to specialize in a new knowledge area or develop new problem solving strategy, they face to short term difficulties or their courage are broken. Despite these difficulties and broken courage, the undetermined people usually become unsuccessful (Ayres and others, 1990; Torgesen & Licht, 1983). Dubey (1982) revealed that the students with higher grit are more successful in their academic life than the students with lower grit. When we exam similar studies, it is seen that the researchers found a relation between the grit and academic difficulty. The people getting the success in their tasks catch success more than the others' because of their patient characteristic (Duckworth and others, 2007). Henry and Smith (1994) made a conclusion that the people successful in their life are more determined than unsuccessful ones and the environmental factors have an important effect on decisions about the grit. Akın and Arslan (2014) also tried to put forward the relation between success tendency and determination.

According to this, the results of our study are consistent with the conclusions reached in the study mentioned above. in academic life of a student, as the grit level increases, achievement also increases. Regression analysis indicates that grit is important predictors of achievement. Beyhan (2016) stated that the time span and experiences have an important role in developing and continuity of the grit. This result and findings indicate that if a student demands own to be achieved better, then his/her

grit should be taken into consideration seriously. For sure, this achievement involves both the development of knowledge, skills and understanding and the learning process as a basis of adaptation to academic life.

As a result, there is a moderate positive significant relation between university student grits and their achievements. Student grits (predictor variables) explain approximately 17% of variability in student achievements (predicted variables). According to these results, these suggestions can be given for practitioners and researchers. Reordering on standards of curriculum to increase their grits and the Standards in reordering can be determined higher than present standards. The struggler areas can be made for increasing students' grits and new researches can be made according to new factors.

Annotation: This article is revised an developed form of presentation that presented at ICEPL 2016-Fall, Seoul, Korea, November 7-9.

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(3) 224-35 (2016)

ISSN 2393-1264

ISSN-L 2392-9863

PERSPECTIVES AND MODALITIES IN ORDER TO DEVELOP THE DIDACTIC STAFF'S INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCES

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to analyse the impact of some perspectives, strategies, and programs, in order to develop the intercultural dimension of the professional competence profile, regarding the teaching career. The investigation tools are represented by the questionnaire and the focus group, applied to a sample of 110 subjects. The results of the research emphasize: a) the social and educational necessity in order to train the didactic staff's intercultural competence; b) the subjects' options for programs of intercultural psychology, intercultural communication, the didactic methodology of the intercultural education; c) the subjects' adhesion to creating a European curricular framework, in order to acclimatize the teachers to an intercultural environment. The results achieved emphasize the idea of adopting the transformational curricular model as part of the intercultural curricula, in order to train the teachers and to synchronize specific strategies as part of European countries.

Keywords: intercultural education, cultural diversity, European conscience, didactic staff's intercultural competences, intercultural curriculum

JEL classification: I10, H10, O52

1 CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL PREMISES

At present, intercultural education is viewed not only as a dimension of "new education", but as a socio-educational paradigm that integrates multidisciplinary contributions and an interdisciplinary methodology to promote the values of a multicultural environment, desirable in the European multicultural society. From this perspective, specialized literature (focused on strengthening the epistemological status of intercultural education) and research regarding social sciences have revealed relevant and effective strategies and programs to develop intercultural skills, as key elements of the "European conscience".

The analysis of the conceptualization perspectives reveals a postmodern pedagogy option for a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to intercultural education, in the spirit of the cultural diversity educational paradigm. The comprehensiveness attribute is given by the axiological nucleus of intercultural education, whose general objectives are defined in the European documents on two axes:

- affirmation of the values of cultural diversity in multicultural societies;
- development of intercultural competencies in lifelong learning, highlighted by stating the social performance, in the context of cultural diversity and the internalization of the mental model of European citizenship.

In a broad sense, intercultural competences represent an operationalizable and transferable set of knowledge, skills, attitudes that highlight the processes of cultural enrichment (acculturation, cultural integration, socialization), which increases the efficiency of the intercultural communication mechanisms and facilitates socio-cultural affirmation. The intercultural competencies detail several key areas of competences of the European Commission: communication skills in foreign languages; social and civic competencies; competence of learning to learn; cultural awareness and expression skills.

By systematizing and reunification of the economic and humanistic approaches, Barmeyer and Devoine (2012) had promoted a structural model of intercultural competence, whose key elements are revealed on three levels:

- A. affective plan: empathic abilities and skills, openness of spirit, not judging attitude, tolerance to ambiguity and frustration, polycentric approach;
- B. cognitive dimension: knowing and understanding the socio-cultural systems, knowledge of foreign languages;

C. the behavior plan: the ability to apply and transfer knowledge about cultural otherness, skills to communicate, the ability for applying the linguistic knowledge in contexts of cultural diversity, the ability of metacommunication, flexibility behavior, self-discipline (Barmeyer & Devoine, 2012).

The EU documents are specified components of intercultural competences, which are objectives of intercultural education in school curricula (Kerzil & Vinseneau, 2004):

- knowledge and respect for cultural identity elements of other societies or cultural groups;
- acceptance and understanding of cultural groups references;
- critical approach to problematic culture situations and taking culture of prevention and solving;
- proper manifestation in situations of interaction with representatives of other cultures;
- understanding the values and customs of ethnic groups;
- to familiarize with the phenomenon and migration processes and means of expressing feelings in many cultures;
- Express the values of multiculturalism in social cognition and actions: the manifestation of opposition to racism, xenophobia, intolerance and radical nationalism, intercultural empathy, solidarity, intercultural respect (Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique, 2007, *Approches interculturelles en education*, apud Bunăiașu, 2015 a).

The Council of Europe and the European Commission promote several categories of programs and projects on cultural diversity and intercultural skill development (Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique, 2007, Meunier, 2008):

- projects of assimilation for immigrant students whose cultural references are not integrated into the school curriculum of the host country;
- integrative projects centered on promoting intercultural dialogue, on optimizing cultural interactions and the manifestation of cooperation between cultures;
- humanities projects, based on the affirmation of active citizenship in multicultural European society.

By reporting from these premises of intercultural skills domain it is revealed the necessity and the legitimacy of researchers on intercultural profile of the teacher. First, a well-defined profile from this perspective represents the sine qua non of

achieving the objectives of intercultural education. Secondly, the shaping of some European educational strategies of intercultural training of teachers ensure the unity and consistency of professional training in Europe. There are still gaps in terms of intercultural training of teachers in the European Union between Western countries with a long tradition of intercultural practices and with consistent elements of training curricula and other countries. For example, the case of Romania where pedagogical training curriculum needs to be reviewed in this issue. Another argument that concerns the situation the magnification of the migration phenomenon as part of Europe and the complexity of the problems as part of the intercultural school.

The intercultural competencies of teachers are integrated into the category of transverse ones and details the structural elements of the model of intercultural competence, within the meaning of exercising of specific professional roles and personal development of intercultural school under the virtue of multicultural values. Key elements of intercultural competence for the teaching profession are:

- extensive knowledge of the cultural values of communities and cultural groups from which students come;
- proper understanding of cultural alterity, which marks axiological references of students;
- abilities, skills and specific strategies of applying multicultural processes, adapted to the student / cultural groups and socio-cultural context and the school;
- skills and abilities to streamline and facilitate intercultural communication;
- management of problematic situations and promoting intercultural relations adequate to classroom;
- development capabilities of synergy of multicultural group;
- implementation of educational strategies of inoculating multicultural values in the consciousness of students and motivating students in asserting intellectual and social performance in the context of cultural diversity;
- empathic abilities and attitudes to issues of cultural openness of the students.

By relation to the process of integrating these elements in the teacher's competence profile, brings in rigorous foundation of intercultural training curricula, continuing education and high level of complexity of perspectives and strategies adopted in this regard. for this purpose, we intend to engage in a series of empirical and experimental research. The general hypothesis of this research supports the

premise that developing a benchmark methodology for intercultural training, supported by theoretical, instrumental, and both direct and indirect adhesion beneficiaries can facilitate the development of programs (European, national and regional) for the development of intercultural competences of teachers.

The approach that we present is initially in the process of shaping the premises issue and achieve a study of impact. The study's purpose consists of the initial evaluation of the impact of some concepts, strategies and ways of developing intercultural skills of teachers, by reference to the subject's views. Depending on the results of the impact study, we foreshadowed following investigative steps, on a greater scale. Relevant information will be correlated with other research results in the field, and the data's reliability will be tested in a future micro-research, where we will apply the same tools, improved. In this respect, we intend to emphasize the methodological character of micro-research, of validation of an assessment tool of direction impact and development strategies of intercultural skills.

2 PURPOSE OF STUDY AND OBJECTIVES

Empirical micro-research hypothesis is one of the particular ones of the general hypothesis stated. It refers to the following assumption:

If the perspectives and the proposed methods of development of intercultural competences have supportive elements theoretical, flexibility and operationality, they can be appreciated and assumed by the subjects. The criteria for these items were used in validating the strategies presented to subjects.

Impact study objectives are:

1. Testing subjects' perceptions and opinions regarding the perspectives of theoretical and methodological intercultural training of teachers.
2. The systematization of relevant data in a list of directions for development of intercultural competencies of teachers.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants

The impact study involved subjects who were selected through the sampling methodology mixed with stratified randomization technique sampling. These variables were applied for reasons of relevance for the type of categories of subjects and research objectives, and to ensure the representativeness. These variables are: the specialty of teachers and teaching degree in pre- university education; expertise of

academic staff in the social sciences; age and sex, according to the principle of ensuring equal opportunities in the selection of subjects and to ensure representativeness at this level (to reflect the statistical report of the target group); stage of professionalization didactical and intercultural formation level, to correlate opinions of subjects in two stages of psycho-pedagogical training (initial and continuous) with diverse learning experiences and intercultural management training programs. By these ways, in Romania the batch of 110 subjects selected from South-West of Oltenia has the following composition: 40 teachers in pre- university education; 25 social sciences experts (academic teaching staff with expertise in Educational Sciences, Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology, Philosophy, Theology); 20 formers (teachers empowered to conduct professional training); 25 students enrolled in science education specializations.

3.2. Instrument

The basic tool used was the opinion questionnaire administered face-to-face and online and constructed with reference to the criteria of operationalization of micro-research empirical hypothesis. The questionnaire is divided into three categories of items: a) perceptions and conceptions on intercultural education, intercultural competences and intercultural training of teachers (items 3-10); b) directions and strategies for rethinking the curriculum of teacher's education in terms of intercultural dimension (items 11-16); c) methodological issues concerning intercultural training programs for teachers (items 18-22); d) the expected impact of development strategies and the intercultural skills of teachers (items 23-24). The data were nuanced by organizing two focus group meetings, attended by representatives from each subject category.

The independent variables of the impact study are represented by perspectives, strategies and programs invoked of development of intercultural competencies of teachers. This led to the expectation of the dependent variable, which refers to the adhesion of subjects at the relevant directions, at the operational strategies and the affirmation of personal beliefs in the field. Regarding intermediate variables, we pointed out the subjects' intercultural experiences, socio-cultural and didactical. The high degree or low of this experiences was put in correlation with the subjects choice to determine their relevance and usefulness of the data in support of further empirical research and experimental.

4 RESULTS

Relevant responses of the subjects were grouped on criteria that operationalize the hypotheses of micro-researches and reveals the impact of invoked variables of developing of intercultural competencies of teachers. Data presentation was focused on: a) variable appreciated "mostly" and "very much" or marked with the values 1, 2 (positive feedback); b) variables assessed "very little" and "not at all" or marked by the values of 4.5 (negative feedback); c) relevant views and opinions presented at items with open answers.

Results of micro-research useful in supporting subsequent investigations in this matter were systematized by cumulating those situated on the steps of intensity "substantially" and "very much" or those quantified by the values 1 and 2):

Perceptions and beliefs concerning intercultural education, intercultural competences and intercultural training of teachers:

The approach of the intercultural education in the spirit of education paradigm for cultural diversity (Abdallah-Preteceille, M., 2013, Charitonidou, 2012, pp.112-122);

European conscience and citizenship valuing active as desiderates of education in the spirit of interculturalism;

The approach of the educational logic centered on competencies and of multidimensional models in the conceptualization and development of methodologies in intercultural competences domain (Barmeyer & Devoine, 2012, 65, Kerzil & Vinseneau, 2004).

Table 1. Conception concerning the premises of teachers developing intercultural skills

Groups	Criterion no. 1	Criterion no. 2	Criterion no. 3
Pre-University didactic staff	55%	72,50%	52,50%
Experts	80%	84%	76%
Trainers	75%	80%	70%

Students	52%	76%	52%
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- Directions and strategies for rethinking the curriculum of teacher training in intercultural perspective:
the usage of transformativist model in rethinking and building intercultural teacher training curriculum (Banks, 1997, Nedelcu, 2008):
 - 1) Introducing curriculum structures centered on interculturalism, in the subjects of pedagogical preparation and didactical
 - 2) The introduction of the intercultural education discipline, in the program of pedagogical initial preparation and in programs/ modules of continue formation of teachers.
organizing teaching practice and mobility in schools with good practices in the field of interculturalism.

Table 2. Methodological reviews regarding directions and strategies of rethinking the curricula of teacher's training.

Groups	Criterion no. 1	Criterion no. 2	Criterion no. 3	Criterion no. 4
Pre-University didactic staff	42,50%	67,50%	77,50%	82,50%
Experts	68%	72%	84%	88%
Trainers	65%	65%	85%	85%
Students	48%	60%	80%	76%

- Methodological aspects concerning intercultural training programs for teachers:
 - 1) the methodical approach of the interculturalism processes in the training programs (processes of acculturation, enculturation, cultural integration) (Gavreliuc, 2011);
 - 2) the usage of constructivist instructional strategies (Joița, 2006, Wilson, B.G. & Lowry, M., 2000);

familiarization with the strategies and methodologies that facilitate interactions in multicultural groups and with meta-communication strategies and of optimization of communication (Smarandache, Vlăduțescu & Țenescu, 2014, Călin, 2010);

- 3) valorisation of elements of emotional learning pedagogy (Bădescu, 2014, Goleman, 2001);
- 4) the usage of virtual innovative strategies specific to virtual communities of teaching in adult education (Bunăiașu, Vlăduțescu & Strungă, 2014, Strungă, 2014).

Table 3. Methodological reviews concerning intercultural trainings programs for teachers

Groups	Criterion no. 1	Criterion no. 2	Criterion no. 3	Criterion no. 4	Criterion no. 5
Pre-University didactic staff	67,50%	52,50%	77,50%	62,50%	72,50%
Experts	72%	64%	88%	72%	84%
Trainers	65%	55%	85%	70%	75%
Students	64%	52%	76%	68%	80%

The expected impact of development strategies and programs of intercultural competencies of teachers:

- the development of teachers skills, the transdisciplinary approach of interculturality (Bunăiașu, 2015 c);
- obtaining higher professional performance in terms of intercultural educational practices;
- optimizing intercultural learning for students;

- involvement of teachers in intercultural projects at European level, national and regional.

Table 4. Considerations Regarding the expected impact of the development process of intercultural competences of teachers

Groups	Criterion no. 1	Criterion no. 2	Criterion no. 3	Criterion no. 4
Pre-University didactic staff	52,50%	72,50%	70%	77,50%
Experts	64%	76%	72%	64%
Trainers	60%	75%	75%	70%
Students	56%	64%	68%	68%

5 DISCUSSION

Comparative analysis of the responses, the categories of subjects indicates significant differences in criteria for: paradigms and models of intercultural education and intercultural competences (criteria Nos. 1 and No. 3, from the first variable, valuing transformationalist model of intercultural curriculum in teacher's Education (criterion No. 1. the second variable). In these cases the experts and trainers appreciated the greater educational paradigms and models that are based on intercultural competence development strategies. These differences put them in connection with specialized high level of culture and methodological experiences of these subjects. On the other variables, however, referring to concrete development strategies and ways of intercultural and their impacts we have not registered substantial differences.

Processing of the data revealed a high degree for subjective appreciation of of methodological choices postmodern intercultural training of teachers. On the other hand, it revealed and the necessity of the development of culture issues, for teachers and undergraduate students. Overall, we consider micro-reaserches empirical confirmation of the hypothesis, meaning that the outlook and the proposed arrangements, obtained adhesion subjects through their premises, by flexibility and great operation.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The final results of the impact study confirmed through retest will be made in correlation with the partial results of ongoing research on the topic of European Curriculum (Bunăiașu, 2013). In this way, we consider the possible outline of a curriculum framework of intercultural training of teachers, with operational guidance and flexible elements so as to be applied within different cultural and educational context. This objective corresponds to European trends and developments in the field of intercultural education, the European model of intercultural school and takes into account the compatibility of intercultural curriculum models and programs for initial and continuous training of teachers in Europe. Registration issues in this direction, synchronization patterns European education is a premise for a higher impact in shaping the strategies promoted intercultural profile of teachers.

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OVERCOMING THE CHILDREN'S MOURNING STATE THROUGH PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION

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Abstract

Death and mourning that follows it are experiences that occurs in everyone's life at one time. There are unavoidable, painful, sad experiences even for adults who are able to manage their own emotions, and even more for children who, at least in early childhood and elementary school aren't able to understand on their own what it's happening in that moment, and how to manage their sadness and live the mourning period properly. Due to the fact that children are not yet fully developed cognitively, cannot understand on their own the concept of death. At that age, death seems for them not to be permanent. Children believe that death is a reversible process that the person in their family is temporarily left and they will return at any moment, and they will wait and ask for that moment long after the actual death, if lacked of any other information. Moreover, children think that death is avoidable, since - at that age, self-centeredness is somehow a characteristic of their personality and death hasn't affected their own person; therefore, when death occurs in their family, their reality will be brutally shaken and they will be very disoriented. Also, in early childhood, kids have a symbolic, magical perspective about death; they imagine it as a devil, a monster or a black lady with a scythe and many other images, far from a realistic perspective. Considering this aspects, it is very important that a realistic, honest, adapted to their age perspective of death when it affects their family. Unfortunately, in many cultures, death is still a taboo. It still exists the belief of overprotecting children from suffering by hiding the death of a close family member, lying them and taking them far away so that they cannot see the dead person. But

actually, by practicing this, parents, teachers and persons around the children only make him be more disoriented and suffer more by not knowing what happened with the person they love. As a parent or teacher, it is very important to understand that staying beside the children and sustaining him emotionally, without hiding him any aspect about death of the loved one has a crucial importance for their future development; otherwise, it is probable that they will develop symptoms of chronic depression, and as adults, problems of attachment and extreme fear of death. Proper education for population regarding this delicate subject is a sign of a developed society. In the light of this perspectives, specialists and psychotherapists should be prepared to offer advice and support in any moment so that parents will be learn how to stand by their children in the hard and long process of managing their negative emotions, living their mourning together.

Keywords: death, mourning, sadness, emotional management, psychotherapy, psychological intervention

JEL classification: I10, H10, O52

1 INTRODUCTION

Death and mourning that follows it are experiences that occurs in everyone's life at one time. There are unavoidable, painful, sad experiences even for adults who are able to manage their own emotions, and evenmore for children who, at least in early childhood and elementary school aren't able to understand on their own what it's happening in that moment, and how to manage their sadness and live the mourning period properly. According to a large body of literature that has investigated relationships between children's concepts of death and such variables as age, gender, developmental level, socioeconomic status of the family, religious beliefs, and previous experience with death (Kane, 1979; Speece & Brent, 1984; Wass, 1991), striving to understand death is a difficult challenge for children. An important reason for this difficulty is that the concept of death is a difficult notion. It incorporates social and cultural beliefs, personal and emotional issues, religious assumptions, and conceptual understandings (Slaughter, 2005). Adults understand death fundamentally as a biological event and this understanding influences the other facets of this concept. For example, adults recognize that death comes to all living things, is the final stage in the life cycle, is inevitable and irreversible, and is caused by a breakdown in the functioning of the body. But not the same thing happens in case of children. For pre-school children and even for children in primary school, death does not look the same at all like for their parents or adults in their lives. At that age, death is still reversible, and caused by supernatural avoidable forces in many cases. Researchers in this concept concluded that children do not grasp all the

subcomponents of death, and therefore lack a mature understanding of death, before age 7 at the earliest (Speece & Brent, 1984). Understanding death and its subconcepts is therefore a clear sign of mental and emotional development.

Unfortunately, death can occur in a child's life even earlier before he could be able to understand the concept of death and the actual situation. Consequently, they will be not only grieved by the death of a close person, but also confused and, unless parents or close relatives and teachers will explain to them that the person they loved died and will no longer be in their reality and sustain them emotionally, they will never be able to deal with grief and negative emotions, and emotional marks of the tragic experience will remain imprinted in their soul forever. Contrary to the practice of overprotecting children from suffering by hiding the death of a close family member, lying them and taking them far away so that they cannot see the dead person, it is very important – as a parent of a child going through grief and mourning or as a teacher - to understand that staying beside the children and sustaining him emotionally, without hiding him any aspect about death of the loved one has a crucial importance for their future development; otherwise, it is probable that they will develop symptoms of chronic depression, and as adults, problems of attachment and extreme fear of death.

2 AGE PERSPECTIVES OF DEATH. CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES

Children's perspective about death is very different from the one of an adult and it develops according to age and cognitive and emotional development. Understanding how children see death is very important in trying to help them to get through the process of mourning.

A multidimensional concept of death must include biological, sociocultural, and emotional components. Children glean information about death in many ways.

According to Speece and Brent (1984) children achieve the three components, irreversibility, finality, and inevitability, between 5 and 7 years, but a full understanding of the components about 10 years of age. Causality is the final subconcept to be acquired, perhaps because understanding the causal mechanisms that result in the breakdown of bodily functioning leading to death is the most complex component of the death concept (Kenyon, 2001; Slaughter & Griffiths, 2007).

M. Nagy shows in her research that before 6-7 years, children have magical, self-centered thinking; consequently, they are not able to understand the concept of death unless death does not belong to their direct experiences and it does not affect them directly. Even if someone close for them dies, unless they are not dead, it means death is still avoidable. They also believe that death is reversible, that the person in their family is temporarily left and they will return at any moment, and they will wait and ask for that

moment long after the actual death, if lacked of any other information. Preschoolers do not grasp the biological basis of death and tend to believe that death is a different state of life – a state of prolonged sleep. At this age, children often say that only old and ill people die, that dead people need to eat and breathe, and that they can still see, hear, or dream (Hodalska, Ghita & Dixon, 2016). The symbolic children's perspective about death is evident in situations when they imagine it as a devil, a monster or a black lady with a scythe and many other images, far from a realistic perspective. Moreover, according to Papalia & Olds (1986), the idea of reincarnation is present in many fairytales and stories for children, one of the main ways children could gather information from. Stories such as "Little Red Riding Hood" or "Prâslea the Brave and the Golden Apples", where characters are resurrected, or in many animation series where dead, are struck, crushed and so on, and in the next episode they reappear safe and sound as if nothing happened. It is also known that, when children experience the death of a friend or family member, it is not uncommon for their grief to be accompanied by some unrealistic beliefs about what has happened and concern over what to expect in the future (Bosticco & Thompson, 2005; Crăciun, 2011). Children's misconceptions and fears may be heightened in cases in which parental grief or parental uncertainty about how to talk to the child hinders communication (e.g., Siegel & Gorey, 1994).

Between 7-11 years, children begin to discover specific causes of death: accidents, diseases or death caused by the deeds of "bad" people. They now realize that death is irreversible, and this is the moment when questions about death as an abstract concept appear. Only after 12 years when abstract thinking stage of development occurs, children realize that death can affect all of us, regardless the age, sex, socio-economic status and it is not a punishment or an act of violence, but a part of the life cycle, and that it is not their fault if a parent or relative is dead and they could do almost nothing to stop this happening.

Additional research sought to investigate whether personal experience of death affects how children understand death. Some studies indicate that children who have direct, personal experience of death show relatively advanced understanding (Popescu, 2001; Hunter & Smith, 2008; Bogdan, 2016). Other studies showed that children who suffered protracted illness or hospitalization may be accelerated in the acquisition of irreversibility and causation, reflecting a relatively early understanding of the medical=biological nature of death (Jay, Green, Johnson, Caldwell, & Nitschke, 1987; O'Halloran & Altmaier, 1996). Contrary evidence emerged from Cotton and Range's study (1990) of 6- to 12-year-old children. Children who had lost a loved one showed less accurate death concepts than did children with no such experience. Similarly, Mahon's study (1993) of 5- to 12-year-old children who lost siblings from trauma, found that these children's death concept scores did not differ from matched controls. The lack

of consensus about the effects of previous experiences on concept acquisition might be the result of various methodologies and instruments used, the different contexts studied, and the various definitions for conceptualizing the meaning of death (Mahon et al., 1999).

Cultural and religious beliefs taken from family have major influence in the way children perceive death. Research into children's biological reasoning provides evidence for cross-cultural universalities in the development of children's ideas in this domain – including those concerning death – but also for cultural influences (Inagaki & Hatano, 2002; Ross, Medin, Coley, & Atran, 2003). For example, Schonfeld and Smilanski (1989) explored the impact of sociocultural influences on the conceptualization of death amongst 4- to 12-year-old Israeli and American children and found that Israeli children understood the notions of irreversibility and cessation better than their American counterparts. The unstable political situation in Israel at that time, and children's exposure to discussions about death, might have influenced their awareness of some of its subcomponents. Mahon, Goldberg, and Washington (1999) reported that Israeli 6-year-olds had an accurate notion of the cessation of death. All children in the study were exposed to conversations about death due to their fathers' involvement in military operations, which might have accelerated their understanding that death is final.

Other studies suggest that children from religious backgrounds (e.g., Muslim or Baptist) have a less scientific understanding of the irreversibility and inevitability of death than their non-religious peers, due to religious ideas about life after death that contradict biological explanations (Antony & Bhana, 1988–1989; Candy-Gibbs, Sharp, & Petrun, 1985). Florian and Kravetz (1985) reported that Jewish and Christian children living in Israel had a more scientific concept of death by the age of 10 than their Muslim and Druze counterparts, possibly due to the different religious beliefs espoused within their communities. In a study of Spanish children, Bering, Hernandez Blasi, and Bjorklund (2005) found that 4- to 12-year-olds attending Catholic schools were more likely than those in secular schools to believe that the biological and mental functions of a dead mouse (the main character in the study's stories) continue after death. Children exposed to religious instruction about the 'afterlife' may differ in their understanding of cessation from children without religious input because the idea that some processes continue after death is supported by their educational and religious background. On the contrary, in another study by , which explored the influence of cultural experiences on the development of children's understanding of death by comparing responses to a death concept interview given by White British, British Muslim, and Pakistani Muslim 4- to 5- and 6- to 7-year-olds, children answering questions about inevitability, applicability, irreversibility, cessation, and causality of death, scientists found that the sequence of subcomponent acquisition was similar for White British, British Muslim, and Pakistani

Muslim children. Moreover, as predicted, and consistent with previous research, for children in all three groups, irreversibility was one of the first subcomponents to be grasped, whereas causality was consistently the last. Results also suggested that, for all cultural groups, inevitability, applicability, and cessation were acquired either at the same time as or after irreversibility and consistently before causality. In addition, children's understanding of these three subcomponents improved significantly with age.

Considering these aspects, it is very important to gradually introduce the abstract and hard to understand concept of death in children's reality, so that they are able to discuss and understand death and its implications. For example, death of a pet could be the occasion for such delicate conversations.

3 MOURN FAZES

The stages of mourning and grief are universal and are experienced by people from all walks of life, adult or children. Mourning occurs in response to an individual's own terminal illness, the loss of a close relationship, or to the death of a valued being, human or animal. There are five stages of normal grief that were first proposed by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in her 1969 book "*On Death and Dying*."

The first reaction to learning of terminal illness or death of a cherished loved one is denial of the reality of the situation. It is a normal reaction to rationalize overwhelming emotions. It is a defense mechanism that buffers the immediate shock. We block out the words and hide from the facts. This is a temporary response that carries us through the first wave of pain. Isolation can also occur in this stage, people feeling the need to be left alone to live their grief.

Anger is the second stage of mourning. As the masking effects of denial and isolation begin to wear, reality and its pain re-emerge. But the person are not ready yet to deal with it. The intense emotion is deflected from our vulnerable core, redirected and expressed instead as anger. The anger may be aimed at inanimate objects, complete strangers, friends or family. Anger may be directed at their dying or deceased loved one. Rationally, he/she knows the person is not to be blamed. Emotionally, however, he/she may resent the person for causing us pain or for leaving them (Munteanu, 2009; Ionescu, 2015). They feel guilty for being angry, and this makes them angrier. The doctor who diagnosed the illness and was unable to cure the disease might become a convenient target. Health professionals deal with death and dying every day. That does not make them immune to the suffering of their patients or to those who grieve for them. In such situations, it is good for the person to be given extra time and just once more the details of the loved one's illness, and to be reminded that everyone did everything they could to keep the person alive or at least to die peacefully.

Bargaining with life, God and divinity is the next stage that a person in mourn passes. The normal reaction to feelings of helplessness and vulnerability is often a need to regain control, by saying things like "If only I had tried to be a better person toward them..." or "If only someone could help us to keep ... alive...". Secretly, person may make a deal with God or higher power in an attempt to postpone the inevitable. This is a weaker line of defense to protect them from the painful reality. Children may say such things such as "I'll be a good kid if you let my parents live, God."

Depression is the fourth stage that may appear when the situation gets worse. Two types of depression are associated with mourning. The first one is a reaction to practical implications relating to the loss. Sadness and regret predominate this type of depression. The person worries about the costs and burial. He/she worries that, in his grief, he have spent less time with others that depend on them. This phase may be eased by simple clarification and reassurance. In this situation, the person may need a bit of helpful cooperation and a few kind words. The second type of depression is more subtle and, in a sense, perhaps more private. It is the quiet preparation to separate and to bid the loved one farewell. Sometimes all that person really need is a hug and someone close to listen to them (Teodorescu, 2015).

Acceptance is the last stage of mourning. Reaching this stage of mourning is a gift not afforded to everyone. Death may be sudden and unexpected or the person may never see beyond anger or denial. It is not necessarily a mark of bravery to resist the inevitable and to deny themselves the opportunity to make our peace. This phase is marked by withdrawal and calm. This is not a period of happiness and must be distinguished from depression. This is the stage when person finally accepts death of the loved one and go one in their lives in absence of the loved one.

Coping with loss is ultimately a deeply personal and singular experience. But others can be there for you and help comfort you through this process. It is very important to understand that for every person the situation is different and each person go through these stages in a different way. There is also a great difference between the way an adult and a child get through mourning. Not completely understanding implications of death changes the way they see things and deal with grief (Vlăduţescu, Siminică & Dumitru, 2015).

4 THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Unfortunately, in many cultures, death is still a taboo. It still exists the belief of overprotecting children from suffering by hiding the death of a close family member, lying them and taking them far away so that they cannot see the dead person. But actually, by practicing this, parents, teachers and persons around the children only make him be more disoriented and suffer more by not knowing what happened with the

person they love. As a parent or teacher, it is very important to understand that staying beside the children and sustaining him emotionally, without hiding him any aspect about death of the loved one has a crucial importance for their future development; otherwise, it is probable that they will develop symptoms of chronic depression, and as adults, problems of attachment and extreme fear of death. Proper education for population regarding this delicate subject is a sign of a developed society. In the light of this perspectives, specialists and psychotherapists should be prepared to offer advice and support in any moment so that parents will be learn how to stand by their children in the hard and long process of managing their negative emotions, living their mourning together.

In any moment parents consider needed, they may ask help of a psychotherapist. It is very important in such situations when adults do not know how to deal with the situation to talk with a specialist who can listen to them, sustain them emotionally, a person who can be emphatic and help the family get over the mourn without transforming it in a permanent, chronic state, a depression.

In case of children suffering from the loss of a loved person, special techniques of intervention adapted to their age and cognitive development can be used to help them. Such techniques are therapeutic tales, drawing projective test and role-play games which can show and heal traumas without having kid to remember the actual death of the loved one.

Researches shows that drawings could be fruitful especially for those children who had experienced death within their family, because drawings might help children to talk about experiences that otherwise might find difficult to express. Moreover, drawings enhance the quantity of information children reveal about their past experience, as well as that they provide more accurate information compared to those obtained through narratives (Gross & Hayne, 1998; Ene, 2014; Al-Tokhais, 2016). Gross and Hayne argued that drawings decrease the social demands of the interview, allowing children to feel more comfortable, facilitate memory retrieval because children's pictorial representations offer them effective retrieval cues, and help children organize their verbal reports. We hypothesized that on both the questionnaire and in the drawings, older children with personal death experience would have more mature death concepts compared to younger children with no death experience.

Therapeutic fairytales, storybooks and picture books could be other resources that foster open communication with children and facilitate the therapeutic intervention, helping children prepare for or cope with death and to understand it in developmentally appropriate terms (Corr, 2000, 2004). Children's literature has been used legitimately as a therapeutic and didactic tool for grief counselors, teachers, and school administrators to aid children in bereavement, as well as a useful means for

parents to communicate with their children on the subject of death (Heath et al., 2008; Pehrsson, 2007; Todahl, Smith, Barnes, & Pereira, 1998). Research shows that psychotherapeutic intervention using fairytales and literature in case of children has led to very positive results, due to the fact that they do not force the children to live again the painful experience directly, but allow him to have insights and heal his trauma by identifying with the leading character who, in the story scenario, is going through the same situation as him (Ștefan & Popescu, 2015; Voinea, Negrea & Teodorescu, 2016).

Psychological intervention shall be a very gentle one and, if possible, in the presence of the family, so that child knows all the family is there with him sustaining in the process, and he is not alone and abandoned with his grief.

5 CONCLUSION

Death and mourning are for sure some of the saddest and painful experiences one must go through in his life. It is a difficult moment for any person, but especially for children who are by definition not fully developed emotionally and cognitively. When a loved one dies, a child will feel abandoned, disoriented, confused, as a result of possibly losing the person of attachment. Severe emotional problems might appear if the situation is not well managed. It is therefore very important for parents and close relatives to stay together with the child, to explain him sincerely and according to his age the situation and to sustain him emotionally until they all overcome the challenge and the recovery successfully. Eventually, if the child feels secure and loved during the hard moments, the sad experience will turn into one that will help him develop and get mature, understanding death and its implications.

In such situations, teachers must be prepared to recognize the aspects of mourning and possible symptoms of an early depression or abnormal functioning in child's behavior and, as much as possible, help and counsel kid and his family, as well as advise the other pupils to help him and integrate him in their activities as possible as normal.

Parents shall know that in any moment they feel they cannot deal with the hard situation, they can ask for aid of a psychotherapist for kid and also their family if needed. This way an emphatic but detached of the actual situation, trustful specialist trained to deal with such things will assist and advise them on the hard road through mourning and will help them reconcile with the new state of their family.

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THE DIMENSION OF THE SOCIO-CULTURAL BRAND OF COCA-COLA

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Abstract

Today, advertising is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating social phenomena, a fundamental factor influencing individuals, attitudes or lifestyles. It is an important element of contemporary culture, deeply anchored in our cultural heritage. In this framework encompasses our article, aiming to demonstrate influential aspects of the Coca-Cola advertising slogan as an instrument of culture and ideology, in a few words, a merciless mirror of our society.

Keywords: advertising, slogans, culture, language, communication

JEL classification: I10, H10, O52

THE ADVERTISING REVOLUTION PRODUCED BY COCA COLA

Given the fact that the advertising messages are always acts of indirect communication which have, beyond a declarative, expressive and assertive level, a directive, implicit and persuasive character, through which the receiver/consumer is determined to buy, we believe that only through a pragmatic approach we can obtain framework conventions which are the basis of advertising signs. The diversity of the commercials can be dissuasive for a systematic research, a brand like Coca Cola, which we are going to talk about in the article, launches sometimes more ads in a single week, carried out differently but having the same message or philosophy. It is still fairly prevalent the idea that the "art of the creation departments of advertising agencies is rather intuitive", even though the research conducted in the recent decades, which have been done in particular by the sciences of communication with an interdisciplinary opening, have shown through the semiotic and pragmatic analyses that there are sets of principles on the basis on which the coding and decoding of the advertising messages take place.

Advertising, in general, has been since the first half of the twentieth century, the carrier of various ideological messages, a behavior shaper and the creator of new myths. Through its enormous impact in the capitalist societies, advertising sells "modes" and "models" of life.

To highlight the role the advertising plays in our representation and envisions about reality, we can use Sandu Frunza's title, *Advertising constructs reality*.

There are advertising slogans that have turned into life mottos, and those launched by Coca-Cola, over time, are the most relevant in this regard. In fact, Coca-Cola slogans have become true globalization slogans. Coca-Cola is, according to a myth created and propagated on the Internet, the second most popular word in the world after "OK", information which can be checked through a search via Google, another word that is in the top.

From where does, however, such a success come? Primarily through advertising campaigns that kept incontestably transmitting the values of the "American dream". Coca-Cola has also become a symbol of "integration into American imperialism", which also gave rise to side effects which did nothing else but increased its popularity.

Coca-Cola makes us facing a continuous advertising revolution of different modes of expression, giving rise since its first decades of existence (being created by John Pemberton in 1886) to the multicultural marketing as a means of integrating *the other* in the culture they represent, the American culture.

Its basic strategy is expressed precisely by the slogan "*think local, act global*", that announces the availability for recognizing the differences in mentality and culture

between the countries that consume or will have consumed the drink. In the spirit of this philosophy, Donald Keough, President of Coca-Cola, said, when being interviewed, the following: "You know, actually, Coca-Cola does not really belong to us [company], it belongs to you, to anyone and everyone who have ever shared a moment with a Coke."

The statement is one of the primary values which represent the cultural meaning that the drink has got and keeps cultivating, because, in fact, Coca-Cola is, indeed, much more than the product itself, it is an industry, "an international resource", "a cultural, global act". Through creativity and ability to grip the realities and cultural trends of an epoch or of a cultural space, the Coca-Cola promoters have created the strongest brand and the most durable visual identity of a product, redefining at the same time, the advertising image. The ways in which it appeared as a symbiosis of tradition and innovation, the fact that it has adapted immediately to the evolution of television, to the evolution of all media or advertising means, including new media, and also that it was ahead the taste's mutations, made Coca Cola an iconic brand, a paradigmatic one that has entered into the modern man's conscience. It is considered to be the brand which is the most interested into the loyalty of its consumers in the history of trade, which underlies its international success.

In the specialized literature, the term "brand" is used to refer to both a special line of products marketed under a recognizable identity, to a large scale, after the logo and other symbolic marks that it uses, and to social image which the producing company tries to impose on itself and its products.

According to Nicoleta Corbu, "brand appears to be designed as an empty concept that fills in time with the repeated experiences of the contemporaries," which means that the brand subsumes what consumers do with the brand in their minds as a source of additional value and profit", being from this point of view, "a virtual good in the sense proposed by Pierre Lévy, as something that exists as a potentiality, without the tangibility of what is present, but without missing some".

Nowadays, this probably is best reflected by Coca-Cola, the branding which "creates identity, structures myths, because the brand is a myth performer and bearer of an identity myth". After a superficial analysis Coca-Cola appears to us as a plurality of paradoxes, of nuances and simulacra.

Specifically, from observing its evolution we find that:

- although the visual identity of the product has gone through very few changes during the 125 years and not in its determinant compartments (font name and color), nor philosophy, the brand syncs perfectly with the contemporary socio-cultural rhythms and with the new promotional techniques in the infinite space of the Internet through the proposed advertising scenarios;

- although many commercials and advertising campaigns are created annually all over the world, its identity remains unaltered and consolidated;
- although it's a refreshing drink, by the creative association with the winter holidays and, at another level, with the most International holidays, Coca-Cola is consumed by the whole family throughout the year, which means that the idea of a target audience is basically annulled, being the perfect drink for everyone, all the time;
- the symbiosis of visual identity of the product and the philosophy detectable in its advertising slogans is perfect.

We find that the "brand image" and "personality" brand are basically in a constant change, but on a structure and philosophy that goes back more than a century, and the interpretation of the brand as a particular advertising sign must take into account this dynamic.

The series of commercials that are being proposed by large companies, despite the fact that they already had entered into the public and individual consciousness, have also the role to direct the infinite semiosis. This is why advertising has become so important in stores or supermarkets, by providing the traders with thermal shop windows, with the insignia of the brand product (in this case, Coca-Cola) or with special shelves in the case of different brands of cigarettes. Coca-Cola made an art from advertising itself in the (super) market and, moreover, established a true style in design and decorative art, synchronized with the trends and patterns in this area.

The pragmatic analysis of Coca-Cola advertising will have to take into account, therefore, the association of the brand with the Pop-Art, the power to visually or auditory dominate, with suggestions from the tactile area (ice cold becoming a real slogan printed on display cabinets and metal firms displayed on storefronts, fast food restaurants, cafes etc.) large public spaces and venues, including private spaces, becoming, as mentioned before, a phenomenon in terms of decorative and more than this, a design style. We should also remember of its participation in the "winter holidays' decoration", probably being the most imported brand which participates in the visual "representation" of our everyday reality.

The sociocultural implications of Coca-Cola made their presence felt in music also. The interaction between words and visual elements was accompanied by interaction with musical elements. In 1971 was launched one of the ads that gave the brand an international scope. The commercial consists of a music video in which young people from around the world, wearing symbols of nationalities they represented, were arranged in an equilateral triangle, the symbol of balance and harmony, on a hill and interpreted in chorus, the song "I'd like to buy the world a Coke." The clip has a clear pacifist, globalized message, and had such a successful melody that the New Seekers transformed it into a global hit called "I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing", which occupied the

first places in the major music charts of the '70s for a long time. The commercial message, displayed in the form of lyrics that were running from the bottom to the top, was the following:

*„On a hilltop in Italy/
We assembled young people/
From all over the world.../
To bring you message/
From Coca-Cola Bottlers/
All over the world./
It's the real thing./ COKE.”*

Last sentence became one of the most popular slogans of the company. This particular commercial gives us a very relevant example of a double message: the visual and conceptual elements are carriers of universal values - pacifism and equality between people, namely the ideal of communication, which is associated with the hearing ideal, the lyrics themselves talk about how Coca-Cola is an universal gift, a symbol of tolerance, of the union between people, of acceptance of the other and communion, global friendship.

Following this philosophy, Coca-Cola reached one of the most powerful symbols of freedom in countries emerged from totalitarian regimes such as those in Central and Eastern Europe, including the post-December Romania.

THE EFFECT OF PRIORITY AGENDA

The audible and visual brand presence in public spaces, namely commercial ones, has an immediate effect in changing the consumer's shopping agenda. Theorists have used the concept of highlighting, the process being well managed by the marketing departments of the Coca-Cola multinational and placed in a relationship of spectacular efficiency with the advertising campaigns, aimed at influencing the consumer's policy alternatives. An important role in this respect is played by slogans. One of the functions of a slogan is, therefore, that of highlighting and thus making the product it promotes a priority. Always Coca-Cola is probably the best example that can be found in this regard. The slogan appears in both TV and internet videos and is also printed on shelves or on bottle and carton product packaging. The "Always Coca-Cola" slogan is representative of the early '90s.

By advertising it in stores, the companies are trying to change the consumer's mental agenda "skipping all" - inducing the idea of taking them into account. Equally, the

remembrance of the advertising from the store, and also our mental agenda of brands, can suggest us which alternatives are to be considered before we even ask ourselves what we want. Therefore, specialists in advertising are trying to influence the highlighting of the brand in the store, not only our mental agenda. They use posters in an attempt to suggest us their brand visualization.

When we go into a store or into a local to buy or to order a refreshing drink, we are already in a state of suggestion through category, facing an election with a specific number of options. In a very short time, without even being fully aware of the process, most often without being aware at all, there is a whole "debate" in our mind, possibly triggering all sorts of subconscious processes of will and desire. We become very responsive to stimuli in times when "we lust". The advertisement is therefore decisive and slogans like "Life has taste" or "Thirst for life" and visual "assault" which is so famous, create that state of Genuine ... and Always ... thorough which Coca-Cola wins so many times this "battle".

It is interesting that through this marketing, Coca-Cola won the competition with other "categories" of products by replacing them or, in a subtle way, by associating with them. It is the marketing of its premises dedicated to hot drinks. So, where Coca-Cola is not already in the mind of the consumer when entering a shop or in a Cafe & Bar, will be inserted automatically in the mind:

- (a) the suggestion of the product's category and
- (b) its visual presence in the local store or through: posters, objects, proper exposure of the bottles etc.

Even when Coca-Cola is among consumer's preferences memory, if there is a confrontation with a Pepsi poster, under any form, the individual may consider both brands, which is why advertising's presence is crucial.

Advertising thus involves a domination of space and a "statement" of its presence in the places where it is sold, which is being made through controlling the multitude of alternatives that may be displayed and placed in the consumer's mind. Coca-Cola has invested more resources over time to highlight the category and make their presence felt continuously in reality to as many levels, but especially in everyday life. Slogans launched by the Coca-Cola advertising campaigns have a decisive role in highlighting the category, and one of their functions is to trigger the mnemonic mechanism that triggers the remembrance of the brand and one of the best examples in the history of advertising is offered in this regard, by the perennial and incomparable *Always Coca-Cola*.

Advertising today is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating social phenomena, a fundamental factor influencing individuals, their attitudes and ways of life. It is an important element of contemporary culture, deeply rooted in our cultural heritage.

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THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF ACCOUNTING WITHIN THE PROJECTS FINANCED FROM STRUCTURAL FUNDS

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Abstract

In this article are analysed the main aspects which lead to creating an optimal accounting framework. Talking about the elements, of accounting legal framework, we refer to accounting general principles and in particular, to the principles applied in the domain of structural funds.

The article aims to gather all the directives, laws and regulations which stipulate the principles and the major changes, appeared, all over the periods of time . Also, it is highlighted the grade and the way in which every accounting principle is implemented in the area of structural funds.

The researching methodology is based on qualitative method, and is completed by the quantitative one, putting the accent on the theoretical and practical aspects of the problems mentioned above, from a descriptive conceptual perspective.

Keywords: structural funds, principles, accounting, directives, regulations

JEL Classification: M40, M41, F21, F36

1 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this article is to emphasize the general framework of accounting within the projects financed from European funds.

The second objective aims to notice the differences between the constituent items of the accounting framework both from the European level and the national level ones, too.

It is also important to be identified the principles to govern the accounting organisation in relation with the structural funds domain.

The third objective consists in highlighting the directives and regulations and the issues set by these ones, regarding the functional principles of activities within the structural funds, from an accounting perspective.

2 INTRODUCTION

The word „Contabilitate”/Accounting comes from the French word „comptabilite”, meaning that economic science, which has as main objective recording of transactions carried out in an enterprise, their results, to determine the efficiency and utility of economic activity carried in (Dicționarul Explicativ al Limbii Române, Academia Română Institutul de Lingvistică ”Iorgu Iordan- Al. Rosetti”, p. 507). Also, according to the Accounting Law, it represents a complex system of collecting, identifying, classifying, processing, recording, generalization of accounting and financial reporting elements

(Legea nr. 82/1991 a contabilității - Republicată și Actualizată 2016).

The notion of “frame” comes also from the French language provider of the noun “cadre”, with the meaning of domain, limit of an action from a spatial, temporal point of view, but also the different characteristics that define an activity (Dicționarul Explicativ al Limbii Române, Academia Română Institutul de Lingvistică ”Iorgu Iordan- Al. Rosetti”, p. 476). In our case, referring to the accounting framework, we can talk about the whole amount of items, that together, set the rules and limits based on which the accounting is organised.

Regarding the compound noun “structural funds”, this one proves the financial funds allocated by the European Union, in order to reduce the structural disparities (Dumitru, Motoi & Curelaru, 2016).

The general framework of the accounting within the projects financed from structural funds refers basically to the principles in accordance with which the accounting is structured in this field.

3 BASIC ASPECTS REGARDING THE GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE ACCOUNTING

The word „principle”, so used over the time, comes from French language, from the word „principe”, that defines a fundamental idea, a basic law that is the basis of a scientific theory, a political and legal system, a norm of conduct.

The principles represent the main elements, that design the general framework of accounting, in any domain of activity. They are rules followed by all business entities, regulations that are applied as a reference system in accounting (OMFP 3055/2009 – CAPITOLUL II – SECȚIUNEA 7 PRINCIPII CONTABILE GENERALE actualizat ca OMFP 1802/2014).

The goal of the economic science called accounting is to show as accurately as it is possibly patrimonial situation of a company or several economic entities, from the economic and financial point of view and in relation with the results of the performed activity.

In order to support and apply in a transparent way, the accounting object, it is necessary that at the basis of this discipline to be a set of common principles and accepted internally and externally.

Taking into account the fact that the globalisation phenomenon is underway at present, it really necessary that the accounting principles to be applied by all the states members of the EU, in the context of their integration into the community.

The accounting principles are discussed from 3 distinctive directions: international, European and national, everyone of them with different regulations. Thus, the international plan is represented by the New Accounting Directive (Directive 34/2013), the European level is regulated by the IV-th Directive, the historic legislation, that resisted and was developed, in the same time with the expansion of the European Community and OMPF 1802/2014 (derived from OMPF 3055/2009) at the state level.

It is preferable that the accounting principles to be considered, taking into account the provisions that refer to, the Directive IV of the European Economic Community, taking also into account the International Accounting Standards, known under the abbreviation IAS.

The IV-th Directive of the Council, from 1978, regarding the annual accounts of certain types of entities represents one of the most important legislative acts, adopted at European level, resulting from the fusion of two major directives: the IV-th Directive and the VII-th Directive. This provides the way of presenting the annual financial statements but also the accounting principles and the rules of identification, evaluation, end of record and the presentation of the elements in the annual financial statements, the rules for drawing up, approval, audit/verification, according to the law, and publishing annual financial statements, some rules regarding management accounting, Chart of Accounts

General and the content and function accounts accounting. (Directiva a IV-a a Comunităților Economice Europene 78/660/EEC din data de 25 iulie 1978 privind conturile anuale ale anumitor tipuri de societăți comerciale)

This directive is helpful for the accounting information users, assuring their comparability and facilitating the harmonization of the elements that ensure an enterprise's financial position or generic, of an economy. The benefit of all those interested in using accounting data, by this regulation, is that these aspects mentioned, stipulates the obligation of rendering financial statements in the same format and in a currency of international circulation.

The only gap remarked, over the years, is that one of the materiality threshold principle, that, at the European level, it was not taken into account in the accounting management of the economic entities.

At this above mentioned regulation it is added the Directive 43 from 2006, regarding the legal audit of the annual and consolidated accounts. This one stipulates the responsibilities that an auditor must fulfill and the conditions under which the effective auditing action can be performed.

The two Directives are complementary, because accounting refers to both the preparation and presentation of financial statements, their verification and traceability, their certification with the reality.

Legislation in force are completed by the Directive 34/2013 regarding the multiannual financial statements, consolidated financial statements and related reports of certain types of companies called the New European Accounting Directive, intelligent Regulation in EU. An intelligent regulation within the Community allows, after our opinion, developing higher quality laws that clearly define all aspects included in the accounting, by respecting the principle of subsidiarity, and that of proportionality.

Taking a closer look, the International Accounting Standards, the pillar underpinning the unification of accounting rules and create a common regulatory framework for the most important elements that are found in this economic science. It talks about the presentation of the annual financial statements about inventory, depreciation, taxes on income, earnings per share, strands of accounting change prices, cash-flow situation of SMEs, agriculture, etc.(Standardele Internaționale de Contabilitate- IAS)

All the 41 international standards contribute to the preservation of the accounting at the same level for all the companies, from all the states members, whether in public or private property.

Thus, it is necessary, that also in the domain of the structural funds to be fulfilled the above mentioned directives, because the companies that would become the

beneficiaries of the grants, have to organise the accounting within their company, the help of the distinct analytical accounts, that clearly performed the separation between the current activity of the firm and the actions performed for the implementation of the projects financed by EU.

There is only one motivation that resort to distinct analytical accounts: avoid confusion to hire an expense to be settled on the project when it does not meet the eligibility criteria stipulated in the Guidelines for Applicants for each operational program.

Besides, it is necessary, with each request for payment or reimbursement of expenditure incurred by the Structural Funds for repayment of expenditure incurred in the projects to be presented on separate financial statements and the project company and be evaluated separately the assets and liabilities.

Nationally, these directives are complemented by OMPF 1082/2014 - accounting regulations on individual annual financial statements and annual consolidated financial statements, generically called in Romanian accounting literature, as SFA and SFI.

Within each regulations, listed and discussed above, the general accounting principles are described by means of characteristics more or less similar.

It can be highlighted the idea that standards at EU level are partially consistent with those that Romania, has, in terms of accounting principles, but can not observe the same line between the European and the international legal framework.

4 THE TYPOLOGY OF THE GENERAL ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES

Centralization of the specific literature led to highlighting several classifications of accounting principles. The concise presentation thereof reveals a number of 10 accounting principles, widely accepted internationally. There are, however, specialists, considering as being relevant activity in the economic field, there are 12 general principles that can be completed with another 4 accounting principles, which can be contained into the main 12 ones, but may exist independently others.

To ensure equivalence and comparability of the financial information included in the annual financial statements, the most significant principles that take into account are the going concern assumption, that of prudence and accrual (known as Accrual principle).

The continuity of the activity is the most representative principle, which states the obligation of permanence in the conduct of current operations, by a company. Nationally, OMPF 94/2001, forms the legal framework for implementation of this principle, under the conditions of maximum efficiency of this principle.

It highlights, therefore, that regardless of the industry in which the company operates, it needs to continue its work in perspective without unjustified suspension thereof. The only cases accepted, as exceptions to this principle are considered, according to expert opinion, liquidation and bankruptcy situations.

Going Concern blazing forth in the book value, which is calculated as the difference between the input value of property in society (whether the source of funding for it comes from their own resources or from structural funds) and the value of accumulated depreciation thereof (calculated annually). In case of, the entity activity is interrupted after the acquisition is performed, noticing an error in calculating the balance sheet, which is not consisted with the reality.

The second principle, the one of methods permanence, refers to constant evaluation methods that are applied in each financial year. There is the obligativity to keep during several annual exercises, the accounting methods of working (registration accounting and valuation of property) to ensure data comparability over time provided by.

However, if it is found that an accounting method is much more efficient than the one used by the operator at the time in question and leads to clearer information thereof, the method may be modified, subject to mention the new method will be applied in the annual financial statements.

Talking about European funds, it could be remarked the fact that the consistency of the methods guarantees for all the users of information, at any stage of the project, the possibility of making comparisons between the results. It is important to take into account this principle, as during the implementation and monitoring of an European project, it is performed an intense scrutiny of the proper use of funds by the authorities certified, but experts who evaluate the situation are different depending on the context so that they can only picture the reality presented by the entity's financial statements (Reza Hosseini, Maghrebi, Chileshe & Travis Waller, 2016).

If it refers to methods of depreciation of fixed assets purchased with a grant, they are less important in the field of structural funds as are pursued by the competent authorities, income and expenses generated by those assets rather annual depreciation thereof what is not eligible to be settled by Community funds.

The most significant principle of the accounting is, after the specialists' opinion, the principle of prudent economics, which provides to the thirds the guarantee that the entity's financial statements picture the reality and they are objectively drawn up. Noteworthy in this principle is the rule according to which it is forbidden the overvaluation of assets and income, as otherwise, need to be avoided understatement to liabilities or debts, or expenses.

It should be stressed that when it is predicted to appear diminutions of value, they must be registered in order not to distort the subsequent economic reality. Paradoxically, possible increases in value are not counted, except when they are final and can be treated as a certainty. Accounting for positive differences would lead to overvaluation of asset, considered the opposite principle of action described above.

The accrual basis which must be taken into account when the evaluation is performed has to follow few main rules: it is included into the financial statements only the profit already realized at the date of the balance sheet; all the debts from the current financial year or from the previous one must be taken into account; also will take into account any possible or predicatable liabilities from the current financial year and the previous one; it is taken into account the outcome of the financial year, whether it is profit or loss for the enterprise.

In case of the structural funds, the accrual principle consists in accounting recording of the expenses and incomes obtained effectively, at the date of the balance sheet being drawn up, respectively the profit registered. It must be taken into account in working with projects at Community level, the idea that not all amounts incurred by the beneficiary, there are actually paid. They generate losses for the applicant, as it increased the amount to be covered from own resources which represents the value of expenditure considered ineligible and not subject to reimbursement.

Another problem in this principle to be treated carefully is that pre-financing granted for certain projects belonging to different types of operational programs, creates more value accounting, but when it is not deducted appropriately at the appropriate time, generates losses. It can be seen therefore that it is not taken into account in practice of this principle in the field of structural funds.

The principle of the fiscal year independence uses the sharing of the time in equal parts mechanism, recognized, in the accounting field as financial exercises. All the incomes and expenses must be registered in accounting books, whether their collection or payment date is in the in the fiscal year in which they are highlighted in the annual financial statements. A fiscal year is considered to be the time between the 1st of January and 31st of December of the same year.

This principle is considered by many specialists to be in addition of the continuity principle of the activity, but, in opposition with the, so called, prudence principle. Justifying the assumption that the principle of independence exercise comes in contradiction with caution is that, taking into account a financial year by itself, can not be calculated the possible and predictable impairments that is recorded subsequent to the balance sheet and passing in accounting society in the next financial year (Nedelcu, Siminica & Turlea, 2015; Stefănescu, Turlea, Pitulice & Tudorache, 2016).

Regarding the structural funds domain, it could be pointed out the compliance of the financial exercise independence by the fact that the reimbursements and payments within the projects receiving a grant are performed from January 1st to December 31st.

Intangibility refers to the opening balance requirement similarity of the current year, with the closing of the previous financial year, so between the two exercises should not have occurred any change in the company's accounting.

Within the projects financed from European funds this principle is essential because the expenses registered during each year of implementation are checked and controlled by different experts. It is necessary, therefore, to avoid confusion, the amounts presented in the end of the previous financial year, to coincide with the amounts from the beginning of the current financial year.

Non-balancing accounting principle is captured in all specialty works as "brick", which is the basis of building a better separation between the assets and the liabilities. So, in accordance with this rule it isn't possible to do any compensation between the assets and liabilities accounts in the balance sheet. The exceptions to this principle are those compensations allowed by the International Accounting Standards and other legal provisions in force, but compensation is made only after the recording of revenues and expenses at their full value.

Noncompensation can be found also in the funds domain and after our opinion it is a regulation that aims the appropriate highlighting of the assets and liabilities, for a better statement of the beneficiary that it is consistent with economic reality. The management authorities must be able to verify in an efficient manner the applicant's incomes and its expenses, over a financial year, by simply analyzing their annual financial statements.

The prevalence of the economic over the juridical summarizes the following aspect: it is necessary to analyze the balance sheet, profit and loss account to be done through the substance of the transaction reported and less in terms of legislative, legal thereof (Constantinescu, Ogarcă & Bocean, 2008; Feleagă & Feleagă, 2016).

A good example of this principle is in our view the next eligible expenditure, conducted in projects from structural funds: acquisition through financial leasing an asset, to be recorded as an asset entered in project accounting, although it has only transferred the right of use on it.

Materiality principle is called the principle of relative importance, because of the idea supported. It sets forth that in accounting should be recorded only distinct elements which have significant values, those with significant values, the rest being classified as insignificant and being recorded, summing only. The basic condition that governs this

principle, we can say that is the use of separate notes for all items that have values below the significance threshold.

Only items with significant value can influence decisions of users of accounting information so that their distinct failure in the financial statements would distort reality.

Motivating this principle lies in the following: ensuring a higher level of clarity of the information presented; facilitating the use of data by all interested without the appearance of confusion about the elements insignificant.

Very relevant in this sense, it is an example of the Structural Funds: can be purchased in eligible expenses, consumables, which taken separately, would be significant, but recorded in the accounts under the name generic consumables, represented by account 302, acquire significant value and can generate decisive influence among recipients of accounting information.

Separate assessment of the assets and the liabilities is fair, thinking about that and their registration is done all separate assets being represented by accounts receivable and liabilities Accounts payable, when it comes to input their heritage entity. The process is followed to determine the value corresponding to a total balance sheet position (Andreica, 2016; Nazzal, 2016; Ongus, Wafula & Ruvuta, 2016).

The historical cost principle describes the accounting registration of the purchased goods. Any good purchased by acquisition is registered in accounting at the original value, known as historical cost, acquisition cost, input cost. This value is kept from the entering moment into the entity to the leaving of the asset from the entity's property. This principle is to guarantee the reliability of information from annual financial statements. However, when deemed necessary, Member States may require revaluation of fixed assets (Dumitru, Guse, Feleaga, Mangiuc & Feldioreanu, 2015; Ogarcă, Crăciun & Mihai, 2015).

All fixed assets, inventory objects items purchased through structural funds, are recorded in accounting at the economic value stated on the invoice. Bear in mind that VAT on the purchase applies only to domestic acquisitions, nationally, at intra-Community acquisitions without VAT being executed.

Currency monetary quantification principle stands in a double role: unit of account and buying unit. It is very important to be set from the beginning the currency for all the beneficiary's transactions. The base currency is the national one, but there are cases when it can be used also foreign currencies. Transactions in foreign currency must be accounted for in both local currency and in international currency in question has satisfied the requirements for all categories of users of accounting information.

This principle is even more important in the field of structural funds, as, fund transfers are made between the European Commission that uses the euro currency transactions and a Member State that uses the operations performed in its own currency.

The connection of the expenses with the incomes is in close relation with the comparison of the efforts performed (expenses) in order to obtain the effects (incomes), for highlighting in an appropriate way the result of the fiscal year, profit or loss.

In case of the structural funds, it is created a separate connection to incomes and expenditures of the project and those of the current activity. However, at company level, there is a result of the global exercise, that places the recipient on profit or loss, taking into account both results of the exercise (conducted in project accounting and the accounting company).

We can also speak, in the specialty literature of a total of four secondary principles: the principle of monetary nominalism, principle of entity's autonomy, the principle justifying facts and objectivity. They are, however, debated and they are not universally accepted principles in international practice (Quffa, 2012 Okan & Yalman, 2014; Knowles, Phillips & Lidberg, 2017).

5 THE DESCRIPTION OF STRUCTURAL FUNDS DOMAIN

The structural funds represent etimologically speaking a compound term, provided by the french language „fonds structurels”, where it represents the total amounts of money allocated for reducing the differences of „structural” origin existing between regions (Balan, 2006; Vstag-Vladutescu, 2015).

It was rumored about that notion in the context of achieving regional development and cohesion, since the beginning of the Economic Coal and Steel Community in 1957, as stipulated in the Treaty of Rome.

It was only in 1986 by the Single Western European Act when it has been given increased importance for developing the Member States and increasing the living standards of citizens and later, in 1988, with the first reform of the Structural Funds, it has been decided to allocate significant amounts to the states possessing poor natural resources and demographics, or were located in island, mountainous or sparsely populated areas.

As a basic idea, we can underline the fact that the two politics, for regional developing and cohesion one, are followed with the help of the structural funds and moreover by using the structural tools. These are funds that are aimed at reducing regional disparities in the EU Member States, achieving the primary strategic 3 objectives: convergence; competitiveness and employment; European territorial cooperation.

Thanks to the major size of the investments in discussion, the structural funds are being used through the operational programmes, within which one can access a grant,

by any public or private beneficiary by submitting and implementing projects, whether individual or partnership.

6 THE ADDITIONAL PRINCIPLES IN THE FIELD OF STRUCTURAL FUNDS

Besides the general accounting principles, which are taken into account in any field, working with projects financed from structural funds must be followed a series of specific principles that facilitate the coordination, implementation, monitoring and control of them: the complementarity principle, the principle of additionality principle of subsidiarity, the multiannually principle, compatibility principle, the partnership principle, the principle of concentration.

THE COMPLEMENTARITY PRINCIPLE - it means a good complement to Community actions with those undertaken at the state level;

THE PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE - there must be a close communication, continue, between the European Commission and the competent authorities at the national level (eg national bodies may be local or regional authorities and economic, social partners). This principle must be applied at all stages of programming.

THE SUBSIDIARITY PRINCIPLE- the priorities of the development programme related with structural funds belong to the national authorities. The Commission can not decide which projects are awarded European funding. It is incumbent upon bodies Member States to select the projects to be funded, and how it will achieve management. This principle coordinates the EU actions with the ones of the member states, with the responsibility that these actions would not overlap, being well defined. The subsidiarity principle was defined for the first time in the Maastricht Treaty always setting that international authority must not interfere when an objective is performed in a better way at a lower level (in this EU case, at the national level). This principle was very little defined in the Single European Act, but was regulated by the Maastricht Treaty, EU Operating Treaty, rules of the Treaty establishing the European Community.

The subsidiarity principle is both generic and programatic in the same time. This principle provides an equal sharing of the powers to EU funds, EU, Member States, regional and local authorities, for better effectiveness and proportionality.

At the same time **the subsidiarity principle** represents the organization engine at the community level, which completes the lack of clear legislation regulations, but also the absence of a unitary definition of the wanted objectives by the allocation of the structural funds (Voinea, 2015; Vlăduțescu, Siminică & Dumitru, 2015).

It is also the principle which has generated in time the most powerful discussions because of the interpretations that it could have. On the one hand, it is considered that

the EU can effectively manage aspects of providing public goods and services. On the other hand, the national authority substitutes it when it comes to partnering with regional and local bodies for setting standards in the legal field. Many conclusions rise from here, among them the most important are: Community actions on matters of intervention, the effects of which have an European dimension; before intervening directly, it needs to be underlined the inability of states to cope with the issues; ultimately, the European Union must be recognized his need to intervene to resolve the situation better (Sitnikov, Vasilescu, Ogarca & Tudor, 2015; Domnișoru, Ogarcă & Băloi, 2016; Ridley-Merriweather, 2016).

ADDING PRINCIPLE (COFINANCING) - Grant financial aid came from the EU complements the expenditures made from the state budget in any case not replace them. Therefore, within the Applicant's Guides, on different priority axis, there are provided the percentages are granted EU funding amounts and the percentages that could represent the amounts generated by the national budget, either from public sources, or private ones. In addition, this principle is applied to increase resources at a state level, in order to get a better streamline regional development and labor market activity. For example, for the convergence objective, in Romania, the EU's support for the ESF, ERDF, EAFRD, EMFF reaches 75%, only for FC, it could reach even 85%.

COMPATIBILITY PRINCIPLE- all the domains and activities financed from structural funds have to perform in accordance of the EU Treaty, but also the politics, principles, objectives, all of these belonging to the European Community. It can not be supported the activities that contradict the interests of the EU and member states.

THE MULTIANNUALLY PRINCIPLE- there are set at EU level, programs, actions, objectives and the amounts allocated to each area of intervention for a long time, about 7 years, what it is called the Multiannual Financial Framework. In the same time this refers to the development multianually plan, as a result of the consultations between EU and the member states. After the discussions are done, a strategic document is adopted- **NATIONAL STRATEGIC REFERENCE FRAMEWORK** and an operational document- **OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES**.

PRINCIPLE OF CONCENTRATION- allocating financial resources from the structural funds, which meet several primary objectives, which often cover a small area and a limited category of persons to whom it is addressed (Bačík, Mudrik, Sfetko, & Kot, 2016). This is the main drawback of the structural funds: that they can not simultaneously meet the objectives of large areas to generate accelerated economic growth, at the European level.

In addition to the principles described above, it can be noticed the importance of the following basic rules for an appropriate using of the structural funds: funds are never

given in advance, but as projects are submitted, approved in Brussels and it starts their implementation; country receiving funds must be able to co-finance projects in a percentage ranging from 15% for the Cohesion Fund projects and 20-25% for Structural Funds projects; monitoring rule for 2 years, the amount allocated to a project must be consumed, otherwise, it is recovering.

It is underlined the importance of the structural funds using through: the clear establishing of the duties and competences at European and national level; setting the responsibilities and obligations for each authorize body; distribution of financial commitments between the Community and member state, since the constituent countries of the EU have the burden of stimulating their regions through the allocation of funds from the state budget.

The general principles are the engine which generated the economic development of the EU states and they represent a basic pillar to guarantee economic and monetary integration, but also to eliminate existing disparities between regions.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The most important components of the overall framework of accounting are the general accounting principles, which have been regulated over time through a series of legislative acts that have led to the improvement of their quality and transparency.

Each activity field must comply, in addition to the 10 principles generally accepted accounting principles also the specific ones, imposed by the legislation in force.

It highlights the fact that in case of Structural Funds the IVth Directive, Directive 34/2013 and OMPF 1802/2014 are completed by EU Regulation 1303/2013, which requires common provisions for the structural funds and European investments, including also the operating principles.

The general principles in the use of funds have evolved over time, depending on the economic and financial context in the market, and according to the priorities expressed by the European Union.

So, we can conclude that for the transparency and efficiency of the actions in the field of structural funds, the general accounting framework includes the general accounting principles and also the principle for using the European funds that complements and guarantees the success of projects benefiting from a grant.

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A POSSIBLE BARRIER IN EXTENDING THE PROCESS OF LIFELONG LEARNING (LLL)

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Abstract

The process of accumulating cognitive and socio-emotional proficiencies is accomplished mainly during the first period of a person's life. These proficiencies assure a basis for the ulterior accumulation of specific skills through vocational and technical education, superior education and lifelong learning. Employees have limited access to information about their training opportunities, and employers do not benefit of stimuli so that they might offer a professional formation.

A comparative approach regarding necessary skills categories on labor market may be very useful from the education and formation point of view.

Keywords: proficiencies, obstacles, expansion, LLL

JEL classification: I10, H10, O52

1 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INITIAL FORMATION. CONTINUITIES

It is "comprehensive and unifying the idea that permanent education includes formal, non-formal and informal learning with the purpose to acquire and enrich a knowledge horizon that might allow reaching the highest possible development level during different periods and fields" (Dave, 1991, pp. 47-48). It is based upon another idea, that the "permanent education is an perfecting process of the personal, social and vocational development all along individuals' life having as purpose their life quality improvement (...)".

Personal development represents the action to develop and its result, thus, personal development is real if it has as a result inner growing/evolution. It includes activities and experiences that have their declared purpose to improve the consciousness state, development of personal talents and abilities, life quality improvement and contributing to accomplish personal aspirations and dreams. It is a very important aspect for integrating into the society. Known as "self-help" or "personal evolution", the concept of personal development also includes formal and informal activities.

Social development is a type of social change generally defined as the passing of some component of a social system "from one state to another which is different taking into consideration quality and/or quantity" (Vlasceanu, 1993, p. 529).

Unlike vocational preparation (initial formation), vocational development is a more complex process, having as objective the acquisition of useful knowledge both reported to the individual's position at a certain moment and to the ulterior one.

In Romania, training is perceived as a necessity but does not represent a priority yet. A professional training may have results only if it is based on a thorough analysis.

2 PERMANENT EDUCATION FROM PROCEDURAL AND FUNCTIONAL POINT OF VIEW

Two realities govern and influence permanent education from procedural and functional point of view:

- permanent education may be differently acquired by individuals and societies, and these alternative ways may lead to reaching the highest and the best level of life quality (Dave, 1991, p. 48),
- the connection between "inter-educational elements variety" (structures, curriculum, initial formation) and other "extra-educational elements" (personal, social, historical, cultural configurations of individuals and societies) is really necessary (Dave, 1991, p. 37).

Permanent learning is differently acquired by correlating numerous resources: educational stages, contents/ dimensions/ sides of education, forms, factors/roles of education (inter-educational elements).

Personal and historical/social configurations of the individual find themselves under the sign of general objectives identified by Paul Lengrand (1970, p. 54), "creating structures and methods favorable to forming-developing human personality along its existence and preparing the human personality for self-instruction and self-education".

Reaching and accomplishing such frame objectives imply a new educational policy, an anticipative one ("one continuous process, juxtaposition of the two parts-formal and informal", Thomas, 1977, pp. 79-81) and globally engaged within an integrator and integrative system ("educational fortress", Faure, 1974, p. 225).

The process through which such objectives might become operational is seen by R. Dave (1991, p. 52) through four groups of "conventional objectives":

- 1st group: the acquisition of fundamental social skills (reading, mathematics/informatics calculus, elementary notions about keeping health),
- 2nd group: developing the adaptation capacity to a society based on certain fundamental values: peace, democracy, freedom, happiness, efficiency, humanism, solidarity,
- 3rd group: cultivating some personality features that may assure "a new quality of life": intra-psyche stability, emotional strength, "inner youthful enthusiasm", capacity of responsible option, social engagement, capacity of self-surpassing/personal engagement, acquiring and renewing these acquisitions,
- 4th group: instrumental objectives/ "learning to learn", inter-learning, self-directed learning.

3 LLL SPECIFIC FEATURES IN ROMANIA

Leaving school before acquiring basic abilities, essential for lifelong learning, specific for certain socio-economical groups, concerning children in rural environment and those who come from families with small income, gypsies or who belong to other disfavored groups, influence and make vulnerable the quality of education in Romania, (thus it is shown by the results of the Program for Students' International Evaluation 2012, www.rocnee.eu).

The disparity of chances is considerable which means that the children's socio-economic situation affects their school results. Some discuss about diversified and quality educational support together with adapting to community life. The main challenge for the educational system and vocational formation from the poverty and exclusion risk

point of view, is represented by the significant discrepancy between children and young people's situation in Romania comparative to UE medium, rates of poverty and social exclusion at children and young people being constantly upper (almost twice bigger) in Romania comparative to UE medium (Needs analysis concerning education and vocational formation, 2012, www.edu.ro).

Territorial differences are also significant and obvious, the probability that pupils living in bigger towns and cities to benefit from a more favorable educational environment than those who live in rural environment is higher.

Initial vocational and technical education is not attractive and not enough aliened to actual necessities of labor market. Tertiary education is confronted with challenges regarding supplying specific proficiencies necessary on labor market. Although unemployment among tertiary education graduates is significantly reduced than among those with inferior educational levels, employers are more and more preoccupied by the lack of specific proficiencies for the job and the cognitive and socio-emotional abilities also (Europe Report 2020 Romania).

The quality and relevance, as pillars of Lifelong Learning National Strategy (LLLNS), having as definite objectives to increase the participation to lifelong learning and to improve the relevance of the educational and vocational formation systems for labor market, imply coordination and regulation both in evaluating proficiencies needs and developing a set of abilities more comprehensive and in creating a system of quality assuring, of monitoring and evaluation for LLL.

As action directions selected to prevent and stop restrictions related to learning accomplishment all lifelong, the National Strategy has as purpose:

- improving the information quality and availability, evaluation of proficiencies needs and developing a set of abilities more complete, at the coordination level,
- involvement regulation of the vocational and technical educational units, superior education institutions from the lifelong learning concepts' perspective,
- coordination and settlement of the system created for assuring the quality, for monitoring and evaluation for lifelong learning. (Strategy LLL, 2015-2020, ec.europa.eu/transparency).

4 NECESSARY SKILLS FOR THE LABOR MARKET

The process of accumulating cognitive and socio-emotional skills is accomplished mainly during the first period of a person's life. They assure some sort of basis for ulterior acquisition of specific skills for the vocational and technical education, superior education and lifelong education. This takes place under the conditions the success on the labor market is determined by different dimensions of a person's set of proficiencies,

combining cognitive, socio-emotional abilities and specific abilities for the activity/job ("EU Skills Panorama": tasks evolution regarding skills, 2012, ec.europa.eu/transparency).

Proficiencies refer to the set of skills implied in solving problems within the personal and professional sphere (Vaida, Doctor's Degree Thesis, 2013, p. 56). There is recognized the part played by education in supplying the what is called minimal stock of practical or technical skills necessary on labor market.

A comparative approach of the categories of necessary skills on work market from the education and formation point of view may be very useful.

Cognitive Skills	Socio-emotional Skills	Specific skills for the job
▪ refer to using the theory and concepts, and knowledge capacities acquired through experience. ▪ implies understanding, appliance, analysis, synthesis, evaluation knowledge capacities. ▪ the difference between "know what" and "know how", procedures used in solving problems (Anderson, 2001, p. 96). ▪ "know what" has many categories: factual/conceptual (isolated pieces of information, systems of information, classifications, categories), procedural (algorithms, heuristics or learning through discovery,	▪ refer to what the person who studied knows or can prove he or she learned, learning products of the emotional development and social learning, assure inter and intra-personal optimization, obtaining personal and professional performances (Oberst, Gallifa, Farriols and Villaregut, 2009, in Vaida, Doctor's Degree Thesis, 2013, p. 72) ▪ Skills through which begins the process of learning and that speak about interpersonal development and increasing the academic potential (Liff, 2003, in Vaida, Doctor's Degree Thesis, 2013, p. 89)	▪ they depend on the specific job and are correlated to those of the employing institution ▪ they base on the relation among proficiency fields, proficiency units, proficiency elements and accomplishment criteria.

techniques and methods, knowledge about situations these methods and procedures are used in) and meta-cognitive (about thinking processes related to thinking and the way these processes can be used)		
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There are necessary measures of activating and improvement and making compatible all skills from the increasing importance perspective of the economy based on knowledge and increasing the capacity to occupy jobs. Aiming for this target, the European strategy proposes:

- Activation,
- Diversification,
- Making compatible/ matching,
- Information.

Activating skills means consolidation of the human capital and the capacity to integrate from the professional point of view, improvement includes also ethical values (equity, equality, cohesion). Making compatible the skills, matching skills and jobs, is about diversification the educational offers regarding tertiary education and being informed concerning modifications appeared on the labor market, available jobs, projections of the required skills. Furthermore, in Romania there is a lack of information regarding necessary skills on labor market and mechanisms through which these pieces of information become available for the people.

Employees have limited access to information about training possibilities and employers do not benefit from sufficient stimuli to offer professional training.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The relationship between education and formation on one side and the labor market on the other seems to be a priority of our contemporary world. Speaking about forms of education, "there is a justified advance of the formal education both for secondary and tertiary education, but there are obvious evidences of the limits this form of education has, especially reported to the rhythm of changes" (Costea, Cerkez, Sarivan (coord.), 2009, p. 53).

Some of the solutions already outlined:

- Promoting education results (knowledge, abilities, skills);
- The accent given to collaboration between school and business environment together with professional training represents a supplementary advantage;
- Reshaping the curriculum through a more powerful adequacy to life's needs by redefining the component elements from learning perspective, accentuating the evaluation and facilitate trans-disciplinary approaches;
- Concepts clarification especially concerning the instruction problem;
- Identifying possibilities to make valid experiences/lessons obtained through non-formal education, at the same time with diversification ways to certify modalities of skills obtained through formal education especially for theoretical high school;
- Studies capitalization related to preparing graduates for the labor market (studies of Educational Sciences Institute, 2011, p. 5);
- Diversification of connections between formal and non-formal education based on some examples already materialized (Tools, Socrates Grundtvig Project, 2005);
- Engagement of social partners in financing the permanent education through the system of sector formation funds (Costea (coord.), 2009, p. 65).

The previous exordium has the purpose to outline the fact that the lack/discrepancy of different necessary proficiencies categories on the labor market from the education and training perspective represents a real obstacle concerning lifelong learning extension, " the continuous process of flexible learning opportunities, that correlates learning and acquired skills into the formal institutions with developing skills in non-formal and informal contexts, especially at the work place" (Educational Sciences Institute, 2011, p. 9).

This is the reason why "people must actualize their skills as individuals, citizens and employees. This is essential for supporting competitiveness within the context of a global economy of knowledge, based on technology and for promoting social integration and participation to a democratic society" (Substantiation Note in Government Decision no. 418/2015 regarding the approval of Lifelong Learning National Strategy 2015-2020).

There is a perspective upon the implementation of the Lifelong Learning National Strategy that makes complete a reflection approach on this above and invites us to be more conscious about the necessity to create a culture for lifelong learning.

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PENAL POLICIES IN BULGARIA AND POLAND

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Abstract

The contemporary European studies underline the necessity of adoption of an European model, in order to assure the compliance with the fundamental rights and liberties of people deprived of liberty. But the visions of the model favour one of the two opposite tendencies, which are invariably present in theoretical debates and penal politics: on one hand, the use of the deprivation of liberty as a mean to avoid the repetition of an offense and on the other hand, the compliance with the fundamental rights of people deprived of liberty. The article proposes the analysis from a theoretical perspective the European penal politics' impact on the penal politics from Bulgaria and Poland, member states of the European Union. Within this context, it is important to mention the fact that the selection of the two states is underlay on the hypothesis according to which the theoretical and empirical knowledge of the European penal politics' impact on the national penal politics is not developed from the sociological perspective.

Keywords: European model, criminal politics, prisoners' rights.

INTRODUCTION

Although the European penal model promoted during the last decade is favorable to one of the two opposite orientations- the use of deprivation of liberty as a way to avoid the repetition of an offense respectively, the compliance of the prisoners' rights- what is more important is not to exclude one of the two perspectives, but to correlate them so that they can guarantee the public safety, the achievement of the objectives of deprivation of liberty, the compliance of the prisoners' rights, of the conditions of re socialization and social reinstatement. This desideratum is based on the fact that "surveys made in a certain number of countries, members of the European Union, have highlighted that, at an empirical level, the level at which the convicted person can successfully reinstate in society and on the labor market after executing the sentence is perceived as the indicator with the biggest importance in evaluating the benefits of the penal sanction, while the repetition of an offense is seen as the main risk" (Yordanova et *all.*, 2011, p. 6). Within the given context, at the European Union level is tried the optimization of the penal systems and the raising of the efficacy in executing the penal sanctions in proportion with the society the modernization and the humanization of the detention institutions. Starting from the hypothesis according to which in the East Europe the number of the studies from the domain is diminished, some data don't reflect the reality or are contradictory, we will analyze on, from the theoretical perspective, the situation of the penitentiary system from Bulgaria and the penitentiary system from Poland. We mention the fact that we are going to focus on two indicators (sanctions, overcrowding and education), as far as the available data permit an evaluation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bulgaria

The juridical framework which regularizes the good functioning of the penitentiary system from Bulgaria is defined by the primary and secondary legislation: The Criminal Code, The Criminal Procedure Code, The Law Concerning The Execution of The Penal Sanctions and The Freedom's Privation Punishments, The Rules for the Application of The Law Concerning The Execution of The Penal Sanctions and The Freedom's Privation Punishments and other instruments from the secondary legislation, emitted for the application of The Law Concerning The Execution of The Penal Sanctions and The Freedom's Privation Punishments. The international regulations approved by Bulgaria include The Universal Declaration of the Human Rights, The Convention for the Protection of the Human Rights and the Fundamental Liberties, The Convention concerning the Forced and Compulsory Labor, The Convention of the United Nations against Torture or other Cruelties, Brutal or Degrading Treatments or Punish-

ments, The Minimal Standard Rules of the United Nations concerning the Prisoners' Treatment, The European Prisons' Rules, contained in the attachments of the Cabinet Council's Recommendations for the Member States of the European Council and so on.

Considering the imposed requests of the European Union through the professional institutions and the legislative documents, theoretically speaking, it is considered that "the progressive introduction of the transnational standards and the affiliation of Bulgaria to European and international organizations had a favorable impact in creating a modern juridical framework, based on democratic and humanistic principles of the execution of the freedom's privation sanctions and the implication of the state in the problems of the detention system" (Yordanova, *op. cit.*, p. 8). Therefore, in the professional literature it is assigned that the first democratic changes from Bulgaria took place during 1990-2000, when the process of "de-ideologization, demilitarization and humanization of the treatment from prisons, the reformatory education's reformation and the training of the staff from prisons" (*Idem*, p. 8). This process has continued with the integration of Bulgaria in the European Council in 1992 and soon after, with the admission to the European Union, in 2007. However, the reality of the Bulgarian detention system highlights the fact that "harmonization of the legislation with the *community acquis* had a gradual evolution but the reforms of the penitentiary system were practically unfinished during the process of the admission to the European Union. The unsolved problems accumulated when they were invariably excluded from the priorities of the majority in power and with small exceptions, from the attention and the concern of the public" (*Ibidem*). More exactly, in the last decade, the penitentiary system has been in the center of the public debates as, it has been intensively evaluated both before and after the admission of Bulgaria to the European Union. In this context, the evaluations of the European Committee and the efforts of the state to adapt to the European and international standards creates some moral panic feelings. Bulgaria "was hit by the cruel reality- the lack of vision and strategy, necessary for the transformation of a system that has hardly changed since the fall of communism, in 1989" (Gounev, 2013, p. 206). In consequence of the changes hardly significant in the present, in Bulgaria, the main form of penal sanction is detention. According to Gounev, "the data of the National Institute of Statistics for 2004-2009 show that overall, this tendency has persisted even after the introduction of the penal sanction of probation in 2004, in spite of the exponential growth of the enforcement during the last years. (*Despite the general tendency, some penitentiaries are exceptions. Being interviewed in 2009, the director of the Plovdiv prison declared that the number of people deprived of liberty diminished with the introduction of the probation*", p. 10) (...) The detention institutions have a total capacity of 8.740 places, estimated on 4 square meters per person, the overcrowding being a significant problem (...). At the same time, the application of other non-deprivation measures of liberty, like the fines, has a

descending trend” (*Idem*, 10). Beside the deprivation of liberty, two more penal sanctions are preponderant being used: life imprisonment and life imprisonment, without the possibility of probation, the latter being introduced after the abolish of the capital punishment or the death penalty, in 1998. Bulgaria is among the few European countries that readjusted the life imprisonment punishment, without the possibility of probation. Although is defined as a temporary and extraordinary action, imposed in a few situations, this sanction is criticized by professional researchers and experts, being considered against the aims of the execution of the penal sanctions. Therefore, this sanction is not regulated in the Criminal Code in force. At the same time, regarding the sanctions, including the privation of liberty punishments, has been followed a model rather different from the one present in the other European states. For example, in 2006, in the process of admission to the European Union came into force a new Criminal Procedure Code. At that moment, from political and legislative reasons was created a group of *lobbyists* who stipulated in the new Criminal Procedure Code a chain of amendments in favor of convicted people. Therefore, the number of freedom's privation punishments and their average duration was reduced. “The number of culprits and defendants from prisons has decreased with approximately two thirds during the last twenty years. The decreasing tendency has become especially visible since the beginning of 2007, on the 1st of January 2010 the two categories representing 9% of the total population in prison. At the same time, the number of people in the preventive detention centers suddenly raised *Investigations in 28 detention centers have been realized. The majority of these are not in accordance with the international and European standards*”, p.16 (with 1.083 culprits on the 31st of December 2009, from 723 culprits on the 31st of December 2008” (*Idem*, p. 16). This brings to the fore the problem of preventive commitment centers' overpopulation, together with the problem of poor material detention conditions” (*Ibidem*). Nevertheless, the data provided by the Ministry of Justice and the National Institute of Statistics pinpoints the fact that “an agent that rather inverted the situation and which explains the progressive raising of the average duration of the freedom's privation sanctions (from 10,4 months in 2009 to 11,1 months in 2011), was the pressure of mass-media and from the European Committee which asked for harsher sanctions regarding the organized crime and corruption” (Gounev, *op. cit.*, 209). Beside these types of sanctions, we consider that a relevant indicator regarding the impact of European penal politics on the Bulgarian penitentiary system is the increasing of the instruction level of people deprived of liberty. The equal access to education, formation and qualification is regulated through The Law Concerning the Execution of The Penal Sanctions and The Freedom's Privation Punishments. But, The Rules for the Application of The Law Concerning the Execution of The Penal Sanctions and The Freedom's Privation Punishments sets measures to the right of people deprived of liberty to participate to alphabetization courses, basic

education, vocational and social formation, establishing at the same time the terms and procedures through which the implication in such activities can reduce the sentence. People under 16 years old are obliged to follow the educational programs from the detention institutions. In this context, the specialists from the Center for the Study of Democracy specifies the fact that the standards European Prison Rules (Rule 28) regarding the access to education, formation and qualification are chiefly adopted. Even so, it considers that “more attention should be given to the disposition of Rule 28.2, through which the prisoners with alphabetization needs, mathematical preparation, basic and vocational education represent a priority. This has an extraordinary importance, taking account of the fact that the percent of the illiterate prisoners in jails from Bulgaria is approximately 30% and of those with a lack of any vocational formation is approximately 35%” (*Idem*, 32). Although at a theoretical level the new Code of the Criminal Procedure matches the European standards from the domain as “are enforced simplified procedures in case of less difficult causes, the charge of the criminal system is diminished and is stipulated the judicial surveillance of some investigative or coercive measures that can infringe the fundamental human rights” (Marinova, 2006, p. 65), in fact, it is difficult to find out a comprehensive or strategic way of thinking regarding the Bulgarian criminal system, the more so as the official data are not sufficient. Also, from the sociological perspective, the tendencies observed in the growth of the freedom's privation punishments or more severe sanctions reflect the political pressures, rather than the careful organization of the penitentiary system and the execution to a great extent of the European standards.

Poland

After the fall of communism in 1989, the first democratic Parliament was elected in Poland and in 1997 the new Constitution, the new Criminal Code and the new Criminal Procedure Code came into force. In 1991, Poland became a member state of the European Council, two years later it ratified the European Court of the Human Rights, in 1994 ratified the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and in 2004 adhered to the European Union. In this legislative context, reforms of the criminal system were initiated, through new amendments introduced in the Law regarding the Penitentiary System, the Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code and the Code of Execution of Penalties, the Justice Minister's Regulations regarding the Preventive Detention and the Execution of the Penalty and through the ratification of many international regulations like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention for Protecting Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Convention of the United Nations against Torture or other Cruelties, Inhuman or Degrading Treatments or Punishments, The European Convention for Preventing The Inhuman or Degrading Treatments or Punishments, The European Prisons' Rules, contained in the appendices of the

Minister's Committee's recommendations for the European Council's member states, the United Nations' Standard Minimum Rules regarding Prisoners' Treatment and so on.

Through the national legislation's configuration at European and international standards, Poland proposed itself "the abrogation of the regulations regarding the increase of penalty for hardened offenders, the introduction of compulsory moratoriums for the application of death penalties, the reintroduction of life imprisonment and the right given to prisoners to participate in the prisons administration decision-making process" (Szymanowski *apud.* Stańdo-Kawecka, 2014, p. 219). Therefore, the aggregate of the sanctions stipulated in the new criminal codes has successfully achieved the state of being defined through super national standards according to which a rational criminal system implies the restriction of the freedom's privation measures and the use of some noncustodial punishments. "In article 58 (1) of the Constitutional Court, the imprisonment principle was formulated as a last solution. According to this regulation, in terms of the law which provides for discretionary use of power in choosing the type of punishment, the court can impose imprisonment without suspension only if another criminal punishment or measure cannot realize the aim of the punishment act" (Wróbel *apud.* Stańdo-Kawecka, 2014, p. 219). In this context, the elimination of the overcrowding from penitentiaries became the main objective of reforms from the criminal system, being influenced by Constitutional Court's and European Court of Human Rights' needs. "In 2008, the Constitutional Court gave a decision regarding the non-constitutionalization of Article 248 (1) from the Criminal Procedure Code, that used to permit the prisoners' accommodation in smaller cells than the one regulated for undefined periods of time and didn't stipulate a minimum allowable surface" (Stańdo-Kawecka, 2014, p. 232). Due to the chronic overcrowding, the Constitutional Court postponed the decision to come into force as, the lack of space would not permit the execution of punishments for many of the prisoners. But, in 2009 the European Court of Human rights was emphasizing the fact that overcrowding from penitentiaries and Polish centers for preventive arrest indicate a structural problem. In the same year, for the Constitutional Court's decision to be implemented, the Parliament adopted new amendments at the Execution of Punishments Code through which it introduced a set of rules regarding the prisoners' temporary placement in cells with the minimum necessary size. "According to these purviews, a prisoner has the right to make a complaint against the penitentiary administration's decision of placing him in a cell with a smaller area than the one provided in the regulations in force" (*Ibidem*). At the same time, changes in the civil courts' practices, in specific cases regarding the overcrowding from penitentiaries. Therefore, a coherent step, according to which the prisoners from overcrowded cells can start a civil action regarding the compensations associated with the infringement of per-

sonal rights, stipulated in the Civil Code, came into force. It must be mentioned the fact that the minimum regulated area for each person in prison is still an area of 3 square meters and is one of the smallest areas in Europe. The Constitutional Court legislated the formal prerequisite of anticipated probation in 2009. "According to new regulations, the probation is still possible after a half, two third or three-quarter of the punishment, depending on the prisoner's police record, but, the minimum imprisonment period that has to be atoned (six months or one year for hardener offenders), was eliminated" (*Ibidem*). Stańdo-Kawecka mentions that the use of anticipated probation is rather loose, as a result of the significant existing differences in the instances' approaches from penitentiaries. For example, in some cases, the prisoners tried to transfer to a penitentiary situated in the district of another instance, of another penitentiary, where they considered there were softer probation conditions. Trying to avoid situations like this, in 2011 new modifications were brought to the Criminal Procedure Code. As a result, the legal base for the prisoners' transfer became more restrictive and the prisoners lost the right of executing the sentence in the prison close to their habitation. But, the new amendments break the European standards, especially Rule 17.1 of the European Prison Rules and "can linger the prisoners' preparation for their release and social reintegration, representing a very controversial way to solve the territorial diversity problem of the instances involved in judging probation" (Stańdo-Kawecka *apud*. Stańdo-Kawecka, 2014, p. 232). Another compulsory measure required by legislators to eliminate overcrowding is the introduction of the electronic monitoring, as an alternative to freedom's privation sanctions for the maximum period of one year, in 2012, mentions Stańdo-Kawecka. "According to the Monitoring Office from the Central Administration of the Penitentiary System, on the 31st of December 2012, 4.782 prisoners were under electronic supervision. Due to the lack of empirical researches it is hard to estimate if the electronic monitoring is an effective tool and efficient in terms of costs within the criminal polish contemporary politics" (Stańdo-Kawecka *apud*. Stańdo-Kawecka, 2014, p. 233). As a result, the number of people deprived of liberty has not exceeded the designed capacity of the imprisonment polish system, according to the minimum area of three square meters. "In January 2013, the population density indicator of the prisoners on 100 positions was 99.4%" (Central Administration of the Prison Service *apud*. Stańdo-Kawecka, 2014, p. 233). According to the Constitutional Court, the criminal polish legislation permits interpretations and exceptions as, in its wording, is restrictive, unclear and vague. For example, the arbitrary placement of the prisoners at an undetermined period in cells with the size under the compulsory dimensions of three square meters (among the smallest standards in Europe), which leads to overcrowding and inhuman treatments. Finally, it has to be mentioned the fact that towards the respect of some rights of people deprived of liberty, the Polish Parliament stipulated a new amendment in the Execution of Penal-

ties Code, according to constitutional regulations. More exactly, in Article 4 (2) of the Constitutional Court, it is stated that “a prisoner, just like any other convicted people, is entitled to have his constitutional rights recognized, less if they were canceled by a law emitted by the Parliament or by a valid sentence of an instance. As a result, the regulation of the problems regarding the constitutional rights of prisoners through the use of commands by the Justice Minister or by other Ministers” (Hořda and Postulski *apud*. Stańdo-Kawecka, 2014, p. 219). From a general perspective, as a result of the evaluations from the last years, the Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights criticize the prisoners' rehab conditions and draw the attention on the infringement of some fundamental rights. The new reforms didn't obtain the expected results and, therefore, efficient and lasting steps, to be based on simple but important changes of attitudes and current practices, are necessary.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of criminal politics emphasizes the fact that the developments from the domain have been directly proportional with the measure in which the reformers took into consideration the respect for human rights, as they are established in the national and super national legislation. From this perspective, we notice that the most advanced period of Bulgarian and Polish penal politics was the one from the first years after the changing of communism. Therefore, the evolution regarding the sanctions, including freedom's privation, took place in the real context of criminality. Considering the existing data, we can say that even nowadays the nature of the politic system fundamentally determines the penal politics' characteristics, by way of proof being the fact that the reaction at criminality became a politic problem in Bulgaria and Poland. The most significant example consists of two characteristics which are almost unchanged: on one hand, the preponderant use of freedom's privation, on the other hand, the insufficiency of non-privative sanctions or of alternative ones. Starting from the given context, we consider it is important that both states take into consideration the fact that the social prevention of criminality is a complex task for the entire society, for the purpose of improving the quality of life while creating safe conditions for the whole population and for reducing criminality. The new penal politics' changes have to create the most favorable framework for the proliferation of the restorative justice and the increasing of criminality control, through respect for human rights and of the European Union's standards, as it is natural in a democratic society, in a constitutional state.

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LOCAL AND EUROPEAN IDENTITY IN THE REGIONAL PRESS

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Abstract

The study assesses the way the mission of Europeanization is assumed by the press. From this perspective, it is shown that the media has an educational role, even one of emancipation, transgressing the absolute expectation of informing. The study proposes a re-interpretation of the social involvement of journalism, recognizing a pertinent role in setting up the civic and mentality values at local and regional levels. The speech of the online written press was monitored with precise reference to the most important publications in two regions: Oltenia (Romania) and Valencia (Spain).

We understood the journalistic texts as interpretation actions that generate meaning for a community. The thematic fields circumscribing the key terminology were analyzed, texts were evaluated in terms of perspective and of socio-emotional proximity graphics and we have demonstrated the need of subsuming of so-called 'European journalism' with the more complex 'social journalism'.

Keywords: journalistic roles; proximity; social journalism; European Union; identity.

Introduction

In our study, we aimed to follow the way in which the proximity press takes over and communicates to the public the fundamental ideas of integration of the society in the frame of the European structures. We relied on and tried to nuance the theory formulated by Clifford G. Christian, Theodore L. Glasser, Denis McQuail, Kaaerle Nordenstreng and Robert A. White (2009). They continued and updated the theory created by Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm, *Four Theories of the Press* (1956), the only paper (up to 2009) which systemize the media's role in society.

Beyond the witticism that journalism is a central actant in society, in general, and in democracy, in particular, both the study of 1956 and the one of 2009 attempted (and succeeded) to systematize de facto the assumed role of the media in society.

The 1956 study started from the premise that the press takes the features of the society and of political structures in which context it operates. Therefore, Siebert, Peterson and Schramm were detected as main models of the media: the authoritarian, liberal, social responsibility and the communist model. From 1956 to 2009 there were several attempts to update the description of the role of the media in society, but there were no fundamental changes.

The 2009 study no longer refers to totalitarian societies, but focuses instead on professional consciousness assumed or required by journalists and describes patterns of the media in a democratic society exclusively. The four roles identified by the Clifford G. Christian group are: monitoring, facilitating, the role of radicalization and the role of collaboration.

Monitoring covers the exploratory character of the press and selects its information depending on newsworthiness. Facilitating assumes that the media reflects the political order in which it exists and provides the transfer of information from the State to the people by encouraging the public debate. The role of radicalization implies an oppositive status of the journalists in front of the Establishment, the latter being seen as an obstacle to the smooth flow of information. The attitude of the journalists is inflexible, repetitive, monothematic, in support of minorities, marginalized people. The collaborative role requires a partnership between the state and the press in the name of public interest.

Researchers establish two types of agreement: pragmatic and normative. The pragmatic agreement is set according to what is already known, and the normative agreement is given by what should (need) be known. In both cases, the journalist assesses the situation as being right and fair. Clifford G. Christian & all. consider that this type of press - establishment relations appears in the systems living in transition. From this perspective, the media will have an active role in society, in the implementation of new forms of organization and development.

We identify the journalism that has a collaborative role as an example of what is called 'development journalism' (Banda, 2007). Covering the 'independent journalism containing constructive criticism of the government and its agencies', this concept appeared in the 60s informs readers about how they are affected by the process and support (highlighted) projects' (Christian & all, 2009; Shah, 1996). Emancipatory journalism, as this kind of journalism is called (Shiraz, 2010), assumes that there is 'a link between the access of the citizen to the media and social changes'. In terms of scripted reporting of the journalist to reality, we believe this kind of journalism corresponds to

what Fisher (1984) calls ‘the paradigm of rational world’. It is built on logic and reasoning and excludes the average man. Saying what must be said, the journalist assumes a role that is not only informational, but also one paideic, similar to a didactical one. This civic movement of journalism involves the idea of participation of the community members, but also of the readers (Perry, 2003; Salcudean, 2015).

In the digital age, the professional in information has become the professional of the sense, of the comprehension, while the public means citizens that should not only learn, but must understand and action towards a way validated by the journalist. Assuming the role of collaboration, of emancipation, the civic journalist not only delivers public messages, messages from the citizens to politicians, but also acts in reverse. The journalist will coordinate institutional information they consider useful to the citizen-public. Positioned between the public institutions and the citizens, the journalist is not only actively involved in disseminating messages, but also in their implementation in both directions. This involvement supposes an explanatory, argumentative, and indignation speech, (Wolton, 1997), so it means reaction. Through this kind of involvement (active, not as mere receivers) readers / recipients / citizens appropriates the essential message of the publication. From this perspective, the re-building community, the civism and emancipation can be an answer even to the tabloidization.

Also, we relied on Brown and Yule’s theory (1983) of the difference between the transactional view and the interactional view, because we understand the journalistic text as a perpetual tension between information and interpretation. We found useful Angela Phillips’ theory (2007) of the archetypes, considering it a step forward from the Greimasian model. In her study, Phillips considers the mediatic contemporary coreferences and describes five archetypes that are active in the press. We found also very interesting Barbara Johnstone and Justin Mando’s (2015: 95) theory, according to which the geographical proximity can be a local limit.

CASE STUDY: TWO PUBLICATIONS – GAZETA DE SUD (SOUTHERN ROMANIA) AND LEVANTE-EMV (VALENCIA, SPAIN)

We have chosen these two publications for many reasons. First of all, they are very important regional newspapers, with a very high level of credibility. Then, Valencia is a very important place for the Romanian immigrations – in 2015 there were 130,000 Romanians in Valencia. Related to this, the Spanish press is an example for the Romanian journalists (according to their statements). The historical moment, as part of discursive context, is the year of 2011. At that time, Romania was redefining itself after the economic crisis (the end of the recession was announced), and Spain was questioning

its own administrative identity. Because of the social turbulences, as a surprise, during the research to find the corpus, we also kept for comparison the articles from 2009. In the Romanian newspaper, the pro-European attitude was unchanged, but we have found some changes in the Spanish one.

Gazeta de Sud has a daily readership of over 200,000 and an average circulation of 18,441 copies (brat.ro). The publication is distributed in Oltenia (southern Romania), covers all areas of daily generalist specific editorial quality and takes a radical role in the declaration of principles.

We have chosen as a comparison with the leftist publication, Levante-EMV, the most important Valencia daily newspaper, which displays a pro-European option. In 2011, the publication announced a readership of 285,100, with 143,300 readers more than Las Provincias, its most important rival.

We manually selected 75 articles from May, 2011, and precisely those materials containing not only a formal, official reference to the Europe/European Union, but also consistent and pertinent ones, with a clear link between Europe and region. We found only two opinion articles, one interview, and 73 short news.

However, concerning the European information flow, Gazeta de Sud plays an unreported collaborative and acceptance role, by regulatory agreement, and practices a journalism of emancipation. Quantitatively, we see that there is at least one item on the European Union in every edition. All this information is treated in the stylistic matrix news, as a univocal communication.

As general characteristics of the journalistic discourse, in the present case we are discerning two invariables: the words 'European Union' operates as an absolute rating scale, and the materials, in their overwhelming majority, are not signed. The information is only the flow processing received from news agency. The journalist takes the information and distributes it to the reader. Trademarks of transformation archetype (Phillips, 2007) emerge in the journalistic discourse: assimilation is the reward that citizens will receive if they comply with the European training regime.

The topic poles are: the European Union (sometimes denominated by the more expressive metonymy 'Europe') and Romania. Local references appear either as an illustration of macropolitics or inside of some specific economic events. In the segment monitored by us the idea of Euroregion does not appear, and the issue of local identity is absent. Integration occurs as a one-way process, built on the tenets and practices of inclusion and not on dialogue or negotiation. According to this logic, local actions, for example, (irrespective of the initiator) are evaluated exclusively by the European grid.

An important aspect is the (implied) reinterpretation of the journalistic law of proximity. Thus, in terms of material selection, the proximity law is changing, so that the news on the European Union is not valued and presented as 'foreign news' and thus

operated in the exotic key, originality, logic solidarity, etc., but it is included in categories also containing ‘internal’ news (national, regional, local): ‘news’, ‘economy’, ‘Short news’, etc.

Two main behavioural discursive directions can be detected in terms of reporting Romania (Dolj) to the European Union, with unequivocal antithetical structures as a result: the absolutization of the Europeanized idea and the exclusively negative evaluation of the local management’s structures. There is a kind of comparative ritual reference within which localism swings widely between blocs of superlative superiority and inferiority (see Tabel 1). Only through such (evaluative) blocs can some identity implied marks be detected.

Superiority	Inferiority
→ It is the most important unit of the petrochemical industry in Romania, the leader in Central Europe (GDS, 2011)	→ Among Member States the highest decline was recorded in Romania (minus 43.7%) (GDS, 2011)
→ Polovragi Monastery and Olteţ Keys, some of the most spectacular in Europe (Flororiu, 2011)	→ Romania has an absorption rate of European funds only 7% in 2007-2010, which ranks her last in Central and Eastern Europe (GDS, 2011)
→ Twenty Romanian invention that could be revolutionary (GDS, 2011)	→ income of population is much lower than in the EU (Olaru, 2011)
→ imported gas to mix with the internal and the result is a unit price, state regulated by ANRE, much cheaper than in Europe (Olaru, 2011)	→ Romania is ranked last in European Union (EU) in terms of investment in research and development of new drugs (GDS, 2011)
	→ among Member States the largest decline was recorded in Romania (minus 43.7%) (GDS, 2011)
	→ Romania maintained the first position in the EU judging by inflation (GDS, 2011)
	→ Romania's champion submitting projects, but actual laggard attract European money (GDS, 2011)

[Tabel 1]

Economically and administratively, the two terms of the relationship we investigated describe the same unequivocal report: Europe is the financial source and absolute model

of organization and Romania (and, implicitly, the region to which we refer) is the material to be moulded by structure default. From this perspective, lending and absorption of European funds is an eliminatory test which must support any of the main political and economic actors. Amid compared predefined ratio - higher - lower - Romanian side (local / national) is shown also by the attitude of disciples.

Politicians are invariably described as subjects who must systematically report how they access and manage the magical helper (European financial aid). The composite-sketch which journalists outline for politicians finds its legitimacy in the decisions made in Brussels. The inferiority report determined strictly on economic and financial principles transforms the European model in a prerequisite assessment of a standard of living.

The European model is not working as a landmark, but as the measure of all things. In terms of cultural identity, the newspaper presents events that betray regional complexes. Integration is taken in the paradoxical. In the same area of non-critical assimilation lies also the news / stories covering events occasioned by Europe Day. The only published materials cover teaching activities organized by the county library. All articles are subsumed to news discourse, except one explanatory feature (Metzler, 1986).

Concerning the foundation and continuity of the model, young people can apply to get scholarships to thwe European Parliament (Bătrînca, 2011). Incidentally, in the period under review there is only one material in which the citizen is present. It is a interview conducted by Anca Ungurenuş (2011), ‘What does Europe offer?’: the material shows what a couple of young people know about integration in the European Union. Opinions, mostly favourable, are formulated around the freedom of movement.

From **Levante-EMV** we manually selected 89 articles, 40 from 2009, and 49 from 2011. All the articles are ample, in an argumentative and explanatory frame. Following the media archetypes theory created by Angela Phillips, romance is the archetypal image that the publication builds to deliver to the public about the Europe idea, in other words the happy solutions archetype (Phillips, 2007). In this publication Europe is built as ubiquitous, saviour, protective authority, the key to a happy end of the crisis.

When it comes to the status of Spain in the European Union, journalists seek to consolidate a balanced position. Unlike the Romanian press, which is prisoner of national inferiority complexes, Spanish journalists meticulously build the image of Spain seen as partner and not a problem for the other European countries, as the Romanians do for Romania. We find a globalizing integration, not an isolationist vision (see Tabel 2).

2009

2011

Europe is a central theme	Europe is the background theme
Articles that fights for the Valencian traditions	Subjects with serious social implications (education, health, social security, unemployment)
Europe demands / oblige / disallow	Europe fears

[Tabel 2]

Everything that is important benefits of a history, of a guide to understanding. In 2009, for example, the publication offered a brief history of the EU to understand why this construction - which is at the moment in crisis - was achieved (L-EMV). A context is created on which a solid viable reason can be build. Though Francesc Romeu's signature the European theme enters in political disputes and anti-European political leaders are evaluated negatively by their choice. The tone is very harsh, vehement and the editor goes even further and suggests a causal relationship between the ideology of the Spanish right, anti-European, and economic and financial crisis.

Pro- and anti-European guidelines are evaluated as right / wrong according to the militant rhetoric and propaganda requirements. European values are overrated and related to the Spanish left. Freedom, tolerance, respect, pluralism, etc. can be implemented only by the left. Moreover, the publication develops a column entitled 'Juntos' (Together) echoing the assertion of omnipresence EU.

An evident balance appears in 2011, the year of restoration, as we call it. The articles are mostly rhetorical interrogative, and as structural-discursive schemas we remark the insistence of quoting and massive lending figures. In the content there is a clear shift towards social stake articles (education, health etc.) - almost non-existent in 2009. Now, the journalist is de facto the citizens' spokesman. This orientation to social topics is assumed in the news announcing that Levante-EMV journalist Ramon Ferrando's efforts were rewarded with a prize for freedom of expression. Commenting on the award, columnist Julio Monreal (2011) links freedom of expression and citizens' freedom and opposes them to the establishment's propaganda.

In Spain, now there are large street demonstrations, and the publication strikes a didactic exhibition accent. The reports published have wide features - but without pathos, and, above all, the newspaper develop a new guide, this time to explain events as done in downgrading the crisis. Also, if in 2009 we detected emotional, even noticeable emotive nuances, in 2011 the publication takes more visible mission to calm the population. The major themes are unemployment and social security. These are contextualized positively, constructively. Wider news or materials contains solutions (creating jobs, new policies in the area of social security), proposals or even open horizons of expectation. Almost every edition records economic successes (involving the status of European country). Moreover, in the same frame of Europeanist references, there is now

fear of contagion from Greece and an irrepressible need of comparison between Spain and Portugal. Europe still appears as a protector, auditor, and supreme authority.

DISCUSSIONS

The media creates European proximity, with its discursive tools. In *Gazeta de Sud*, all the European references are positive, if not superlative, with not a single pejorative reference.. Romanian journalists use appreciative, weighted and axiological signs in a descriptive frame. The Spanish publication also refers positively to the European Union, with more affective and opinion items, but using an argumentative frame. Both publications use an intrinsic subjectivity.

In the Romanian press the journalist is a severe and conformist teacher, concerned about the apparent discipline. The Spanish journalist is seeking a balance at least at the rhetorical level, prioritising the economic and the social fields. Furthermore, if the Romanian press is equal to itself in the kind of attitude described, in the Spanish one change has been noticed in the sense of moderating at a praxemic level.

The Romanian journalist filters everything through the lens of politics, while the Spanish journalist does it through the economic one. 90% of the Spanish materials on the European Union topic are positive: it will solve or should solve a community problem. In the case of the Romanian materials, the similar percentage include political interference and negative isolationist self evaluation. In Romania, identity is a source of insecurity and media should guide communities through integration. In Spain, the sources of insecurity are the social policies of the Government, a similar status among the European countries, as it is shown by journalists. They understand to advocate for change together with the public, not only regionally but also at national and European levels (S1).

Identity issues have a peripheral presence in the context of the materials on the theme / supra-theme 'Europe'. Valuing local specificity exclusively through the marks of inferiority, or, conversely, by growing similarities, all these media topics describe the mechanism of acceptance of a supra-identity communicated unequivocally and the regional (social) journalist becomes a guide and a partner for his audience, by establishing a European media teaching, and thus building a behavioural and informational community (S2). Using Barbara Johnstone and Justin Mando's (2015: 90) findings, we can say the Romanian newspaper has the behaviour of a local publication because of its describing articles, while for its analytical perspective the Spanish newspaper is a regional publication. We find that the geographical proximity is indeed a limit, not for the outside, but for the inside. The outside is the solutions; the inside is the problem, in both cases.

Regional problems call for European solutions. These European solutions call for a European community. The anaphoric presence /Europe/ and the coreference /saviour/ produce the meaning for this intentional discursive universe.

CONCLUSIONS

Sociological research shows that significant social changes have automatically generated extensive debate around themes of identity (Rusu, 2008), amid the new introduced ways at the social level. We discover, however, the local media engaged in the emancipation journalism, assuming the role of importer of new meanings that legitimize on the cognitive map of the recipient the administrative and economic mechanisms that change (reforming) society / community.

Numerous interventions and scientific studies on the process of integration convey a tension between the need for affirmation of identity (individual, local, national) and the need to respond to the imperative of integration. In the cases we have chosen, it appeared that this tension does not exist and that, at present, at least in economic-administrative and hence low mass communication, the official meaning leads exclusively and smoothly to the insertion of the community into the European matrix. We saw that the press gives a transactional view (Brown, Yule, 1983), through its concern for meaning. Speaking on the topic (Brown, Yule, 1983), the press creates the frame for the insertion of the dramatic strategies to catching the public's attention. Using presuppositions and the tensions from antithetical and argumentative structures, the press builds a true discursive community. Through its role to set the agora's agenda and to draw the main speech orientations, the press writes and directs the topic of public interest which is invested with the attribute of timeliness or of anachronism. Through its explanatory valences, the press monitors the assimilation flow of the social changes produced (in our case) by the enlargement of the EU.

ABBREVIATIONS:

BRAT= Romanian Audit Bureau Transmedia

GDS = www.gds.ro (Gazeta de Sud [Southern Gazette])

L-EMV = www.levante-EMV.com

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THE ROLE OF THE INTEGRATED, THEMATIC PROJECT TO LEARNING PROGRESS OF THE CHILD IN THE EARLY PERIOD

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Abstract

In this study, we have proposed to present you the results of an empirical research in order to identify the positive aspects of the integrated, thematic project in learning progress of children in preschool. Using the observation method, we analyzed children's results regarding the objectives in the respect to the objectives in the grid. Children's progress in learning represents the confirmation and affirmation of the role of this integrated, thematic project in supporting the early learning child.

Keywords: integrated project, learning progress of the child, alternative methods, interdisciplinarity, constructivist strategies

JEL Classification: I20, I21

1 INTRODUCTION

The psycho – philosophical basis structure in the manner of educational integrated approaches is the holism, in fact – the attempt to conceive a fully integrated unit of information that can lose their sequential features. This approach facilitates the inclusion of special knowledge in logical assemblies that exceed quantitative but also qualitative the characteristics of curricular divisions.

Children are offered chains or suite of integrated themes depending on the educational objectives or in relation to their interests and skills.

The integrated curriculum is the expression of the way in which we can see the child development and we can also think of its learning. “Integrated curriculum involves creating meaningful connections between themes or skills that are usually made piece meal in different disciplines. These themes and skills have a strong connection to the everyday life of children and aim directly or indirectly to contribute to the formation of some values and attitudes” (Ciolan, 2003).

All the development areas are interrelated and interdependent. The development in a field conditioned the development in other areas. Although the curriculum is structured into curriculum areas by setting and reference objectives, it aims to develop the whole child, the objectives between curriculum areas being related with each other and also with the development areas.

Knowledge, skills, developed abilities by each curricular area, are closely correlated and they become more solid when learning activities are carried through interdisciplinary themes, when the activities are made connecting the knowledge, skills, abilities in different areas of development.

Thematic studies and projects are integration practices to what children learn in the educational process. So, children are required to learn significantly. ”Cross – curricular themes” are studying integrated themes that focuses on personal and social development of the children. These themes have a transversal character, they reach beyond the boundaries of traditional school subjects and they propose some skills training or some fundamental values for the every day life. To be introduced successfully in school, cross – curricular themes requires creating of diverse learning experiences and the experimentation of learning acquisitions in concrete and varied context (Ciolan, 2008).

In the early education, integrated teaching and learning signifies the way in which the teacher integrates several areas of experiential contents, exploiting the resources of many activity centers in order to achieve many reference objectives. The

integrated approach of teaching provides stimulating children in several areas of development, paying equal attention to all of them.

Integrated activities are conducted alternating the modalities of work organization: frontal, in groups and also individual, depending on content, age and individual particularities of children and time of the day.

The trans-disciplinary approach proposes the interplay of several areas from the perspective of the genesis of a new field of knowledge. This trans-disciplinary approach capitalizes and proposes higher level skills, conceived and designed in a constructivist way.

Constructivist pedagogy follows the child stimulating participation in the development of knowledge. Children build their own understanding. Teaching means self – support in learning. The concepts shouldn't be taught directly, but teacher can help the child to build his own concepts. Transmission of information should not become an end in itself, but it should remain an incentive offer and to differentiate their own cognitive structures. The teacher works together with his children not to deliver ideas, but to guide their constructive effort.

Constructivists especially propose and support the following pedagogical strategies: experiments, projects, solving the global and significant problems, the simulation, collaborative learning strategies that emphasize the tie opinions and negotiate meanings (Honebein, Duffy & Fishman, 1993; Jonassen, 1991; Duffy & Cunningham, 1996), the establishment of learning communities, including open communities – interviews with experts, methods inspired from the cognitive – apprenticeship concepts (Collins, Brown & Newman, 1989) “intentional learning” (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1989); constructivists are opting for a continuous assessment, they use a variety of measurements, avoiding the criterial assessments, promoting the evaluations in real context and counting on measuring and assessing of high level competences; there are used especially the following assessment methods: portofolios, projects, group discussions, public themes presentations, the development of some detailed plans for work projects; the assessment is focused on the construction process of knowledge.

“The project can also be determined by the teacher or by his children depending on their interests. It is usually conducted in group (made of four or five participants, each of them having a precise task to do), through it, children can prove that they have the ability to investigate a particular subject, using methods, different instruments and knowledge in different domains (interdisciplinary approach) (Stoian, 2015).

The project - a complex activity that appreciates the detailed learning and highlights certain qualities of children. It involves an activity which takes place outside the classroom that has a motivator role for children.

M. Stanciu (2003) distinguishes these defining aspects of the project:

- unlike the investigation, it is more complex;
- it addresses interdisciplinary learning approaches;
- the title of the project may be a teacher's proposal, but also children can make other proposals;
- it can be continued outside the classroom and outside the kindergarten;
- the finalization of the project takes place in the classroom by exposing the results and also the products.

The project method assesses different capacities as: selecting the correct working methods and bibliography, the correct dosage of working material and of used equipments, identifying an adequate solution, how to organize the modality of organizing the material, the way of presenting the material and the clarity of figures.

Advantages:

- The child is determined to conduct researches and also to act;
- It develops children's creativity;
- It motivates the child, increasing his self-esteem;
- It develops the anticipatory thinking;
- It allows the development of some specific techniques which are used in teaching;
- It determines the development of some techniques in the elaboration of a scientific or practical work.

Limits:

- It reduces the teacher's role;
- It requires some time to do the organization activities and also the assessment activities;
- Children can develop poor concentration as a result of low interest for the project's theme or due to their long effort (Stoian, 2016).

The integrated project method is a learning and assessing strategy which is focused on the deliberate research effort of the child on the whole detection and understanding of the subject, it contributes to practice learning by cooperation.

This approach has an increased efficiency in raising children's motivation and stimulating their superior operations of thinking, because project based learning is at the same time a research action and also a practical action.

The project is an interactive method of teaching learning that implies a micro research or a systematic investigation of a subject which has a big interest for children.

Project based learning involves collecting of information, processing and synthesizing information, interpretation and personal reflection and cooperation in solving the tasks.

William Heard Kilpatrick (1918) published the study regarding the project based learning which was taken in different formulas by the education sciences on a large scale. The benefits of the integrated project approach for children derive from the following considerations: the active involvement of children in learning process, children build themselves the learning process, working with ideas, knowledge and conceptions that they have already possessed, they are encouraged to freely express their opinion in the context of respect for each other, recognizing and accepting in this way the big diversity of the world, of the opinions and ideas, valuing their own abilities and interests, cultivating creativity and communication competences, becoming partners in the teacher education act.

The advantages of integrated teaching strategies are recognized by comprehensive knowledge of the variety of experience promoted by children who processed differently aspects of reality which gravitates around a central explanatory idea.

The integrated approaches propose interactivity, interconnections, juxtapositions of meaning and interests, learning styles, encouraging the promoting of some understanding broad prospects of reality and also to know its reality.

The effective methods are best seen in the participation of students in the learning process, it is studied into consideration their activation, being understood as a condition sine qua non of increasing school efficiency.

In this project we are proposing the following objectives:

1. The registration of preschoolers' progress in expressing curiosity and interest for the environmental elements because of their integrated thematic projects;
2. Children's development initiative in the activities in which they are involved for the educational projects;
3. Preschoolers' development perseverance in fulfilling their tasks even if they find some difficulties;
4. The strengthen of imagination and creativity in daily activities because of their integrated, thematic projects;

The general hypothesis of this research is:

If we use the integrated thematic project in preschool educational activities, then children's results will record an evident progress, as a response to the method efficiency.

2 METHODOLOGY

The sample

The research project was represented by 31 children, between 5 and 6 years old from the „ Magic Cottage” kinder garden from Craiova.

Methods and instruments

As methods and results processing tools were used: methods of graphical representation of the research results with the help of IBM-SPPS program. The qualitative interpretation methods have consisted in: identifying the differences between post-test and pre-test, establishing the concomitant variation, the relation between variables, analyzing the compliance, the content analysis of responses. To study the relation between phenomena, we will consider into account the influences associating and covariance.

To determine the extent to which the interdisciplinary thematic project method can produce the increase of children's education performance from preschool education, we propose to analyze some complete progress worksheets from the large group.

In these progress worksheets, teachers have recorded the development level in September at the beginning of school year, of some different stated objectives in March, at the beginning of the second semester and in all this time we've used more often in the current evaluation but also in learning activity, the interdisciplinary project method.

3 RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Statistical analysis

Descriptive statistical analysis of the variables progress worksheet for the large group. The distribution of results of all 31 children from the large group, to the variables which represent the followed competences, is an unimodal distribution (module 1- for some variables, 0 for the others), simetrical (with a Skewness value smaller than the significance threshold, $p=1,96$), the Skewness obliquity coefficient for all variables has got values between 95% $(-0,42x2; +0,42x2)$, so $(-0,84; +0,84)$ and mesokurtic. For children's distribution results from September, Kurtosis coefficient is situated at a threshold of significance smaller than 1,69; children's distribution results from March is mesokurtic with some tendencies toward platykurtic, because it respects the condition as the Skewness value to be smaller than the threshold significance ($p=1,96$), but it is not situated at a confidence interval of 95% $(-0,82x2; +0,82x2)$, so $(-1,64; +1,64)$.

We can easily conclude that the distribution of children's platykurtica results from March shows us a higher degree of heterogeneity scores, the results being very spread from the medium. This fact does not worry us, because of children's monitoring performance we do not intend to realize a Gaussian classification, but we want to record

the progress or regress in learning after applying the project method of evaluation. Also this spread of results around average, it is due to the fact that we've proposed scalar variables, we've also designed ordinal variables specifying the three levels (unrealized, realized in progress and realized).

Those mentioned above, the amplitude of the two scores of our distribution between a minimum of "1" and a maximum of "2", determine us to prefer statistic tests for nonparametric data.

Taking into consideration all these elements, we can notice that the obtained scores by the 31 subjects are normally distributed in the variables to identify children's learning progress from the large group.

Monitoring the learning performances in the large group recorded in the worksheets

The investigation of children's progress in learning from the large group followed the development of the objectives in "Developing skills and attitudes learning" domain. So, the respondent teacher registered the level of achievement of each reference objective from monitoring worksheet from September as a result of initial assessments.

It followed a training program using very often during the class the integrated, thematic project method. In March, at the beginning of the second semester it recorded the children's progress or regress in learning, relating to the same objectives.

Each objective was defined by a variable receiving as values the achievement levels: "unrealized = 0", "realized in progress = 1" and "realized = 2".

We present you in a comparative way the obtained results from September, at the beginning of school year, with those from March. So, we can notice that the standard: "Expressing curiosity and interest for the elements from the environment" is verified through three objectives.

The first objective referred to is "Formulating questions to the changes around them"; if in September 10 of these children haven't done this objective and 21 of them are in progress to do it, in March we can notice the learning progress, so 13 are in progress to do it and 18 children have done/realized the objective of formulating questions about the changes around.

The second objective is "Expressing the preferences during the activities"; if in September 10 of these children haven't done this objective and 21 of them were in progress to do it, in March we can notice an obviously progress, so 13 are in progress to do it, and 18 children have done the objective of expressing choices and preferences during the activities.

The third objective is "Choose and do an activity that fits to their interests"; if in September 20 of children haven't done this objective and 11 were in progress to do it, in

March we can notice the learning progress, so 11 children are in progress to do it and 20 children have done the objective of choose and do an activity that fits to their interests.

So, we can notice the verifying standard: "The manifestation initiative during the activities" by four objectives.

The first objective is: "They assume responsibilities"; if in September 20 of children haven't done this objective and 11 were in progress to do it, in March we can notice a big progress, so 11 of children are in progress to do it and 20 of children have done this objective to formulate questions about changes around.

The second objective is: "Exploring the environment using different strategies", if in September 12 of children haven't done this objective and 19 of them were in progress to do it, in March we can notice a big progress, so 11 are in progress to do it and 20 of children have done the objective to explore the environment by different strategies.

The third objective is "Performing an activity plan" if in September 21 of children haven't done this objective and 10 were in progress to do it, in March we can notice the learning progress, so 12 of children are in progress to do it and 19 succeeded to perform the objective to project an activity plan.

The fourth objective is "Make an activity plan"; if in September 12 of children haven't done this objective and 19 were in progress to do it, in March we can notice the learning progress, so 13 of children are in progress to do it and 18 were doing the objective to do an activity plan.

The third standard refers to "The manifestation of the perseverance in completing the task, even if they get some difficulties.

The first objective follows: "Maintaining the concentration on a task, question, set of indications or interactions despite all the distractions and interruptions: if in September 19 of children haven't done this objective and 12 were in progress to do it, in March 12 of children were in progress to do it and 19 of children have done the objective to maintain the concentration on a task.

The second objective is: "They adapt their behaviour according to the external requests, continuing their activity": if in September 18 of children haven't done this objective and 13 were in progress to do it, in March 8 of children were in progress to do it, and 23 of children have done the objective to answer the extern requests.

The third objective: "Completing a task that is taking place out in succeeding stages: if in September 10 of children haven't done this objective and 21 of children were in progress to do it, in March we can notice a progress, so 8 of children were in progress to do it, and 23 of children have done the objective to fulfill a task.

The fourth standard refers to "The manifestation of imagination and creativity in daily activities".

The first objective follows that the pupil to “introduce new elements in the known activities”: if in September 20 of children haven’t done this objective and 11 were in progress to do it, in March 12 of children were in progress to do it and 19 of children have done the objective to integrate what they have already learnt.

The second objective verifies if the child “uses and correlates strategies in unusual ways to investigate and solve problems”. If in September 19 of children haven’t done this objective and 12 of children were in progress to do it, in March 13 of children were in progress to do it and 18 of children have done the objective to use and correlate strategies in unusual ways to investigate and solve problems.

The third objective is “Create games, situations”; if in September 21 of children haven’t done this objective and 10 of them were in progress to do it, in March 11 of children were in progress to do it and 20 of children have done the objective to create games, situations.

The fourth objective follows “Changing the content of some known stories and introducing new characters created by them”. If in September 19 of children haven’t done this objective and 12 were in progress to do it, in March 11 of children were in progress to do it and 20 of children have done the objective to change the content of some known stories and to introduce characters created by them.

4 CONCLUSIONS

So, we realized the scientific fundamentation of the project’s method, referring to integrated, thematic project, we presented the importance of this form of evaluation and of its formative valences, by systematizing and shaping epistemological, theoretical and methodological premises in the literature; and also the role of formative function of the thematic project to contribute to the child’s individual progress by achieving and developing some abilities and competences to sustain its learning motivation.

Using these projects as alternative methods determines a representative evolution from the “testing culture” to the “appreciation culture” (Manolescu, 2004). The testing culture performs measures by objective and semiobjective items. The appreciation culture is using alternative methods, open items making a qualitative assessment.

The evaluation is a complex process, with multiple dimensions, which have the role to identify children’s learning progress, and not to quantify their results.

Integrated, thematic projects have the role to determine the child to learn motivating him.

The co-participation of preschool child to his own formation add an original and creative coefficient from teacher, which is, as Neacșu arguments: “the real personalization of teaching competence” (Neacșu, 1990).

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NEW PERSPECTIVES OVER THE USE OF SMARTBANDS IN UNIVERSITY-BASED HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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Abstract

The aim of our case study is to analyze the perceived impact of smartbands on adopting an active and healthy lifestyle by students at the level of university education. Integrating recent contributions from education sciences, knowledge management and applied health informatics, the paper highlights the premises of an institutional educational program that aims to improve students' health (with a special focus on weight loss). Starting from the arguments for using smartbands in health education programs and the current research being made in this field, the authors propose several directions of study and solutions that could be integrated at university level in order to improve students' health.

Keywords: Smartbands, smartphone, health education programs, case study, weight loss

JEL Classification: I12, I23, O33

1 INTRODUCTION

The new generation of wearable technology seems to be very promising and with great potential especially in the field of gaming industry and health services. A smartband, also known as activity tracker or fitness tracker is usually a wristband used for tracking and monitoring various fitness parameters such as: heartbeat, quality of sleep, distance. Closely integrated with dedicated mobile software applications and wirelessly connected to the mobile phones. Some smartbands have even more advanced medical sensors and are used to support medical interventions and tracking for: diabetes, sleep disorders, cardiovascular diseases, obesity, asthma, epilepsy, anxiety and Alzheimer's disease.

Based on an ICT-based healthcare practice called eHealth and in the framework of Quantified Self movement, smartbands could be also used in physical education programs. However, the pedagogical integration of such devices is still lacking and needs to be carefully analyzed first by researchers and experts. The importance of pedagogy in implementing technological innovations, such as smartbands or e-learning applications, especially in the context of mobile learning, is confirmed by many studies in the field of education sciences (Zahrani & Laxman, 2015). According to Banyard and his collaborators: "Technology is not enough to promote self-regulation and improve performance. A culture change is necessary to bring this about" (Banyard, Underwood & Twinner, 2006). Additionally, many questions are raised regarding the privacy of biodata collected from users, especially in the case of Internet of Things paradigm shift and mass utilization of wearable devices.

2 ARGUMENTS FOR USING SMARTBANDS IN HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

First, the main argument of using smartbands in health education is related to the high prevalence of obesity worldwide and particularly in Romania. According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2015): in 2014, more than 1.9 billion adults, 18 years and older, were overweight. Of these over 600 million were obese; overall, about 13% of the world's adult population (11% of men and 15% of women) were obese in 2014; in 2014, 39% of adults aged 18 years and over (38% of men and 40% of women) were overweight; the worldwide prevalence of obesity more than doubled between 1980 and 2014; in 2013, 42 million children under the age of 5 were overweight or obese (WHO, 2015).

Second, the prevalence of cardiovascular diseases remains high worldwide, especially very high in Romania. This fact is partially explained by a similar incidence of

risk factors and a common style of life. The Romanian population has a similar diet, rich in saturated fats, red meat, white flour, salt and sugar, leading to a high incidence of overweight (52% for men over 20 years old in Romania and 44% for women over 20 years old in Romania), the incidence of smoking is increased (38% in Romania in men and 21% in women) and alcohol consumption is high. Any educational intervention intended to reduce cardiovascular morbidity and mortality in Romania should address the reduction of these risk factors and attempt to change the lifestyle of these people (Bunescu et al, 2008).

Third, many experts think there is considerable evidence to assert that a postmodern community is likely to be virtual and mobile. Insofar geographical distance and access to technology is concerned, the new technologies for information and communication (NTIC) can bring people together and build cultural bridges over nations (Moynihan, Paakkari, Välimaa, Jourdan, & Mannix-McNamara, 2015; O'Brien, Troutman-Jordan, Hathaway, Armstrong, & Moore, 2015; Oberer & Erkollar, 2014). Many students and teachers are increasingly more communicating by using smart watches, smartphones, tablets and laptops creating the premises for a radically new culture of education A category of devices that is increasingly are wearables and particularly, smartbands.

Fourth, several studies highlighted the importance of using smartphones in various health education programs, particularly weight loss: a) in a 12-week randomized controlled trial, adults ($25 \leq \text{BMI} \leq 35 \text{ kg/m}^2$) were randomized to SmartLoss ($n = 20$) or an attention-matched Health Education control group ($n = 20$). SmartLoss participants were prescribed a 1,200 to 1,400 kcal/d diet and were provided with a smartphone, body weight scale, and accelerometer that wirelessly transmitted body weight and step data to a website; according to the authors: "SmartLoss efficaciously promote clinically meaningful weight loss compared with an attention-matched control group. Smartphone-based interventions might prove useful in intervention dissemination" (Martin et al, 2015); b) in another 2-arm, 12-month study, seventy adults (body mass index >25 and ≤ 40 (calculated as weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared) were randomly assigned either to standard-of-care group treatment alone (standard group) or to the standard and connective mobile technology system (+mobile group). The experimental group was provided personal digital assistants to self-monitor diet and physical activity; they also received biweekly coaching calls for 6 months. Weight was measured at baseline and at 3-, 6-, 9-, and 12-month follow-up. The conclusion of the authors was that "The addition of a personal digital assistant and telephone coaching can enhance short-term weight loss in combination with an existing system of care. Mobile connective technology holds promise as a scalable mechanism for

augmenting the effect of physician-directed weight loss treatment” (Spring, B et al, 2013).

Taking into account other studies from this field we agree together with Pellegrini, Pfammatter, Conley and Spring that “Current evidence is promising and continues to emerge on the potential of smartphone use within weight loss programs; yet research is unable to keep up with the rapidly improving smartphone technology. Future studies are needed to refine the conceptual model's utility in the use of technology for weight loss, determine the effectiveness of intervention components utilizing smartphone technology, and identify novel and faster ways to evaluate the ever-changing technology” (Pellegrini, Pfammatter, Conley and Spring, 2015). The wearables, particularly smart watches and smartbands can be an important tool in addressing both the weight loss and cardiovascular diseases issues (Bunescu, Stoffers, van den Akker, & Jan Dinant, 2008; Ferrari & Mamei, 2013; Gilson et al., 2014; Granado-Font et al., 2015; L Hebden et al., 2014; Lana Hebden et al., 2013; Knipper, Baumann, Hofstetter, Korte, & Krawinkel, 2015; Laing et al., 2014; Lee, Park, Jeong, & Park, 2015; Linde et al., 2015; Martin et al., 2015). Some of this devices track steps, distance and estimated calories burned as well as providing a timeline of how long you are active each day. The information breaks your day activity into walks, runs and activities. According to several experts “On the other hand, smartwatches have two strong advantages over other devices: their mount location, and (probably more important) the continual connection to the skin. Similar to augmented reality glasses, their interactions do not always require both hands. In particular, users do not need to hold the device, which is required by smartphones and one hand is completely occupied. Nevertheless, users need to change wrist position and, if a touch or voice input is needed, use the other hand for the interaction” (Rawassizadeh, Price & Petre, 2015).

3 POSSIBLE DIRECTIONS OF STUDY FOR USING SMARTBANDS IN HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

First, the integration of smartbands with the social networks and virtual learning communities could be very useful for boosting motivation, getting support and information regarding the best practices for weight-loss. Second, many pedagogical methods do not make use of the newest approached in ICT available to the digital natives, particularly wearable technologies; it would be very useful to integrate computer-based instruction and evaluation with smartbands or developing new physical education exercises with the help of wearable technologies (measuring the speed, calorie consumption, distance and so on). Third, the initial education curriculum should be adapted to support the use of wearable technologies, in the context of Quantified Self

approach; the results, viewed as a form of self-reflection over one's personal activity could be useful in the context of self-regulated learning activities, mediated by the used of ICT-enabled methods. Fourth, smartbands could be useful in the case of special needs students, offering the possibility of monitoring the health and observe in time any kind of signs that would require medical care or hospitalization. As more complex technologies arise, such as smartwatches (e.g. Apple Watch), more and better perspectives appear for educators, especially at the level of higher education.

In conclusion, students' health education is an area that is was not studied enough at the level of university. More studies are needed evaluate what are the most important parameters that influence how students adopt a healthy lifestyle. Some of the instruments that can help motivate students could be smartbands, devices that are increasingly more used, usually paired with smartphones. Evidence from other studies also highlighted the fact that technology alone can't have a meaningful and long-lasting result (Bunăiașu C.M., 2013; C.M., Vlăduțescu, Ș. & Strungă, A.C., 2014, Zahrani & Laxman, 2015). Health education programs, developed under the guidance of pedagogy experts, possibly in the framework of European projects (Bunăiașu, 2011), using complementary and alternative methods (Stoian, 2015) could be included in the academic curriculum with aims such as losing weight and reducing the prevalence of cardiovascular diseases.

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PERSPECTIVES ON MARKETING AND ORGANIZATIONAL ADVERTISING

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Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to show several perspectives on marketing and organizational advertising, as fields of research, training and practice. We also aim to highlight the relationship between the two concepts: “marketing” and “advertising of organizations”.

Keywords: organizational advertising, organizational marketing, perspectives, practice, research, training.

JEL classification: A10, H10, O10

1 INTRODUCTION

Since marketing represents nowadays the art of satisfying the consumer and as it holds a major role in obtaining success at a company's level, not only are specialists and practitioners interested in finding out how companies and firms can use marketing and its tools in order to gain benefits on the market and obtain profit, but they also seek to comprehend how organizational marketing is set up in a circumstance characterized by an important increase in consumers' demands of a company's products or services and by an expansion of a company's production capacities so that it is necessary to focus on the company's sales and to understand the way organizational marketing and organizational markets work in practice. The researchers' objective would be to "open up the field of organizational marketing in a [...] structured [...] way" (Wilson, 1999: 3) so as both practitioners and readers understand organizational marketing and organizational markets as they are practiced rather than how they might be conceived, all the more so as theorists and researchers are faced with an ever more "growing dissatisfaction" with the mechanistic approaches of both concepts.

At the core of our analysis, we should highlight the modern evolution of inter-organizational relationship marketing which many researchers (Buttle, 1996; Groonroos, 1994; Gummesson, 1987) regard as a foundation for the management of intricate marketing relationships amongst organizations surviving in an unpredictable environment and of the relationships between marketing and advertising activities inside the same organizations. This would thus allow us to open-mindedly explore several perspectives on marketing and organizational advertising rather than favoring one perspective by overlooking others.

2 ORGANIZATIONAL MARKETING AND ADVERTISING OF ORGANIZATIONS

With the marketing of organizations, we move towards a perspective where marketing attempts to create and support the emergence of an efficient and effective trade organization overseeing, organizing and supervising the outputs of manufactured products, while the enterprise focuses its attention on the correct segmentation and targeting of the public (consumers) with products meant for them (Wind & Bell, 2007: 222). The ever growing and expanding markets for the company's products, new means of distribution, the psychological remoteness and the physical distance existing between producers and consumers, as well as the consumers' possible reluctance to buy reflect the changes that occur in the environment where the organization unfolds its activities,

accounting for this new direction in the marketing of organizations. The commercial department and management of an organization perform several functions centred on the physical distribution of the company's products, on organizational trade policies, on the commissioning of trade networks, on advertising and promotion of goods and on the performance of market and consumer studies. The marketing specific to an organization also takes into consideration the consumers' possible reluctance to buy the company's products and that is precisely what justifies the fact that it envisages stimulating and triggering their purchase of products by sometimes using and activating powerful, aggressive promotional and advertising techniques.

There is yet a major distinction to be made between two different meanings of the syntagm "organizational marketing". The traditional meaning of organizational marketing equates with "marketing of organizations" and defines a complex field of marketing comprising the relationships of exchange between organizations and their consumers, taking into account the significance of consumer market. The second meaning is revealed by the new perspective considered by Wilson (*op.cit.*) which construes organizational marketing as a field of practice and research grasping the "forms of exchange relationships" between an organization and another organization, reflecting the importance, both in theory and in practice, of organizational markets, rather than of consumer markets.

Even though the issues of organizational marketing superpose debates on consumer marketing or behavioural marketing, promotional marketing (*cf.* Zahorsky, 2016) or production management, we become aware that distinctions amongst fields or topics of marketing do not reveal absolute differences; on the contrary, the different fields of study of marketing are interdependent. A first step to be taken is to subsume organizational marketing to marketing management (Kotler and Keller, 2006; Kotler and al., 2008; Ries and Trout, 2000), as the latter is a hypernym of the former (hyponym), implying the practical application of marketing orientations, methods, strategies (Jeannet and Hennessey, 2001) and techniques inside different organizations, as well as the management of a company's marketing resources and activities. A second step would be to discern amongst the categorizations of organizational marketing, to differentiate between the traditional and the modern meaning, as well as to identify its subclasses (buying behaviour, consumer behaviour and so on) and analyze the specifics of marketing mix with its 4 Ps: people, product, price and promotion (or product, place, price and promotion). A third step would consist in seizing the modern meaning of the syntagm, revealing the pluridimensional facets of organizational marketing, insisting on the exchange relationships between organizations and coping with the challenges brought by complex experiences in organizational markets nowadays.

Since the second step we have mentioned above includes the analysis of the specifics of marketing mix, we should emphasize the importance of the 4th P: promotion – that is publicity or advertising – as well as the relevance of the relationship between organizational marketing and advertising. Institutional or organizational advertising conceives the promotional and advertising messages meant to create an image (for the organization), to increase its reputation, to practice charity and goodwill, to promote its philosophy and advocate its ideas, instead of supporting promotion of sales. When organizational advertising is used by an institution in order to market and advertise itself rather than its products and services, the term “corporate advertising” is employed most often than not. A lot of organizations nowadays apply and use institutional advertising, by supporting local or disadvantaged communities, by supplying funding for child care or children education. Unlike product advertising, institutional (organizational) advertising constitutes a type of advertising that is mainly employed in order to improve an organization’s image instead of promoting one of its products. A well-known subtype of organizational advertising is *advocacy* advertising. This form of institutional advertising centers on organizations which have had to use advertising in order to answer to controversial media attacks directed at them. An example would be an alcoholic beverage company like Anheuser-Busch that shows how much of their profit is given to promote a cause directly related to its products. The overall promotional strategies have been chosen to show, through the “Drink responsibly” campaign, how the alcoholic beverage (beer) company supports a cause linked to its products on the market, by releasing audio-visual messages (scenarios) illustrating the importance of choosing a designated driver so as to avoid driving drunk, while at the same time dodging attacks from individuals (consumers or certified critics) who feel they should condemn alcohol providers for the increasing number of drunk driving car accidents. By targeting social issues in order to grasp and seize the public opinion’s eye, the company has succeeded in improving its brand image.

Even though the common meaning of organizational/institutional advertising is a type of radio, TV, digital or print or social media advertising (Sălcudean, 2015: 129; Sălcudean, Mureșan, 2017: 109) meant to promote an organization, an institution or a company, without trying to sell anything directly, and generally informing the target public about how the company is involved in local community’s causes or about how the organization is doing something for society in areas such as education, employment or health, thus emphasizing the positive side of advertising, there is also an unfavorable side of it. This unfavorable outlook starts from a perception of institutional advertising as “a segment of the communication between the organization and the users of its products”

(Thyssen: 2011), with a supplementary twist revealing that advertising uses a “hidden address” to approach other receivers such as the company’s investors, employees, stakeholders and non-users.

3 CONCLUSION

The current paper identifies and synthesizes several perspectives on organizational marketing and on the relationship between organizational marketing and institutional advertising, by emphasizing traditional and modern meanings of organizational marketing and by discerning two different facets of institutional (organizational advertising): a positive side and an unfavorable hidden side.

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AN EXTENDED REVIEW FOR A REMARKABLE BOOK: SYSTEMIC APPROACHES TO STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

The volume "Ioan Constantin Dima (Ed.), Systemic Approaches to Strategic Management: Examples from the Automotive Industry (pp. 396-424). Hershey, PA: IGI Global. doi:10.4018/978-1-4666-6481-4" is a high quality scientific book; it appeared at prestigious American publishing house IGI Global. The book is coordinated by Ioan Constantin Dima, Professor at "Valachia" University of Targoviste (Romania) and contains 14 chapters. Professor Dima himself contributes 7 chapters, two are developed by Professor Mariana Man (University of Petrosani, Romania), to the remaining 5 chapters contribute 10 reputed researchers: Maria Nowicka-Skowron (Częstochowa University of Technology, Poland), Janusz Grabara (Częstochowa University of Technology, Poland), Sebastian Kot (Częstochowa University of Technology, Poland), J. Novák-Marcinčin (Technical University of Kosice, Slovakia), Vladimír Modrák (Technical University of Kosice, Slovakia), Ioan Cosmescu ("Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu, Romania), Sorin Mihai Radu (University of Petrosani, Romania), Maria Măcriș (University of Petrosani, Romania), Dorina Tănăsescu ("Valachia" University of Targoviste, Romania), Ion Stegăroiu ("Valachia" University of Targoviste, Romania). In the book are debated in a structured mode a set of major problems of strategic management as that activity that consists of decision-making involving critical organization's objectives: considerations regarding the theory of systems, system

management risk, organization as system, the company on the terms of market economy, formal and informal structure of the organization, theoretical approaches of the current strategic management, theoretical approaches of company strategies, production strategies in the mining machine and machinery manufacturing industry, strategies regarding the production quality in the company. The book gathers strategies, methods, concepts, samples of high performance, tested, applied by companies in automotive industry, which is one of the most complex one. The approach represents a challenge for companies to apply the most efficiently methods, concepts regarding strategic management. New technology conjugated with strategic management applied to systems theory generate powerful companies that follow high quality of products, efficient flow production, cost reduction, environment protection, finally customer satisfaction. Thus, the book highlights the system of strategies, which the industrial companies must elaborate in order to have a favorable evolution under the current globalization conditions. By its issues, an interdisciplinary and even international approach, the book is very helpful to production specialists, scientists, students, master students, as well as to professors.

Keywords: systemic, strategic management, globalization, logistic strategies, budget.

1 INTRODUCTION

In times of uncertainty, knowing the best methods of performance measuring and creating value, determines the increase effectiveness and competitiveness of companies. The development of international markets and globalization, represent for companies pursue entry in many national, regional or international markets. Competitiveness of companies is linked to performance; that can be presented by various methods, as the company must have a sustainable presence on the market. Strategic management is a continuous process of strategic analysis, strategy creation, implementation and monitoring, improving, used by organizations with the purpose to achieve and maintain a competitive advantage. Strategic management provides overall direction to the enterprise and involves specifying the organization's objectives, developing policies and plans designed to achieve these objectives, and then allocating resources to implement the plans.

2 AN IDEATIONAL RADIOGRAPHY

The fourteen chapters of the book are grouped in two sections: “The Company Dealt with Systemically” and “Use of Systemic Theory in Strategic Management”. The first section (“The Company Dealt with Systemically”) is composed of six chapters Information in Systems Theory (Chapter 1; Dima, 2015), The Risk in Systems Management (Chapter 2; Dima, 2015), Use of Systems Theory to Deal with Industrial Companies (Chapter 3, Ioan Constantin Dima), Companies' Operation Environments in a Global Economy (Chapter 4; Kot & Macris, 2015), Companies' Activities in the Current Market Economy (Chapter 5, Ioan Constantin Dima), Company Organisation under Current Globalisation (Chapter 6, Ioan Constantin Dima). In this section are treated two issues:

a) the presentation of the current stage of the systemic theory in the first two chapters, including the risk in the management of the systems, according to the opinions in the literature;

b) the implementation of the systemic theory at the study of companies in the current globalized market economy, particularly highlighting the harmonization of the company's structure with its development strategies.

The second section (“Use of Systemic Theory in Strategic Management”) consists of late eight chapters: Companies' Strategies: A Theoretic Approach (Chapter 7, Ioan Constantin Dima), Considerations on the Current State of Strategic Management (Chapter 8, Ioan Constantin Dima), Communication in the Process of Elaborating Strategies on Company Development (Chapter 9; Novák-Marcincin & Cosmescu, 2015), Production Strategies of Companies in Machine Manufacturing Industry (Chapter 10; Modrak & Radu, 2015), Strategies Used to Improve Industrial

Companies' Production Quality (Chapter 11; Nowicka-Skowron & Stegaroiu, 2015), Budgeting Technique of Strategic Management (Chapter 12; Man, 2015), Use of Budgets to Elaborate the Strategy of Industrial Production Costs (Chapter 13, Mariana Man), Interdependence Relation between Industrial Companies' Logistics and Commercial Strategies (Chapter 14; Grabara & Tănăsescu, 2015).

Companies' strategies and strategic management through systemic theory is dealt with in this section. A logical dealing with the problem approached by starting from the current stage of the theory in the field of strategic management and companies' strategies in the market economy was continued by dealing with the production strategies of the companies in the automotive industry; in the end, the special role would be highlighted, that the strategies have it concerning the production and quality of the production process in industrial companies that perform their activities under the conditions of current globalization.

In the globalization era, the production environment of all countries comes to the stage of realizing the real prosperity. With the growth of markets towards globalization, all the firms need to deal with the challenges facing them. This has resulted in the materialization of automated industries with high performance of manufacturing systems. In this context, the development of systems theory and its application in strategic management holding company becomes a necessity. The increased development of the theory of systems provides its possibility to be used in the applicative scientific research in very many fields. As specifies Prof. Ioan Constantin Dima (p. XIII), "after the science has been guided for centuries by the analytical primacy-isolating the parties and their separate extrapolation and, finally, the reconstruction of the behavior of the whole from that of its components, the current evolutions no longer fall into previous patterns, radically changing the explanatory and methodological principles of classical disciplines. Thus, in the there is an increasing need to define their basic concepts and study the phenomena and processes closely related to the multiple interactions of the environment where the activity is performed." The penetration, the most spectacular of the systems theory, has been, however, registered in economic sciences, the approach particularly aiming at the systemic analysis, oriented directly towards the management of systems, points out the editor, Ioan Constantin Dima.

The idea of designing the society as an indestructible whole is not recent. Exceeding the limitative point of view of reductionism, according to which the society appears as an indefinite lot-the population with a vague idea about the whole-it has been proven that the idea of society, as a sum of the defined relations is characterized by certain groups, called subsystems or partial systems (classes), fulfilling specific functions within a certain organization, asserts Professor Dima. Without minimizing the decisive

role which the objective laws have in the development of the society, the contribution of the subjective factor “man” should also be noted, especially since the managerial element entering into the structure of any system is only of human nature.

3 CONCLUSION

The analysis of strategic management and of how it acts within the industrial companies enables them to make their activity more efficient. Thus, the book highlights the system of tactics and strategies, which automotive industrial companies must to generate in order to have a good evolution under the current competitive globalization conditions. By its issues, an extended international and even interdisciplinary approach, the book is quite helpful to students, master students, scientists, production specialists, as well as to professors.

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HOW THE MESSAGE BECOMES PART OF THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

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Abstract

This study argues in favour of the thesis according to which the message is not directly perceived and it does not occur immediately within the communication process. We can notice that, in order to receive and understand the message, we need to follow a process concerned with the initiation into the process of comprehending the message: we receive the message after having established a hermeneutic situation and determined an instance of discourse. The message will not become obvious implicitly, within the reality of comprehension: it is not conveyed as such, as the sender does not simply deliver a message; the message takes shape within the processing of the significations used in the communicational transaction.

Keywords: message, communication, comprehension, hermeneutic situation

JEL classification: A10, Z10, H0

INTRODUCTION

Any kind of communication includes a message. We could even assert that any communication imposes, it asks for a message, which actually turns it into communication (Vlăduțescu & Tomiță, 2014; Enachescu & Tarabay, 2016; Sandu, 2016).

Although the message comes after the communication, it is the one that makes communication possible, and not vice versa. Communication is described as a debate on significations, as an approach to certain issues. Communication is defined as a debate on significations, meanings, as a demarche concerned with the determination of a reality of significations. The method of communication represents only a transmission of significations. This illusion constitutes a possibility of reality, a modality of the truth belonging to reality, an aspect of what is real. Once selected in this manner, it is judged as reality. The illusion is essentially an advanced form of reality. It only exists as a consequence of a known, tested reality. It has substance only if it is preceded by a clear non-illusion. The illusion consolidates the ideas of precedence specific to a fixed truth. Consequently, the illusion comes as a future of reality. The illusion eliminates the wrong part of reality, diminishing it by the updating of a development possibility. The illusion as method of communication shapes the framework necessary for wisdom to be able to represent illusion itself as a form of philosophizing. If illusion did not exist, the appearances that lie at the basis of the philosophical elements would be blocked. Any demarche is certainly illusory (Militaru, 2012; Ene, 2014; Ghita & Ghita, 2016; Al-Tokhais, 2016).

Transaction as a method of philosophizing takes place as a beneficial and inevitable failure. Communication has never paid attention, communicationally speaking, to the aspect concerned with what kind of message it is itself and whether it stands for a message, to how much and how it is communication. This failure is actually part of the traditional omissions that render the communicational reflection endless (Petrescu, 2016; Landicho, 2016; Ghita, 2016). The questions communication states throughout an epoch represent its present stakes. These stakes entail in the circuit of meditation aporias that turn times into traditions, but also amazements, interrogations, astonishments and questionings that reveal the inaugural specific elements of each epoch. Communication focuses on what it imagines to be itself. Consequently, inaugurally, it is defined as a message of cogitation, of reflection, meditation and contemplation of meanings. Methodically speaking, communication is described as a process of message-shaping.

The message finally proves to be a problematization of meanings. Any communicational discourse contains a message, so that we can recognize the message according to its character, to its communicational tendency. The theoretical idea of

signification is specific to the communicational fact called message. The message is the one that makes two processes converge, namely: the process represented by our personal story and the process made up of the history of our previous communications.

The communicational element pulsates as communicational discourse. The message is an event within the human existential behaviour. Communicational life and the life of communication consist of behaviours that divide into events that draw their essence from abbreviated communicational messages. These nuclear communicational messages are called ideas, attitudes, situations, visions.

The communication that problematizes meanings exists at the linguistic level, it exists by the meaning of language. Communication is, on the one hand, a mathematics of meanings, while on the other it represents the preparation of a discourse for writing and reading. Thus, the communicational discourse depends on two apparatuses: the cogitative and the linguistic apparatuses.

Communication comes to be what it is only by means of the cogitative-linguistic discourse. The communicational discourse stands for a way of understanding the meanings by making use of the language. In order to understand things, Aristotle sustains, (in "Politics", I, 2), we must notice them in the make, surprise them in the moment of their formation. We can presently talk about communication at the discursive level, due to the fact we are able to understand the process of their embodiment in a definite form.

The idea of communication itself is a message that has conferred names to all the other elements of communication, naming itself as well. This phenomenon follows the rule according to which the Red Emperor has a red kingdom. The word speaks, as Heidegger states; communication communicates, more precisely it builds messages. By its message, communication is a historical phenomenon (Crăciun, 2010; Domović, 2015; Motoi, Dumitru & Curelaru, 2016; Grad, Frunză & Frunză, 2016).

The main communication is unique. The fundamental communication is to be found at the crossroads between the primary cogitative communication and the secondary or linguistic communication. Both forms meet within the message. It depends on the way and devices by which the message is configured in the communication. The main communication represents the meanings that can be communicated: meditation, reflection, cogitation. Fundamental communication is characterized by a clear and distinct message. The difference between the two types of message consists in the fact that the first message is conveyed as an idea of message, whereas the second one is established as "experience, feeling". Man's experiences events and puts into perspective communicational behaviours. The message focuses and at the same time it is structured out of meanings. It consists of meanings. The cogitative spirit develops a theoretical reflection on the capital issues of thinking and life. Thinking evolves as cogitative and

linguistic activity on thinking (Ionescu, 2016; Kupritz, 2016; Voinea, Negrea & Teodorescu, 2016).

THE MESSAGE SIGNIFIES A WAY OF LIFE AND AN EXISTENTIAL OPTION

Communication means to turn a message into discourse. From this point of view, the discourse is designed to convey the message it carries. The message reveals and justifies rationally the existential option, as well as the image of the world. This is the reason why the discourse that presents it, is mandatory, impositive. Beyond the option, there is always an agreement that tries to offer an explanation. Communication understands, explains and proposes, suggests. The discourse is animated by an image of the world, by a way of life, an existential option, an impositive way of representing all these elements (Frunza, 2016).

If he had nothing to say, a man would not convey messages. The message goes beyond the discourse. The message comes after the discourse. Consequently, it has no decisive qualitative duties towards the discourse that contains it.

On the other hand, the divided core of the discourse is formed by the message. The power and individuality of the discourse are established by the message. Any discourse contains a message. The discourse must necessarily contain a message. Such an experiment is itself a message. Both the discourse and the message stand for realities similar to the meaning. The meanings of the discourse are shaped linearly, whereas the meaning of the message has a tabular character. Taking into account the fact that the message is carried out as a discourse, we conclude that it represents the real practice of the linguistic practice. The message is not directly propagated, it is conveyed as reflection, speculation, meditation, contemplation, etc. These types of discursive practices rely on the idea of spiritual exercise: the intellectual substance that gives relativity the possibility to self-improve and manifest as a concrete experience (Ranta, 2014; Gioroceanu, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Communication, the discourse and the message are inseparable, especially because they are constituent elements of the same order. They have a common feature: they belong to the domain of meaning. They are inseparable because they are organized, generated and they function by means of the same two aspects: cogitative and linguistic. Communication ends within the discourse, the discourse ends within the message, more precisely within the message that concludes, in its turn, the communication process. The three elements conclude one another: this is how they are inseparable. Let us not omit the fact that the message always comes after the communication process. The message is

“the delayed reason, wit.” The message stands for the text’s wisdom. It reveals the meanings concerned with the complete self-coherence of each of us.

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THE PUBLIC BROADCASTER AND THE DYNAMICS OF THE ROMANIAN RADIO MARKET

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Abstract:

The permanent changing of the listening habits of the population and the rapid technological evolution represent a real challenge for the Romanian public radio. That is the reason why the editorial management of the public broadcaster should find the proper strategy to keep up with the transformations constantly taking place in the domestic radio market. Adapting to the New Media paradigm is a vital matter to any radio station, including the public one. Therefore the modern ways of reaching more audience should be a priority for the management of the public broadcaster, especially when the dynamics of the radio market are often spectacular and rather unpredictable. That is why the editorial strategy of the public radio must focus on the constant improvement of both the editorial offer and the means of transmission. The “battle” for rating and market share can be won only by constant adjusting and readjusting the policy of the radio station and by permanently improving the structure and the content of the radio programs.

The editorial policy of a public radio station is necessary to be (re)designed in order to adapt the strategy to the new social climate that inevitably generates profound mutations also at the level of general reception of radio products, without neglecting its mission of public broadcaster and without altering its fundamental functions required by law. The significant behavioral, cultural, and psychological changes that have been taking place in the contemporary Romanian society and the unprecedented technological evolution on a worldwide scale are two of the most important factors that must be taken into consideration when devising the strategy for modernizing or restructuring the program grid of a radio station, as well as all the radio programs included. As Mainali, Chapagain and Subba emphasize, the strategy of a station “should define its approach, policy, processes, and norms and standards while carrying out most common production functions, (...) its approach, policy, processes, and norms and standards while carrying out most style of presentation” (Mainali et. Al, 2009) which, taken together, represent the style of a radio. They conclude that “the editorial policy of a radio can define its approach, actions, behaviors and radios norms with regard to different kinds of programs, and at different contexts, and with different objects” (Mainali et. Al, 2009).

So the strategy of a public radio station must rely mostly on the main features that derive from its status of public broadcaster, but without disregarding the editorial means used by the private competitors. This doesn't mean that, due to some legal and ethical rigours that might be considered rather restrictive and intransigent, the public radio is to be considered prone to immobility and consequently unable to detach from the inertial “orbit” that it seems tempted to stay on. Therefore the main objective of a manager or a director of programming from a public radio station should be the constant improvement of radio programs (structure, content, journalistic discourse/presentation/“package”), a permanent editorial rejuvenation through a flexible standard program grid and a judicious appointment of radio journalists to each and every program included in that grid.

The statistical data and the rating figures provided by the accredited institutions show that the public broadcaster (under this title we will include all the stations of Radio România, both national and regional) has the capacity to adapt to the new media environment and its certain requirements without giving up on maintaining its essential characteristics that have established it in the general acceptance as a serious and reliable radio station, a trustworthy source of information, a competent medium of education and a constant supplier of tasteful entertainment.

The impressive ratings achieved in the last years could create the sensation that the public radio is in a too good position to necessitate further adjustments. That would be a false impression that could lead to a relaxed and complacent attitude that represents the sure path to disaster in a more and more dynamic radio market with a rather unpredictable evolution.

The inertial effect is a permanent threat that can be experienced not only in the managerial acts, but also in the editorial activity itself, a situation that can lead to a flattening or even a qualitative decrease of the radio programs. The complacency is a clear and present danger for a radio station that arrogantly hides itself behind the rating figures that places it, at a certain moment of time, in the

flattering position of market leader (by adding up the rating figures of all the stations belonging to the Romanian Radio Broadcast Corporation – SRR), but which cannot have any guaranties of permanence in that respect during a reasonable period of time. As large segments of audience (especially the elderly listeners who are accustomed to certain kind of programs and ways of realization/presentation and who can have difficulties in adapting to the newer concepts regarding radio journalism products) listen to a certain radio station mainly as a result of an inertial reflex, the managerial strategy of a public station must take into account the prospect of naturally losing much of this audience and must find alternative ways of attracting new listeners, especially by online expansion through all the platforms available.

Thereupon an efficient editorial plan should be designed in order to deliver a coherent strategy for increasing the audience indices, without compromising the quality of the programs, gaining and/or maintaining the position of market leader, improving the professional standards and building a recognizable sound and an unequivocal identity worthy of a national brand. The managerial planning should operate as a guidebook, an instrument and a stimulant for the team that carries it into effect and works efficiently to achieve a well determined goal. It is a continuous process that starts from research and monitoring, goes to analysis, consulting, designing the editorial plan and implementing it, then back to the monitoring and gathering information phase, collecting and analyzing the feedback data, a *perpetuum mobile* depicted in the following diagram:

The Cycle of Managerial Planning



The public radio broadcaster faces a dynamic and competitive direct or indirect competition, according to the characteristics of the media channel and the geographical and thematic coverage. The TV stations and the written press (print or online) are to be considered indirect and quasi-harmless competitors for a radio station after the stabilization of the audience from the point of view of the favorite media channel and according to the complementarity or “cohabitation” relation between the existing media channels, online included. Taking into consideration the fact that, in general, the TV stations have built a settled audience which, in a certain favorable context, listen to the radio, too, even though occasionally, and the traditional newspapers can’t keep up with the radio stations in terms of transmitting information fast, the public radio should focus mainly on its direct competition: the private radios.

Although frequently invoked, the idea that the public radio, national or regional, is not in a direct competition with the commercial radios, the mere fact that all the players present on the market fight for acquiring an increasingly larger fraction from the same pool of listeners, *nota bene*, a constantly decreasing common pool of listeners, should be enough to confute such a preconception, a clearly comfortable judgment which can only generate complacency and superficiality when it comes to fulfilling the tasks. Moreover, we must not forget that, in order to fulfill its essential objectives (inform and educate the audience), the public broadcaster must reach as many listeners as possible, so “the battle” with the other competitors is a fact that can’t be disregarded. No matter how valuable the radio products are, in the opinion of those who realize them, they are absolutely useless in the absence of a significant number of listeners. A conclusion from which should start any editorial strategy that intends not only to exist on paper, but also to generate positive and quantifiable results.

The continuous changing of listening habits leads to redefining the ways of reaching the target groups of a radio station and so the identification of the behavioral, psychological and technological valves through which can take place a profound and measurable permeation of the obstacles between emitter and receptor, technologically and semiotically speaking, becomes a vital target for any director of programming and their staff. At the same time with the terrestrial transmission, the public radio must focus on the elements of New Media and the alternative means of reaching those segments of public that mostly ignore now the programs of the public broadcaster. All these ways of reaching the audience must be regarded as complementary and interdependent when developing a multitask strategy that aim to extensively penetrate “the fortress” behind which are to be found the listeners that the public radio wants to attract and who retreated themselves into the virtual space, “barricaded” behind the new digital platforms. It is a permanent “siege”, a continuous “battle” with the private radios that the public broadcaster must undertake in order to gain more market share.

Regarding the musical policy and the radio format chosen, the competitive radio environment is marked in Romania by the collision between the two most important radio formats today, Adult Contemporary (AC) and Contemporary Hit Radio (CHR), with all their well sedimented characteristics, other formats (such as Adult Album Alternative or AAA/ Triple-A) reaching insignificant ratings, as we can clearly notice from the data delivered by Asociația pentru

Radio Audiență – Association for Radio Audience (A.R.A.) for the period August 29 – December 18, 2016, a report which reveals the current tendencies of the Romanian radio audience : (paginademedia.ro, 2016)

	NATIONAL	Autumn 2016	Autumn 2015	Difference
1	Kiss FM	2.155.100	2.105.300	49.800
2	Romania Actualități	2.025.600	1.990.000	35.600
3	Radio ZU	1.960.600	1.752.200	208.400
4	Europa FM	1.381.700	1.509.900	-128.200
5	Pro FM	965.600	1.454.300	-488.700
6	Magic FM	700.600	772.100	-71.500
7	Antena Satelor	699.400	701.200	-1.800
8	Radio 21	563.000	568.800	-5.800
9	Digi FM	485.300		
10	Radio România Craiova	403.400	418.400	-15.000
11	Radio România Iași	395.900	401.800	-5.900
12	Rock FM	290.700	264.100	26.600
13	Național FM	251.800	253.200	-1.400
14	Radio România Cultural	208.000	176.000	32.000
15	Radio România Timisoara	191.400	203.200	-11.800
16	Radio România Reșița	190.500	163.000	27.500
17	Radio România Cluj	134.300	99.500	34.800
18	Radio România Târgu Mureș	116.000	134.300	-18.300
19	București FM	98.100	80.600	17.500
20	Radio România Constanța	36.500	49.000	-12.500

In conclusion, the public radio must design a coherent editorial strategy in order to expand its market share and reach those categories of listeners that at the moment are not part of its hardcore audience and that now listen only sporadically to Radio România stations. These segments of listeners can be turned into permanent audience only by diversifying and modernizing both the editorial offer and the means of transmission.

For expanding the number of regular listeners (P1) it is necessary the editorial management of the public broadcaster to conceive a strategy capable of attracting the non-regular listeners (P2, P3). Such a strategy requires structural measures and ways of improving the programs, as well as the

implementation of new radio products in order to dismantle the theory according to which the public radio has a dated sound and is stiffened in mentalities and habits from long bygone days.

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A REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF GENDER EQUALITY IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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Abstract: Gender inequality is one of the important challenges in all modern societies, the United States of America being no exception, despite the progress and significant advances that have been made in the past century. There still is a significant gender gap in many areas – most notable being the pay gap, social norms and practices, education, political participation and social institutions. The present article aims to analyse the legal framework and social framework that has evolved in the United States of America in order to diminish or completely abolish gender inequality and discrimination.

After the 1920 ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America, which empowered women with political rights, there was a proposed amendment to the Constitution to guarantee equal rights for women, first introduced in Congress in 1923, passed by both houses in 1972, but which failed ratification – only 35 out of the 38 states needed ratified the amendment before the deadline – 1979, which later was extended to 1982. The United States has since taken some steps in reducing the gender gap and stopping gender discrimination: in 1963 it passed the Equal Pay Act, that prohibited pay discrimination based on sex, the next year the Civil Rights Act, which outlawed discrimination, including when based on sex, and Title IX of the Educational Amendments in 1972, which provided equal federal financial assistance indiscriminate of sex.

This legislation helped shape the United States into one of the frontrunners in gender equality, even if in 2014 it ranked on the 20th place according to the Global Gender Gap Index.

Keywords: equality, gender equality, gender legislation, equal rights amendment

A large number of countries around the world have made significant progress regarding gender equality in the past years. There have been significant advances all around the world, in all kinds of fields: *“girls today outperform boys in some areas of education and are less likely to drop out of school”*, (OECD, 2012, p. 13) over 96% have closed the gap in health outcomes, 60% in economic participation and 21% of the gap in political empowerment. (Hausmann, Tyson, 2014, p. 46)

This present paper is constructed in two parts – the first is a social diagnosis of the current situation of gender equality in the USA and in a global context, followed by an legislative analysis of the current state of affairs in the United States of America at the federal level.

Globally, we’ve been able to notice a positive trend regarding the evolution of gender equality – an evolution made possible by both the development of third world countries and the continuous improvement of the modern states. The issue of gender equality has been a core debate in a large number of societies not only for philosophical and social reasons, but also for economic ones. According to the data presented by the Global Gender Gap Index Report, an instrument design to measure gender inequality in over 130 major and emerging economies worldwide, with over 93% of the world’s population, we can *“confirm a correlation between gender equality and GDP per capita, the level of competitiveness and human development. The correlation is evident despite the fact that the Global Gender Gap Index (unlike other gender indexes) explicitly eliminates any direct impact of the absolute levels of any of the variables used in the Index (e.g. life expectancy, Educational Attainment, labour force participation), as these may be impacted by the relative wealth of a country.”* (Hausmann, Tyson, 2014, p. 39) The conclusion is drawn after the analysis of four critical areas of inequality between men and women: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment and health and survival.

The most significant development in the recent years have been in the area of economy and employment – but even though the advances here been major, and there has been a large number of governmental programs dedicated to the elimination of this issue, the effects have been limited and take a long time to fully propagate: *“more women have entered the workforce in recent years, but often experience more difficulty than men in finding a first job, earn less than men, and are more likely to work part-time.”* (OECD, 2012, p. 15)

Women find themselves dealing with a harder challenge when faced with entering the workforce and finding a job and maybe usually choose jobs that allow them to have time for their family and children. It’s clear that women are usually paid less in the United States and all over the globe, but the fundamental reason between that is debated: do women choose lower-paying jobs, because they are more risk-averse? Do they work part time more than men do? Since they are the primary caregivers for the children, do they simply work less time than men? According to an 2015 American Association of University Women study, in 2013, *“women working full time in the United States typically were paid just 78 percent of what men were paid, a gap of 22 percent”* (The American Association of University Women, 2015, p.3), a gap that has been decreasing since 1973 when it was at 43%. Another study, found that *“after accounting for college major, occupation, economic sector, hours worked, months unemployed since graduation, GPA, type of undergraduate institution, institution selectivity, age, geographical region, and marital status, Graduating to a Pay Gap*

found that a 7 percent difference in the earnings of male and female college graduates one year after graduation was still unexplained." (Corbett, Hill, 2012). Most groups advocating gender equality in the workplace in the United States have centered their message around the issue of the pay gap, promoting the *equal pay for equal work* concept of labor rights, which states that any all individuals that are doing the same work should receive the same remuneration, no matter the sex, race or colour. Even though the legislation for this exists in the United States of America, enacting is difficult. *"Female employment participation has generally increased and gender gaps in labour force participation have narrowed. Yet occupational segregation has not improved, gender pay gaps persist, and women are still under-represented at more senior job levels, especially among managers and on company boards."* (OECD, 2012, p. 18) The gender pay gap can not be explained only by human capital factors and work patterns, the preference of part time jobs over full time jobs or that men are inherently better negotiators of their wage or are more proactive when asking for raises and seeking promotions. Most modern societies are still patriarchal societies, where women are expected to be the primary caretakers, while men are expected to be the hardworkers, the breadwinners.

There have also been critics to the gender pay gap reports, stating that the true topics should be if "is social work or nursing as complex and do these professions require the same depth of knowledge as an engineer or computer programmer? Should a janitor be paid more like a surgeon? If most job professions are basically equal; why are the male-dominated professions paid more than the female dominated ones?" (Zinan, 2013), claiming that the differences that AAUW finds are not explained by discrimination, but through the choice that women take when becoming parents – which often brings along leaving the workforce for a significant amount of time, and with it the loss of seniority, benefits and higher pay. Soberg and Laughlin found that "occupational assignment is the primary determinant of the gender difference in compensation [...] the analysis of the index of compensation indicates that there is no gap for the most female-dominated occupation or for the most male-dominated occupation". (Solberg, Laughlin, 1995) Thus, Soberg and Laughlin attributed the pay gap to the different choice of occupation that men and women make, the gender gap being according to them of only 3.6 percent.

The United States does not have a non-discrimination clause in its Constitution, but it does guarantee equality before the law to all its citizen, including all men and women. The 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution states in it's first article that "*All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.*" Included in this is the last part, the *equal protection clause*, known under the term of *equal justice under law*. Even if this amendement does not specify gender protection, it does include a most likely deliberate equality between all "persons". This interpretation was upheld by the United States Supreme Court in *Reed v. Reed* (*Reed v. Reed*, 404 U.S. 71, 1971) - where it ruled that administrator of estates cannot be named in a way that discriminates between sexes and *Craig v. Boren* (*Craig v. Boren*, 429 U.S. 190, 1976) where it was decided that the

government must only use the sex-based criteria in regulation only where it can demonstrate that it is substantially relevant, adding thus another level of scrutiny, both rulings being based on the courts interpretation of the 14th Amendment.

“The Equal Protection Clause protects persons against certain forms of discriminatory state action only. In a few discrete areas, the Court has ruled that the Clause protects certain fundamental rights that the state cannot burden” (Siegel, 2004, p. 310). Thus, the 14th amendment does not protect against discrimination from private entities but only from the state, as later legislation will do. On the other hand, in the 1970s, with the development of the affirmative action movements, the Court began to interpret the amendment as a color-blind filter, discouraging any programs that might consider criteria that will favorize only formerly segregated groups.

The most major development for women’s rights in the United States of America was the passage of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution: *“The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.”* Through this amendment, first introduced in Congress in 1878, women in the USA have gained political rights: to vote and to hold office, after forty years of political upheaval, beginning the slow process of liberation for women. The women rights movements started popping up after 1848, but only gained significant momentum at the turn of the 20th century. Women thus gained an important public and political voice in the American society through this legislation.

An important evolution in the history of women’s rights in the United States of America could have been the Equal Rights Amendment, a proposed and failed amendment to the United States Constitution which only received 35 of the necessary 38 state ratifications. The ERA was introduced in Congress in 1923, taking advantage of the political momentum of the 19th amendment, but not starting the process of state ratification until 1972. The amendment was incredibly innovative and bold for its time, stating that *“equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.”* thus bringing effective legal equality to men and women, no matter the provisions of other laws or deprecated Constitutional interpretations. Even though the Equal Rights Amendment failed ratification, ten states have adopted a similar constitutional provision, which enforces equal rights under the law, undeniable because of sex – Alaska, California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Montana, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming.

“A mass movement for women’s rights did not coalesce again for another half century - once again arising out of a movement for racial equality.” (Siegel, 2004, p. 308) It took half a century of political distress in order to reboot the women’s rights movement capable of gaining the traction needed to bring social change.

Another important advancement in gender equality in the United States of America came with the adoption of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA), which prohibited sex-based wage discrimination. The law provides that *“no employer having employees subject to any provisions of this section shall discriminate, within any establishment in which such employees are employed, between employees on the basis of sex by paying wages to employees in such establishment at a rate less than the rate at which he pays wages to employees of the*

opposite sex in such establishment for equal work on jobs the performance of which requires equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and which are performed under similar working conditions". Through this law the first important step in recognizing and thus balancing the gender gap in payment between men and women was taken. The EPA prohibits employers from paying lower wages to one gender than it does to another gender for the same work and under the same condition, through this allowing both men and women protection in their workplace against a discriminating employer. This law was passed as part of John F. Kennedy's New Frontier Program and was based on the Peterson Report drafted by the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women, which proposed paid maternity leave, equality for women in the workplace – both regarding wage and hiring practice, better education and counseling and affordable childcare, but at the same time opposing the Equal Rights Amendment.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 includes a clear prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Section (a) (1) of 42 U.S. Code - 2000e-2 - Unlawful employment practices, makes it unlawful for an employer to *"(1) to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; or (2) to limit, segregate, or classify his employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin."* Thus, any person is granted protection against their employer on the matter of sex regarding hiring or firing practices, but also the rights of said individual in the workplace. Similar provisions specified in Title VII apply to employment agencies, labor organizations and training programs, while there are exceptions regarding the federal government, federally recognized Native American tribes, religious groups and non-profit private membership organizations. Title VII thus forbids gender discrimination in any aspect of employment, as defined by the federal government: hiring and firing; compensation, assignment, or classification of employees; transfer, promotion, layoff, or recall; job advertisements; recruitment; testing; use of company facilities; training and apprenticeship programs; fringe benefits; pay, retirement plans, and disability leave; or other terms and conditions of employment.

In 1972 another step forward was taken in the move for gender equality in the United States – the introduction of the Title IX of the Educational Amendments. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in all educational institutions that receive federal funding. It states, in part, that *"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance"*. Thus, any federally funded educational institution - colleges, universities, and elementary and secondary schools, but also any education or training program operated by a recipient of federal funding is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of sex, bringing equal educational opportunities to both men and women. Title IX is thus a landmark in federal civil rights that promote gender equality in the United States of America. It forces educational institutions not only to stop discrimination, but also to be proactive about

stopping sex discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual violence. This policy was extended in 1976, when the Education Amendments of 1976 “*mandated the elimination of sex discrimination and sex-role stereotyping in vocational education programs receiving federal funding [and] required collection and analysis of data concerning participation by women and studies to identify methods used to eliminate sex bias and stereotyping*” (Women’s Rights Task Force, 1979, p. 14)

In 1975, women in the United States of America were granted admission to all military academies through Public Law 94-106, which stated, in part: “*female individuals shall be eligible for appointment and admission to the service academy concerned [...] the academic and other relevant standards required for appointment, admission, training, graduation, and commissioning of female individuals shall be the same as those required for male individuals, except for those minimum essential adjustments in such standards required because of physiological differences between male and female individuals*”. Thus, the US Army became available to women, making them eligible for voluntary military service in any branches of the army. This was an important development mostly thanks to its social symbolism, allowing women to serve in one of the last gentlemen only clubs.

The same year, the United States Supreme Court in *Taylor v. Louisiana* (Taylor v. Louisiana, 419 U.S. 522, 1975) decided that women could not be excluded from a jury pool in a systematic way, when the appellant made the claim that he was not granted a fair trial, as the jury that convicted him was all male. Equal protection and due process cannot be ensured without equal representation in all aspects of society, including jury duty. Prior to this, women were excluded from jury service unless they specifically requested, through a written request, to take part in such proceedings.

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 has brought important developments in gender equality, by amending the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to expand the protections against unlawful employment practices, by allowing liability to accrue and extending the definition of an unlawful employment practice with respect to discrimination. Thus, in part, it occurs “*when a discriminatory compensation decision or other practice is adopted, when an individual becomes subject to a discriminatory compensation decision or other practice, or when an individual is affected by application of a discriminatory compensation decision or other practice, including each time wages, benefits, or other compensation is paid, resulting in whole or in part from such a decision or other practice*”. The protection against sexual discrimination is thus extended, allowing all victims of pay discrimination to effectively challenge unequal pay. This is an important act in the issue of gender equality if we consider the large gender pay gap we have identified earlier in our paper.

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