

CONTENT

SUMMARY	1
LIST OF TABLES.....	4
LIST OF FIGURES	5
INTRODUCTION	7
CHAPTER 1. HUMAN CAPITAL - A DETERMINING FACTOR OF TEAM PERFORMANCE.....	14
1.1. DEFINITION AND IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN CAPITAL IN BASKETBALL AND BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS	14
1.2. HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT – AN ESSENTIAL PROCESS IN BASKETBALL AND BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS	18
1.3. VALUING HUMAN CAPITAL THROUGH THE TEAM.....	22
1.3.1. <i>Teamwork as a means of developing human capital.....</i>	22
1.3.2. <i>Characteristics of teamwork.....</i>	23
1.3.3. <i>Types of teams in organizations</i>	25
1.3.4. <i>Analysis of organizational structures – a comparative approach between business and basketball organizations</i>	27
SUMMARY	31
CHAPTER 2. THE IMPACT OF THE LEADER ON HUMAN CAPITAL AND TEAM PERFORMANCE.....	33
2.1. THE LEADERSHIP PROCESS AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE: AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH	33
2.2. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LEADER IN INFLUENCING TEAM ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR.....	34
2.3. EMPLOYEE/PLAYER MOTIVATION AS A DETERMINING ELEMENT IN INCREASING PERFORMANCE	36
2.4. MANAGING CONFLICTS IN ORGANIZATIONS: THE LEADER'S CONTRIBUTION TO INCREASING PERFORMANCE	40
2.5. ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF THE LEADER IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN CAPITAL ..	43
2.6. THE ROLE OF THE LEADER IN TEAM FORMATION	44

SUMMARY	46
CHAPTER 3. HUMAN CAPITAL SELECTION - A COMPARATIVE APPROACH BETWEEN BUSINESS AND BASKETBALL ORGANIZATIONS	48
3.1. THE ROLE OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY	49
3.2. THE INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY ON TEAM PERFORMANCE	51
3.3. THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT – FROM A SUPPORT ROLE TO A STRATEGIC ONE	53
3.4. PLANNING THE NEED FOR HUMAN CAPITAL – AN IMPORTANT STEP FOR SELECTION.	55
3.5. IDENTIFYING CANDIDATES.....	57
3.6. THE HUMAN CAPITAL SELECTION PROCESS.....	58
3.7. ORIENTATION, INDUCTION AND INTEGRATION OF NEW EMPLOYEES/PLAYERS INTO THE ORGANIZATION.....	63
3.8. ASSESSMENT OF SELECTED EMPLOYEES/PLAYERS – PREMISES TO ENSURE TEAM PERFORMANCE	65
3.9. THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE LEADER IN THE SELECTION, ORIENTATION, INDUCTION AND INTEGRATION OF HUMAN CAPITAL PROCESSES.....	66
SUMMARY	67
CHAPTER 4. TEAM PERFORMANCE – A NECESSITY FOR BASKETBALL AND BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS	69
4.1. DEFINING TEAM PERFORMANCE IN BUSINESS AND BASKETBALL	69
4.2. THE IMPORTANCE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – A COMPARATIVE PROCESS APPROACH IN BUSINESS AND BASKETBALL ORGANIZATIONS.....	71
4.3. ALIGNING TEAM PERFORMANCE AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL.....	75
4.4. TOOLS FOR MEASURING TEAM PERFORMANCE.....	77
SUMMARY	80
CHAPTER 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	82
5.1. AIM, OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	82
5.2. RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY, TYPE AND STRATEGY	82
5.3. ESTABLISHING VARIABLES, FORMULATING RESEARCH HYPOTHESES AND THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL	83
5.4. TIME HORIZON	90

5.5. SAMPLING STRATEGY.....	90
5.6. DATA COLLECTION METHOD.....	92
5.7. QUESTIONNAIRE.....	92
5.8. STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS METHODS.....	95
5.9. METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS.....	95
SUMMARY.....	96

CHAPTER 6. DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS 97

6.1. DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE OF RESPONDENTS.....	97
6.2. ASSESSING THE INTERNAL CONSISTENCY OF THE ITEMS USING CRONBACH'S ALPHA COEFFICIENT.....	100
6.3. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ANALYSIS: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, COEFFICIENTS OF VARIATION AND SYMMETRY.....	101
6.4. INFERENCE STATISTICS ANALYSIS: T-TEST, KAISER-MEYER-OLKIN TEST, FACTOR ANALYSIS.....	104
6.5. RESPONSE FREQUENCY: IMPACT OF HUMAN CAPITAL SELECTION PROCESS ACTIVITIES ON TEAM PERFORMANCE.....	110
6.6. PEARSON COEFFICIENT: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADER INVOLVEMENT AND TEAM PERFORMANCE.....	112
6.7. IDENTIFYING BEST PRACTICES IN HUMAN CAPITAL SELECTION, BASED ON THE PREFERENCES OF THE RESPONDENTS.....	116
6.8. THE CRITERIA ON WHICH THE QUALITY OF THE SELECTION OF HUMAN CAPITAL DEPENDS, BASED ON THE PREFERENCES OF THE RESPONDENTS.....	117
SUMMARY.....	122

CHAPTER 7. INTERPRETATION OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OPTIMIZING THE HUMAN CAPITAL SELECTION PROCESS 124

7.1. THE RELATIONSHIP TYPE BETWEEN HUMAN CAPITAL SELECTION AND TEAM PERFORMANCE.....	124
7.2. HUMAN CAPITAL SELECTION PROCESS ACTIVITIES WITH THE GREATEST IMPACT ON TEAM PERFORMANCE.....	126
7.3. DETERMINING LEADER INVOLVEMENT IN THE HUMAN CAPITAL SELECTION PROCESS AND IN ENSURING TEAM PERFORMANCE.....	127
7.4. EVALUATION OF BEST PRACTICE PROPOSALS REGARDING HUMAN CAPITAL SELECTION.....	129

7.5. HIGHLIGHTING THE CRITERIA ON WHICH THE QUALITY OF HUMAN CAPITAL SELECTION DEPENDS	130
SUMMARY	131
CHAPTER 8. BEST PRACTICE GUIDE FOR THE SELECTION OF HUMAN CAPITAL IN BASKETBALL AND BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS.....	133
8.1. PROPOSAL FOR ORGANIZING THE SELECTION PROCESS WITHIN BASKETBALL AND BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS	133
8.2. BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES IN THE HUMAN CAPITAL SELECTION PROCESS APPLICABLE IN BASKETBALL AND BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS	140
FINAL CONCLUSIONS.....	144
LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF STUDY	154
CAPITALIZING OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS	156
REFERENCES	158
APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW FORM.....	179
APPENDIX 2: SCOUTING FORM.....	180
APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE.....	182

Keywords: human capital selection; leader impact; team performance.

SUMMARY



Over time, the functioning and progress of organizations, whether in the field of business or basketball, have been constantly influenced by globalization and technological advancement. Thus, ensuring organizational performance has become an increasingly complex and demanding process. Organizations, regardless of the field, have been affected in various ways, including human capital (e.g., opening labor markets globally, increasing labor market turnover, etc.), financial aspects (e.g., the possibility of opening locations in regions with lower labor costs) and technological domains (e.g., access to new technologies), among others. Consequently, organizational processes have undergone a series of changes. One of these processes, addressed in this thesis, is candidate selection, which has become increasingly challenging.

The starting point of the doctoral thesis, titled “Enhancing Team Performance Through Optimization of Human Capital Selection. A Comparative Approach of Basketball Team and Companies Strategies”, lies in the recognition that, in a context characterized by increased labor market volatility, the process of selecting suitable candidates is becoming increasingly complex and challenging. At the same time, the (internal) trend of the unprecedented rise in the importance of the team in organizational management adds new dimensions (and/or possible constraints) to this process. Consequently, **the relationship between the selection process and team performance assumes a key role**, with strategic significance, in ensuring organizational success. **This relationship is the focal point of this thesis**, through which I also investigated the importance of the leader in enhancing team performance - from the perspective of their involvement, both in the process of candidate analysis and selection, and in ensuring team performance.

Numerous studies in the specialized literature have examined the connection between human capital selection and team performance. However, there is a noticeable lack of comparative studies that analyze how organizations in basketball and business sectors select their personnel. Such studies are necessary because they could help identify best practices that can be transferred from one field to another. Additionally, these studies could reveal other forms of cooperation between the two types of organizations, beyond the traditional promotion/sponsorship. Therefore, in this thesis I proposed a comparative approach to extend existing knowledge and identify similarities and/or differences in the human capital selection approaches in these two fields. Through this I aimed to make a valuable contribution to understanding and optimizing selection practices in basketball and business organizations.

This research represents **a contribution to the specialized literature**, as I focused on a new topic in the context of current studies. Consistent research has been conducted in the literature on the relationship between human capital selection and team performance, but there has not been sufficient comparative analysis of how this relationship manifests in organizations from different fields. Through this study, I aimed to cover a part of this gap. Compared to existing research, I centered my research on the complex dynamics of the human capital selection process and its impact on

organizational performance in general and on teams in particular, both in basketball sports organizations and in business organizations. Moreover, I identified and explored essential aspects such as the criteria for planning human capital needs, the duration of analysis and decision-making, the quality of selection decisions and the leader's involvement in the selection process. I addressed these aspects in the context of previous research and I consider them important for understanding and improving the personnel selection process, viewed as a precursor to performance.

Therefore, through this doctoral thesis I tried to make a **distinct contribution to the specialized literature** by providing a comparative analysis of the human capital selection process in basketball and business organizations, thus expanding the specialized literature and facilitating knowledge exchange between the two fields. This approach can offer valuable insights for improving performance in both contexts.

Starting from the identified **managerial problem**, namely the increasing difficulty faced by basketball and business organizations in finding suitable individuals for various positions or teams, the fundamental aim of my work was to identify solutions for optimizing the human capital selection process in a way that leads to improved team performance. Thus, I was able to make a **contribution to solving a contemporary problem** frequently encountered by coaches and managers in basketball and business organizations: selecting the right (competent and high-performing) candidates for different positions, teams and organizations.

I developed the topic along three main coordinates, as follows:

I. Human capital selection

Aligned with the strategic perspective that the research topic demands, the approach to human capital selection aimed to investigate several aspects, including: a) the importance of human capital—in both basketball and business organizations—for achieving performance; b) the need for continuous development of human capital to ensure performance over time; c) valuing human capital through the team; d) important variables in planning human capital needs; e) challenges in identifying candidates; f) particularities regarding the selection process in basketball and business organizations; g) evaluation of selected employees/players. The main contributions include: synthesizing historical approaches to human capital management within organizations, highlighting the potential of leveraging human capital through the team and making a comparison between the organizational structures specific to the two researched fields.

II. The (moderating) role of the leader

Investigating how the leader intervenes both in the candidate analysis and selection process and in ensuring team performance involved addressing topics such as: a) the leader's involvement in the selection process of new employees/players (by establishing selection criteria, participating in interviews and making selection decisions); b) ensuring the effectiveness of orientation, induction and integration processes by defining team responsibilities for each process; c) the leader's influence on the attitude and motivation of employees/players; d) the leader's role in managing conflicts within the organization/team; e) the importance of the leader in leveraging the potential of human capital; f) the leader's contribution to transforming individual performance into team performance. The main contributions focus on: highlighting activities through which the leader can influence attitude and motivation by setting objectives, ensuring fairness and designing job roles; emphasizing the importance of

constantly assessing the motivation level of employees/players and adopting appropriate measures in case of conflicts.

III. Enhancing team performance

As a measure to validate the selection process (and the leader's role alike), team performance represents a strategic target to which all individual and collective efforts are subordinated. Consequently, my analysis involved addressing topics such as: a) the approach to performance management—as a means of improving team results (in the two researched fields); b) aligning team performance with organizational performance—from the perspective of the two types of organizations; c) methods for measuring team performance, applicable in both researched fields. The main contributions include: emphasizing the importance of adopting a strategic approach to improve team performance; highlighting that team performance can be considered as a moving target for organizations; highlighting indicators and tools for performance analysis that can be applied in a similar way in the two areas researched.

I carried out the scientific approach through quantitative research, using a questionnaire-based survey for data collection. The sample included, on one hand, head basketball coaches who have served in this capacity over the past five years at a basketball club participating in the Romanian National Basketball League and on the other hand, managers from large companies (with over 250 employees) in the automotive industry, operating in the Romanian market and who have sponsored basketball clubs participating in the Romanian National Basketball League in the past five years. I aimed to identify: the activities within the human capital selection process that can be optimized to enhance team performance; the methods to ensure the quality of selection decisions; the involvement of the leader in the human capital selection process and in ensuring performance; the best practices that could be transferred from one field to another. I outlined these aspects in the form of a best practice guide, resulting from the quantitative research I conducted.

The data analysis methods I used in this research included descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, coefficients of variation, data skewness) and inferential statistics (KMO test, factor analysis, Pearson correlation coefficient, Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient, T-Test for influence). Among the key findings of this research, I noted the following: between human capital selection and team performance there is a moderate positive correlation (0.465); leader involvement is strongly associated with human capital selection (0.830) and team performance (0.796); a very strong correlation (0.88) was found between 'quality of selection decision' and team effectiveness, while a weak correlation (0.197 and 0.294, respectively) was found between "quality of selection decision" and team effectiveness on the one hand and satisfaction on the other hand; the interview is considered the most important analysis method in both fields; and the training of interviewers is the most important activity in the human capital selection process.

The thesis is composed of eight chapters, with the final part dedicated to the final conclusions, limitations and future directions of study, as well as the utilization of personal results. The research results of this thesis can be considered important for optimizing processes within organizations in the two researched fields. Ultimately, the results I obtained through the conducted research may have implications for future comparative studies between the two studied fields.