



Universitatea "Lucian Blaga" din Sibiu

ULBS



**SIBIU INSTITUTE FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF
DOCTORAL AND POST-DOCTORAL STUDIES**

Doctoral field: MANAGEMENT

**CONTRIBUTIONS ON METHODS OF USING
SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS IN
LIBRARY MANAGEMENT**

SUMMARY OF THE PHD THESIS

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KEYWORDS

Performance indicators, public libraries, library statistics, library management, performance diagnosis, information society, national library system, professional training.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SNB	National Library System
INS	National Institute of Statistics
OUG	Government Emergency Ordinance
IT&C	Information and Communication Technology
ANBPR	"National Association of Librarians and Public Libraries from Romania"
LibEcon	It represents the acronym of the <i>Library statistics for international benchmarking and advocacy project</i> , carried out between 2001 and 2005 under the coordination of the European Commission
UE	European Commission
AELS	European Free Trade Association
DIGINIFOS	Program of Directorate General XIII – Telecommunications, IT Industries and Innovation
IFLA	„International Federation of Libraries Association”
UNESCO	„United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization”
CUTL 1	The form for collecting statistical data from libraries developed and used by the National Institute of Statistics
PROBIP 2000	National Romanian Performance Program in Public Libraries
BIBLIONET	Modernization project through the use of IT&C of public libraries in Romania, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, carried out in the period 2009-2014.
RSA	Statistical Activity Report – Part of the statistical report collected by ANBPR
RSU	Statistical Usage Report – Part of the statistical report collected by ANBPR
CALIMERA	The CALIMERA Guidelines – are a series of documents developed by the European Commission under FP6 Information Society Technologies intended for the integration of IT&C in the activity of museums, libraries and other cultural institutions.
IVP	Performance question
BSC	Balanced Score Card
CAF	The Common Self-Assessment Framework - of the Mode of Operation of Public Institutions
UB	Bibliographic units or volumes



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I. JUSTIFICATION AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Libraries are at the foundation of the most profound changes that people and societies experience, as evidenced by their millennial existence. The world is constantly changing, the history of society can be perceived as a continuous transition in a programmed process, as if written in its DNA. This evolution includes various periods that are traversed at a slower or faster pace. At the micro level these periods of accelerated development are perceived as periods of transition. The library cannot be excluded from these stages, it faithfully reflects the episodes that the world goes through.

In the transitional periods of a society, when, compared to the previous period, time seems to contract and events take on a different dynamic, when new trends intertwine with old ones, libraries must be supported, because abandoning them would lead to long-term negative experiences at the social level. I believe that it is precisely the dynamism of libraries in transitional periods that can make the difference, through the way they support science and culture, alongside society, in their processes of change.

Under the influence of the knowledge-based society and the expansion of information sources, less is read at the national level, the budgets of public libraries are getting smaller every year, there is no national strategy, the planning of resources and services is increasingly more difficult, the general problems of these institutions are on the last points of the decision-makers agenda and sometimes even seem to be bothersome to them.

The theme addressed in this doctoral thesis is shaped by the growing interest in evaluating the services that the public library constantly carries out, or those activities that it implements for the first time, so that their managers can make decisions that lead to a increasing their efficiency and effectiveness.

From the managers desire to prove or amplify the usefulness of library services, efforts are made to integrate performance indicators into the managerial activity that would validate both them and the financing institutions efficiency, especially since the appearance of the

Internet and the services that are based it has led to a competitive environment for information and documentation institutions and libraries in particular.

The purpose of this paper is to present, based on documentation and research, considerations on the integration of a set of performance indicators in Romanian public libraries correlated with the evolution of their legislative, financing and management framework.

By interpreting the data from this paper, a series of information is obtained about how the performance indicators are integrated into the activity of a library, in the management plan, so as to allow the analysis of activities and services, and the manager can take timely decisions that leads to efficiency and effectiveness.

Some of the information gathered during research and data processing has been included in articles and presentations at professional meetings. Given the interest in them, the dissemination of these studies will continue. Part of the information obtained during the documentation and research of this work has already been included in various presentations and articles.

II. OBJECTIVES

Hypothesis – There is no set of specific performance indicators in Romanian public libraries.

Particularly important component of the management aimed at checking/evaluating the activity that the public library carries out through the services is not adapted to the activity/services that the institution carries out at this stage of operation. There is quite a bit of literature dedicated to performance measurement and especially in the case of the integration of performance indicators specific to libraries worldwide. They appeared in the form of a standard, more like a result of the standard on library statistics, a standard that appeared in the mid-60s at the initiative of UNESCO. In order to establish a reference system regarding the performance indicators specific to the library activity in the case of our country in relation to the degree of development of the library system, we will use a questionnaire (Appendix 1).

The general objective – increasing the management efficiency of Romanian libraries by adopting a performance evaluation system. Taking into account the

requirements of the legislation in force, it is very important to establish a set of performance indicators to improve decision-making. The specific objectives of the study are the following:

Specific objective 1: Establish the library manager experience.

Hypothesis: In Romanian libraries there is not enough experience in the correlation between the management program and the performance indicators used.

Specific objective 2: Classification of a library according to the population served according to SR ISO 2.786: 2006.

Hypothesis: In Romania, libraries are not included in library families.

Specific objective 3: The identification and acceptance by the managerial community of Romanian libraries, of a group, of performance evaluation indicators leading to the improvement of the institution's activities and visibility.

Hypothesis: Managers use in reports a reduced set of indicators and those regarding the traditional library activity.

Specific objective 4: Establishing a typology of performance indicators that can be implemented in Romanian libraries.

Hypothesis: The performance indicators identified in the PROPBIP Program and in the IFLA standards do not coincide from the point of view of framing.

Specific objective 5: Identify the influence of the external environment on performance indicators and how they are used in annual reports.

Hypothesis: A SWOT analysis is required in the annual reports that the managers have to present to the credit authority, which may be insufficient.

Specific objective 6: Identifying the optimal use of the proposed indicators, in correlation with the objectives proposed in the management project.

Hypothesis: Performance indicators are often used in reports because it is required by law, hence some inconsistencies with the management program appear.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research activity for the realization of the doctoral thesis envisages two plans: one theoretical and one practical. The theoretical research is included in the first part of the thesis and is based on the documentation necessary for the scientific foundation of the topic as well as familiarizing the reader with the chosen subject. It is based on the study of the specialized bibliography in both printed and electronic format, consisting of books, periodicals, studies and articles. Regarding access to electronic publications, the possibility offered by "Lucian Blaga" Sibiu University to search for information on the national platform ANELIS PLUS was used.

Bernard Marr believes that in applying the research methods to collect the necessary data we will follow the following principles:

- What data do we need to define an information?
- Are we getting the data in a useful/correct format?
- If we have not obtained data in a useful/correct format, what is the optimal way to obtain this data?

This work aims to contribute to the development of library performances and to the identification of managerial tools that allow the multifaceted analysis of the services that the public library offers to the community. The way in which these resources are allocated and the impact that the analyzed service has on the community can lead to its continuation, its efficiency or its abandonment. This can be achieved through the use of performance indicators, to be included and assumed in the management strategies of the libraries.

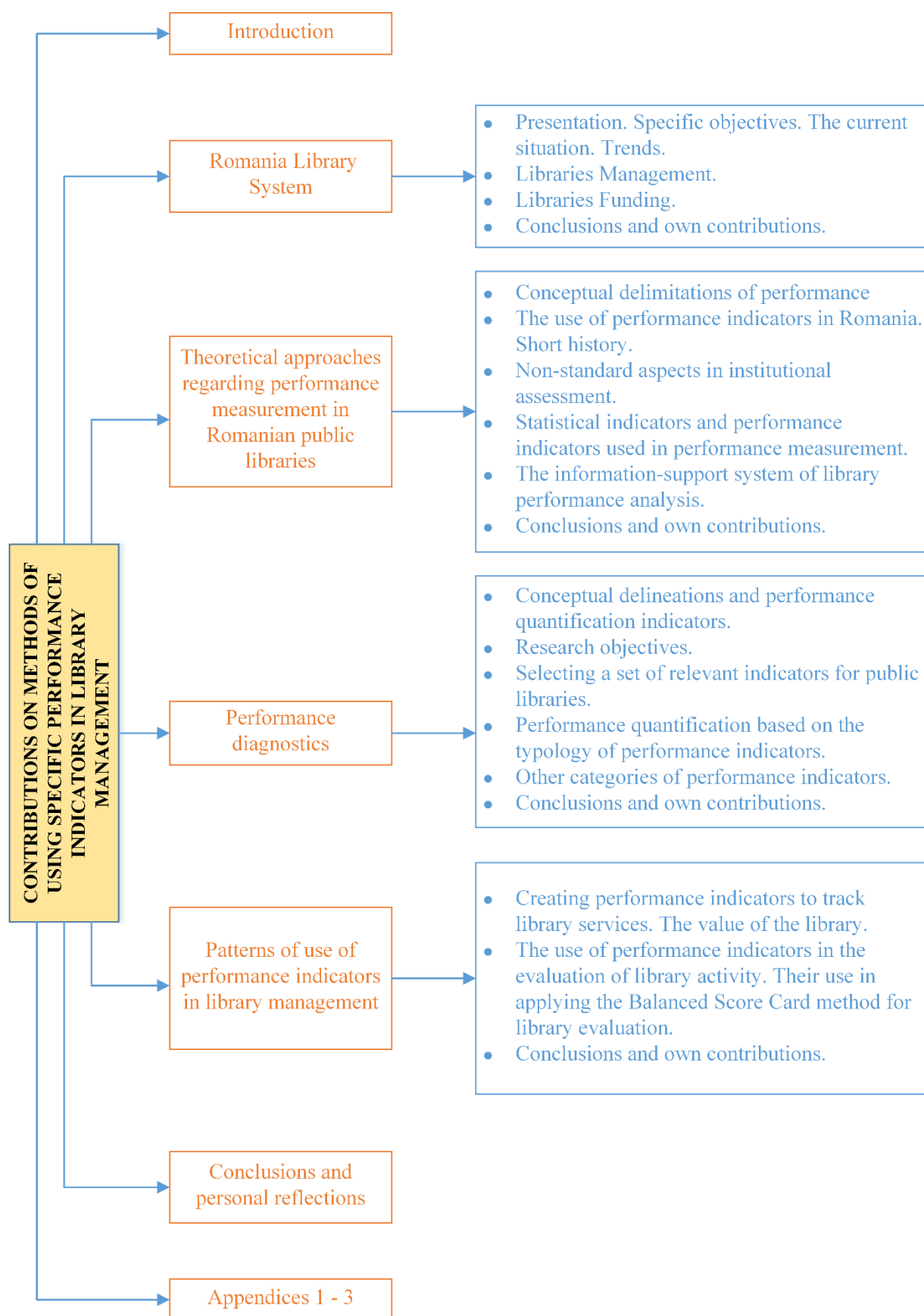
In the second part of the doctoral thesis, the empirical research undertaken to confirm or deny, as the case may be, the research hypotheses formulated above as specific research objectives is addressed. For the empirical research, the following methodology was applied:

- **Sampling:** 57 public libraries under public law with legal personality were selected.
- **Questionnaire:** a quantitative method based on a complex survey transposed into a grid question structure was used. They were used sporadically, only with the aim of supporting or confirming the information obtained through quantitative methods and qualitative methods, respectively the interview and the case study. The questionnaire is attached to the doctoral thesis. The questionnaires were communicated by e-mail and the collation was done through the same system.

The questionnaire has seven sections and follows in relation to them:

- a) Experience of the incumbent manager;
- b) Placing the library in a category related to the size of the population served;
- c) Identification and validation of a set of performance indicators:
- d) A set of library use indicators – 10 indicators;
- e) A set of indicators for material resources – 16 indicators;
- f) A set of human resources indicators – 4 indicators;
- g) A set of development indicators – 4 indicators;
- h) A set of cost indicators – 10 indicators;
- i) A set of quality indicators – 2 indicators;
- j) Identification of other performance indicators used by the surveyed manager, other than those presented.
- k) The relevance and necessity of using performance indicators to assist the managerial process;
- l) A point of view regarding the use of performance indicators to carry out a national evaluation of public libraries;
- m) Transmitting by questionnaire the Mission, Vision of the General Objective and Specific Objectives of the manager to identify the correlation between the indicators proposed/used at the section and the library management directions
 - **Interpretation:** it is based on the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the results provided by the questionnaires. Microsoft Excel was used for interpretation, applied to the seven sections of the questionnaires. Quantitative information being combined with qualitative information provided by interviews with fellow managers from public libraries. Equally, the experience accumulated over time is of particular importance in terms of validating the results.
 - **Conclusions and future research directions:** Although sub-chapters were presented that include conclusions in each chapter of the thesis, the conclusions in the last chapter represent the personal contribution to the study of performance indicators and their application in the management of public libraries. Since the subject is in its infancy and therefore far from being exhausted, some of the ways in which the research can be communicated and continued have been listed.

III. THE STRUCTURE OF THE WORK



IV. THESIS STRUCTURE AND CHAPTER SYNTHESIS

The doctoral thesis was structured in six chapters, through which I aimed to create a logical presentation of the issue addressed from the title, and through this, it was intended to include, in the proposed structure, all the theoretical and practical information necessary for the scientific approach. Obviously, we cannot consider exhausting the problem of this research, given the complexity of the field, especially since it is extremely dynamic, so there is room for future approaches both from the author and from other researchers who want to study it.

The six chapters of the thesis are as follows: Introduction; The library system in Romania; Theoretical approaches regarding performance measurement in Romanian public libraries; Performance diagnosis; Models for using performance indicators in library management; and finally Conclusions and personal reflections. At the end of the paper, three appendices are added, whose role is to supplement the content of the thesis with additional information. In terms of approach, the thesis can be divided into three parts.

Thus we can delimit a first part that presents the current context of the way in which the issue of library performance evaluation is approached; this first part extends over the first three chapters. After a short introduction, the organizational context in which libraries of all types operate is presented. The presentation of this context is particularly useful both for library staff from specialized sectors, although many of them are familiar with the issue, but especially for those who want to understand the structure of the library system in Romania. În primul capitol au fost prezentate obiectivele specifice precum și atribuțiile principalelor componente ale sistemului național de bibliotecă.

Summarizing, at the end of 2016, the SNB consisted of a number of 9,832 administrative institutions, registering, compared to the previous year, a decrease of 279 institutions. Compared to the previous year, "in 2016, the number of university libraries decreased by 3, reaching 98 university libraries, and that of specialized libraries, which serve public institutions and economic agencies, decreased by 20, reaching 516 libraries. In the same study period, 2,304 public libraries were registered (48 less than in 2015), consisting of 41 county libraries, 256 municipal and city libraries (3 units less) and 2,007 communal libraries (45 less compared to the previous year)". The number of school libraries decreased, in 2016, to 6,911 libraries (by 208 less than the previous year).

In the second chapter, the current situation of the libraries in Romania is presented, and in order to have a good overview of it, a tabular presentation using data sets collected by the INS was presented. Thus, the structural situation of SNB is presented depending on: the type of library, users and collections, the structure of school libraries by education cycle, the activity of libraries by age categories, the structure of full-time staff employed in Romanian libraries.

We could not have an image regarding the functionality of the SNB without an analysis of the internal and external factors that influence the libraries. It is precisely the influence of these external factors that actually constitutes the framework within which each library exists. Thus, the direct and indirect external factors were analyzed, defining a series of their characteristics.

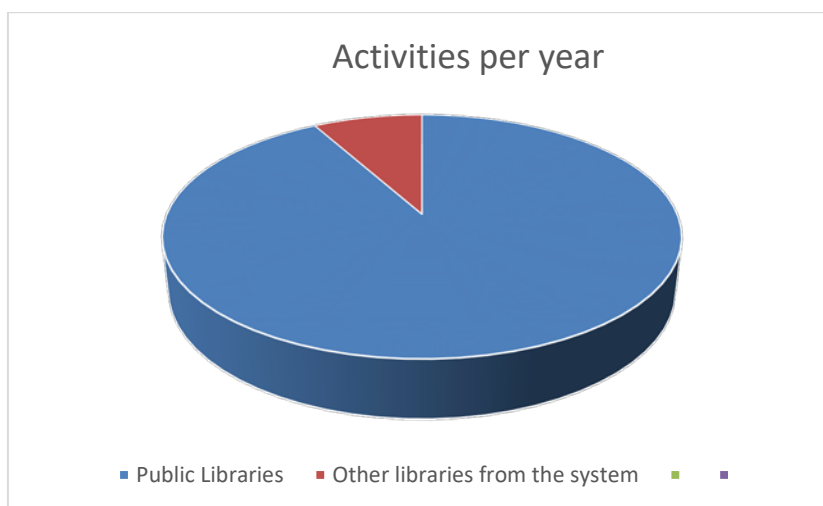
The macro environment in which the libraries operate was also defined and the following component elements were analyzed: the economic environment, the organizational environment, the technical and technological environment, the demographic environment, the cultural environment, the domestic and international political environment, the natural environment and the legislative environment. In order to understand how the elements defined in the macro-environment influence or intervene on the SNB, a PEST analysis was chosen through which the following factors are followed: political, technological, economic, legislative, socio-cultural as well as environmental factors.

Also within the second chapter, the development trends of library functions were also analyzed. This direction was approached because the inclusion of new services implies the identification or definition of performance indicators that can no longer be included in a predefined set, these being a set of special performance indicators, characteristics of each library.

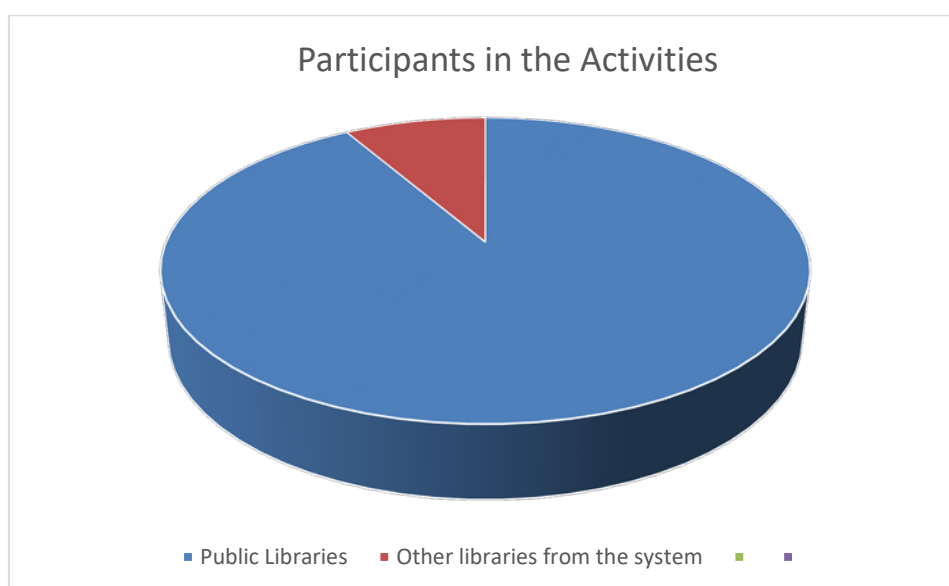
It is addressed separately and in detail, also in the first part of the thesis, in two sub-chapters, the issue of library management by type and financing, strategies, objectives and projects, also mentioning the normative acts that contribute to the establishment of the framework. Even if the operating law is not very clear, for all the constituent elements of the SNB there is elaborated primary and secondary legislation that defines the management of libraries.

Thus, it is noteworthy how the Emergency Ordinance No. 189/2008 regarding the Management of public cultural institutions has boosted the activity of public libraries compared

to the functioning of the other component libraries of the SNB. By comparison, the traditional and cultural activities organized by them amount to 17,747 activities and 1,501,321 participants; the rest of the libraries in the national system, which are governed by other management systems, perform, in the same period of time, only 1,567 activities and have 137,784 participants.



Activities carried out during a year



Participants in library activities throughout the year

The fact that the manager must fulfill a series of requirements established by the management project and by the contract he has with the funding authority leads to a dynamism of the activity, placing the public library at this moment in an active factor at the level of the

population it serves . If we study the programs that these institutions run over the course of a year, we will discover that, in addition to the traditional information and documentation activity, the libraries have extensive cultural and learning programs for the community served, turning the institution into a real cultural mall . One of the manager's fundamental tools is the tracking and evolution of traditional services and new activities that he integrates into the current activity of the institution he leads. Without a way to measure and relate to past developments, he could not correctly determine evolution or involution. The best way to measure is the optimal performance indicators established for each cultural program or information and documentation activity.

The principles of implementing performance indicators and, implicitly, of measuring managerial performance used in a library should take into account:

- **Factors leading to decision-making:** they seek to establish the position and priorities regarding a performance management (recognition of team vs. individual, etc.);

- **Integration:** it is represented by the choice of tools that should take into account the structure, strategy and institutional culture specific to the library. All the tools of a performance management seek to support and drive towards a performance strategy, along with future directions to address etc.;

- **Communication of the performance culture:** each tool developed plays a particularly important role in the communication process and in establishing a culture of the organization we want.

In the third chapter, theoretical aspects of the performance measurement approach in Romanian libraries are further developed because, in the last twenty years, they have begun to use and develop performance indicators in the desire to define institutional performance through the use of various data financial statistics, as well as various questionnaires addressed to users or non-users. All these efforts led to a common standard structure of statistical data collected by all libraries. Alongside this shared body of collected data sits a single common system for reporting it. In conjunction with the binomial data - reporting, library managers must demonstrate the performance of organizations precisely through these means. It is necessary to develop standards that include predefined data structures, their definitions, procedures and especially methodologies that define a structure of performance indicators for libraries that demonstrate their value.

We can also discuss the institutional performance of the library in seeking a competitive advantage through an improvement in the services offered to users while reducing their inefficiency. Since libraries are unique competitors, most of the time there are no similar series except in other localities or even counties, there is no real competitive pressure. Practically the library "effectively gains a competitive advantage through innovation". The ability to innovate in the case of libraries is to identify the way to improve a service so that it is noted with increased value by users and thus creates a difference compared to similar services of other libraries.

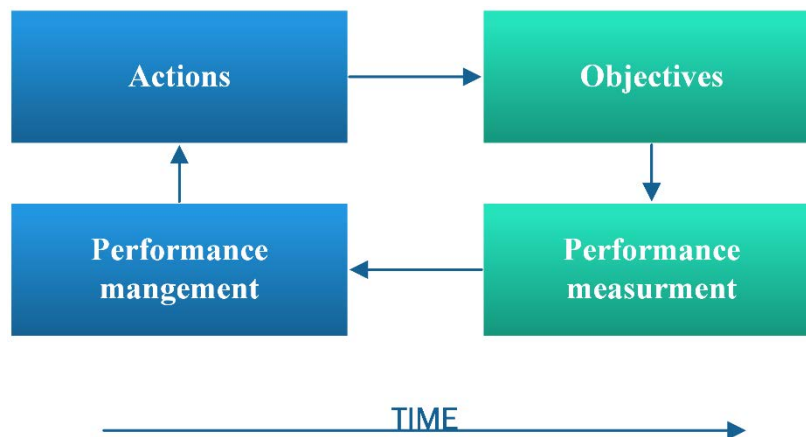
Also in this chapter we make a history of the collection of data on traditional services related to information and documentation, which libraries began to collect with the reconfiguration of the SNB in 1952, a structure that remained unchanged until 1998 when the National Romanian Performance Program - PROBIP 2000 was introduced into Public Libraries. Unfortunately, following the implementation of the National Program Romanian Performance in Public Libraries - PROBIP 2000, the very interesting results were found only in the annual statistical reporting form CULT I, assumed by the INS, the rest of the results, among that the performance indicators and the classification of libraries according to the population served, were not taken up in any normative act, methodology or standard to formalize their use.

The use of performance indicators by reference to the structure of the 9,935 libraries is difficult to achieve, primarily due to a very low degree of automation with SIB; thus, in 2019, only 3% of all libraries used an integrated library system. The inclusion of performance indicators in the management reporting system by means of *OUG 189/2008 on the Management of public cultural institutions, with subsequent amendments* and by *"ORDER No. 2799 of December 10, 2015 for the approval of the framework Regulation for the organization and conduct of the management project competition, the framework Regulation for the organization and conduct of the management evaluation, the framework model of the notebook of objectives, the framework model of the activity report , as well as the framework model of the management contract"*, becomes a major necessity in order to avoid adopting or imposing specific indicators on other institutions in the field of culture. To these two elements of legislation specific to public cultural institutions and, implicitly, to public libraries, OSGG No. 600 / 2018 is also added, which imposes the establishment of a set of performance indicators for all public institutions.

Given the multitude of activities carried out by libraries that are not part of the so-called traditional activities, in the same chapter we have included a series of non-standard measurements, which seek to present in a different form the efficiency of the services and activities that the public library carries out. After these elements of analysis of non-standardized activities, I presented the way of making a comparison of the results obtained by the libraries. This can be done using the library family system defined by the ISO 2789 standard; the defining element of library families is the population served, these data being provided both by the CULT I form of the INS and by the statistical data sets collected through the PROPBIP 2000 forms. The establishment of library families by reference to the population served is very important, linking the institution of the community but also of funding, the budgets that libraries from the same family receive being, most of the times, quite close. In the next sub-chapter I presented the performance indicators defined within PROPBIP 2000. Since in most cases of the data processed in the performance analysis I presented both the role and the limitations they present, for relevance I presented and analyzed the data collected through PROPBIP 2000 statistics and through form CULT I of the INS.

At the beginning of this chapter I stated that the thesis can be delimited considering the problem addressed. Thus, the second part includes the study itself and identifies the set of optimal performance indicators for an effective evaluation of public library services, as a result of the empirical research undertaken, together with a study on the use of performance indicators in accordance with management strategies and projects . This second part aims to achieve the research objectives, the results and the way in which they subscribe to the research theme.

In the chapter "Conceptual delimitations and performance quantification indicators", the fourth chapter of the thesis, the link between performance management and performance measurement is presented, along with the link between actions and objectives.



Bernard Marr definește măsurarea performanței ca un proces etapizat și orientat spre rezultate; el distinge mai multe activități în procesul ce presupune măsurarea performanței, după cum urmează:

- a) Building a performance model specific to each organization;
- b) Data collection;
- c) Data analysis and interpretation;
- d) Extraction and communication of information;

In order to select a set of relevant indicators, a predefined structure was created consisting of the solutions through the CALIMERA and PROBIP 2000 programs as well as through the ISO 2789 and ISO 11620 standards. Thus, regarding the choice of a set of relevant indicators, we took into account the following problems:

- The issue of data collection;
- The gap between the standardized activity and the real activity of the library;
- Standardization as a viable solution in the evaluation process.

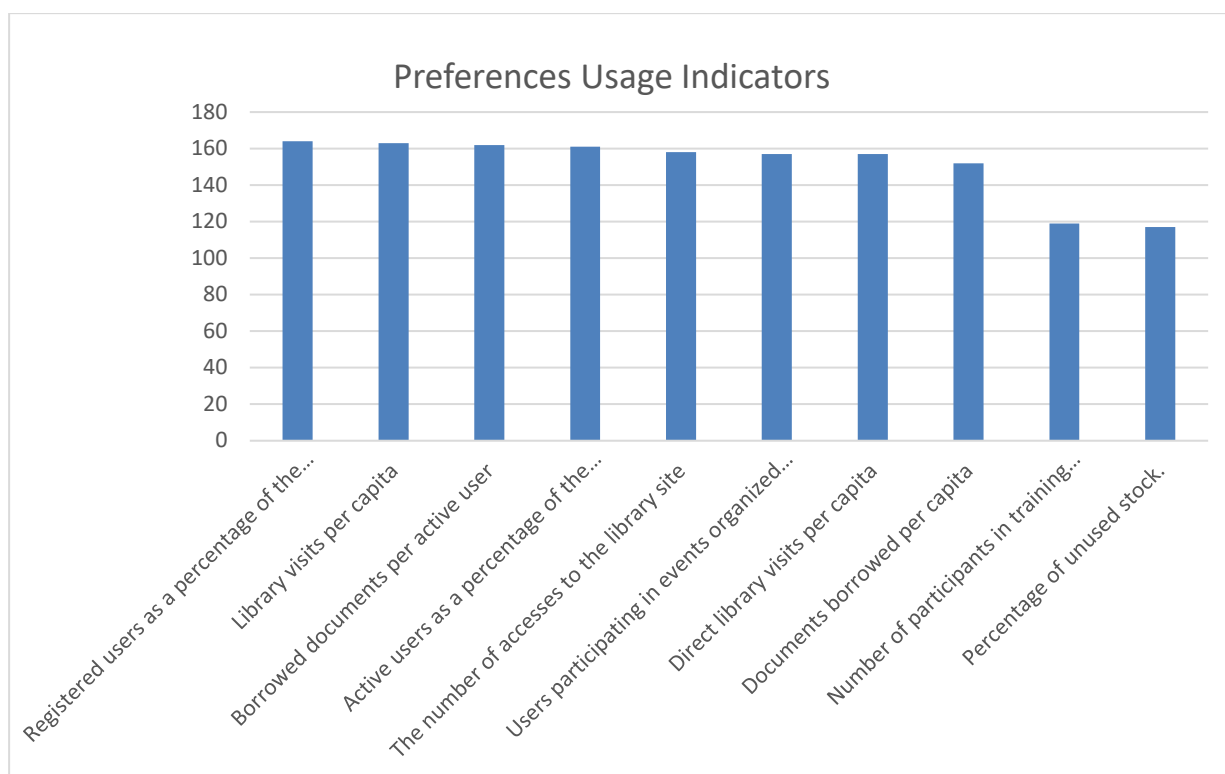
De asemenea indicatorii selectați trebui să poată fi evaluați prin schema tradițională, arătând că performanța este o rezultată a:

- effectiveness - the results being in accordance with the institution's objectives;
- efficiency - the results are achieved at a lower cost;
- relevance - the means are adapted to the objectives.

The resulting structure has seven sections and follows, in relation to them:

- a) Experience of the incumbent manager;
- b) Placing the library in a category related to the size of the population served;
- c) Identification and validation of a set of performance indicators:
 - A set of library use indicators – 10 indicators;
 - A set of indicators for material resources – 16 indicators;
 - A set of human resources indicators – 4 indicators;
 - A set of development indicators – 4 indicators;
 - A set of cost indicators – 10 indicators;
 - A set of quality indicators – 2 indicators;
- d) Identification of other performance indicators used by the surveyed manager, other than those presented.
- e) The relevance and necessity of using performance indicators to assist the managerial process;
- f) A point of view regarding the use of performance indicators to carry out a national evaluation of public libraries;
- g) Questionnaire transmission of the Mission, Vision of the General Objective and Specific Objectives of the manager to identify the correlation between the indicators proposed/used in section C and the library management directions.

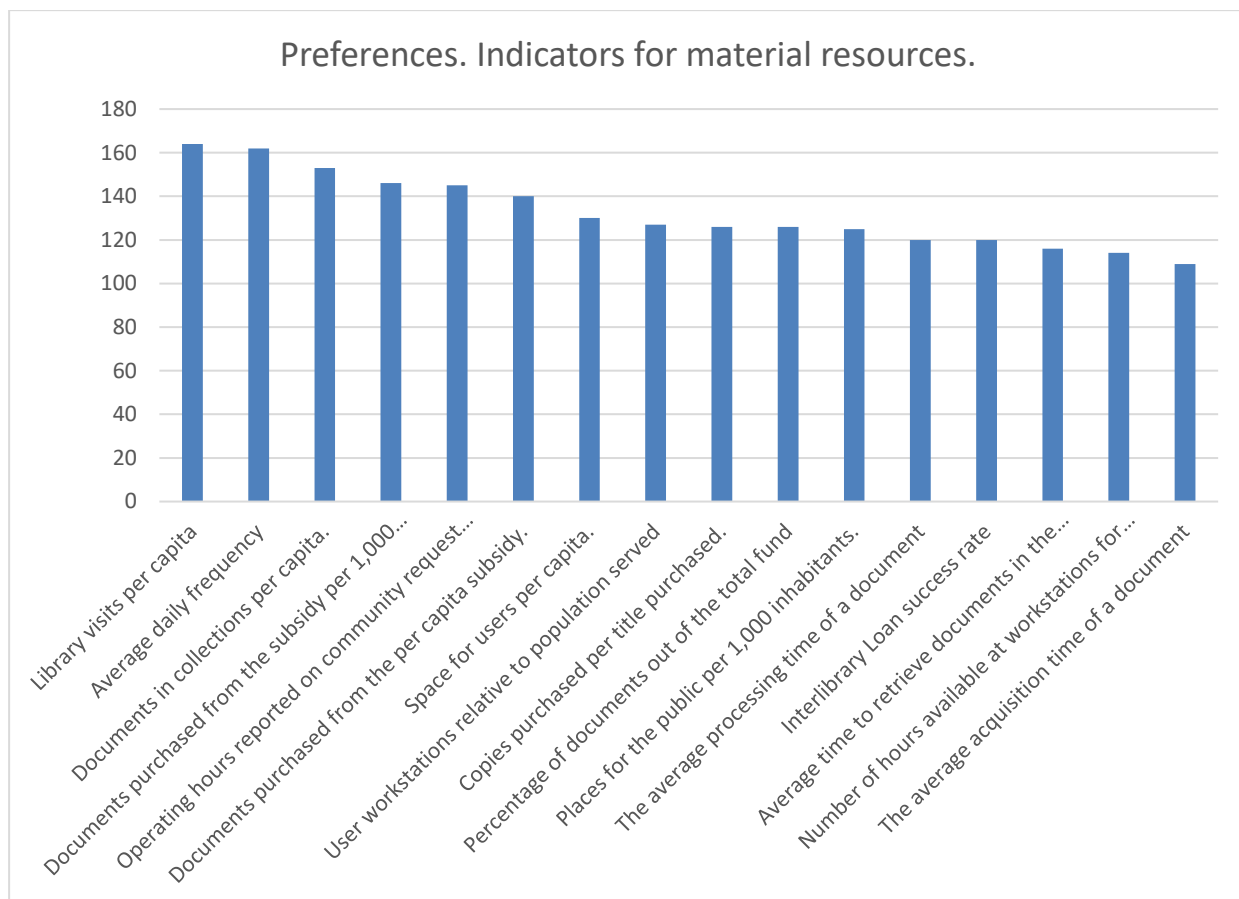
Thus, following the empirical research, a hierarchy of the importance of the proposed indicators from the category of use was established, having the structure in the figure below, the most important indicator being "Users registered as a percentage of the population".



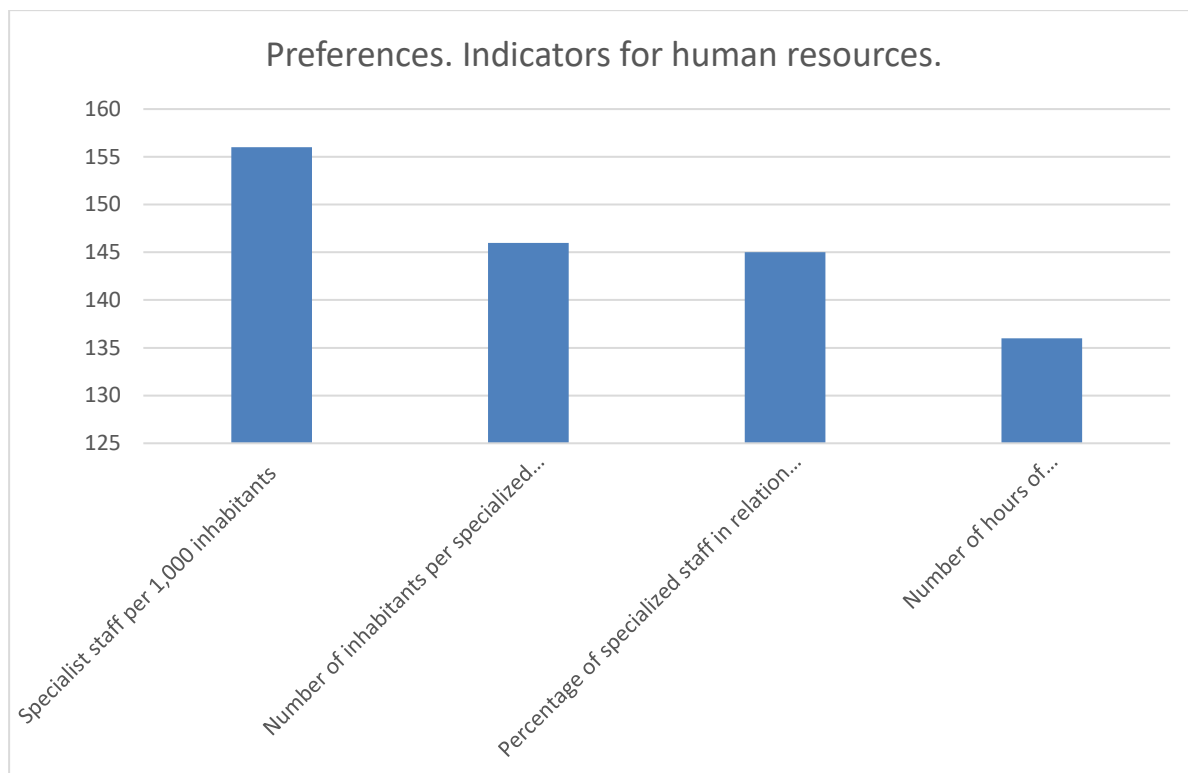
Analyzing the graph regarding the choice of managers in relation to a typology of performance indicators regarding material resources, the option for those indicators that mainly measure traditional library services is visible. Thus the first 5 preferred indicators are:

- a) Visits to the library per capita;
- b) Average daily frequency;
- c) Documents in per capita collections;
- d) Documents purchased from the subsidy per 1,000 inhabitants;
- e) Operating hours reported at the request of the community.

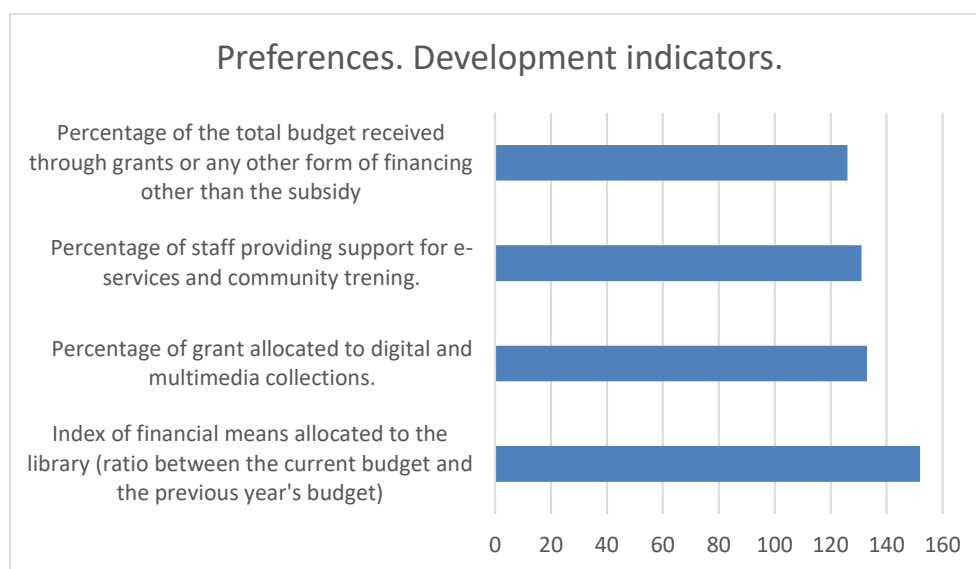
This structure of indicators still reveals a tendency of the hybrid library to break away from traditional services quite hard, practically a rather exclusive management of document collections on paper, compared to the newest means of online documentation and consultation of databases.



In the case of performance indicators aimed at human resources, the preference of managers for two performance indicators is visible. The first is *Specialized personnel per 1,000 inhabitants*, due to the proximity to the method of allocation of the specialized personnel resource according to the law. The next preferred indicator is the number of inhabitants in relation to specialized staff.

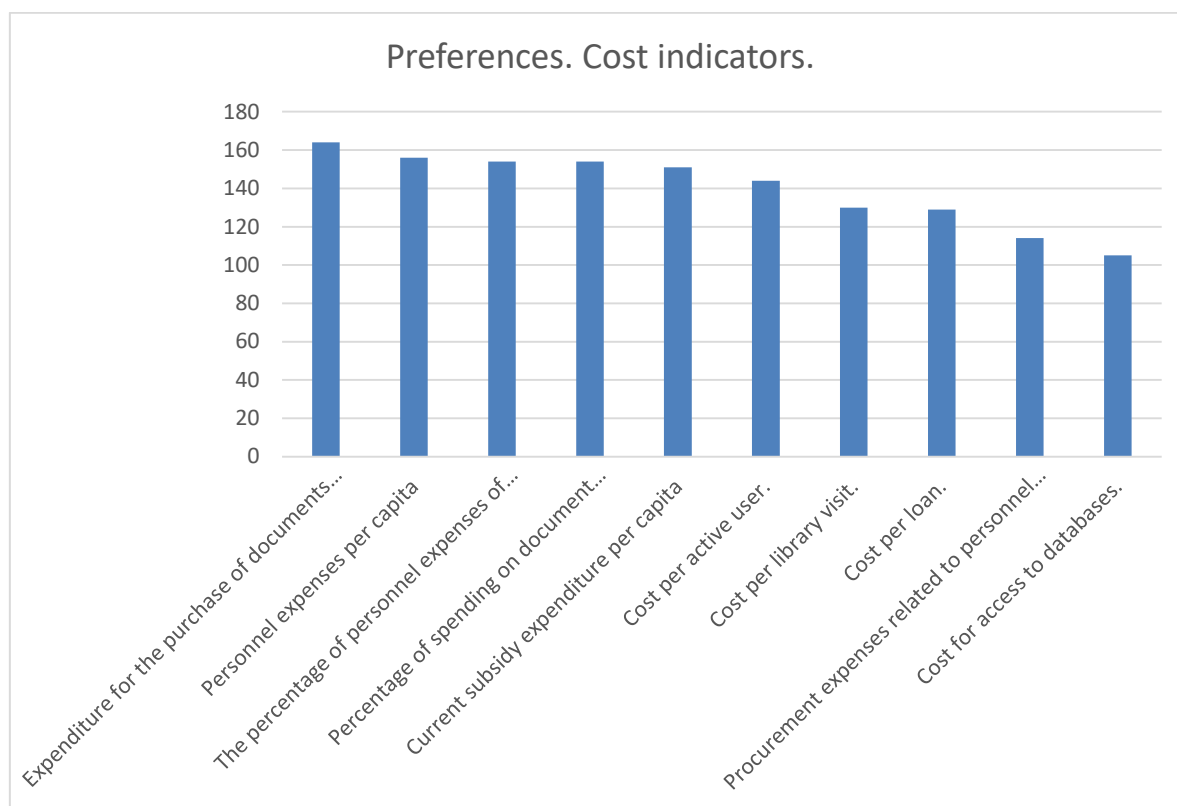


Analyzing the managers' preference for the proposed indicators, the concern regarding the evolution of the subsidy allocated by the financing authorities is visible, along with the concern regarding the development of the collection with multimedia and digital materials. Unfortunately, the external funding application exercise is still in its infancy.

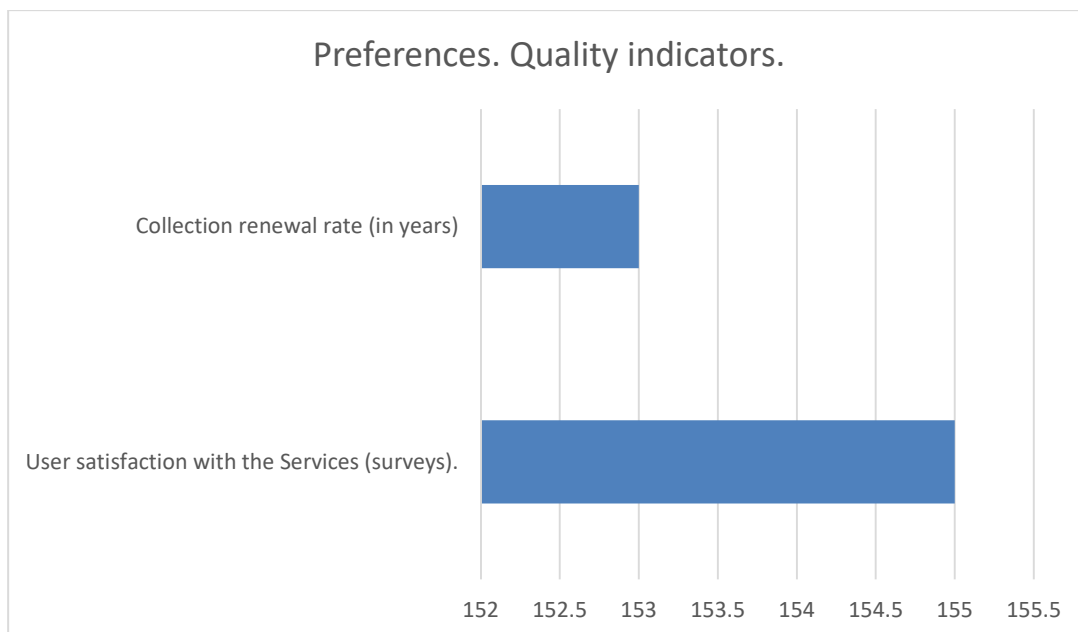


In the case of cost indicators, it is worth noting that the degree of conservatism is maintained, regarding the tracking of some costs, because it is preferred to track direct and clear indicators such as the expenses for the purchase of publications and the expenses for personnel

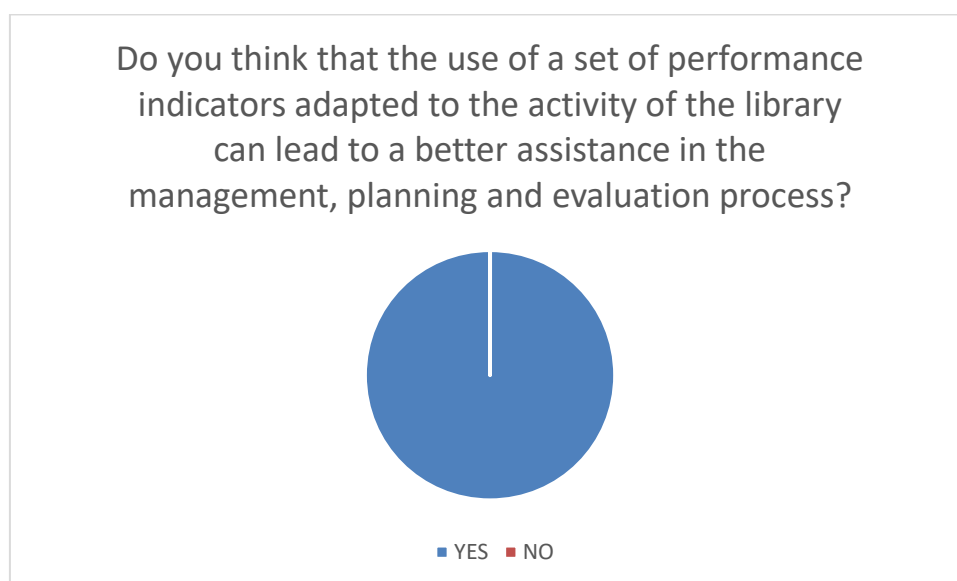
per capita. The respondents were less influenced by the cost indicators and the majority was not responsive to the indicator regarding the monitoring of databases, knowing that public libraries have an extremely limited offer of such services.



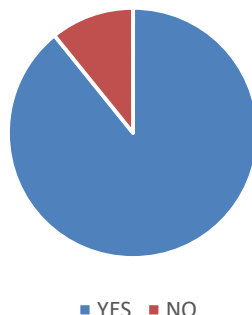
Regarding the quality indicators, the managers prefer measuring the degree of user satisfaction because most of those who completed the questionnaires are county library managers who manage large, historical collections and are also the holders of local legal deposit rights, which leads to figures of several decades for the renewal of library collections.



Library managers fully agree that using a set of performance indicators tailored to the library's work can lead to better assistance in the process of management, planning and evaluation. Totally agreeing with this.



Do you think that using a set of common performance indicators for libraries in Romania, a national evaluation of libraries can be carried out?



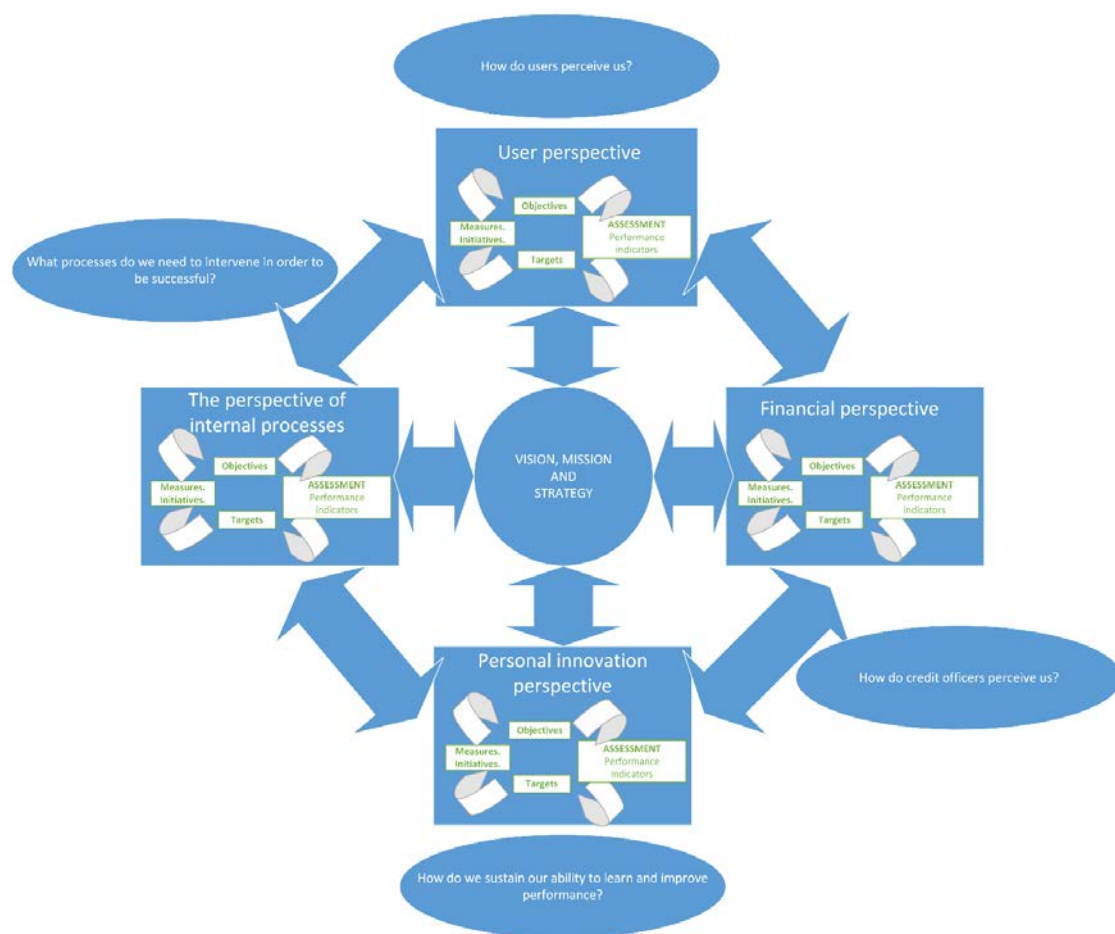
In the fifth chapter we addressed models for the use of performance indicators in library management, considering that performance indicators are the most important navigation tools used by library managers to understand whether the collection of documents, as well as information, documentation and leisure services are on an upward trend or moving away from what would be called success. Identifying and using an appropriate set of indicators will score performance and highlight services that require management attention. It is said that in fact "what gets measured gets done" and "if you can't measure it, you can't manage it". These are just two of the most popular expressions that are used to highlight the importance of performance indicators as evaluation metrics in the service of managers. Thus I described how a performance indicator can be defined that can lead to the measurement of a new service, for example. Everything being accumulated in a descriptive sheet for the elaboration of the performance indicator.

In order to understand an adequate performance measurement system based on an analysis of performance indicators, we proposed as a model the application of BSC for library evaluation. I considered this method useful because, through it, the method of putting the strategy into practice is tracked along with the tracking of the objectives included in it.

The horizons in the BSC are different from the point of view of the specific importance of a commercial company, as defined by Robert Kaplan and David Norton. In the case of libraries and public institutions in general, the Financial Horizon and the User Horizon are no longer at the top of the perspectives. The order of the four perspectives in the case of libraries, being linked, as in the previous case, by cause-effect relationships, is:

- *Users' horizon* (how do users perceive us?);
- *Internal process horizon* (what are the processes we need to excel at to be successful?);
- *The staff and innovation horizon* (how do we support the ability to adapt and improve performance?);
- *The financial horizon* (how are we perceived by the main loan originators?).

Thus the structure of a BSC developed for a library is as follows:



BSC undoubtedly represents a modern approach that, unfortunately, is not used in the approach of modern management in public libraries in Romania, although all the premises are met. In the future, the management of public libraries can propose the establishment of a modern management by focusing the institution on strategy, creating one or even some strategic maps that, along with the mission, vision, objectives, programs, projects and services, can be evaluated through performance indicators specially selected for them.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the last decade, library services have been influenced by a series of concepts that are mainly found in the space dedicated to economic activity. Thus we encounter more and more general ideas such as marketing, quality management, management and performance analysis. All this thinking is due to the evolution of society and the need to support libraries to adapt to the new conditions due primarily to the stage that humanity is going through at the moment, the economy based on knowledge.

The concept of knowledge-based economy is not a new one, it appeared more than fifty years ago with the main idea being that the production of information, scientific knowledge contributes to economic growth. We can say that probably this way of thinking is one that has governed society for all time and influenced our existence, practically social reality was organized based on the information that was available at a given time. But the influence of the last fifty years of information and communication technology has led to an annual increase of information by 40%. In this context we have to think about the transition from an industrial society to a knowledge society with all its influences on the social structure, commercial companies, institutions, organizations and politics, which means our society in general. Libraries at this stage have a fundamental role, transforming from institutions of culture into institutions of knowledge having a formative role alongside education in education, developing creativity and creating skills for the communities they address. This development trend leads to rapid changes in the field of education, which was not used to such transformations, and the qualification thus obtained may no longer ensure the employment of graduates. In these conditions, lifelong learning takes on a particularly important role. Libraries in this context become the main provider of structured information for the communities they serve.

In a single day, GOOGLE processes 3.5 billion search requests, while GOOGLE manages 10 billion gigabyte databases in the same 24 hours, Facebook adds 2.5 billion posts, along with "2.7 billion "Likes" and over 300 million photos".

Libraries are the main holders of paper publications, the information held by their collections would represent 6% of the information held by humanity at this moment. This assessment was made in the year 2007, the proportion of 94% of humanity's knowledge in

digital format is surprising, but the most surprising thing is that 90% of this percentage was accumulated by humanity in the period 2005-2007.

In this context, the public library must transform itself into a dynamic public institution that has the capacity to work with other people and institutions to provide a range of library and information services in general, aiming to meet the varied needs of the community. To achieve these goals, managers and staff with training and experience are needed, having the ability to use a multitude of equipment and means of finding and communicating information.

One of the activities in which the management of a public library is involved is the one in which the process of monitoring and evaluating the extent to which a library service is moving towards its objectives set by institutional strategies is carried out. Management must be responsible for financial control, monitoring and evaluation of its activities. This can be done by collecting statistical data at certain time intervals, and making measurements through performance indicators, which can identify trends.

The availability of statistical information through the national statistical data collection tools, CULT 1 and that through the PROBIP2000 program provides a suite of sufficient data to be able to lead to an evaluation and improvement of the efficiency, as well as the quality of the service, in fact a performance measurement. The performance indicators identified and validated during this research, along with those created specifically for monitoring newly implemented services, will be able to constitute an effective tool for tracking and implementing the objectives set by the library's development strategies.

Considering the addressability of this study, I think it is possible to adapt to the delivery of information in an online system through an e-Learning platform. The majority of those who are interested in this information are most of the time library managers and thus we can meet them with a flexible course in terms of time while still maintaining a fairly high degree of practical applicability. Considering the pandemic period, it is considered that "the didactic activity carried out online represented a degree of efficiency and quality, developing a series of complementary qualities."(Banciu 2020).

Moreover, those libraries that develop digital libraries or have digital collections added to the library catalog can be "utilized and disseminated, so that they are of real use in the new paradigm of the education system". (Banciu 2020)

The present research, by its structure, is unique in the specialized literature, because the importance of the application of performance indicators in public libraries in conjunction with the legislation in force regarding their management has not been addressed until now. The approach of linking the indicators with a tool for evaluating the strategies implemented in the library is also important.

Another tool that will prove particularly useful is the use of a system for evaluating the application of strategies such as the Balanced Score Card, presented in this study, along with performance indicators. The performance indicators will evaluate each project/objective through the lens of the four perspectives defined in the BSC, and the system itself will analyze the entire institutional strategy, thus the manager of a public library will be able to monitor and intervene along the way, if necessary, on the strategy /objectives/programs/projects of the institution.

It is fully understood that in this work with somewhat limited space we cannot address the topic of performance indicators in libraries, primarily due to the high speed of development of the field, which is constantly seeking to find new services for the benefit of the communities that serves. We covered a way to create your own performance indicators that would allow managers to create their own assessment tools. I believe that the managerial experience so far has allowed me to be able to address the issue of evaluating the activity of a public library and that the explanation and identification of the performance indicators proposed by this work will be useful tools in the work of any public library managers in Romania.

Regarding future studies, we propose to expand the research on the use of managerial assessment tools of library development strategies such as the BSC and complement it with a similar module on the use of CAF in public libraries.

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