











Investeşte în oameni!

Proiect cofinanțat din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operațional Sectorial Dezvoltarea Resurselor Umane 2007 – 2013

"LUCIAN BLAGA" UNIVERSITY OF SIBIU FACULTY OF ECONOMICS

THE INFLUENCE OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ON UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

SUMMARY OF THE PHD THESIS

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KEYWORDS

Higher education, university management, extracurricular activities, managerial performance, influence factors, comparative management, modelling.

INTRODUCTION

One of the important objectives of the university management is to highlight the human resources' performances, making them the most important production factors, human capital being the most precious resource of any organisation.¹

The mission of higher education is to generate and transfer knowledge to society through initial and continuing training at university level, scientific research, development, innovation and technology transfer.

In full accordance with the above mentioned, are also the ideas formulated by Georg Simmel, whereby the university, as part of the knowledge-based economy plays a vital role in the exchange of values and knowledge, presenting differences from classical economy, based on the exchange of goods.²

Thereby, resulting are the main **arguments regarding the need to approach this field**, belong the fact that studies that have as objective the modernisation of university management and the alignment of Romanian universities to European standards and labour market's requirements represent a priority for all stakeholders: Ministry of Education and Research, universities and the whole society as a direct beneficiary of educational products.

In order to train students in line with labour market needs, to increase their academic results and the development of their motivation to study and thereby to increase the university management performance, studies regarding students' integration in the academic environment and researches with the aim of changing, training and developing of the student community are proving to be very useful.

In this regard, along with researches strictly related to curricular educational management, studies in the field of extracurricular activities are of particular importance. These studies try to prove according to the research hypotheses, that activities of this type, especially those in the field of career guidance help students increase their study motivation, integrate in the academic or business environment and thus improve their academic results. They also facilitate the improvement of the attractiveness of the geographical area where the university is located and hence the community contentment.

The elements set out above, represent the main pillar around which the entire thesis' edifice emerges, scientific approach through which we seek to verify the validity of the hypothesis through which extracurricular activities have a positive effect on performance. Items related to the hypothesis, as the increase of university educational demand, study offer determined including by the attractiveness of the area, community contentment, increase of students' academic

¹ Todericiu R., Şerban A., Dumitraşcu O., *Particularities of knowledge workers' motivation strategies in Romanian organizations*, Procedia Economics and Finance Volume 6, 2013, Pages 405–413, [accessed on: 22.06.2015]. Available under: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S221256711300155X

² Marga, A., Cultură, democrație, modernizare, București, Editura Institutului Cultural Român, 2012, p. 64

performance on one hand and the university management on the other hand are interconditioned and are also required to be studied, including the fact that in their mix they seem to have a synergistic effect.

Summarizing the whole argumentation, including the one arising from an extensive bibliographic research in the field concerned but also in related areas, we can state that the **necessity, topicality, utility and importance of approaching this field** derives from:

- Certain deficiencies regarding the development of specialty literature in this field;
- Poor development of specific studies regarding the correlations between university management performance university's attractiveness academic performance of students skills' and competencies' development of students leading to integration in the economic environment involvement in extracurricular activities;
- Need to enhance the Romanian universities' attractiveness by taking certain customary practices from German higher education and beyond, capturing some similarities or differences between Romanian and German universities;
- To ensure the balance between theory and practice in the Romanian higher education;
- Need to increase the quality of Romanian higher education and students' academic performance;
- Requirement for students to acquire practical skills and competencies in order to facilitate their further integration in the socio-economic environment;
- Need to increase students' satisfaction regarding the act of learning and study atmosphere. Another argument of the necessity and topicality of the approached subject, entitled "The influence of extracurricular activities on university management performance" is that it contributes to the development of the doctoral field, falling under and bringing contributions in **the priority domain C.N.C.S.I.S. no. 9: "Cercetare socio-economică și umanistă"** (Socio-economic and humanistic research), research direction **9.1 "Noi metode manageriale, de marketing și dezvoltare antreprenorială pentru competitivitate organizațională"** (New methods of management, marketing and entrepreneurship development for organisational competitiveness) and research direction **9.2 "Calitatea educației"** (Quality of education). The theme also fits within the objectives of the program "Parteneriate în domeniile prioritare" (Partnerships in priority areas), component of the National Plan for Research, Development and Innovation II³, and of the strategy "Europa 2020 O strategie europeană pentru creștere inteligentă, durabilă și favorabilă incluziunii" (Europe 2020 An European strategy for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth), launched by the European Commission.⁴

The proposed research subject is very topical and fits to the research directions of Sibiu Doctoral School of Management, as well to the scientific concerns of the doctoral supervisor, Prof. Univ. Dr. Ec. Emanoil Muscalu, demonstrated by publications in this field of research. ^{5,6,7}

³ Centrul național de management programe – CNMP, *Programul 4- Parteneriate în domeniile prioritare*, [accessed on 22.06.2015]. Available under: http://www.cnmp.ro:8083/pncdi2/program4/documente/CNMP_Prezentare.pdf ⁴ * * *, *Strategia Europa 2020 și Semestrul European*, [accessed on 22.06.2015]. Available under: http://europedirect.centras.ro/europa-2020-si-semestrul-european-1.html

⁵ Muscalu E., *Strategii universitare*, Bucuresti, Ed. Eficient, 2001

⁶ Muscalu E., *Management general*, Sibiu, Ed. Universității "Lucian Blaga" din Sibiu, 2003

⁷ Muscalu E., Fundamentele managementului, Sibiu, Ed. Univ. "Lucian Blaga" Sibiu, 2007

The **central objective** of the thesis is the analysis of the extracurricular activities' influence on the university management performance, with the aim of bringing real contributions in terms of increased quality of university management through diversification of the extracurricular activities' offer within universities, with effect on managerial performance growth. As **general objectives** we can distinguish the following:

- Analysis of the current state of scientific knowledge in the field of university management performance;
- Analysis of the university system functionality;
- Determination of the similarities and differences regarding the effect of extracurricular activities on the attractiveness of the study location, academic performance, graduates integration in the economic environment and the managerial performance;
- Analysis of the extracurricular activities' offer in some Romanian universities and observing their influence on students' performance and university's attractiveness, with effect on university management performance.

Considering the extracurricular activities' influences on the act of learning, students' satisfaction, their performance, skills and competences acquisition and on the university's attractiveness, the research is based on the following hypotheses:

Table 1.1. Research hypotheses

Nr.	Hypothesis
1.	Managerial performance increases with increasing students' involvement in
	extracurricular activities - hypothesis which determines the vertical logic of the PhD
	thesis.
2.	The involvement in extracurricular activities depends on the university's offer, its
	promotion and involvement of university management.
3.	The involvement in extracurricular activities increases the attractiveness of the study
	location and thus an increase in demand for university education.
4.	The involvement in extracurricular activities brings benefits to students both socially
	and personally and helps to their socio-economic integration, with a positive role on
	the educational outcome.
5.	University management is more facile, performing, efficient and effective when it is
	performed in an environment in which the culture of students' involvement in
	extracurricular activities is developed.
6.	The involvement in extracurricular activities increases students' academic
	performance.

With the objective of increasing the veracity of the research's results, the research methodology that will be used in the paper will be very diverse, meaning that along with the bibliographic research also used will be selective research based on questionnaire method, comparative management method, modelling method and also univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis method.

The bibliographic research of exploratory type, from secondary sources, is a faster and less costly method, which entails the use of available data from different sources. Along with books,

scientific papers, research reports, also consulted will be informative materials, promotion and information leaflets, brochures in the field of extracurricular activities and Internet sites. Secondary data thus facilitates understanding the issues from the field concerned and the development of procedures and methods of collecting primary data.

As primary research methodology the questionnaire technique is chosen, of quantitative, descriptive type, aimed at testing hypotheses and examining the relationships between different variables, ensuring consistency of the results and their veracity. Through the questionnaire, consisting of clear and concise questions, open or closed, as appropriate, data will be collected from respondents, in this case students. The collected data are then analysed using SPSS statistical software and certain influences will be analysed using statistical tools and using Weka software. In univariate analysis variables will be analysed individually and bivariate analysis will deal with the relationship between two variables. Multivariate analysis includes the analysis of relations between several variables. Using Weka that rely on machine learning algorithms of Data Mining, enables the extraction of information or knowledge from large data sets with the aim of finding new relations to facilitate their usefulness. By means of modelling technique such information or knowledge can be extracted and new relationships between the different factors underlying the forecasts and establishing certain influences can be found.

Regarding the comparative method, with the role of analysing the functionality of the subsystems related to extracurricular activities and also of piloting the study extended in the third part, the first research of this thesis will focus on two countries, Romania and Germany. It will use international comparative management methods, looking to identify similarities and differences regarding extracurricular activities between the two cultures, considering that no culture is dominant, in accordance with the methodology of comparative studies. The study will have a polycentric character that fills the ethnocentric study, with the emphasis on what is specific and not similar.

From the structural point of view, the work is composed of four parts: I. The current state of scientific knowledge in the field of university management, II. Systemic analysis of university management, III. Studies regarding the role of extracurricular activities in increasing the university management performance and IV. Final conclusions, own contributions and future research directions. In order to systematically achieve the proposed objectives, the four parts in turn are composed of ten chapters, each with a clearly defined role in the logical construction of the thesis.

THE FIRST PART. CURRENT STATE OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE IN THE FIELD OF UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

Objectives

- Defining the conceptual elements of the approached field and observing the perception and opinion differences of various authors;
- Realisation of a bibliographical research in recent national and international literature, in order to identify certain gaps in research, insufficient and ineffective approaches in terms of scientific knowledge and to identify potential solutions to the problems identified.

The general objective of this part is to highlight the current state of scientific knowledge in the field of university management performance and the specific objectives are presented in the previous box.

The analysis of the current state of scientific knowledge in the concerned field, as a distinct research stage, is a necessity, facilitates knowledge in the approached field through its examiner role regarding the eventual vacuum of knowledge, identifies niches and potential research directions that were not approached yet and is constituted as the basis of future research in this thesis. Specifically, based on an extensive bibliographic research through various secondary sources, in the first chapter entitled "Epistemological approach, conceptual elements" was originally developed the analysis of terms, concepts, definitions related to the field approached, but also the current state of knowledge in the field of general management with implications in university management and the specific terminology regarding the university management, extracurricular activities management and their related areas. Comparisons of different opinions and own opinions were also exposed. Of particular importance are the research of concepts, typology studies and analysis of comparative management models, as a methodology used in this thesis. From the models and theoretical approaches of comparative management presented, were selected those approaches that are appropriate for further research and analysis of university system and its management.

In Chapter 2, entitled "Bibliographical research from various secondary sources existing at national and international level", as a second bibliographical research stage, different national, international studies and papers were analysed. Also the systemic analysis of the university management as approached, with the analysis' orientation to extracurricular activities and their influence on university management performance growth, using for exemplification the real environment offered by the research cases. Within these, the most visible direction that wasn't tackled so far will be studied, the one related to the correlations between extracurricular activities - academic performance - the supply / demand of study - the attractiveness of the study location – students' motivation.

As a summary of the undertaken research, in Chapter 3, "Conclusions and personal opinions regarding the current state of scientific knowledge in the approached field" problems have been identified, discrepancies of views and different approaches regarding the current state of knowledge. Also the typology, orientation of specific studies from the specialty

literature and the causes and effects have been analysed. As own contributions possible solutions to problems have been identified in order to fill any gaps.

We can thus conclude that this part of the thesis reveals that the main problem of knowledge in this field is an insufficiently literature focused on university management. This constitutes the starting point of the objectives' and means' development with a remedy role of the problem identified. This remedy is necessary because the identified problem can lead to low academic performance, to a vacuum of knowledge in this field and to a not conform managerial culture in the university environment. The university's reputation, academic staff's motivation, academic performance of students and their satisfaction can thus be negatively influenced. ⁸

We conclude that the objectives of the first part of the thesis were achieved, succeeding with the analysis of the current state of scientific knowledge and conceptual elements. The consultation on numerous bibliography sources, studies and researches in the field has led to the identification of problems, causes, effects and hypothetical solutions. This part of the thesis is the basis of future research, which will focus on the study of the functionality of the university system.⁹

THE SECOND PART. THE SYSTEMIC ANALYSIS OF THE UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AS A SUBSYSTEM

Objectives

- identification of the necessary resources for the functionality of the university system in general and the extracurricular activities in particular;
- analysis of the functionality of the university system and its management;
- concrete cases describing the operation of the system:
 - o comparison between Germany and Romania regarding students' implication in extracurricular activities, as components of the educational system;
 - o determining similarities and differences in regards to students' satisfaction with the university from Romania and Germany, the result of the functionality of the system;
- comparison of various extracurricular activities offers between the two countries;

As concluded in the end of part I of the thesis, the research conducted so far revealed a clearer picture of the current state of scientific knowledge in the concerned field. It was revealed that the specialty literature only partially demonstrates the hypothesis what constitutes our thesis,

⁸ Dumitrașcu O., *Knowledge in the Field of University Management – causes, effects and hypothetical solutions*, Proceedings of the IPC Conference, Conferința internațională a studenților doctoranzi, Sibiu, 2013

⁹ Dumitrașcu O., *Knowledge in the Field of University Management – causes, effects and hypothetical solutions*, Proceedings of the IPC Conference, Conferința internațională a studenților doctoranzi, Sibiu, 2013

that the practice of extracurricular activities lead to academic performance at student level, but also at the level of university management.

A new stage of research is therefore imposed, a deeper one, with a new field of analysis of the problems of the university management. The second part of the thesis deals with the analysis of the functionality of the university management, focusing deliberately on extracurricular activities as a subsystem. The new research consists of real examples based on the comparative study Romania - Germany. The research is quantitative and has the purpose of understanding the functioning of the systems by knowing the components and the correlations between them: extracurricular activities - managerial performance. For instance, we can distinguish the necessity to achieve a new **general objective**, the analysis of the functioning of the university system and its management. The specific objectives mentioned in the box contribute to the overall reach of the general objective, being fully consistent with it.

In this step of the research, through chapter 4 entitled "Analysis elements regarding the functioning of the system", elements are followed which have not yet been addressed in the first part, respectively resources, transformation process, functions, system components, process outcomes and influence factors of the system.

This chapter captures elements that contribute to the increased performance, through the knowledge of the functioning of the university system, its management and its subsystems, input elements in the system such as resources, organisational culture and managerial performance, as well as environment factors, as influential elements of the system and performance in terms of system results.

According to the resulted data from the bibliographical studies, the attractiveness of the study location is influenced by the good reputation of the university, its facilities, the study offer, but also the extracurricular activities' offer and atmosphere of the respective university. These aspects influences the potential students' decision to choose a study location.¹⁰

With the aim of developing the specialty literature and addressing new research directions in the field, we have considered appropriate, that in chapter 5, "Extracurricular activities, components of the university educational system. Comparative research Romania – Germany with a role in highlighting their influence in achieving performance", to address specific cases of studies of the functioning of extracurricular activities, components of the university system. Thus, chapter 5 of the thesis consists of a pilot research of the comparative management between some universities in the north of Germany (University of Applied Sciences: Technology, Business and Design Wismar, University of Applied Sciences Flensburg and the University of Applied Sciences Kiel) and some universities in the Central Region of Romania ("1 December 1918" University from Alba Iulia, "Lucian Blaga" University from Sibiu and "Petru Maior" University from Târgu Mureş), the research being useful in determining the specific elements of the system functioning.

The research starts from the premise that for graduates of medium studies, the continuity of their education and implicitly choosing a university is influenced mainly by the curricular offer, university reputation, its facilities, but also the extracurricular offer, the atmosphere within the

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¹⁰ Heine C., Studienanfänger in den alten und neuen Ländern: Gründe der Hochschulwahl und Bewertungen der Hochschulregionen West- und Ostdeutschland, Hannover, 2008, p. 23, [accessed on 22.06.2015]. Available under: http://www.hochschulkampagne.de/dateien/HIS-Studienanfaenger-Hochschulwahl-und-bewertung.pdf

university and the attractively of the geographical region. Therefore, students satisfaction vis-àvis these factors is one component of the research needed to be studied, as the study results can be used in the university management, for adjusting the university offer, with direct implications on the potential students' decision in choosing the respective university.

The collected data with the aid of the questionnaire have been analysed with the aid of univariate and bivariate analysis. Capturing the similarities and difference between Germany and Romania in regards to extracurricular activities, recommendations have been formulated, which can contribute to a change management leading to performance.

Chapter 6 "Conclusions, recommendations, personal opinions regarding the systemic analysis of university management" demonstrates the achievement of the objectives and validates a part of the hypotheses. The chapter summarizes the results of the studies that have the purpose of knowing the functioning of the system, the university management process, its composing subsystems, organisational culture, specific and general external environment factors as well as the necessary resources, personal perspectives regarding the university organisation, the important role of knowledge management, both in the transformation process, as in obtaining the results.

The comparative management study within the universities in Northern Germany and the universities in the Central Region of Romania provide a better understanding of the functioning of the university system in general and of the extracurricular activities subsystem in particular, allowing the development of relevant recommendations. Moreover, in assessing the system functioning and to identify similarity or difference elements between the addressed cultures and as results of a wide bibliographical study, an own conceptual model of compared university management has been constituted, in which are included the conclusions drawn in the preceding paragraphs (Figure 6.1.)

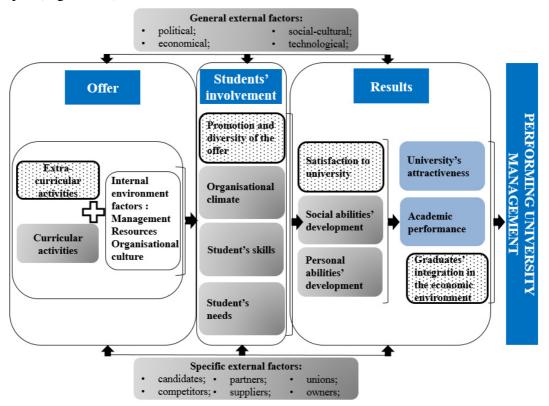


Figure 6.1. Comparative management model in the university field

THE THIRD PART. STUDIES REGARDING THE ROLE OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVIES IN INCREASING UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

Objectives

- comparison of the participation degree of students in leisure activities between the analysed universities from Romania;
- determination of the influence factors on students' academic performance and the attractiveness of the university;
- evaluation of the students' satisfaction regarding the university where they study;
- evaluation of the leisure services in the sports arena, indicating deficiencies of the sports offer and offer comparison;
- comparison of the extracurricular activities in the field of career guidance;
- comparison of the extracurricular activities in the field of recreation and culture;
- formulations of recommendations regarding the extracurricular activities offer in general and for the "Lucian Blaga" University in particular;
- establishment of certain rules of decision and influence on university management using the modelling technique;
- determination of the influence of extracurricular activities on managerial performance in general and on academic performance at student level;
- determination of the influence of extracurricular activities on study location attractiveness, elements of major importance on students' motivation;

The specific objectives outlined in the above box contribute to the reach of the general objective aimed at the analysis of the extracurricular activities offer in the studied universities and observing their influence on students' performance and university attractiveness, also with an effect on university management performance.

The objectives will be reached through a new study that starts from the premises that currently, from the studied bibliography arisen is the influence of university attractiveness, of academic performance of students and graduates integration in the economic environment on university management performance, hypothesis yet not proven. The new quantitative research from primary sources will demonstrate the stated correlations and will attest the influence of extracurricular activities on university management performance.¹¹

Hence, considering the previous study as a pilot study, in which only part of the assumptions were proven, but useful including the verification of the research methodology, the following research is more extensive, both in terms of the types of analysis, which offers a plus of quality to the information, but also in terms of quantity, which offers increased veracity of the

¹¹ Muscalu E., Dumitrașcu O., *Studies regarding the influence of extracurricular activities on the management of the university system*, The Best Romanian Management Studies 2013-2014, LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, 2015

results. Therefore, the questionnaire-based research from the third part of the thesis has been applied to a representative sample from Romania, within representative universities, respectively "Lucian Blaga" University from Sibiu, Politehnica University Timişoara, Babeş Bolyai University from Cluj, Academy of Economic Studies from Bucharest and the Bucharest Politehnica University, and focused on the study of correlations: extracurricular activities – study location attractiveness – academic performance – integration of graduates in the economic environment – performing management, presented in the model from figure 6.1.. The validation of this model contributes to the quality increase of university management by making recommendations in regards to the development at local universities and communities' level of extracurricular activities offer's diversification.

In chapter 7, entitled "Selective research based on the questionnaire" five university centres from Romania are analysed, in order to appreciate their extracurricular activities offer and observe the correlation between the offers and the university management performance.

In the research the answers of 728 respondents have been analysed from five universities in the country, for which studied have been the similarities and differences regarding the extracurricular activities, but also certain correlations between the extracurricular activities university performance of students - university attractiveness - graduates' integration in the economic environment – the development of certain skills and abilities. The role of the extended research is to demonstrate the generality of the studied phenomena and to analyse certain decision rules, relationships, and factors' influence on university management performance. In this research the students' university performance is captured and the factors that influence it, students' implication in extracurricular activities (in the field of sports, culture and recreation and vocational training), the correlation between them and the managerial performance. The data collected through the questionnaire method were analysed based on multivariate, univariate, and bivariate analysis, through the statistical software SPSS and by the modelling method with the aid of the Weka software, surprising similarities and differences between the analysed universities. The necessity of using the factorial analysis in validating the proposed model was tested with the help of the Bartlett test, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test, and the correlation matrix, justifying the use of this method, due to the existence of certain correlations between the variables.

At the end of part III, in chapter 8, "Conclusions, opinions and recommendations regarding the role of extracurricular activities in growth of university management performance" shows that the new research confirms the results of the pilot research completed in the second part of the thesis, in terms of students' low implication in extracurricular activities and has demonstrated the generality of the studied phenomena.

The new research complements the previous results with new information, allowing recommendations to be issued for all relevant factors, recommendations that may contribute to a change management leading to overall performance. The analysis conducted by the modelling technique, and by the factorial analysis, demonstrate certain important correlations, that validate the research hypotheses.

THE FORTH PART. FINAL CONCLUSIONS, OWN CONTRIBUTIONS, FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Chapter 9 "General synthesis of the final conclusions, own contributions and recommendations", presents the results of the studies, analyses and researches conducted in the previous chapters.

The researches presented in the previous chapters led to reaching the general objective, namely the analysis of extracurricular activities influence on university management performance, as well as the specific objectives. It is considered that through the obtained results the thesis brings contributions to the development of university management in general, and the extracurricular activities management in particular. In terms of scientific endeavour, the paper used an ensemble of techniques and research methods, which gives it originality, while also ensuring the accuracy in interpreting the results. In this sense the current state of scientific knowledge in the field of university management, the functioning of the university management system was analysed, through a study the extracurricular activities' offer was compared between universities from the Northern Region of Germany and those from the Central Region of Romania, in order to highlight the similarities or differences and also issue recommendations meant to optimize the system. As an extension of the pilot research, a second analysis of the extracurricular activities offer was elaborated in representative Romanian universities, in which studied through various methods was their influence on students' performance, graduates' integration in the economic environment and the attractiveness of the university, with effects on the university management performance.

The research allowed the **validation of the following hypotheses:**

• The involvement in extracurricular activities depends on the university offer, its promotion and the implication of university management;

The involvement in extracurricular activities is in general lower for the Romanian students than for the German ones, the offer's attractiveness for such activities being higher in the German universities. A direct relationship between the attractiveness, diversity, extracurricular activities offer's promotion and students' involvement in such activities can be noticed also within the analysed Romanian universities. The lack of students' involvement in extracurricular activities is mainly due to their lack on information and unappealing offer.

• The implication in extracurricular activities determine an increase of the study location attractiveness, and implicitly an increase in the demand for university education;

A direct influence can be noticed of students' involvement on university attractiveness, while also increasing their satisfaction towards the university.

The analysis through the modelling technique has facilitated the obtaining of the conclusion that leisure opportunities are determined by the offer in the field of culture and recreation and the sports activities' offer, aspects that influence in turn the university's attractiveness. In addition, from various bibliographical sources consulted the influence of other factors emerges, the fact that the choice of a study location depends in general by the study offer,

university reputation and attractiveness, its facilities, distance from home, extracurricular offer, university atmosphere and study tuition.¹²

• The involvement in extracurricular activities brings advantages to students, both socially and personally and aids their integration into the socio-economic environment, integration with a positive role on the quality of the study degree;

Especially, the Romanian students consider that their participation in extracurricular activities in the field of vocational training develops new skills both socially and personally, that help them to integrate in the economic environment.

Following the factorial analysis regarding the influence of the involvement in extracurricular activities, demonstrated was that they aid to the development of certain skills and abilities, with beneficial effects on graduates' integration in the economic environment and their university performance.

• University management is more effortless, more performing, more efficient and effective when it is carried out in an environment in which the culture of student involvement in extracurricular activities is developed;

Starting from the opinions of different authors in the field and taking into account the current regulations, university management performance depends on infrastructure, institutional capacity, university relations with the economic environment, national and international university recognition, its collaboration with other universities through partnerships, employees motivation, financial potential, development strategy, organisational climate, leadership training of management, graduates integration on the job market, capacity to attract new students, involvement in student problems, the relationship with graduates, grants offered, teaching process and its focus on the student, the scientific and pedagogical training of the professors, respectively the skills, results and evaluation of the student, international compatibility of the curricula, didactical means, communication between professor and student, extracurricular programs, recognition and performance of staff, the grants acquired and the publications with an impact factor.¹³

It is therefore noticed that the specialty literature induces, but does not demonstrate the existence of the correlation between the management performance and students' involvement culture in extracurricular activities, hypothesis later demonstrated by us through the mentioned methods.

• The involvement in extracurricular activities increases the academic performance of students;

Validated by the first factorial analysis was the fact that extracurricular activities in the field of vocational training, in the sports and recreation field positively influence students university performance, dismounting the many times circulated hypotheses, that recreational activities affect academic results.

¹³ Ilie M., *Culturi organizaționale în spațiul universitar românesc, Cultura Schimbării Organizaționale*, [accessed on 22.06.2015]. Available under: http://cosur.rcsedu.info/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=11&Itemid=15

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¹² Heine C., Studienanfänger in den alten und neuen Ländern: Gründe der Hochschulwahl und Bewertungen der Hochschulregionen West- und Ostdeutschland, Hannover, 2008, p. 23, [accessed on 22.06.2015]. Available under: http://www.hochschulkampagne.de/dateien/HIS-Studienanfaenger-Hochschulwahl-und-bewertung.pdf

Starting from the analysis through the modelling technique it has been shown that the integration in the business environment and student community can be influenced by the communication between students and can foster involvement in student organisations, with influences on students' university performance.

• Managerial performance increases with increasing student involvement in extracurricular activities:

According to various specialty papers in the field, the university management performance depends among other factors, on the involvement of the teaching staff in activities with the students, respectively in extracurricular activities¹⁴, national and international recognition of the university, graduates insertion on the labour market, potential students attraction or extracurricular programs.¹⁵ All these assertions were demonstrated in the carried out research.

• The organisational culture influences the involvement in extracurricular activities;

The German students participate in student organisations, in volunteering activities or student events, less, in comparison with the Romanian ones. The involvement in extracurricular activities can depend on the organisational culture, but also on the national one, the Romanian students belonging to the collectivist culture according to Hofstede's approach, they want to participate in more group activities, and the Germans belonging to the individualistic culture, participate less in such activities.

Main conclusions and personal opinions drawn across the entire research refer to:

- The concerns in the analysed field through the presented paper are somewhat limited, pointing out even a vacuum of knowledge due to a lack of addressing (especially in the Romanian scientific researches), of some issues of university management, referring here mainly on its performance and the correlations between extracurricular activities student university performance their motivation and satisfaction study offer/demand university attractiveness– university management performance.
- In Romania, the concerns in this field are focused in general on the study of higher education demand and supply and university marketing, to which added are the studies referring to the students' professional concerns and expectations, candidate profile and students' perception regarding different aspects of the educational process (in particular curricular).
- Resulting from the study is the importance of the managerial system, managerial techniques and methods in reaching managerial performance in universities, these being key elements in the functioning of the organisation, together with the decision-making, information and organisational system.
- The comparison method is not very easy to apply, but allows outstanding results to be obtained, highlighting similarities or differences between the studied organisations, identifying the issues necessary to be studied, facilitating the researcher to formulate relevant recommendations, in our case with the purpose of improving students'

¹⁵ Ilie M., *Culturi organizaționale în spațiul universitar românesc, Cultura Schimbării Organizaționale*, [accessed on 22.06.2015]. Available under:http://cosur.rcsedu.info/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=11&Itemid=15

¹⁴ Nica P., ş.a., *Managementul resurselor umane*, Unitatea Executivă pentru Finanțarea Învățământului Superior, a Cercetării, Dezvoltării și Inovării, București, 2011, p. 84

involvement in extracurricular activities with beneficial effects on university performance, satisfaction, graduate integration in the economic environment and university's attractiveness.

- The pilot comparative management research has captured the influence of extracurricular and curricular activities, together with internal environment factors (resources, management, organisational culture) on students' involvement in extracurricular activities, which is in turn influenced by the promotion and diversity of such activities offer, organisational climate and the skills and needs of students. All these aspects lead under the influence of general external factors (political, economic, socio-cultural, unions, partnerships, suppliers etc.) to certain outcome variables, respectively students' satisfaction towards the university, develop certain social, organisational, leadership skills and abilities, useful both personally and professionally. These determine the university attractiveness, students' academic performance and their integration in the economic environment, variables which determine managerial performance. All these influences have been represented through the proposed comparative management model.
- All these aspects lead under the influence of external factors (political, economic, socio-cultural, technologic and international) and of those specific external (candidates, competitors, unions, partnerships, suppliers etc.) to certain result variables, respectively students' satisfaction towards the university, development of certain social, organisational, leadership skills and abilities, useful both personally and professionally. These determine the university's attractiveness, students' academic performance and their integration in the economic environment, variables that determine managerial performance. All these influences have been represented through the comparative management model proposed.
- Even though the generality of the phenomena has been captured in the pilot research, with the purpose of improving the research results, both qualitative and quantitative, a second research was conducted, extended at national level, in which the answers from 728 respondents from five Romanian universities were analysed. Based on the collected data, with the aid of the univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis, factorial analysis and the modelling technique various correlations have emerged which demonstrate unequivocally the influence of extracurricular activities on students' university performance, their integration in the economic environment, university's attractiveness and implicitly on university management performance.
- After applying the factorial analysis with regards to the influence on extracurricular
 activities' involvement, it was demonstrated that these help develop and improve certain
 transversal skills and abilities, such as leadership skills, time management, team spirit,
 organisational skills, communication skills, personal and professional training of the
 involved students, integration in the academic community and the business environment,
 influencing thus their academic performance with beneficial effects on graduates
 integration in the economic environment.
- Through the factorial analysis of the influence factors on university performance of students, it was validated the fact that extracurricular activities in the field of vocational training, the field of sports and recreation positively influence students' university performance, favouring their integration in the economic environment. Students'

university performance can also be influenced by the balance between theory and practice, facilities and teaching methods of teachers, courses interest and enthusiasm, fatigue, courses atmosphere and the capacity to concentrate.

- University's attractiveness is influenced by the sport activities' offer and the offer in the cultural and recreational field, aspect demonstrated through the modelling technique.
- The comparative management model, on the basis of which the modelling technique and the factorial technique were used has facilitated the determination of certain correlations in regards to the extracurricular activities' offer students' involvement in extracurricular activities students' necessities and skills organisational climate promotion and diversification of the extracurricular activities' offer satisfaction towards the university development of skills personally and professionally university's attractiveness graduates' integration in the economic environment academic performance university management performance, demonstrating that it is particularly useful.

Chapter 10. Summary of original contributions and future research directions

10.1. Original contributions

Following this research, we find as relevant, several original contributions in this field, worthwhile mentioning are the following:

- Formulation of personal opinions regarding the existing problems in the specialty literature
 in the concerned field, concepts' definitions and functionality of the university system and
 consequently formulating opinions regarding the definitions' completion of certain
 concepts, such as university management, comparative management, extracurricular
 activities' classification, university management performance indicators;
- Applying causal methods in effects' and causes' explanations for problems identified in the current state of knowledge and identification of objectives and means of solving them;
- Formulation of recommendations regarding the development of specialty literature by extending studies in the field of university management, with explicit targeting to areas less explored, for example, the correlation between extracurricular activities students' performance university's attractiveness university management performance;
- Highlighting knowledge management's involvement in university management;
- Using the comparison as a study method in university management, applied to the concrete case of Germany-Romania, which gives the research a special originality, since the subject and target group studied, have not been addressed so far in this manner;
- Specification of the framing characteristics of comparative research in typology, objectives and steps outlined in the literature, as well as highlighting relationships between research results and Hofstede's approach;
- Approach of ethnocentric study type (the investigation applied in Germany is applied in a similar standardized way also in Romania), aiming to check the theory once valid in the first analysed culture (Germany) also on the culture analysed in the next step (Romania);
- Partially polycentric approach of the study, which complements the ethnocentric study
 mentioned, with the emphasis on what is specific and not similar. Thereby, the comparative
 study character is obvious as it seeks to identify differences and similarities between the
 two cultures and also the universality elements;

- Development of an original conceptual model of comparative university management, which outlines the extracurricular activities' influence on university management performance and allows the study of different correlations highlighted and analysed in the thesis:
- Formulation and demonstration of certain influence relations between extracurricular activities, academic performance and university's attractiveness, with effects on university management performance, relations that validate the proposed model. Thus, the influence of extracurricular activities on university management performance is observed;
- Validation of the model proposed by means of the factorial analysis, a successive phase to the application need testing through Bartlett test, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test and correlation matrix, justifying the use of this method, through the existence of certain correlations between variables;
- Use of Scree Plot analysis that highlights the distribution of the studied factors and the existence of correlations;
- Use of modelling technique in order to establish specific decision rules and influences from the model. For each factor of the components from the proposed model decision rules and decision trees are elaborated by means of Weka software;
- Formulation of recommendations on improving the attractiveness and promotion of the extracurricular activities' offer, with effects on students' satisfaction, their performance and the university's attractiveness and image;
- The large volume of undertaken research (high number of respondents) and the use of a diverse research typology, appropriate to the research topic approached.

10.2. Exploitation of the research results

Some of the original contributions of the thesis led to the development of scientific papers presented at conferences or published in various prestigious journals, books and conferences specific publications. From the papers' list presented below it can be observed that out of 16 scientific papers elaborated in the field of the PhD thesis, a paper is published in an **ISI journal** with impact factor, one work is classified in the **ISI** category, one in **ISI Proceedings**, six papers are indexed in international databases (BDI), three papers are published or are being published as book chapters of prestigious international publishing houses and other 4 papers are published in various other volumes of national and international conferences.

In terms of research practicality, its results will be disseminated among stakeholders from the university field but also among other persons and interested institutions in order to promote interest for extracurricular activities, and to develop and support these types of activities, the impact being obvious economically and socially beneficial. With a purpose of an urgent implementation of the suggestions made in this research and thus proving the high revaluation potential of the thesis' results, we propose the following steps:

- development of actions and activities plans, at least at the level of the analysed universities;
- setting priorities for the proposed activities;
- development of the activities proposed in the plan in the form of projects proposals;
- identification of means, funding (including grants) and generally interested stakeholders in the implementation of these projects.

10.3. Future research directions

As future research directions we can distinguish the development of studies in the field of general management, in order to complement the specialty literature. This can be achieved through a greater concern of all interested factors in this field by raising awareness of all stakeholders on the importance of university management. It requires that scientific works, on the one hand have to clarify terminology in the field, and on the other hand have to be focused on correlations between general management - extracurricular activities' management - university management.

In order to develop the specialty literature in this field stands out the need to elaborate studies on the functionality of the university system, with examples and case studies on representative institutions of higher education, in which to shape best practice models.

The development of specialty literature in this field and the elaboration of case studies as examples of good practice will have positive effects in increasing the university management performance, motivation of university staff, students' contentment, improving students' academic results and university's reputation. Thus, organisational culture will also develop.

As future research direction focused strictly on extracurricular activities noted is the need to further study the influence of extracurricular activities on performance management and the identification of the influence of related determinants factors. As we have already outlined the hypothesis through which the factors mentioned present a synergist character, this statement remains to be demonstrated in a later stage of research.

An extension of the comparative management research on a more representative sample at the European level would be ideal. In this research, those factors could be more intense studied. One of the most important and interesting factor as a study element is the culture, so that obtaining of correlations between this and managerial performance in the academic field, would enrich the specialty literature in the field of comparative management.

In order to improve the quality of extracurricular activities it is recommended repeating the satisfaction studies at a certain time (six-month assessments), aimed at meeting the needs of students by improving the offer, increasing its attractiveness and thus improving the university's image, favouring attracting good students, thereby causing an increase in the average academic performance of the university.

The modelling technique and factorial analysis are particularly appreciated by the important specialty publications, therefore, their use on various topics is a necessity and a priority, the results of their application being noted through their variety and exactness in the interpretation mode.

In line with those set out above and in close correlation with the theme of the thesis, as a continuance of it, developing a statistical - mathematical model that should prove through mathematical relationships the correlations between extracurricular activities – academic performance of students - motivation to study – students' satisfaction – university's attractiveness – graduates' integration in the economic environment - university management performance would be particularly useful and interesting, representing an additional analytical tool, along with those already used.

* * *

As a summary of the items listed in the conclusive chapter, it appears that the approached theme is of high topicality and importance and, by association of the analysed influence factors

and by various methods used, it is very original, being one of the first scientific approaches in this field. We hope that through this complex scientific approach we have proved unequivocally the important role of higher education in general in the development of society and in particular, the beneficial effect of extracurricular activities on the university management performance growth, thus contributing to the development of higher education as a mainstay in terms of human resources' training and their integration in the economic space and society.

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