Journal of Community Positive Practices

CONTENT

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DETERMINANTS OF SYSTEM OF ROOT INTENSIFICATION (SRI) METHOD, IN BIHAR STATE, INDIA

Aviral PANDEY [1]

Abstract: *Input-dependent strategies of 'modern agriculture' is less cost-effective and less sustainable, the benefits of system of root intensification (SRI) are considerable, especially in terms of resource conservation, production and addressing the challenges of climate change. Despite policy support that has been extended by nongovernmental organisations and some Governments, still the adoption of SRI has been restricted to some vicinity in India. This article is an attempt to explain principles, practices of SRI and reasons for the low adoption of SRI by farmers in Bihar and make policy suggestions, so that the discussion could be used for further research and policy support. The contents have been accumulated from literature and field visits and interaction with farmers in Bihar, state of India. This study finds that preference for SRI is higher among experienced farmers than younger farmers in Bihar. The analysis finds significant the role of literacy/theawareness programme in promoting farmers to use SRI in agriculture, in Bihar. Productivity of wheat and paddy has increased forty to sixty percentages, after using SRI practices. Limitations reported by the farmers are lack of awareness, labour intensive nature of SRI, shortage of skilled labour and absence of proper machines, useful for different types of soil. The findings of this study support that supply-side factors are playing major role in the adoption of SRI practise in Bihar. The adoption of SRI is still low in Bihar, because of the low role of demand side factors, Involvement of civil society with incentives may promote SRI practices in Bihar.*

Keywords: *Agriculture Development, Bihar, Paddy, SRI, Wheat.*

Introduction

Being mainly an agrarian economy, largely dependent on the vagaries of monsoon, the policy support to the farmers are essential in Bihar State, in India. Policies devoted to agriculture development have supported in a considerable amount the improvement of agriculture in Bihar, during recent years. Still, there are huge unused potential in agriculture in Bihar, in terms of productivity and crop diversification. Data shows that

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the average yield of paddy and wheat is lower than its production potential. Even though the State is rich in terms of availability of soil and water resources, its average yield of paddy and wheat are only about 32% and 44 % of the potential yield.(The Asian average is 4.23 t ha^{-1}, while the world is averaging 4.18 t ha^{-1}) (Thiyagarajan, &Gujja, 2013). Considering improvement in agriculture productivity as priority, a series of schemes have been initiated by the government of Bihar, following first agriculture road map (a time bound policy document). The focuses of these schemes are improving agriculture productivity and farm income in Bihar. One such programme regarding productivity improvement in Bihar is SRI (system of root intensification), covering both aspects of technology and inputs.

The *System of Root Intensification,* is a climate-smart, agro ecological methodology for increasing the productivity of paddy and more recently other crops by changing the management of plants, soil, water and nutrients. SRI methodology is based on four main principles that interact with each other: (1) early, quick and healthy plant establishment, (2) reduced plant density, (3) improved soil conditions through enrichment with organic matter, (4) reduced and controlled water application. Based on these principles, farmers can adapt recommended SRI practices to respond to their agro-ecological and socio-economic conditions. Adoptions are often undertaken to accommodate changing weather patterns, soil conditions, labour availability, water control, access to organic inputs, and the decision whether to practice fully organic agriculture or not.

The principles of SRI, which are fundamental to achieving the expected benefits, are following:

(1) Very young seedlings should be used, to preserve the plant's inherent growth potential for rooting and tillering;

(2) Transplanting single seedling per hill should be done quickly, carefully, shallow and skilfully, in order to avoid any trauma to the roots, which are the key to plants' success;

(3) Reduce the plant population radically by spacing hills widely and squarely, so that both the roots and canopy have room to grow and can have greater access to nutrients, sunlight, etc.;

(4) Provide growing plants with sufficient water to meet the needs of roots, shoots and soil biota, but never in excess, so that the roots do not suffocate and degenerate;

(5) Active soil aeration improves paddy crop growth in order that both roots and beneficial aerobic soil organisms are in benefit;

(6) Augmenting organic matter in soils, as much as possible, improves performance of the paddy crop, by improving soil structure and functioning and supporting beneficial soil organisms.

Each of the six principles of SRI has an important bearing on the performance of the crop. Detail benefits of SRI method are discussed in Table 1 and Figure 1. The overall

effect of adopting SRI practices is an increased grain yield, which can be obtained irrespective of the variety planted (Thiyagarajan, &Gujja 2013).

Studies show that SRI method uses 30-50% less water (Thiyagarajan et al., 2005; Mahenderkumar et al., 2010; Thakur et al., 2010; Zhao et al., 2010), 60-80% less seed (Kumar et al. 2010; Styger et al. 2011, WWF-ICRISAT, 2008.), 10-25% less use of labour (Anita, Chellappan, 2011; Thiyagarajan et al., 2005). It has been widely accepted that SRI is a cost saving method and net income increases is possible up to 80-165% (Thiyagarajan et al., 2005; Radha et al., 2007, WWFICRISAT, 2008) as production increases up to 10-90%10 to 90 percent at a lower cost. On the other hand, linkage between the nutrition and output produced, using SRI is also high, as it has been found that cereals produced using SRI has high nutrient content than non-SRI methods produced cereals (Barison, & Uphoff ,2011).

Table 1: Significance of SRI Principles

	Principle	Significance
1.	Young seedlings	Much greater potential for tillering and root growth • Earlier arrival within a better growing environment in the main field extends the time for tillering • No transplanting shock if transplanting is done carefully.
2.	Single seedling per hill	No competition for nutrients, water and space within a hill • Seed requirements are reduced • This practice combined with wider spacing enables all leaves to be photosynthetically active; whereas with crowding, lower leaves do not get enough exposure to sunlight for photosynthesis. This deprives the plant – and especially the roots – of possible supply of photosynthesis.
3.	Wider spacing	Promote more profuse growth of roots and tillers • More space (below and above ground) per hill for access to nutrients, water and light • Inter-cultivation with mechanical weeder is made possible.
4.	Moist and unflooded water management regime	Non-hypoxic condition of soil favours root health and functioning, and supports more abundant and diverse communities of beneficial aerobic soil organisms • No degeneration of roots, which otherwise will be as much as 75% degraded by panicle initiation under flooding • Exposing the soil to sunlight is favourable for warmth • Water savings of up to 40% • Energy saving where water is pumped.
5.	Inter-cultivation	Churning up of the soil activates the microbial, physical and chemical dynamics • Triggers greater root growth and tillering • Weed biomass is incorporated into the soil as green manure • Weeding costs can be reduced.
6.	Liberal use of organic manures	Gives better plant growth response than inorganic fertilizers • More sustained supply of nutrients • Favourable growth of soil biota • Enrichment of soil health.

Source: Uphoff, 2008

Actual return to SRI depends on several factors, such as farm and farmer characteristics rather than the technology itself (Barrett et al., 2004). Overall findings reveal that SRI

method has high potential and it can have more significant change in productivity if other socio-economic factors are also in favourable condition. However, Alagesan & Budhar (2009) found that farmers faced difficulties in large-scale adoption of SRI in Tamil Nadu, India, because of the knowledge deficit and labour shortage. Moser and Barrett (2002) found in their study, in Madagascar, that SRI higher labour needs and seasonal liquidity constraints, social conformity also play major role in low adoption of new technology like SRI.

Since the benefits of SRI in terms of productivity are higher and the cost of production is also lower than the other conventional method, the government of Bihar is promoting farmers to use SRI practice in the crop production. Despite policy support has been extended by state Government, still the adoption of SRI has been restricted to some farmers. Besides, findings presented above showed significant role of SRI in increasing cereal productivity, while any evidence based study on Bihar was not available. The central question of the present study is why SRI method adaptation is lower in Bihar, where most of the farmers are confronted with low income and low agriculture productivity.

In this backdrop, this study covers debate on SRI and ground realities with the help of field visits and interaction with farmers in Bihar, state of India. This study is divided into three sections. First section discusses data and methods. Second section presents results. Third section provides discussion and conclusion.

Figure 1: *SRI Hexagon*
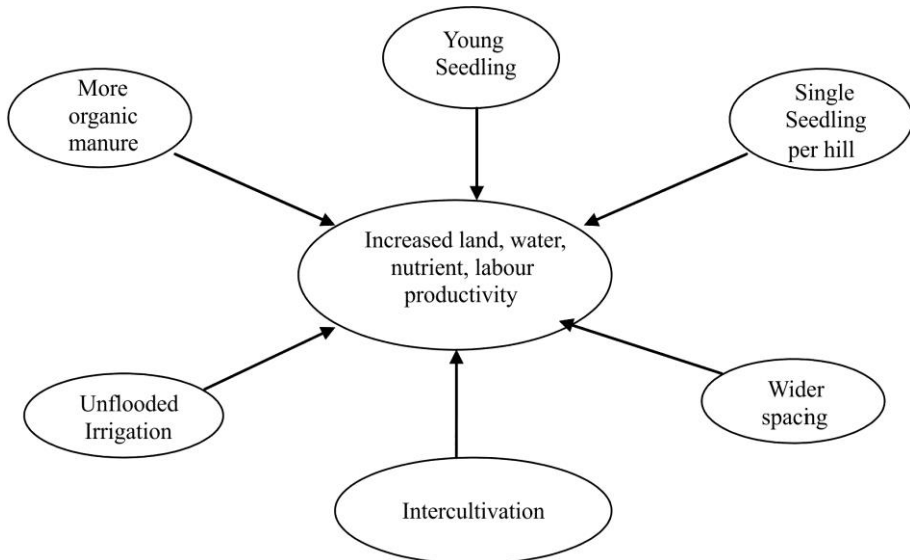
Source: Uphoff, 2008

Section I . Data & Methods

To increase the productivity of agriculture by using less resource, Government of Bihar has introduced a number of schemes for the agriculture road maps and SRI practice promotion is one of them. Under SRI promotion scheme, government of Bihar provides SRI kit, including seeds, micro nutrients, bio-fertilizers, conoweeder etc., following a promising demonstration of SRI practice at Panchayats, at block or district level to farmers in Bihar. In the farmers selection, priority is given to Scheduled Castes (SC) & Scheduled Tribes (ST) and women. The government claims that it has resulted in higher yield and higher income.

This study seeks to find out effects of SRI practice on agriculture of Bihar and reason for low adoption. The study is based on primary data collected from 14 districts of Bihar (Begusarai, Dharbangha, East Champaran, Gopalganj, Khagaria, Madhubani, Muzaffarpur, Sheohar, Smastipur, Saran, Sitamarhi, Siwan, Vaishali, and West Champaran). A multi-stage – stratified – purposive – random sampling design was adopted in the study. The sample household were selected from fourteen districts of Bihar. From each district, two blocks having highest number of beneficiaries were selected. In selected blocks, two Panchayats rather than villages selected based on the highest number of beneficiary. From each Panchayat, 15 sample household were selected based on stratified random sampling method. From each district, 60 farmers were selected. A total of 840 farm households were surveyed.

The process of the farmer's adoption has raised a serious debate and numerous hypotheses have been tested to identify its casual viewpoints. The major hypotheses put forwarded in the literature are "Market incentives hypothesis"," Non-Market incentive hypothesis" and "Time factor hypothesis". Several studies have tested these hypotheses and identified a large number of factors, explaining the adoption practices of farming households. These includes financial reasons (Wilson and Hart, 2000), farmer's Attitude (Ajzen & Fischbein, 1980; Artikov et al., 2006; Elliot et al., 2011; Burton et al., 2006), farming system (Barnes et al., 2011), geographical factors (Burton et al., 2006), farm size (Manley & Smith, 2007; Defrancesco et al., 2007), demography of farming household (Ahnstrom et al., 2008), socio-economic, psychological and social and psychological factors (Willock et al., 1999a, 1999b) (Burton, 2004). This paper seeks to test above mentioned hypothesis to explore the farmer's adoption of SRI method in Bihar.

To analyse the determinants of farmer's adoption of SRI method in paddy and wheat, logit models have been used, in order to estimate the probability of a farmer to adopt SRI method. Details of explanatory variables are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Detail of Explanatory Variables

Sl. No.	Variable	Detail of Variable
1	SRIR	Does the farmer adopt SRI in paddy cultivation
2	SRIW	Does the farmer adopt SRI in wheat cultivation
3	AGE	Age of the farmer
4	LAND	Type of the farmer
5	LITERACY	Years of education from primary to Master degree
6	GENDER	Gender of the farmer
7	SOCCLASS	Social category of the farmer

Section II. Results

Household Characteristics Findings

The risk behaviour of farm household is determined not only by preferences, but also by the availability of institutions and psychological factors or decision costs of peasant production choices (Roumasset, 1976; Eswaran & Kotwal, 1986; Morduch, 1994; Duflo, 2003). In farm economy of Bihar, there are non-market forces, such Castes, that decide access to land (by the Law of inheritance) and play significant role in agriculture production dynamics. Here, access to government schemes also depends on the Castes and land holding dynamics of farm households in Bihar.

Besides the fact that SRI method has significant bearing on productivity, only about 52 % of selected total sample of farm households were using SRI practise in paddy cultivation. Similarly, about 35 % of selected sample of farm households were using SRI practice in wheat cultivation (Table 3). Use of SRI method was higher in paddy cultivation than in wheat cultivation. Landholdings' wise distribution of SRI practitioners gives another significant picture. In all, preference for SRI in paddy and wheat cultivation among small and large farmers was higher than the others (Table 4).

Under the SRI scheme, Government of Bihar provides not only SRI kit to the farmers, but also financial supports to purchase farm machines. Analysis of all sample beneficiaries shows that small farmers, medium and large farmers received the benefit of the SRI kit, but access to financial support for buying agriculture machines, horticulture and others was comparatively higher among large and medium farming households. Findings show that large landholders mostly prefer labour saving techniques and concentrate on commercial farming, instead of investing in new methods, like SRI. The distribution dynamics of SRI kit also shows different situation. The detailed assessment of beneficiary of different schemes reveals the fact that financial support was given for buying those machines, which were useful for large or medium landholders. On the other hand, the amount of support was low for machines like threshers or tractors, therefore most of the benefits under mechanisation supports were used either by large or by medium farming households.

Gender wise distribution shows that access to all supports was higher among male farmers, as 96% of beneficiaries were male. Here, composition of households in Bihar may be responsible for the male biases nature of the outcome. Recent census data show that about 7% of total households in Bihar are headed by women, which is lower than all Indian figures. On the other hand, benefits were mostly distributed at block or district level and it was difficult for female farmers to collect those benefits outside their villages, thus percentage of female beneficiaries was lower in these districts.

Table 3: Distribution of Sample (in %)

Access	SRI Paddy	SRI Wheat
Adopter	52.5	35.83
Non-adopter	47.5	64.16

Source: Primary Survey Data

Table 4: Landholding Wise Distribution of SRI Adopter Farmers in Bihar (in %)

Beneficiary categories according to landholding	SRI Paddy	SRI Wheat
Less than 2.5 acres	16.10	16.28
2.5 to 5 acres	37.87	39.53
More than 5 and less than 10 acres	22.90	19.93
More than 10 acres	23.13	24.25

Source: Primary Survey Data

Literacy and caste play important role in the agrarian economy of Bihar. Access to education, especially quality education, plays significant role in the discrimination and level of awareness in society in Bihar. It has found that literate farmers have greater access to information and receive greater benefits of any government support. Similarly, under SRI scheme, literate farm households had higher access to SRI kit in Bihar (Table 5). Social category wise distribution shows (Table 6) that preference for SRI was higher among general and OBC's (Other Backward Castes) farm households than others.

However, SRI is an innovative method of cultivation; its use is depending on several factors, including demand and supply sides. In all, supply side factors were playing main role in use of SRI method in Bihar. However, supports like SRI kit was attractive for small and marginal farmers, the benefits were not higher in terms of money and binding to use SRI method at least in one acre for the beneficiary of SRI kit, large and medium land holdings farm household were not much interested in absorbing the benefits of SRI kit or use of SRI in cultivation.

Table 5: Literacy Wise Distribution of SRI Adopter Farmers in Bihar (in %)

Level of Education	SRI Paddy	SRI Wheat	Level of Education	SRI Paddy	SRI Wheat
Illiterate	4.76	5.98	Graduation	20.63	21.93
Primary	7.03	7.64	Master Degree	3.63	3.32
Middle	10.43	11.63	ITI	0.45	0.66
Secondary	34.01	31.23	B.Ed.	0	0
High secondary	19.05	17.61			

Source: Primary Survey Data.

Table 6: Social Category Wise Distribution of SRI Adopter Farmers in Bihar (in %)

Social Category	SRI Paddy	Sri Wheat	Social Category	SRI Paddy	SRI Wheat
General	44.22	48.84	Minority	1.81	1.99
OBC	45.35	42.52	Mahadalit	3.17	1.66
SC	3.17	2.66	Other	0.23	0.33
ST	2.04	1.99			

Source: Primary Survey Data.

Effect of SRI on Productivity and Income

This section shows effect of SRI on land use, productivity and farm income of paddy and wheat producer farm households of Bihar. Table 7 shows the effect of SRI on the use of land for paddy and wheat cultivation. It shows that land used for paddy cultivation has increased after SRI intervention. Similar trend can be seen in wheat cultivation. Table 8 shows the changes in yield of paddy and wheat production of SRI farmers. The table shows that the productivity of paddy and wheat has significantly increased after using SRI practices. The analysis shows that small farmers have also experienced similar improvements in productivity, which is a positive sign for policy makers. It was also noticed that productivity gain in paddy after using SRI has also attracted farmers to cultivate more paddy than the previous year. Table 9 shows the effect of SRI on sale of wheat and paddy. The table shows that sale of wheat and paddy has increased after using SRI. However, effect of SRI in terms of marketable surplus on the production of wheat cultivation was less satisfactory.

Table 7: Pattern of Land Use for Paddy and Wheat Cultivation by SRI Adopter Farmers in Bihar (in %)

Beneficiaries Categories According to Landholding	Land used in Paddy Cultivation		Land used in Wheat Cultivation	
	Before Plan	**After Plan**	**Before Plan**	**After Plan**
Less than one acre	26.53	12.8	27.82	13.64
1.1-3 acres	39.29	42.4	49.62	54.92
3.1-5 acres	20.15	27.76	12.03	17.05
5.1-10 acres	11.48	12.8	7.57	10.22
10.1-20 acres	1.79	3.5	2.26	3.79
20.1-40 acres	0.52	1.1	0	0.38

Source: Primary Survey Data.

Table 8: Yield of Paddy, Wheat of SRI Adopter Farmers in Bihar (quintal per bigha)

Beneficiaries Categories According to Landholding	Paddy Cultivation		Wheat Cultivation	
	Before Plan	**After Plan**	**Before Plan**	**After Plan**
Less than 2.5 acres	10.54	17.44	8.58	13.15
2.5 to 5 acres	10.89	17.57	9.09	13.52
More than 5 and less than 10 acres	11.31	18.04	8.97	12.85
More than 10 acres	11.43	17.94	9.97	14.31

Source: Primary Survey Data.

Table 9: Sale reported by SRI Adopter Farmers in Bihar (in %)

Reply	Paddy Cultivation		Wheat Cultivation	
	Before Plan	**After Plan**	**Before Plan**	**After Plan**
Yes	92.97	95.20	89.96	91.03
No	7.03	4.80	10.04	8.97

Source: Primary Survey Data.

Determinants of SRI Method Adoption in Bihar

The results given in table 10 and table 11 confirm expected relationship between age of farmer and possibility of adoption of SRI method in paddy and it is positive for both, paddy and wheat. The strong relationship between age of farmer and possibility of adoption of SRI method for paddy, in comparison to wheat, shows that preference for SRI increases if the farmer produces paddy. The relationship between education and SRI adoption is positive and significant. It suggests that with higher level of education, the probability of using SRI becomes higher. The education makes the farmers capable of understanding the pros and cons outside traditional methods and loosens the barrier in access to SRI. The relationship between land and probability of using SRI method is positive. Large farm households can bear the risk of adopting new methods of cultivation without adversely affecting the agricultural activities. The marginal effect of age on SRI adoption is the highest for both, paddy and wheat. With an increase in the age class of farmers, the probability of access to SRI increases by about 5 to 6%.

Table 10: Determinants of farmer's adoption of SRI
method in Paddy Cultivation in Bihar

Particulars	Coefficient	Standard Error	dy/dx	Standard Error
AGE	0.82	0.28	0.063	3.15
LAND	0.14	0.07	0.018	1.99
LITERACY	0.05	0.02	0.006	2.04
GENDER	0.12	0.37	0.093	0.33
SOCCLASS	0.09	0.15	0.037	0.60
Constant	-1.63	0.50		
Log Likelihood	-0.571			
Number of Observation	840			
Chi²	0.001			
R²	0.017			
Correct Prediction	0.52			

Table 11: Determinants of farmer's adoption of SRI method
in Wheat Cultivation in Bihar

Particulars	Coefficient	Standard Error	dy/dx	Standard Error
AGE	0.32	2.39	0.056	2.82
LAND	0.08	0.08	0.017	1.11
LITERACY	0	0.02	0.006	-0.01
GENDER	0.45	0.41	0.08	1.2
SOCCLASS	-0.28	0.15	0.036	-1.78
Constant	-1.78	0.56		
Log Likelihood	-542.025			
Number of Observation	840			
Chi²	0.013			
R²	0.013			
Correct Prediction	0.35			

Problem related to SRI in Bihar

This part of analysis is based on the findings of focused group discussion. Focused group discussion is useful because it gives a better idea about the change in behaviour of farming household and it also suggests potential solution to the problem. Interactions with beneficiary farmers and non-beneficiary farmers reveal major concerns regarding SRI practices in Bihar. Debates about the adoption of SRI practices were mostly focused on the fact that SRI is more-*labour intensive* than conventional methods. During interactions, it was reported by a large number of farmers, especially medium and large farmers, that SRI practice is labour intensive and needs extra attention because it is not common until now. It was noticed during interactions that concern regarding SRI was misinterpreted by some farmers. Another major concern was reported by the farmers that SRI is a more rigorous and exact regime that needs precision-timed operations and constant supervision. Unavailability of trained labour was reported as a serious problem, because government concentration on training of agriculture labour was missing in the programme of Government of Bihar. Lack of specifications regarding the designs of conoweeder appropriate for different soil types also appeared as a serious problem. Besides, SRI practice is applicable in rain-fed paddy and wheat, and to other crops, such as sugarcane, finger millet, pulses, showing increased productivity over current conventional planting practices; however, this study finds that SRI principles were applied only for paddy and wheat in Bihar. It was also found that in most of the cases only those farmers who received SRI kit, were using SRI . Most of the non-adopter farmers were telling that they were not practicing SRI, because government did not give thembenefits of SRI kit. Overall, it was seen that in most places farmers are using SRI practice because of binding of use of SRI method on at least one-acre land under the SRI kit scheme. This shows that besides support of the government, the level of social awareness about the benefits of SRI is not up to the level. In several studies, it has been demonstrated that the role of civil societies in information/ dissemination is important. Unfortunately, the involvement of civil society to promote the use of SRI was missing in Bihar.

Section III. Discussion & Conclusion

Farmers and policy makers have long time focused on improving the yield in agriculture as an effective way of improving food security since independence. Up to previous decade, most of the policy supports were concentrated on inputs oriented mechanism to increase yield of crops in Indian states like Bihar. In absence of context specific development strategy, the policies support towards agriculture has resulted in an uneven growth pattern in terms of productivity of crops, such as paddy and wheat, across the states. Due to additional emphasis on the use of natural resources like water, India is close to the limits of water shortage in many states including Punjab, Tamil Nadu. Under the present situation, increase in poverty is expected, if diversification towards other livelihood sources or improvement in the use of scarce resources in a sustainable manner is not being promoted. Under the sustainable livelihood framework, most of the policies are concentrating on the promotion of diversification towards noncereal production in agriculture, in India's states, in recent decade and stress on paddy and wheat land is indirectly increasing, day by day. Under this situation, the need

of the present time is to produce more paddy and wheat, using few resources, such as less water and less land. One of the promoting methods, under which more production is possible using similar amount of land and less inputs, is SRI. However, some of SRI principles, such as practices of single seedlings and wider spacing has been in practice by the paddy farmers of Tamil Nadu in India (Thiyagarajan & Gujja, 2009) for a long time. The first structured invention on SRI was made in the year of 2000 and it has been followed by trials, in several states, including Bihar after the year of 2000.

This study examines farmers' views on SRI regarding and its effect on paddy and wheat production in Bihar. This study finds that preference for SRI is higher among experienced farmers than younger farmers in Bihar. The analysis also confirms the role of literacy in promoting farmers to use SRI in agriculture in Bihar. Productivity of paddy and wheat has increased significantly after using SRI practices. Limitations reported by the farmers are lack of awareness, labour intensive nature of SRI, shortage of skilled labour and absence of proper machines, useful for different types of soil. The findings of this study support that supply-side factor is playing a major role in the adoption of SRI practise in Bihar. Due to the low role of demand side factors, the adoption of SRI is still low in Bihar.

Proper demonstration of SRI practices may have significant bearing on the use of SRI practice in Bihar. Training of agricultural labourers especially about SRI techniques and use of green fertilisers etc. can promote more farmers to use SRI practice (need of skill development in agriculture). Village teachers or educated people can be trained to work as local resources to promote the use of SRI practice, efficiently and more beneficially. Involvement of civil society (with incentives) may promote SRI practices in Bihar. Recognitions of successful farmers at block level, district level and state level can also promote farmers to use SRI practice. [1]

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THE CHIMERIC PERSONALITIES OF THREE *PROFESSIONAL REVOLUTIONARIES* IN THE HISTORY OF THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT (1921-1924)

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Abstract: *On the occasion of approaching of the Great Union Centenary, in this article we intend to analyse the character of three key personalities involved in the Communist Movement in Romania, during 1921-1924. The relevance of the study is determined by the need for a psychosocial radiography of a political phenomenon which has set its mark on a nation damned to a totalitarian destiny. The different attitudes and positions of the first founders towards the Great Romania project are due to the chimeric character of some atypical personalities. At both political and legal level, the first communist Party from Romania emerged by accepting the 21 conditions, also known as Zinoviev's theses. By this act, the movement assumed a deeply anti-Romanian position. Beyond the historiographical and data aspects, the Communist Movement also deserves a leadership analysis of the personalities. In this respect, the article focused on the analysis of two research directions: a). A biographical and documentary analysis of personalities that go through ideological metamorphoses generated by the historical and political context of the interwar period; b). An ideological and leadership analysis of the Party concerning the relationship between the leaders and Comintern between 1921-1923. In the secondary analysis, we consulted different articles, books and relevant studies for the proposed topic.*

Keywords: *communist movement, chimeric figures/personalities; anti-national movement, Comintern, illegality.*

Introduction in the research theme and methodology

A lot of books, studies, reports and assessments on the phenomenon of Romanian totalitarianism appeared in literature starting 1990 onward. By going through a large

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part of the list dedicated to this topic, we realized that we are breathing a multi-coloured flow of opinion. The landscape of Romanian Communism seems to be a picture of a pastel painting, sometimes with contradictory opinions. When finally somebody decided to trace the first borders, the famous *Final Report*, a fabulous and controversial project initiated by former President Traian Băsescu, appeared in 2006. But is it scientifically correct to enforce a Report from starting with the title, thus eliminating any right to add something? Most of the answers were accompanied by an avalanche of criticism from well-known historians and researchers such as Florin Constantiniu, Gheorghe Buzatu, Daniel Barbu, Ciprian Șulea, Michael Shafir, Adrian-Paul Iliescu, etc. The ambition of the project's title hit the complexity of an inexhaustible and difficult to treat topic in a single official version. It is understandable why the proposed title exceeded by far the admirable effort of a single team. The intention, however, remains commendable in the absence of an official point of view. The dialogue remains open. Another unresolved dilemma comes from Romanian intellectuals who fail to agree upon a unitary picture of this phenomenon. Endless divergences in opinion and views has become a profoundly Romanian custom where pride is the main downside. With the thought of these situations, our scientific approach started by detaching from what has already been written, focusing on a fundamental research. In this spirit, we approached a documentary analysis of the files available in the National Archives of the State, a thesaurus of testimonies of a recently bygone world. In the first phase, we analysed a part of Security Files from 1919 to 1945. In the second phase, we partly analysed the Comintern archives, under the form of filed copies and, in the third phase, we consulted several secondary studies through which we also took into account other researchers' perspectives.

The theme is part of the psycho-social area, the structure of the work being determined by the analysis of two essential factors: a). The ambiguous positioning of the founding leaders over the Great Union in the period 1921-1923. b). Illegal nature and the cominternist origins of the R.C.P. (Romanian Communist Party). It is known that the first conflicts between the Communist leaders and the Romanian State Authorities began before the Party was founded.

A first cause is given by the anti-national character of the movement, and two other causes were due to the unconditional affiliation of the Party to the Third International and the direct subordination of the Party to the Comintern and Moscow. The subordination of the Party to a foreign authority has involved a dilemma from the beginning, regarding the concept of a political Party. The research questions start here. Beyond this debate, there are two further questions that are relevant to the research goals:

1. What are the main divergences between the first leaders and the Comintern, and how did these new changes affect the live of the new Party?
2. To what extent was the Soviet model of the *professional revolutionary* involved in the policy of cadres of the Communist Party in Romania?

The two questions we are trying to answer are in this case necessary to understand the psycho-social radiography of the Movement. An important limitation of this research is generated by the huge abundance of information found in the archives, which is why

we have made a strict selection of information considered to be priority according to the proposed objectives.

The chimeric personalities of three *professional revolutionaries* in the history of the R.C.P. (1921-1924)

First of all, it is necessary to briefly state the birth of the Communist Party of Romania in order to clarify a problem related to the change of the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar, the cause for reaching a gap of 13 days. The change of the calendar was decreed in the Official Gazette no. 274 of 6 March 1919 (p.6, 114 – p.6, 115). This explains why the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia was moved from October 25 to November 7. However, the Romanian Communist Party continued to celebrate its birth on the old style on May 8, though it should have been moved on May 21st.

Just a few years after the Great Union, on the 8th of May, 1921, (after the old calendar), the first Congress of the Romanian Communist Party was established. "*On May 8, 1921, the congress was held in Bucharest, which consecrated the transformation of the Socialist Party into the Romanian Communist Party*" (Frunză V. 1990, p. 26-27). The statement is almost true except that the new Party was created by rupture and not by transformation. The split was possible due to a rough core of radicals that immediately accepted the 21 conditions (Cioroianu, A. 2007, p.20). "*With the exception of Gheorghe Cristescu, the first general secretary of the interwar Communist Party, all those who succeeded him were non-Romanians, an aspect highlighted in the overwhelming majority of the works dedicated to the history of interwar Communism. Besides Al. Danieluk-Ştefanski, the others came from the minorities, but were born in the provinces united with the Old Kingdom in 1918 and had Romanian citizenship (Elek Kőblős and Stefan Foris in Transylvania, Vitali Holostenco in Basarabia, Boris Stefanov in Cadrilater)*" (Diac, C , P.125). The pro-Soviet character of R.C.P. and the fear of the Romanian society towards the Russians generated a less popular rupture. As evidence from over 45.000 S.D.P. members, R.C.P. reached in 1922 only 2000 members (Denize, E. 2005).

The story of a professional revolutionary: Pavel Tcacenco

An important artisan of this schism was the less known Pavel Tcacenco (Romanian citizen of Russian ethnicity with his real name Iakov Antipov, born in Transnistria in 1901), leader of the communist faction in S.D.P., important founder of the communist movement in RSS Moldova and legendary founder of R.C.P..

Participant and witness of the Bolshevik Revolution, Pavel Tcacenco is elected in 1919 as secretary of the Communist Committee in Chişinău. His important influence on the Communist movement in Romania was determined by the Comintern policy and its relationship with journalist Alecu Constantinescu, an important communist leader in Bucharest.

PAVEL TCACENCO
EROU AL TINERETULUI
1926 – 1951
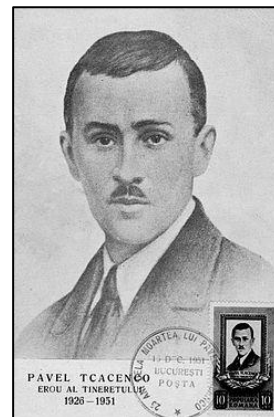
On August 6, 1920, the contact between the two organizations was interrupted by the arrest of Tcacenco, who is sentenced to death in his absence in Chișinău. Running in Iași, shortly after, Tcacenco became a member and an important leader in the S.D.P. communist group, decisively influencing the split and the emergence of the new Party. In March 1921, Tcacenco became a member of the Central Committee, but was arrested on March 26, 1921, and tried in the Spirii Hill Process (Pleșa L., 2014, p.36), where he was sentenced for a year with Gheorghe Cristescu, (the first General Secretary of R.C.P.), Elek Kőblős, Mihai Gheorghiu Bujor, Moscu Kohn and 267 other communists accused of treason by affiliation of the new Party to the Third International. The charging was motivated by the acceptance of the 21 conditions imposed by the Comintern, and especially by paragraph 12, which required members of the Party to act legally or illegally in the interest dictated by Moscow, a point considered by prosecutors to be a direct attack on national sovereignty. During the trial, Tcacenco acknowledges that he distributed communist propaganda material, but denies any affiliation with anarchist Max Goldstein, who would have led a criminal assault on the Senate. Eventually, the young activist flees from the country to Prague, where he works for Comintern. Returning to Romania to organize the Workers' and Peasants' Blocks together with Timotei Marin and Boris Stefanov, they are all arrested again, on August 15, 1926 and imprisoned for betrayal against national interests. Soon he escapes with the help of the Communists in Chisinau but he is caught later, tortured and shot at the border with the Soviet Union. The official communist propaganda considered that the illegal activity, torture and death of Paul Tcacenco are the martyrdom of a model to follow for any *professional revolutionary*. Killed at the age of 25, his image becomes a landmark of the authentic communist fighter by reaching basic objectives and features:

a. son of a Smolensk railway worker, a status that ensures the healthy origin of cadres
b. studying for a short time law in Petrograd, where he enrolled and participates in the October (old calendar) November (new calendar) Bolshevik Revolution, a status that legitimizes the revolutionary profession.
c. active member and agent of the Comintern
d. arrested and convicted several times in Romania and RSS Moldova for illegal activities
e. founder member of R.C.P.
f. tortured and killed for Comintern interests

His short life can be read as a common fragment of the interwar period, a less than peaceful period, in which Great Romania, recently formed and with a political system still too young, tries to cope with unknown challenges. On the other hand, the Communist movement has become a utopian attraction for the pro-Russians, eager to serve the ideals of the Comintern, although they also did not suspect the danger of the moving sands behind ideological promises.

Pavel Tcacenco is the prototype of an introverted young man like Nicolae Ceausescu, devoid of any oratory talent, but remarkable by his promethean ambition, fed by the chimeric illusion of a discovered and learned ideology in the initiatory path from Sank Petesburg. He wants to study Law, according to Lenin's model, he reads and comes to

believe in the bigoted model of the revolutionary profession. His enlistment in the Comintern confirms the high degree of action, adherence and conviction that a young man, easily manipulated, manifests due to his lack of experience. His acidic relationship with the Romanian authorities degenerated into an absurd and dangerous struggle which the young Pavel Tcacenco lost, missing the chance to understand that his struggle was imaginary and was produced in the name of a compatible ideal with the Soviet regime and incompatible with the homeland where he was born. The Anti-Romanian character of the Comintern was visible, yet it does not explain why even ethnic Romanians have fallen into this illusion, which, as we shall see, have thrown into the abyss of an anti-national vision.

Petre Constantinescu-Iasi, the opportunist prototype of the Romanian communist intellectual

Among other important figures of the founding members of the R.C.P., we find the professor and historian Petre Constantinescu-Iași, who became minister of Propaganda in 1945, member of the Romanian Academy in 1948 and director of the "Nicolae Iorga" History Institute in Bucharest. Concerned about his seniority in the history of the Communist Party, Petre Constantinescu-Iași has submitted several memoirs about the modification of some data on his biography. "*In a series of memoirs submitted to the Secretariat of the Central Committee of PMR and the Party Control Committee, he demanded that the age in the Party be recognized in 1920*!" (Cioroianu, A. 2014, p. 127). The acceptance of this year preceded the appearance of the R.C.P., his name, becoming linked to the founding of the Party by accepting the 21 points. Another matter is surprising: Constantinescu-Iași is a university professor, teaching Romania's history at the Faculty of Theology in Chișinău, yet he gets to collaborate with some ethnic projects of the Comintern. Moreover, in 1934, he became a founding member of the USSR Friendship Organization.
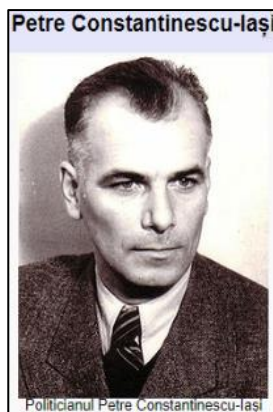
How could a university professor of history accept the 21 points? "*Constantinescu-Iași sustained that since 1920, when he used to be a history professor at Iași and also a member (for two years) of the Social Democratic Party, he made contact with the S.D.P. Communist group led by Tcacenco, and later at the constituting congress of the R.C.P. in May 1921, he had been appointed as rapporteur on one of the congress days and presented Party's position on press and propaganda issues.*"(Cioroianu, A. 2014, p.127-128).

The legacy and veracity of his statements were confirmed in the Report of the Party Control Committee (1965), which found the following statement: "*We believe that his request is fulfilled, and I propose that the CCP Political Bureau of the PRM establish his Party status in 1921*" (Collection 53, file C-156, vol. 1, tab. 2). Beyond this debate the following dilemma arises: if by determinism we explain why Paul Tcacenco is more philosophical than the philosophical, Petre Constantinescu-Iași seems to come out completely from these patterns.

Son of the institutor Gheorghe Constantinescu, a Romanian ethnic born in Iași, old style – educated and raised, later a history professor at a theology faculty, Petre Constantinescu-Iași accepts the pact with Comintern plans. The insistence of recognizing his seniority in the Party from the 1920-21 reveals that he has never agreed to the Great Romania project. Reading the 21 conditions is sufficient to understand why all the R.C.P. signatories were against the national interest. In conclusion, the case of Constantinescu-Iași, university professor in history, is the subject of another chimera. His image of a Romanian communist who wanted to be seen as a left-wing man cannot take him out of the Comintern painting.

Constantinescu-Iasi is a complex and typologically-difficult case. A professor of history, a socialist, and then dedicated communist, positioned himself against the Great Union, since the Comintern period. He embodies the prototype of a Romanian communist intellectual. A good at propaganda journalist, Constantinescu-Iași takes steps back in the delicate moments of the illegal period, dissociating himself from any connection with the R.C.P.. When arrested, in 1934, the teacher vehemently denies any connection with the Bolshevik propaganda of the Comintern, declaring that he only fights against fascism. Twenty years later, under the peaceful protectorate of the P.C.R., Constantinescu-Iași returned in full-power with another reported history, claiming that he was in connection with R.C.P. since the 1920s, at that time the Party didn't even exist. His contradictory testimonies about his role and seniority within R.C.P. make him look duplicitous. "*In 1934, he solemnly declared that his work was socialist and not communist. In 1954, he claimed to be a Communist ever since the early days of the Party. The two testimonies cannot be true at the same time, it is clear that Petre Constantinescu-Iași has mystified the reality at least in one of them* "(Cioroianu, A. 2007, p.129). Its duplicity is explained either by the advantageous or by the disadvantageous context of the two historical situations. In 1934, he was only a socialist, and in 1954, he declared himself a committed communist.

Gheorghe Cristescu, the socialist wandering son, who enthusiastically experiences the communist adventure

Gheorghe Cristescu "the quilt-maker" is the story of another chimera. Romanian Leftist Ethnic becomes the first General Secretary of the R.C.P. on 8th of May, 1921. Born in October 10, 1882, in the commune of Copaci in Giurgiu County, Cristescu is, in his first part of life, a convinced socialist. Between 1907 and 1920, he received leadership positions in the Union of Socialists from Romania, the Social Democratic Party and the General Trade Union Commission.

His oratorical talent and observation skills are quickly noticed and appreciated by Lenin, at the 1920 Moscow meeting. Asked by Lenin why he refused to sign 2 of the 21 conditions of accession, Cristescu replied: "*I can only vote what helps my country's development and to be more precise: being accepted here we went along with the other delegates I took along. In order to answer your question of why I voted against, I'm answering*
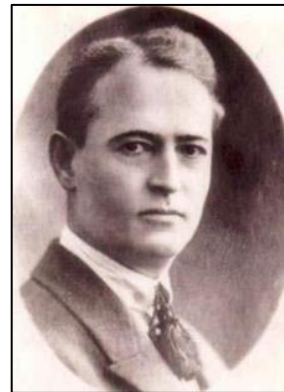
this to you: each country has its own objective and subjective development conditions. A country is economically developed, another belongs to the third world and another is in the middle; the intellect stays the same.

This state has made me think that I cannot play with the situation of our organization. And I, as a Commander of the Workers' Movement, know that the one who obtains with the minimum of sacrifices maximum gain is a distinguished commander, and then we know from the laws of evolution that one can not jump into the unknown. Germination in the mother's womb is done in nine months, and those who violate this law of nature risk an abortion. Then comrade Lenin told me: Comrade Cristescu is right. We will let each Party do their organizing and propaganda work according to their country's specificity"[1].

Cristescu's critique of the anti-national character of the Comintern is accepted and even appreciated by Lenin, which is why he gets to be appointed first Party secretary a year later. His distinct position differentiates him from other Communists, Cristescu and Pătrăşcanu being more Socialist than Communist leaders, simply because they opposed anti-national directives. The Romanian historiography did not keep much data about Cristescu between 1921 and 1944. Nevertheless, I discovered some original testimonies of the character depicted by the archaeologist Iancu Moţu, where I caught some interesting ideas about the situation of Romania, after the First World War. Asked about Dej's detention about the beginnings of the Communist Party, Cristescu replied:

"You know very well what Romania was, after the war (the First World War). Chaos, everyone was doing whatever came in mind. Then, as a socialist in Bucharest, I made the decision to run for elections to become a deputy. And succeeded, without much struggle. I had some funds, I was in good relationship with everyone, both the police and some politicians. One, a liberal, told me I was too handsome and smart for not getting into the Chamber. I believed him and I got here. Then came some Hungarian comrades from Transylvania and some Jewish comrades from Iasi and told me that Racovski (Cristu Racovki, the head of Ukraine) sends me greetings and that we ought to keep in touch, that there is something great which awaits to happen for the country. I knew he was among comrade Lenin's friends, who has great confidence in him, for what he had done for the soviets since 1916.

After a while, there came some comrades who told me that Lenin was dissatisfied with what was happening in Romania, that the socialists were revisionists and gave themselves to landowners and capitalists. That we had to do everything we could to hit them where it hurted most. It was, like, right after the comrade Racovski was, part of the delegation that made the decision to create the Comintern. There, in Moscow, Racovski announced that there was a Communist Party in Romania, but that it was working illegally because the bourgeois government had not yet lifted the state of siege. I knew we did not have a Party, but I knew that many comrades, especially the Bessarabians (Jews) were in Bucharest and that they were trying to hit the political regime. I knew that too. From Ardeal, the Hungarians were going to move against forced union with Romania, Kun (Kun Bela) was performing miracles in Hungary. So, we in Bucharest needed to help them out of all power. We were supposed to help them keep the Soviets in Hungary and help comrade Racovski hit the occupation regime in Bessarabia. So we organized ourselves. Me and others... (I do not remember their names) we have been

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[1] Dosarul Cristescu: Asasinat politic sau crimă pasională? online accessible at http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-arhiva-1254587-dosarul-cristescu-asasinat-politic-sau-crimapasionala.htm (consulted 28.06.2017).

tasked to make a great deal of agitation against government measures, to expose the exploitation of the peasants and workers of Bessarabia and Transylvania. Especially we had to interrogate the Chamber, make the atmosphere in the press. And there was enough room for that, as there where many newspapers that had their own men in backstage. Big problems were only in Iași where a worker from RMS (State Monopolies) Nicolina gathered a bunch of thugs who severely beat the comrades who put the red flag on some buildings. The flags were taken down and put the Romanian tricolour to our great disappointment. They asked the police to allow them to arrest our comrades who wanted to protest. They had a march there. The occasion was the funeral of a bakery worker. But the nationalists stopped any manifestation of sympathy and against the government on the grounds that some of our men had pistols. How can you not have a gun? How did you defend yourself from the police or nationalists? I had a revolver for a long time. Even in the Chamber was over me. Ion Munteanu. Ion Munteanu is the founder of a national right movement. He can be considered a kind of precursor of the Legion"[1]. The citation renders some of the image and tensions unfolded in 1921 shortly before R.C.P. was truly established. Cristescu replies this in a dialogue with another social-democrat, a certain L.I. In Aiud prison, between 1957 and 1964. The material was typed in three copies, and the original written with a pencil was typed and the three copies can be found today in the Library of the Romanian Academy.

On December the 2ⁿᵈ 1920, the first emergence signs of the R.C.P. appeared, a document signed by Cristescu, Popovici, Moscovici, Boris Ștefanov and other socialists, in which they agreed to all the conditions imposed by Second International. They were committed to "struggling with all their strengths for the theses and conditions to be" fully accepted "by the future Congress of the Socialist Party, to participate in the Balkan Communist Federation, whose decisions and decisions they will recognize, to make changes to The editorial office of the press to become a real communist and to propose and support Popovici, Cristescu, Moscovici, Carl Barta, Boris Ștefanov, Iancu Iliescu, Tănase Gheorghe, Rozvan and Bolintineanu to be part of the Central Committee, and Grigorovici, Jumanca, Flueraș to be excluded from the Party "(Ilie O., Ilie C., 2009, p.13).

The internal struggles of the Socialists have become quite deep among the various contenders at the head of a Party that had to decide whether or not to join Third International. The beginning of 1921 was tumultuous by the existence of three currents:

a. *The left-wing radicals, who all agreed unreservedly with the signing of the 21 criteria and unconditional affiliation to Comintern*
b. *The right-wing, which wanted to maintain Party's autonomy*
c. *The center, which wanted affiliation but with certain reservations*

Cristescu case becomes a chimera, as long as it is affiliated with the radical left, although his behaviour, discussions and decisions describe him rather as a moderate. He refuses to sign the two points of the 21 criteria and believes in Lenin's theses, but with certain reservations. Here is what Cristescu answers to the judges after he is arrested right after the Party's founding: "Does the fact that we want the good of this people and of the country they live in can be an act of breaking down the society? No, your honoured judges. And if you want to send us to prison only for this desire, if it takes us in, we will go,

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[1] Iancu Moțu, „arheologia" unei mărturii a lui Gheorghe Cristescu-Plăpumaru. Racovski și partidul care nu există accesibilă online la adresa: https://vasilegogea.wordpress.com/2011/04/18/iancu-motu-arheologia-unei-marturii-a-lui-gheorghe-cristescu-plapumaru/

your honoured judges, with the clear thought and the consciousness that through our sacrifice we have provided a better life for the others" (Tănase S. 2008 , p.46).

His more nationalist than comintern speech convinced personalities such as Iuliu Maniu, Nicolae Iorga and other interwar figures who witnessed a jury in his Spiri Valley Hill. Witnesses say that Iorga disapproved the arrest of this group, considering the act to be a state abuse. Yet, there is a contradictory duality between his presence in the radical area and especially his position as a freshly elected prime secretary at the head of the R.C.P. and the nationalist side of his discourse. His bipolar character marks once again the chimeric archetype of his personality.

The Second Congress of the R.C.P. took place on 3rd of October 1921, when Cristescu was reconfirmed at the head of the Party. The new statute provided the following article in which the R.C.P. reconfirmed its oaths to Comintern:

- Article 1. The Communist Party of Romania is a section of the Communist International. Ithas no goals other than those of the International to which it belongs.
- Article 2. The Communist Theses and Decisions belonging to Third International are binding on all members and committees, commissions, groups, etc. of the Communist Party of Romania. (Scurtu I., Otu P., 2003, p. 240).

In the 18th and 19th of February 1926 elections, Cristescu appears on the list of 26 positions for councillors, but is harshly criticized by Comintern for the alliance with the Socialists declared the death enemies of the Communists. As a result, in the same year, Cristescu is expelled from the Party by motion, motivating the following aspects: "*that he always had an opposite conception to that of C.C. As regards the Party direction in the national and trade union issues has shown liquidation offenses to Party members and governing bodies, has undertaken and continued a systematic campaign against the illegitimate Party against the C.C. and its representatives, seeking its discretisation in the face of Party members and workers ", etc.* (Ilie O., Ilie C., 2009, p.18). His response lacking of any self-criticism was sent to the Comintern in the form of a letter of protest against the anti-national character of the Communist Movement. *"We have objected to you that it is a great mistake to break the Party, that we will weaken the working class's fighting force, especially when it is clear that the bourgeoisie has teamed up not only on national but also on international scale ... I nevertheless listened and coming to the country I broke the Labor Movement. We are in the seventh year since the break of the Movement and instead of going towards progress, as you have said, we have come to destroy a movement. Today we have nothing, so ... I am forwarding to you my resignation as a representative of Romania to the International Communist Office."* (Ibidem).

The categorical rupture of the International and from R.C.P. led Cristescu to return to the socialists. He writes in his own newspaper: "The Socialist Triumph", setting the foundations for a new Party: the Socialist Party, then, in less than three years, in the lack of members for joining the Romanian Socialist Party. Gheorghe Cristescu "the quilt-maker", the first secretary of the R.C.P., has never been a communist in the true sense of the word. Its political character, more socialist than communist, was revealed through his critical attitude towards the Comintern. His relationship with R.C.P. was opposed to the relationship between the Party and the Third International. Although

his role is decisive in the emergence of this movement, Cristescu has repeatedly opposed the Party's interests. 1926 is the year when he realizes the gap between the chimera of his beliefs and the cominternist reality of his own Party.

The illegal period of the Communists in Romania officially began after the adoption of the Mârzescu law, from 19th of December 1924 and lasted until 23rd of August 1944, during which a massive monitoring held by the state authorities was organized of all the members and of their actions. In the background of the Special Intelligence Service (P.C.M.-S.S.I.) there are a lot of interesting data on the illegal activity of R.C.P. members. Suspecting the Jews with Romanian citizenship of cooperating with the Communist Party has become a habit in monitoring all their activities, even if in most cases there were no obvious evidence. Katy Sami is the case of the Ploiesti Jew accused of activating in the Communists' illegal Movement. In the official documents of the PCM-SSI he appears under the name of Katz Samy, the person mentioned through the following words: Katz Samy "who after the cession of Bessarabia disappeared, declaring that he is leaving to Palestine but is believed to have gone to the USSR" File no. 4-1931 I). The confrontation between Katz Samy and Elvira Petcu (a young woman) shows that there is insufficient information, her case remaining largely unclear. Another case is that of Pauker Mendel Emanoil, the uncle of Ana Pauker, who was suspected of having links with the Communist Party, although he only supported the Bloc of Democratic Parties. Pauker was regarded as a left-wing man, but not as a communist. In the file 5553, p. 124, it is shown that on 3rd of October 1931, Emil Pauker and N. Grauer requested the registration of "Adevărul" company in the Trade Register. In the file 3266 S.II – the 1940, a note is shown that Emil Pauker has a nephew named Henry Sulberg, who does communist propaganda in Ploieşti. Emil Pauker is not personally pursued for his own activities, but he is only suspected because of his nephew who in turn is only suspected of being in connection with the illegal. Another interesting case is that of Gheorghe Stere who protested against the Antonescu regime by radio broadcasting to the Romanians (Moscow Post: 6 o'clock, in Romanian). The peasants gathered data to make Gheorghe Stere's record and to prove his anti-Romanian character and his collaboration with the Russian forces which were demanding the liberation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina from the so-called "imperialist Romania".

Even the former collaborator of the R.C.P., Cristescu "the quilt-maker" appears as a suspect in the file 42/1943, though he has been activating for a long time in the Romanian socialist boat. After his dismissal in 1924, Cristescu is suspected that between 1943 and 1944 he would have resumed his ties to the Comintern. Here is what is said in a May 5th 1943 report. 3rd Chapter (P.C:M.-S.S.I. no. 2379, 42/1943): "Cristescu Gh. – the quilt-maker came to Bucharest in order to transport his family to Călimăneşti." In another report made on January 16, 1944 from the same file, it was stated that: "*We are informed that Gheorghe Cristescu – the quilt-maker would have an important role in the Communist organization in Romania."* Why did Cristescu, after being kicked out of the Party and immediately resigned to Comintern, would have wanted to get in touch with the communist organizations? A hypothetical answer could be given by some ideas that lived in the general context of that era where it was said that a victory of the allies would have brought the Red Army to Bucharest. The imminent hypothesis of this fact

probably led Cristescu to try to reconcile the communist camp with the socialist one, that he represented.

Conclusions

A first general conclusion is that the R.C.P. project was anti-national and unconstitutional, failing to meet the political and legal conditions in order to be called Party. Firstly, the R.C.P. was illegal from the first day of its birth by accepting the 21 criteria by which it was obliged to serve to interests established in Moscow. Secondly, R.C.P. was in a representation and subordination relationship to Comintern, which led to a direct interference and control over the power structures by appointing programs, leaders, decisions and actions. It was not possible for R.C.P. to be a Party, but a mere annexation of the Comintern present in Romania. His presence as a representative of a foreign organization was later considered by the Romanian authorities to be a danger to national sovereignty. The regulation of this anomaly was made only in 1924 by the Law of Mârzescu. The delay of the reactions was argued by the slow bureaucratic and legal process of justifying an already existing thing, a decision that could have been taken from the very first day of existence.

From the perspective of biographical and leadership analysis, the case of Paul Tcacenco is the story of a revolutionary professor slaughtered in Romania for the Bolshevik ideals. Tcacenco is the agent of the Third International, faithful to the Red Revolution and ready to fight for importing this model. The lack of experience through its pro-Communist and philosophical positioning quickly attracted the attention of the Intelligence Service, a situation that prevented him from activating in the public light. Recognized as a representative of the Comintern, Tcacenco realised the seriousness of the situation too late. Trying to avoid being prisoned, destiny will push him to death by desperate flight to U.S.S.R.. His revolutionary activity was later considered by communist authorities to be a role model. In his memory, some streets were renamed, and his name was strangely preserved after the 90's. The Pavel Tcacenco street in Voluntari commune provides him with a place in the post-communist collective memory.

Professor Constantinescu-Iasi is the perfect case of the opportunist who fought to maximize personal advantages. Although he is a professor of history, his personality's chimera is given by his position towards Great Romania. Recognized as the founding leader of the R.C.P. by promoting the 21 conditions, Constaninescu-Iași is a contradictory, opportunistic and slippery figure even of his ideological belief. In the interwar period, he chose to declare himself as a socialist, and after 1945 denies socialism declaring himself as communist since 1920.

Gheorghe Cristescu is the only founding leader of R.C.P. who criticized part of the adhesion theses, and is the one who contradicted Lenin, gaining his admiration. In the analysis of his biography, of speeches and decisions, we observe a socialist ideological personality that has strayed on the Comintern field. Cristescu did not criticize the project of Great Romania and seems to be the only person accepted in the Romanian political entourage. It is well seen and described as a charismatic. However, his communist experience ends in 1924 when he resigns from the Comintern and is

released from his duties within the Party. Cristescu was considered by the Communists a traitor, a political activist embroiled in the socialist coat. His ideas are animated by the struggle against the bourgeoisie he sees guilty for the injustices suffered by the working class. Communist ideology seems to be a way but not a creed in itself. Cristescu is the enemy of the bourgeoisie, but he is Romanian first and can not accept the Comintern-Communist version where there is no Great Romania. Cristescu is not the follower of violence, nor does he believe in the radical change of social-political order, the parliamentary way being his only option. His late rehabilitation during the Ceausescu era was an attempt to reconcile old socialists with new Communists, a gesture that was more symbolically regarded. Cristescu did not want to return to politics. His refusal was justified by the definitive schism between his belief and communist ideology.

A summary of these three cases is presented in the following conclusions:

(1) Pavel Tcacenco became the model of the *professional revolutionary* who tried to unsuccessfully import a Leninist model to Romania, misunderstanding the unequal differences between the two political systems.

(2) Petre Constantinescu-Iași embodies the opportunist prototype of the Romanian communist intellectual who is only concerned with the image and the rehabilitation of his past and the advantages he could gain by legitimizing his past.

(3) Gheorghe Cirstescu is the case of the socialist wandering son who enthusiastically experiences the communist adventure later to finally reject it through the incompatibility between his political vision and the Comintern Thesis.

Through the reached conclusions is justified the chimeric character of the three personalities who played an important role in the emergence of the Communist movement from 1921-1923. The R.C.P. picture of that time was preserved as a Comintern mask, failing to individualize and detach itself from the shadow of this international political colossus. Tcacenco is not interested in Greater Romania, but only in the Bolshevik Revolution; Constantinescu-Iasi is the socialist converted to a kind of principal Communism in the name of a struggle against fascism, and Gheorghe "the quilt-maker" remained as a socialist who was never a communist. In all three cases, personal beliefs have struck the chimera of ideological propositions in which none have been found, not even Tcacenco who imagines a liberating Communism of the dominant classes without understanding what is behind this movement. In each case, personal survival has become the only way of cohabitation with times prepared for wars, famine, and crimes. Tcacenco's death is heroic for Soviet Stalinism, but not for Great Romania, Petre Constantinescu-Iasi's duplicitous character saves him from certain dangers and helps him later, while Cristescu remains consistent with his theses in a world Who crossed three periods of deep social agitation: the Comminternist, the illegal and the official-communist period.

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FAN DRAIN DUE TO BRAND IDENTITY LOSS. EVIDENCE FROM ROMANIAN SECOND LEAGUE FOOTBALL

Vlad I. ROŞCA[1]

Abstract: *"Fan drain" is a term used to describe the loss of stadium-goers suffered by a sports club. While there are many reasons why supporters turn their back and walk away from the terraces (e.g. better entertainment alternatives, poor sporting performances, too high admission costs etc.), this research focuses on one of the problems that Romanian football was confronted with lately: the loss of brand identity. Many football clubs, rich in tradition, went bankrupt and were dissolved, part of Romanian football's history disappearing with them and, at the same time, important groups of fans who suddenly faced a situation where they didn't have a club any longer for which to cheer for. Some other clubs, even if still existing, were relocated to other cities due to the loss of support (mainly financial) that they had once enjoyed in their places of origin. The relocated clubs were separated from their fans, while the people in the new places of destination did not show any particular interest in adopting the "alien" teams. A decline in stadium attendances was one of the consequences. The research uses four brand conveyors (tools through which brand meaning can be created for a football club) as independent variables and correlates them with a dependent variable (match attendance) to run a regression analysis that aims to find out whether the creation of brand meaning and its transfer towards the fans can combat the decline in attendances. Romanian Second League football has been chosen as a sample. Results indicate that focusing on sports marketing tactics, such as offering match programs, selling admission tickets or improving PR activities can facilitate the process of neutral fans to adopt "alien" teams, can help football brands with low or no identity to easier relate with (new) fans and, overall, can increase match attendances.*

Keywords: *fan drain, football branding, sports marketing, brand identity, match attendances*

Introduction

After thirty matchdays completed in the Romanian second tier football league (2016/2017 season), the highest overall attendance at a game in the entire

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championship was witnessed on the 24th of September 2016 in Suceava, when local side Foresta defeated Dacia Unirea Brăila with 4-0, in front of 4,100 people. What once was commonplace – fans coming to the stadium to cheer for their home team – now seems odd. Even crowds of 2,000 or 3,000 people only gather on an exceptional basis. During the aforementioned interval, no sell-out crowds were witnessed ("sell-out", in itself, being a grandiose word-choice, as in most cases admission is free of charge), and the usual attendance figures range between a handful of tens of people and a few hundreds of them.

This article examines whether second division football clubs in Romania can increase match attendances by enhancing their brand meanings, through improved brand performance in what concerns customer service. It does so, at a time when Romanian football witnesses an unprecedented loss of stadium-goers. The decline can be easily observed both at top-tier league games, as well as at lower division matches. While first league football has been historically associated with the *crème-de-la-crème* of Romanian clubs, second tier (*Liga 2*) matches also had their slice of the cake as many of the clubs playing in the lower league(s) were highly representative for the local communities. Even though they might not have enjoyed live top-class football, the fans of second division clubs still used to find their way to the stadiums to cheer for their local teams in what Romanian popular culture came to label and to remember in the collective awareness as "*matinee football*": the usual kick-off for Liga 2 matches was and, in many cases, still is 11 a.m.

Figure 1: Average match attendances in Liga 2 between 2011 and 2016
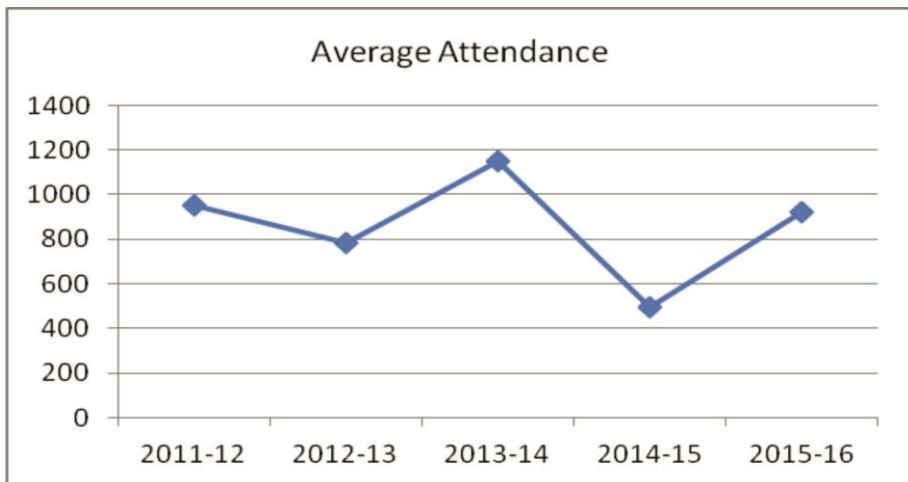
Data source: own representation, based on raw data collected from www.soccerway.com

Despite strong local allegiance, match attendances in Liga 2 have witnessed hefty downfalls. The average attendance in Liga 2 during the last five seasons (between

autumn 2011 and spring 2016) was 985 fans per game (and this considering that big parts of the crowds were attracted, thanks to several traditional clubs relegated from the first division, such as Rapid Bucharest or Craiova). A closer look at the numbers, graphically displayed in Figure 1, indicates that only one season was situated above the mean (2013-2014 with an average of 1150 fans), whereas the rest was placed below average, with a minimum of less than 500 spectators per game: 951 fans in 2011-2012, 781 (2012-2013), 495 (2014-2015), 921 (2015-2016).

This "fan drain" – supporters walking away from the terraces – can be a result of several combined determinants. Research literature has largely compelled these determinants into football influencers and socio-economic influencers (Falter, Perignon, 2000). Football influencers include variables, such as league position, goals scored or win-loss ratio (Simmons, 1996), while socio-economic influencers include alternative leisure activities, disposable income, or TV broadcasting (Allan, 2004). On a global scale, it is widely acknowledged that, throughout the years, professionalization and commercialization have changed the landscape in which supporters relate to and consume football (Merkel, 2007).

However, in the particular case of Romanian football, one of the reasons with high impact on declining attendances is the identity loss of football brands. Identity is what distinguishes a brand, what makes it noteworthy and what helps it stand out from the crowd of competitors. It is the unique touch that influences fans to follow a particular football club and not any others.

Unfortunately, during recent years many traditional football clubs (*Universitatea Cluj, FC Argeş, Gloria Buzău, Farul Constanţa, Rapid Bucharest, Oţelul Galaţi, Dunărea Galaţi, Ceahlăul Piatra Neamţ, FC Bihor Oradea, Oltul Slatina, Poiana Câmpina, FC Caransebeş, FCM Baia Mare, Unirea Alba Iulia, Minerul Motru, Callatis Mangalia, Sportul Studenţesc*) were dissolved due to mismanagement and financial problems. Some of them were re-established, but under different names and starting from lower leagues, others simply vanished. The void was filled by new clubs which, in spite of solid footballing quality, did not have neither the history (some of them established no longer than ten years ago), nor the appeal that the dissolved clubs used to have.

Once the traditional clubs went bankrupt, most of their fans disappeared, either because their beloved team did not exist any longer, or because they could not identify themselves with the newly re-founded teams. Another factor adding to the identity loss is that some clubs had to be relocated because they have lost the support of local authorities, who lacked the abilities or the willingness to continue pumping financial resources into the accounts of the clubs, making their mere existence a difficult problem. Since many of the clubs were private-public entities, co-owned by a private investor and the local authorities, when the financial support of the latter was lost, the owner decided to relocate the club into other towns, where public financial support was identified just as to have not the club dissolved. It was the case of ACS Berceni, relocated to Buciumeni/Buftea (45 kilometers away from Berceni), of Unirea Tărlungeni, moved to Ştefăneştii de Jos (180 kilometers away from the place of origin), or of Metalul Reşiţa, moved to Snagov (500 kilometers away). The local fans were left standing in their home towns, while the inhabitants in the destination towns didn't find any motivation to adopt the new teams, as these did not convey any particular meaning to them.

Most of these young clubs and of the relocated clubs seem to lack brand meaning that can be imparted to fans. This lack of authenticity is one of the reasons why fans do not choose to pursue football clubs any longer. Fans are no longer taking football clubs and their matches into consideration, at least not to the extent they did several years ago because they cannot identify themselves with the clubs. The newly established, young brands, could not offer any particular history or traditions to fans, which left them uninteresting. The fact is being demonstrated by the attendance figures during the first half of the current Liga 2 competitional season (2016-2017): the aforementioned maximum of 4100 and an average of several hundreds continue the downward trend of lower league football in Romania.

Probably, the most speaking example of the downfall in attendances suffered by relocated clubs is Metalul Reşiţa. Figure 2 shows the average attendances of Unirea Tărlungeni, ACS Berceni, Metalul Reşiţa and CS Baloteşti. The former three have all been relocated at the start of the 2016-2017 competitional season, after three years in which they have played their home games in their cities of origin. Apart from CS Baloteşti, a team that won promotion in the 2014-2015 season and seems to have stabilized their average attendnaces at around 250 people per game, the other three teams have suffered fluctuations, with the attendances decreasing below 200 people per game. The drop in the cases of Unirea Tărlungeni and ACS Berceni was milder, as these teams weren't very supported in their places of origin either. For Metalul Reşiţa, though, a club coming from a city and from a region known for their love for football, a dramatic, nearly tenfold decrease (from around 1500 spectators in 2013 to about 160 people per game in 2016) was witnessed.

Figure 2: Average attendances of relocated clubs – comparison 2013-2016
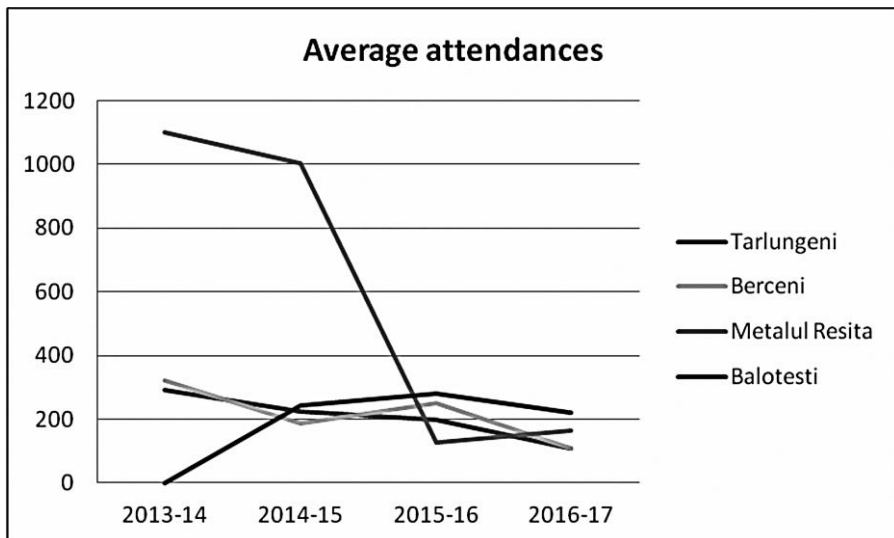
Data source: own representation, based on raw data collected from www.soccerway.com

Eventhough the decrease in attendance and the loss of fans are obvious, most of the Liga 2 football clubs do not do anything to make themselves noticed, to increase their brand salience, which would help in attracting fans.

Given that many football clubs have suffered identity loss, the rationale behind this paper is to find out whether creating (new) meaning for the football brands can help in attracting (new) fans to the stadium. This can be especially true for the relocated clubs which, deprived of their home fan base, may need to create new brand meanings, in order to attract new fans from the region where they have been moved to.

The aim of this research is to verify if creating brand meaning can combat fan-drain, especially if using meaning conveyors can bring fans closer to the football brand and, hence, to the stadiums. The Null Hypothesis is that brand meaning can be an engine for attracting fans. As such, the objective of the paper is to analyze the influence that brand meaning conveyors can have on match attendance of relocated clubs and of those clubs that have suffered brand identity damages.

Table 1: Research architecture (own representation)

Research question	Null Hypothesis	Research objective
Can the creation of brand meaning combat fan drain?	Brand meaning can combat fan-drain, as it is an engine for attracting fans to the stadium (*for football brands with anyor low identity*). Brand meaning can impact on improving attendance figures.	Analyze the influence that brand meaning conveyors can have on match attendance (*for football brands with anyor low identity*).

Literature Review

Knijnik (2015) characterizes football fandomship as a transcendental experience that helps people go beyond the limits of the ordinary conscious events which make up their individual daily lives. Being a fan is closely linked to the idea of membership to a group consisting of other people sharing the same interest in following a particular chosen football team. Following the team, either individually or collectively, creates an identity of belonging to that group of followers. The individual comes to be integrated into the "fan society" (group of fans), taking part to an experience, particularly different from daily life occurrences (Derbaix, Decrop, 2011). Keeping the idea, but moving it from a social to a commercial perspective, it can be claimed that the relationship created between fan and football team is intermediated by the football brand. The fan relates not merely to the team, but to its identity, reflected by the club's brand. A football fan is, thus, a believer in the particular ideas and values that are being reflected by the club's brand identity, becoming an advocate of that identity.

Fans follow football brands to satisfy their inner necessities (mind and spirit combined). Such intrinsic needs include building and expressing one's self-identity, used both for the psychological well-being of the self, as well as creating that sort of individuality, needed for standing out and differentiating from others (Ball, Tasaki, 1992).

According to Levy (1959), people do not only buy goods for their functionality, but also for their symbolic meaning. Purchase and consumption behaviors are strongly influenced by the emotionality of the brands. For sports fans – who are highly emotional individuals following a particular sports team, because of the excitements that a match or that this allegiance in itself can bring – brand choice is also a notion of self-identity. Fans introduce themselves through their preference for a particular brand. That brand becomes an elongation of the self, contributing to the creation of the individual's identity. This is true for individuals, but can also apply to groups of people sharing a common interest (in this case, fan groups), to whom association with a brand bring a distinguishing character. For brands to breed distinguishing character, they need to have meaning. Brands themselves need to stand for something particular, in order to transfer and implant that uniqueness of theirs to the followers.

That particularity comes from meaning. *Meaningful* or *particular* brands are so-called grown-up or authoritative brands, having the capacity to influence or even command thought, opinion, or behavior of their followers. Such brands are warrants of quality, able to produce an effect. Through their power of influence, they often come up as decisive, shaping the marketplace and fit enough to deal with distinct situations (Klink, 2003). They are clearly accurate (their significance being easy to understand), knowledgeable, acting as wardens of a particular idea/ideal, and always up-to-date (Klink, 2000; Klink, 2001). At the same time, such brands are deeply rooted in their history, a value that safeguards their durability, helping them to exist for a long time, without any significant deterioration.

Football brands share a set of notions pertaining to sector specifics. The differentiation is done at a deeper level of understanding, with the authenticity of each brand deriving from its interaction with fans and stakeholders. This corresponds to a school of interpretation that looks at brands as 'social processes', conditioning their existence on the interaction with consumers. Brands can only generate value, as long as they possess an idea that they can communicate to the consumer, and as long as the consumer receives, analyzes and perceives that idea, then sends its feedback.

The latest developments in marketing suggest a shift from brand-induced impressions to co-created meanings (Cova et. al., 2011; Fisher, Smith, 2011; Healy, McDonagh, 2013). Brands no longer impose to consumers, but work together with them for breeding impressions (Arvidsson, 2005; Cova, Pace, 2006; Cova, Dalli, 2009; Zwick et. al., 2008). As such, a brand is no longer what it believes itself to be, but what the consumers think it is. (Humphreys, Grayson, 2008; Ritzer, Jurgenson, 2010; Ritzer et. al., 2012). The social and psychological needs of consumers play a role in creating brand meaning. A brand is the reflection of how a consumer is treated. The consumer perceives the brand through his own lenses: he will designate cues to classify the brand based on how he experienced his interaction with the brand (Martínez-López et al., 2016). Brand imagery becomes an answer of the respect and attention with which the brand has treated the consumer, and it is often down to instants of interaction or even individual points of contact to make the difference between a successful and an unsuccessful brand (Balmer et. al., 2017).

Given the co-creation of value and the mirror-relationship that exists with consumers, football brands have to welcome their fans with marketing activities that can transform watching a game into a unique and unforgettable experience. This would leave fans with the option to associate the brand with positive feelings and meanings. Unfortunately, many local football clubs lack this marketing "*arsenal*" they could use for offering fans memorable ideas.

Brand meaning refers to the ideas, ideals, values, experiences or knowledge that a brand possesses (Mumby, 2016; Vásquez et. al., 2013). Meaning is the logical connotation of a brand, its signification. Hollenbeck and Zinkhan (2010) believe that brand meaning is made up by three items: brand-related discourses, interpretations, and sense-making. Brand discourse is an expression of thought on the identity of the brand. As discourse is usually perceived as a verbal interchange of ideas, in terms of branding this also involves the necessity of a communication-flow-process with a sender and at least a receiver of the conception. Discourse as a process of doing is a social interaction between an emitter and a receiver. Inferring this to branding, it lets understand that a brand can only exist in its capacity of meaning carrier having to act upon some meaning receiver. A brand conveys meaning which it communicates onto the market. Communication occurs by signs, sounds of gestures, each of them having their understood signification. "Understood" in this case refers to the synonymy existing with the receiver, who has a similar comprehension of the signs, sounds or gestures through which he can decode the meaning that the sender has loaded them with. Brand discourse, thus, is a mode of organizing brand ideas, brand ideals, brand values, brand experiences or brand knowledge (all in all brand meaning) in a language (consisting of signs, sounds, gestures) that can be sent to a receiver and easily understood and deciphered by him.

Since discourse is a behavioristic process based on mutual dependence (of the deliverer to send the message and the receiver to decode, interpret and understand it), it cannot exist without the second item stated by Hollenbeck and Zinkhan (2010): interpretation. Once the message acquired, the receiver has to make its meaning clear. The "fit of meaning" is essential to marketing success, as the consumer has to understand and resonate with the brand. Just by feeling the same values with the brand, can the consumer echo the brand's meaning. Else said, coming down to the third brick of the previously mentioned author's model, a brand has to make sense to the consumer. "Sense-making"is critical for a brand's success. If the brand does not make any sense to the customer, then the customer will not understand, nor follow it or consume it. A brand makes sense through the symbolic meanings that it communicates to the consumer. In view of the foregoing, a brand has to be loaded with meanings.

Some brands carry more meanings than others. The brands full of meaning are the so-called "emblematic" or "representative" brands. Marked by forceful expression, they manifest, embody and symbolize a particular condition of being. This condition of being is what mostly determines the brand identity, as each brand will stand for another state of existence, being suggestive and distinctive from its competition. Representative brands, hence brands full of meaning, are able to speak for themselves, are able to express themselves clearly or effectively. The ideals that they stand for are items of meaning that are communicated onto the market, giving authority to the brands and helping them serve as characteristic examples. Powerful brands are also influencers that can easily help in shaping consumption behaviour.

Their "antonyms" are "non-symbolic" brands: brands with none or too little meaning (identity) or values to allow them to stand for something. Lacking positive characteristics, they cannot be marked by any significant worth, and, hence, cannot contribute to the well-being of their prospects or followers. Lacking meaning, these brands are also lacking sense.

Meaning conveyors are features indicating the nature of something perceived (in this case, the nature of that particular brand meaning). Conveyors are cues/hints pointing out to the meaning of the brand. A brand discourse is then framed through a set of such cues. Once received and decoded, the cues help the brand follower to make sense of the brand's meaning and of what it searches to transmit.

As it often happens in football, fans end up following a team after having been influenced by forces such as the stadium's proximity to the habitation area or instilled passion (e.g. through parenthood or friendship). In such circumstances, alliance to a football team is less a matter of choice and more of a given, the fan having been influenced to follow that team, whatever its meanings. Consequently, the fan will transfer brand meanings onto himself which will shape his identity. On the other hand, there is the category of fans who choose to follow a team based on an act of judgement (after having looked at different options available). Here, the fan will choose that brand whose meaning is most closely to the fan's own set of values and believes. In both the cases, however, brand meaning is of importance as it shapes the long-term relationship between fan and football brand and how the former relates to the brand.

Conveying meaning is the act of "getting meaning into" a brand. Once meaning has been created, it needs to be instilled within the brand. This occurs through "brand discourse" (Hollenbeck, Zinkhan, 2010), as meaning is only valued when it makes sense to the receiver. Therefore, the marketing communications policy plays a role in breeding brands with meaning. Marketing communication tactics – such as advertising, public relations, spreading the word, exhibition, events, promotion – are tools through which (by using language of signs, sounds, gestures etc.) meaning can be "inserted" in/ transferred to the brand, and communicated to the brand followers. Apart from marketing communications (that also serve as a vector for moving meaning from the brand to the market and vice-versa), meaning can also be created through the product (quality, delivery, innovation, research etc.), brand ethos (the guiding believes of the brand), symbols, or organizational culture.

Methodology

Six clubs that have competed in the 2016/2017 season of Liga 2 have been selected as sample for this study: Juventus Colentina, Sepsi OSK Sfântu Gheorghe, CS Baloteşti, Metalul Reşiţa, ACS Berceni, and Unirea Tărlungeni.

Juventus Colentina and Sepsi OSK Sfântu Gheorghe are both representative clubs for their local communities. Juventus represents the neighborhood of Colentina situated in the north-eastern of Bucharest. Colentina is part of Bucharest's 2nd District (population ~305,000), with Juventus probably the second most important team of the district after Dinamo Bucharest. Established in 2011, as a continuator of the dissolved traditional club

„Oltul", Sepsi OSK is the most important football club in the city of Sfântu Gheorghe (population ~54,000), as well as for the entire Covasna County (population ~206,000). It is the highest-playing club in the county, accounting for some of the best attendance figures during the 2016/2017 Liga 2 championship season (amongst others, because, as the flagship team of the city, it attracts the entire attention, with fans not being split by local rivalries). In a similar fashion, CS Baloteşti is the representative team of the commune of Baloteşti, 25 kilometers away from Bucharest's city center. Important differences to Sepsi OSK are that Baloteşti only has a population of ~8300, and that it is part of Ilfov county, a territorial division that has put forward six of the twenty clubs staring the 2016/2017 Liga 2 championship, facts reflected in the lower attendances.

At the other end, Metalul Reşiţa, ACS Berceni, and Unirea Tărlungeni are all clubs that have been relocated just before the start of the season and which have lost their brand-identity and fan support once dislocated from the city of origin. Losing financial and logisitcal support from local authorities, the clubs were budgeted to new locations with the hope of receiveing better assistance. Berceni was moved 45 kilometers away from its original commune (population ~6,000) to the Buciumeni area of Buftea city (population ~3,000/~22,000). Unirea was moved 180 kilometers away from Tărlungeni (population ~3,700) to Ştefăneştii de Jos (population ~5,800). The most striking example in terms of distance is Metalul, displaced 500 kilometers away from hometown Reşiţa (population ~73,000) to Ghermăneşti/Snagov (population ~2,000/~7,300). These are striking examples not only for the high distance between the place of origin and the place of destination, but also due to the impact on sporting performances, fan-relationships, branding and marketing quality. In terms of playing squad, the players of the team were either fired and left back home – just for the club to take over the squad of the team from the place of destination that it replaced (Unirea Tărlungeni Ştefăneşti) – either moved hundreds of kilometers away to the new destination (Metalul Reşiţa Snagov), or left to commute extra miles to reach to the new stadium (ACS Berceni Buftea). Anyof the three tactics wasn't suitable for obtaining good sporting performances, as the league tables would ultimately show. The inhabitants from the places of destination could not find motivation to relate to the new team, either because it acted as a „*stranger*" or because it simply stepped in over the identity of the existing local team and disbandeled it. All three teams were perceived as „*alien*" teams, simply implanted into a new destination, with no emotional bounds to that place. Thirdly, all of the teams were moved to the same county of Ilfov, at the outskirts of Bucharest, leading to an influx of football teams in the area. At the start of the season, out of the twenty competing teams, seven were from Bucharest and Ilfov (Juventus Colentina, CS Baloteşti, CS Afumaţi, Academica Clinceni, plus the three relocated teams), which led to sort of a satiety for the inhabitants of this geographical region, who, anyway, were known to consume less live football than those from the original cities. With almost no brand meaning and no connection to the inhabitants of the destination places, the relocated teams suffered both sporting- and marketing-wise.

At the moment of conducting the research, three of the last five places in the league standings were held by Unirea Tărlungeni (16th out of 20), Metalul Reşiţa (18th) and ACS Berceni (20th), in between them standing CS Baloteşti (17th). Lacking brand identity and fan-ties, the average attracted attendances were all less than 200 people per game, while social media engagement was at a critical low. In contrast to them, Juventus

Colentina and Sepsi OSK Sfântu Gheorghe, the only teams in this study to enjoy the backing of strong local communities and a certain degree of history and tradition associated with their brands, ranked first and fourth in the league, drawing average crowds of 400, respectively 1560 people per game.

The sample of six clubs has been chosen to answer the research question as it included three brands lacking meaning and fan support (those of the relocated clubs), two brands meaningful for the local communities with decent support (Juventus Colentina and Sepsi OSK) and another one lying at the intersection of the two categories (CS Baloteşti). For testing the research objective, five meaning conveyors were attributed to each of the clubs, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Meaning conveyors for the football brands

	Average attendance (home games)	Match Program	Entry ticket	Displays on www.liga2.prosport.ro	Table position
JUVENTUS COLENTINA	400	5	1	104	1
CS BALOTEŞTI	219	3	0	79	17
METALUL REŞIŢA (SNAGOV)	164	1	0	86	18
ACS BERCENI (BUFTEA)	107	0	0	77	20
UNIREA TĂRLUNGENI (ŞTEFĂNEŞTI)	108	1	0	91	16
SEPSI OSK SF. GHEORGHE	1560	4	2	101	4

Data source: own representation, based on raw data collected from www.soccerway.com, from www.liga2.prosport.ro, and from own observations

The „**average attendance at home games**" shows the average number of people that have visited the home games of the football team, by the time when the study was conducted, and was computed by suming up the total amount of visitors at all home games in question, then dividing it by the number of games. This conveyor is an indicator of the overall sporting, branding and marketing capabilities of the football club, as a successful and appreciated football club draws the attention of fans.

Two of the meaning conveyors („Match Programme" and „Entry Ticket") depend on the club's willingness and ability to reach out to fans and offer them unique experiences when attending a game. The „**Match Programme**" asserts if the football club offers match programs to the fans coming at the stadium. This indicator was ranked between 0 (lowest) and 5 (highest). ACS Berceni was ranked with zero because, during the analyzed period, it did not offer any match programme at all to the spectators attending itsgames. Metalul Reşiţa and Unirea Tărlungeni received 1 point as they did offer A4 pages with the starting line-ups, but not in an organized fashion: the pages were not actually a true match-day programme offering exclusive content to the fans (such as articles, interviews, analyses, statistics, photographs etc.), but were simple black and

white copies of the mandatory starting line-ups that match officials have to put up and hand in to the referees and supervisors prior to the game. Moreover, the number of the copies was randomly chosen in a limited edition, not enough for all spectators, and the distribution also randomly occured (not at the entrance into the stadium, but in the stands to just several people). CS Baloteşti was graded with 3 as their match program was closer to what football fans are used to. Even if it was a simple production (a folded A4 page), it came in color and it had a front page setting the scene (announcing opponent, kick-off time, venue and referees), then came content pertaining to results of the previous match-day, current match-day fixtures, league standing and starting line-ups, as well as displaying a list of sponsors. Similar to the matchdays of CS Baloteşti were those of Sepsi OSK Sfântu Gheorghe, which received a better grade (4), as they provided more relevant content (including interviews with players and intros from behind the scenes) and they were distributed to all fans once with the purchase of the ticket. The best match programmes out of all analyzed (ranked with 5) were produced by Juventus Colentina: four full A4 size glossy papers in color, including the official poster of the game on the front page, a player interview on the second, statistics and details on the third, and the national anthem on the fourth page (the anthem being played at the beginning of each home game of Juventus), with the programme being distributed to all fans at the entrance into the stadium.

„**Entry ticket**" is a conveyor where only Sepsi OSK Sfântu Gheorghe and Juventus Colentina scored points as they were the only two teams out of the six conditioning stadium entrance on match ticket. CS Baloteşti, Metalul Reşiţa, ACS Berceni, and Unirea Tărlungeni all offered free entrance without ticket. Juventus Colentina also offered free entrance, but based on an invitation ticket that the fans would request and receive together with the match programme at the entrance in the stadium. The only club out of the six to actually sell match tickets was Sepsi OSK, at a price of 10 Lei general admission. The reason why „entry ticket" was selected as a meaning conveyor is that, just as the match programme, the ticket often serves as a memorabilia for fans who choose to keep or collect them. Hence, a match admission ticket can hold an emotional value and carry reminders with itself. Moreover, the entry ticket adds to the effort that a fan has to make in order to follow a game. Each game has its costs, be it opportunity costs (time needed to go to and to spend at the stadium, cost of transportation etc.), or real financial costs (price of the ticket). To a certain degree, having to pay for an admission ticket which would also serve as a memorabilia, adds value to the matchday experience of the football fan, encapsulating more emotionality within (knowing that wathing the match won't come for free but it requires some financial efforts, the fan will pay more attention to the game and watch it with more intensity, in order to make the most use possible of what he has paid for, just as not to loose any value of the purchase, which leads to a higher emotional involvment and to a stronger discourse with the football brand).

„**Displays on www.liga2.prosport.ro**" serves as a PR tool. *www.liga2.prosport.ro* is a website dedicated to lower league football in Romania, offering only dedicated content to the subject matter, a positioning and a strategy that helped it aquire a dominant position onto the Romanian football market, in terms of lower league football news. It is a website with national coverage and focus, currently market leader in what concerns second division news. Being present with news onto this website can increase the

popularity of the football brand, as it offers brand-related content to the wider public and it keeps brand discourse ongoing.

Last but not least, the fifth and final meaning conveyor is „**Table position**", capturing the position held by the teams in the league standings at the moment of collecting the data for research. Table position is an indicator of sporting performances (i.e. of the quality of football produced by the team, else told, the quality of the product offered to fans) – the better the performances of the team, the higher it is situated in the standings.

These meaning conveyors have been chosen because they were not used at their full potential, or even not used at all by the clubs involved in the analysis. A research hypothesis would be that, if these meaning conveyors are better used by the clubs, they can lead to higher attendances. In order to test this hypothesis and ultimately answer to the research question, a regression analysis was carried out, with the Average Attendance at Home Games being the Criterion Variable (Dependent Variable), and the other four variables included in the set of Predictor Variables (Independent Variables). The aim of the regression was to predict if and in which way home match attendances are influenced by the other four variables, which all serve as brand meaning conveyors.

Results and interpretations

Figure 3 fully displays the results of the regression analysis carried out for this research.

Figure 3: *Results of the regression analysis*

Regression Statistics								
Multiple R	0.999624443							
R Square	0.999249027							
Adjusted R Squar	0.996245135							
Standard Error	34.67441134							
Observations	6							
ANOVA								
	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F			
Regression	4	1599807.019	399951.7546	332.6514437	0.04109554			
Residual	1	1202.314802	1202.314802					
Total	5	1601009.333						
	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95,0%	Upper 95,0%
Intercept	-3120.697246	638.9738884	-4.883919832	0.12857306	-11239.63029	4998.235801	-11239.63029	4998.235801
Match Program	118.9812392	23.99567896	4.95844437	0.126691618	-185.9127704	423.8752489	-185.9127704	423.8752489
Entry ticket	1039.479518	38.86408636	26.74653171	0.023790875	545.6644799	1533.294556	545.6644799	1533.294556
PR on Liga2	17.26953528	5.018706613	3.441033042	0.180049046	-46.49917845	81.03824902	-46.49917845	81.03824902
Table position	94.82891566	12.38908842	7.654228658	0.082703873	-62.58937835	252.2472097	-62.58937835	252.2472097

Source: own representation

The value of the Significance F (0,04109554) strengthens the solidity of the regression output, pointing out that the regression result has not been obtained by chance. There is only a minor 4.1% chance that the output was a hazard episode. The R Square of 0,99924 indicates that a significant part of the Attendance at Home Games can be explained by the set of independent variables. This couple of descriptive statistics lets know that offering a match program, offering or selling admission tickets, the amount of PR around the brand and the league position of the club strongly influence the fans' decision to follow a team live from the stadium. These independent variables have got a strong influence on football brand salience, i.e. the degree to which the football brand is thought about when it comes to the fan to decide on how he spends his leisure time (e.g. by consuming the match offered by that football club or by choosing other leisure activities, football or non-football related).

Research results confirm the Null Hypothesis, showing that creating brand meaning and communicating it through marketing tools can combat fan-drain. One of the most striking problems of re-located football clubs is that they have lost their brand authenticity once with the move to another location, which hinders them from having a proper brand discourse. The brand identity of relocated clubs has been damaged: these clubs mean almost nothing to fans. They have actually been separated from their home-based fans once with the relocation and moved into communities where they don't mean almost nothing at all. Empty of meaning, they aren't using any brand conveyors. Since no brand meaning exists, there aren't either any marketing communications tactics used for the fans – as there is nothing to be communicated.

As could be seen in Table 2, there is a striking difference between the re-located clubs and the traditional clubs in what concerns brand meaning and its communication towards the market of fans. While the two established clubs – Juventus Colentina and Sepsi OSK Sf. Gheorghe – offer Match Programs to fans and give entry tickets (Sepsi OSK sells them, Juventus offers the ticket for free), the three relocated clubs don't use any of the two in order to create meaning. Metalul Reșița and Unirea Tărlungeni have been rated with „1" for Match Programme as they actually offered a copied page official referee's report, though that isn't a match program in its true meaning, with content especially created for fans, but simply a page that has to exist either way for the referees. In opposition to Juventus Colentina and Sepsi OSK, the three relocated clubs don't create match programs because they don't stir too much of an interest amongst the inhabitants of the relocated venue, who have been more than slow in adopting the „new" team. They have hardly gathered between 100-170 average attendances per game, free of charge, as people would not pay to see a team that does not mean anything to them. As such, it is difficult to create brand meaning for the re-located clubs, because their brand meanings are rooted in the original place of origin, not in the place of destination, with which they find it difficult to associate with.

Juventus Colentina and Sepsi OSK, on the other hand side, do have a symbolic meaning for their local communities. They both enjoy own and distinctive cues which helps them position their brands against fellow competitors, offering them a noticeable position. These are not a bunch of relocated clubs, but two clubs with powerful local symbolism, projecting a salient image amongst their fans, which helps them be above average.

The *probability value* presented in Table 3 indicates that only 12,6% of the influence that offering a Match Program to the fans can have on attendance figures is obtained by chance, while only 2,3% of the influence of selling match tickets is down to chance.

Table 3: Probability values

	P-value
Match Program	0.126691618
Entry ticket	0.023790875
PR on Liga2	0.180049046
Table position	0.082703873

Source of data: own representation

This means that the cost of an entry ticket can account for up to 97.7% in a fan's decision to visit a game live, offering a match program up to 87.4%, a favorable PR up to 82% and the table position before the start of the game up to 91,8%. Else told, fans will decide, in an overwhelming manner, to go and watch a game from the stands depending on the cost of admission, on the position of the team in the league standings, on the favorable PR and on whether they will or will not receive a match program. Therefore, while the league position is rather harder to control, clubs should at least strive to improve PR, offer match programs as well as admission tickets, as these all strongly influence fan's decisions to follow the team.

The analysis of regression coefficients (displayed in Figure 4) shows that increases in match attendance can be expected if brand meaning conveyors are properly created and used by football clubs.

Figure 4: *Regression Coefficients*

	Coefficients
Intercept	-3120.697246
Match Program	118.9812392
Entry ticket	1039.479518
PR on Liga 2	17.26953528
Table position	94.82891566

Source of data: own representation

The match program and the entry ticket turn out to be the predictor variables with one of the highest possible impacts on match attendances. This research has rated match programs from 0 to 5 depending on their quality. 0 was given if a club did not offer any match program at all to the fans at the stadium, 1 was given if a match program – but with a poor quality – was distributed to the fans, and so on up to 5 with increases in points depending on the quality of the program. Quality was asserted as to the number of pages, the quality of the paper on which the program is printed, its content volume and accuracy. The regression coefficient shows that with every increase of a unit of

quality of the match program, this latter brand meaning conveyor can possibly bring up to almost 119 fans to the game. A club that offers a minimal quality match program (rated 1) compared to a club that offers no program can enjoy about 119 fans more at a game. Multiplying by 5 (considering the best program quality possible), a state of the art match program can bring up to roughly 595 fans to the game. The relationship can be explained through the fact that fans look at match programs as souvenirs that they can collect in order to have a memory of the experienced they have enjoyed at that particular game when the program was offered to them. Not only that match programs serve as memorabilia for fans, but they also induce extra meaning to the game being attended. A football game gains in importance when it receives widespread attention. The more attention is shifted towards a game, the higher the momentum that is built up around that game. Match programs can build momentum as they serve as PR tools where every facet of the game can be addressed in writing. Fans use match programs to research the ins and outs of the game that they will be attending shortly (as match programs are distributed at the entry into the stadium at matchdays, so they are read just moments before the kick-off of the game – as such, match programs help fans enter into the specific atmosphere of that game and live it more intensely).

Figure 5 shows the scatterplot diagram of the relationship between the quality of the match program and the average gameday attendances. The dots indicate that the relationship is not perfect, and this can be explained that the match program is not the only and most powerful influencer in fan's decision to go to a match. Some fans will ultimately attend a game irrespective if they receive a matchday program or not – it is to be taken into consideration, however, that if a ritual would be instilled to offer fans programs at each game, then fans would probably enjoy the gameday experience better and would then choose to return and attend future games as well.

Figure 5: Scatterplot Match Program,
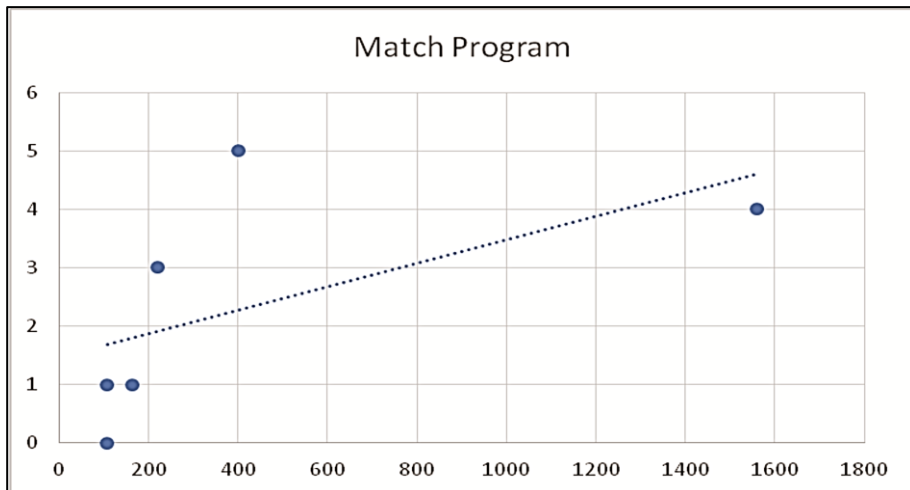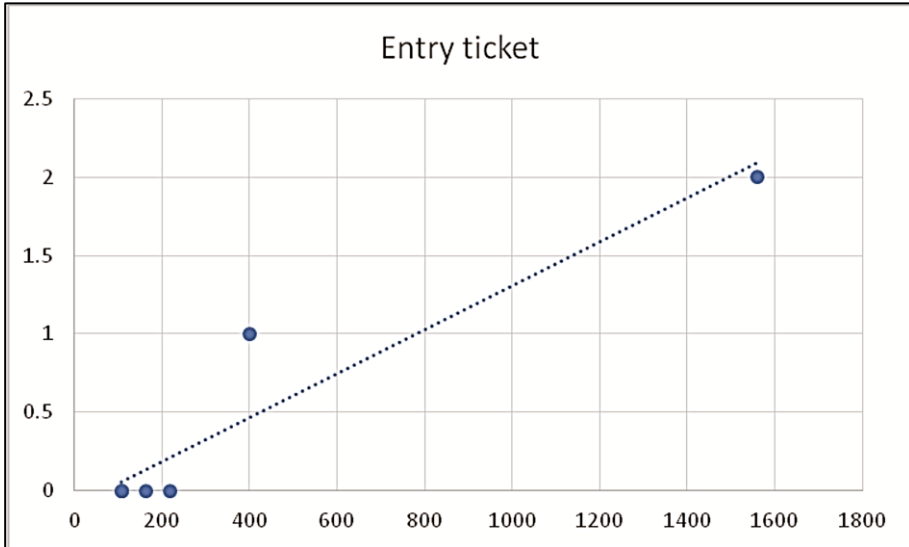

Source of data: own representation

Theoretically, interpolating on the scatterplot trendline, it can be observed that offering even a medium quality program (3) can account for up to 800 fans at a game, while upping the ante to a 4* program can bring up to 1200 fans.

Looking at the "entry tickets" variable, the regression coefficient indicates that the potential sale of match tickets to fans could bring up to 1039 fans to a game. On the one hand side, this result turns out as a surprise given that many of the Liga 2 matches analyzed here have been offering free admission. Nevertheless, on the other hand side, Sepsi OSK, a club that sold entry tickets for 10 Lei per game during the 2016-2017 season has accounted for the best average attendance in the study, while Juventus, a club that offered tickets (for free) for the second best. The clubs that did not offer match tickets had the lowest attendance figures. Such a phenomenon can be explained through several factors. First of all, the admission ticket is also a memorabilia that fans can collect and it also gives momentum to a game. Usually, friendly matches or matches lacking importance (e.g. in lower leagues) can be attended free of charge because of a lower quality and because they do not mean very much to fans. However, true fans want their beloved team to stand for something and would be ready to pay an admission charge in order to see it play. Charging an admission fee is a symbol of the importance of the game. The higher the importance, the higher also the admission price. Fans would rather pay extra to see an important game than to attend a trivial game for free. If a league or a club strives to increase its quality, then it should promote its games as being important games to follow, which would mean charging admission fees. The price elasticity must be also taken into account, as charging too much would keep fans away, but, on the other hand side, charging a reasonable fee should not ward off fans. Moreover, in many instances, fans themselves are the ones willing to pay admission charges, as that money flows to the revenue streams of their beloved club, this being a financial aid that fans are happy to offer to their favorite club, hoping that the money that they have paid will ultimately reflect in higher investments made by the club and, consequently, better footballing quality or better matchday experiences that the fans can enjoy. Statistics show that fans would be ready to pay to attend a game and Liga 2 would actually benefit of this. The scatterplot in Figure 6 indicates this relationship: the bottom left corner displays that for matches where no entry ticket was given to fans (either free of charge or against money), the attendance figures were situated at roughly 200, whereas cases in which tickets were offered or sold accounted for better attendances.

However, though, it is difficult for a relocated club to charge admission fees, as fans would most probably not be ready to pay for watching a team they cannot identify with. Selling tickets would ripe benefits for clubs properly anchored within their local communities, where their local/regional brand symbolism means something special to fans, and the latter ones would be ready to make the financial effort to pay in order to be granted associations with that brand. Nevertheless, even if not charging money, relocated clubs should at least try an effort to offer tickets for free, as Juventus Colentina did throughout the 2016-2017 season. The symbols on the scatterplot diagram stand for no ticket at all ("0"), ticket handed in for free ("1") and ticket sold against money ("2"). Even offering a ticket for free would mean more for fans than offering no ticket at all, because that piece of papers acts as a souvenir for them and

creates some memories. According to the scatterplot, relocated clubs wouldenjoy about 200 fans more if they included free-of-charge tickets into their matchday experience.

Figure 6: Scatterplot Entry Ticket

Data source: own representation

A problem of the analyzed relocated clubs was their poor sporting performances, aside the poor branding and marketing communications initiatives. The regression coefficient indicates that one-unit increase in the league's standings can account for 95 fans more, a fact also demonstrated by the trendline in Figure 7. Fans are attracted by the sporting performances and wish to see a good game if they go to the stadium, so the better the team's position in the rankings, the higher their brand impact on fans. At the moment of collecting the data for the study, the relocated clubs were all at bottom of the league's table, between the 16th and the 20th position, out of twenty teams competing in the league, which meant they had to struggle with attendances of around 200. A proper management on a longer run can help a team ascend in the league tables, which would also mean drawing the attention of fans.

Last but not least, the PR that the football brands enjoy on the website portal *www.liga2.prosport.ro is important*. PR constitutes of free advertising which can lead to higher brand awareness amongst the fans. The more familiar one is with the football brand, the higher the chances that he desires to follow that team to the stadium. Research results show that one unit of good PR can influence up to 17 people to come to the stadium. Given that PR is a marketing communications tool that can be internally employed by football clubs as well (e.g. press conferences, videos, interviews, brochures, posters, promotions, publicity etc.), clubs should invest more in creating and

delivering PR content as this would improve brand reputation and brand recognition that would determine fans to come closer to the club.

Figure 7: *Scatterplot for Table Position*
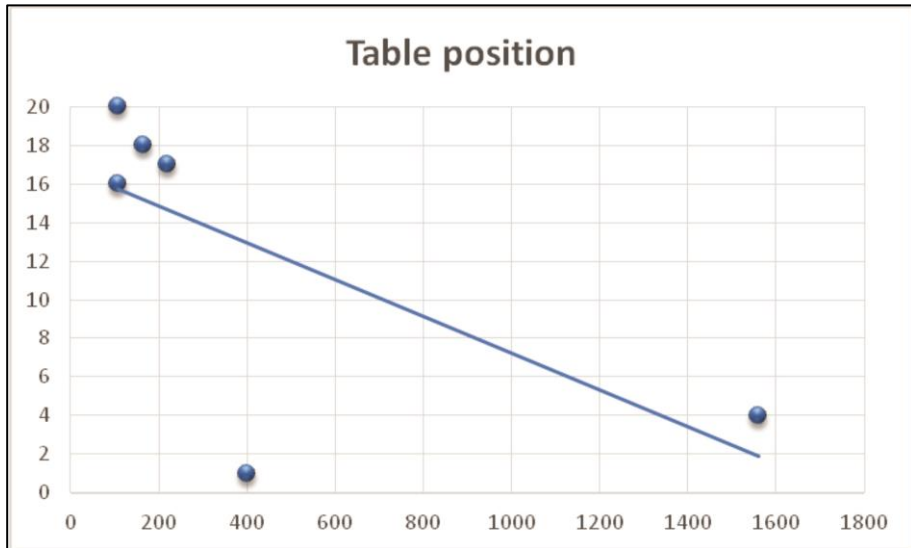
Data source: own representation

Conclusions

Research results confirm the Null Hypothesis, indicating that second division Romanian football clubs that have been relocated and have consequently lost their local fan-base and relevance can use branding strategies and tactics to create and communicate brand meaning to combat fan-drain. For the moment, most of the relocated clubs do not have any brand discourse at all. The management of the football clubs should engage in using meaning conveyors and create new meaning for the football brands so that they can increase brand salience and help the clubs stand out: as shown in the research, this would help in attracting fans. Research findings can be extrapolated to other leagues in Romanian football, but this study has particularly chosen to focus on the second division, as this is a competition that hosts a mix of traditional and "non-traditional" (colloquially known as "*plastic*" clubs). Clubs that have been relocated from their places of origin can still use the power of marketing communications and branding in order to improve their fan communication and combat one of the most severe problems of Romanian football at the moment: "fan drain".

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A RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS OF A WATER SECTOR REFORM IN GHANA: THE INTERPLAY OF UNBALANCED POWER AND BENEFITS

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Abstract: *This paper argued theoretically that power relations matter in public sector reforms. This is empirically demonstrated with a case of a management contract from Ghana. The study finds strong evidence that the power of different groups to obstruct rules that are against their interest clearly affects enforceability. This conclusion is drawn from the analyses of the contract document, the technical evaluation report on the contract, related empirical studies and face to face interviews. The study has significant implication for both theory and practice as it propels reformers to rethink the role of power relations among institutions in public sector reforms.*

Keywords: *Political settlement, management contract, Ghana, reform, power*

Introduction

The public sector seems to be the hub around which all political systems revolve. It is therefore not surprising that the feasibility of a regime depends on the efficiency of the administrative institution implementing the regime's policy (March & Olsen, 1983 in Ohemeng & Anebo, 2012). Many developing countries have remained under developed as a result of ineffective public sector (Kojo, 2000; Ngowi, 2008; Ohemeng & Anebo, 2012; Sakyi & Azunu, 2013) recquiring calls for public sector reforms.

The focus of this study is on NPM reforms and reforms related to organisational restructuring or decoupling. These categories of reforms focus on the nature and division of responsibility within and outside government but more significantly, they have focused on the efficient, effective, and accountable manner of delivery of service by public sector organisations (Ohemeng, Anebo & Adusah-Karikari, 2012). Indeed, one might say there is nothing worthy of research as far as public sector reforms are concerned, because of the sheer volume of existing literature in the field. However,

there appear to be very limited studies on political settlement approach in the study of public sector reforms (Hirvi & Whitfield, 2015).

Besides the point that political settlement approach has been under studied in the area of public sector reform, it is my conviction that the approach provides an alternative and robust exposition to understanding public sector reforms. Generally, the paper seeks to examine the reasons behind the poor performance of the many reforms in SSA by answering three major questions. (1) Why have successive public-sector reforms failed to yield the desired results? (2) What is the nexus between institutional power and institutional benefits in determining the outcomes of reforms? (3) What reasons accounted for the non-renewal of the contract between Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL) and Aqua Vittens Rand Limited (AVRL)? These questions are explored using political settlement literature.

The qualitative approach to research is employed for this study. A critical review of secondary literature was conducted. In addition, interviews were conducted to support the secondary literature. The institutions that participated in study were GWCL, AVRL, PURC and the Ministry of Water Resources Works and Housing. These institutions were directly involved in the implementation of the management contract – they can be referred to as insiders. Furthermore, the researcher saw the need to seek some outsider perspectives on the management contract. These outsiders were civil society organisations that were considered stakeholders in the management contract. These organisations were actively involved in the management contract from its formulation through to its expiration. ISODEC, CONIWAS and NCAP were the civil society groups actively engaged in the contract. The Public Utility Workers Union of TUC was also included in the study. A total of nineteen (19) subjects were interviewed for the study.

The Political Settlement Literature

Political Settlement (PS) views powerful stakeholders as rational actors who deploy their power to influence institutions to serve their interest and at the same time produce some acceptable level of development and political stability (Parks & Cole, 2010). According to Khan (2010), power is an important facet in institutional analysis. He argues that the power of different groups to contest, obstruct and oppose rules that are against their interests potentially affects the implementation of institution or reforms. Thus, for institutional rule to be well enforced, it should have the capacity to affect efficiency and growth by changing the types of decisions that can be made and the costs of making these decisions. However, institutional rules are not just limited to decisions and the costs incurred in arriving at such decisions, they also involve the distribution of net benefits in making these decisions.

The combination of costs and benefits associated with institutions helps to explain why they may face high or low enforcement costs in different contexts (Ibid). At any point in time, in an institutional set up, there is a structure of norms and formal implementation capabilities; the likelihood for the difficulty in enforcement to be greater will depend on the distribution of benefits and consistency with the distribution

of power between the groups affected by the institution (Ibid). Powerful groups are expected to resist the implementation of a reform that is against their interest.

Therefore, a political settlement implies an institutional structure that creates benefits for different classes and groups in line with their relative power. An institutional structure that attempts to achieve economic viability with a distribution of benefits that is unacceptable to powerful groups will collapse. Khan (2010) also referred to '*holding power*' (Ibid, 20), that is how long an institution can hold out against other institutions in actual or potential conflict. Holding power is a function of several different characteristics of an organization, including its economic capability to sustain itself during conflicts, its capability of inflicting costs on competing organizations its capability to mobilize supporters to be able to absorb costs and its ability to mobilize prevalent ideologies and symbols of legitimacy to keep its members committed (Ibid). In summary, similar institutions may exhibit significantly dissimilar results in different contexts mainly due to differences in the distribution of power and benefits among implementing institutions.

The Management Contract

This section of the paper briefly presents the context of urban water service delivery in Ghana, prior to the involvement of the private managers, as well as some details of major aspects of the management contract. Generally, the performance of urban water service delivery in Ghana before the reform was characterised as unsatisfactory. The operational efficiency of the public provider was said to be on decline, one-third of the system was inoperable, Non-Revenue Water – NRW stood at 50% while tariff collection was at 77%. These difficulties were largely blamed on managerial and technical challenges, rising demand for potable water and economic decline during the late 1970's and early 1980's. Furthermore, deprivation of investment in the sector and the loss of skilled manpower were identified as part of the causes for the poor performance of the sector (Whitefield, 2006; European Union, 2010; Shang-Quartey, 2013; Hirvi & Whitefield, 2015).

On details of the reform, it was basically, a Public Private Partnership – PPP and typically a management contract between the government of Ghana, represented by the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL) and Aqua Vitens Rand Ltd (AVRL) from 2005 to 2011 (GWCL, 2005). For the avoidance of ambiguities, AVRL was the private partner and was also referred to as the Operator – these terms shall be used interchangeably in this paper. GWCL was the public partner and was also referred to as the Grantor – again, these shall be used interchangeably. The contract document is large and it would not be possible to give an account of the entire document in this section. Therefore, only some important details are highlighted. The management contract was part of a larger urban water project by the government of Ghana which had the following objectives:

1. To expand the reliable supply of safe water in the urban areas;
2. To ensure that low income consumers have access to potable water at affordable prices;
3. To ensure sustainability of the sector through cost recovery;

4. To ensure an adequate and steady flow of investment funds, with an emphasis on low cost and concession financing;
5. To support the introduction of the private sector into management and operation of the sector under this Management Contract

Objective '5' of the urban water project subsequently translated into the partnership or the management contract between GWCL and AVRL. The management contract had seven service standards that the Operator or the private partner had to achieve.

1. Abstraction of Raw Water
2. Improvement of Treated Water Quality and Pressure:
3. The Reduction of Non-Revenue Water
4. Enhancement of the Efficiency of Treatment Plant Operations
5. Design Customer Response Plan
6. Maintain Customer Accounts Receivable
7. Design a Plan Interruptions and Emergency Actions – this was to be done in collaboration with the Grantor.

The Allocation of Lopsided Benefits to the Private Partner-AVRL

An analysis of the contract document demonstrates that the Operator was granted many benefits with virtually no liability, whereas the Grantor had too many liabilities with virtually no benefit. Some of the benefits are listed below:

1. Under the contract, the Grantor was expected to grant the Operator access to all lands within the Service Area, the Operator needed to facilitate its operation and this was to be done *free of charge*. This right was also extended to all agents of the Operator.

2. In addition to the above benefit, the remuneration of the Operator includeda base fee, which was the equivalent of the bid price, $15 million according to the field data. The base fee was to be paid monthly according to the payment schedule, which should not be less than 85% of the average base fee. However, the base fee was subject to either a reduction in case of non-performance or an increment in case the Operator exceeded its target, but this penalty reduction should not be construed as a liability since the conditions surrounding the reduction was heavily skewed in favour of the Operator. For example, the contract ensured that the maximum cumulative liability of the Operator to the Grantor did not exceed 20% of the aggregate Base Fee payable by the Grantor to the Operator in a year.

3. The contract further granted the creation of a Revenue Collection Account (RCA) into which all amounts received by the Operator from customers were lodged. Other revenues of the Operator were lodged in the RCA, except the base fee. To put icing on the cake, the Revenue Collection Account was left under the exclusive care and control of the Operator. This, in my opinion, completely crippled the Grantor in terms of compelling the Operator to meet performance targets through financial controls. Penalty reduction of the base fee could have been an effective

tool to induce performance from the Operator, but again, its potency was weakened by the very act of granting control of the revenue account to the Operator. With this provision, even if the Grantor did not pay the entire base fee of the Operator, the Operator could conveniently rely on the revenue collection account without being hurt by the withholding of its base fee.

4. As if the benefits granted to the Operator was not enough, the contract made it obligatory for GWCL to retain and discharge the credits and all other debts, liabilities and obligations in connection with Existing Facilities and Services prior to the Debt Rationalization Date. Afterwards, such amounts were to be paid from the Revenue Collection Accounts and also remained the responsibility of GWCL. To add salt to injury, the Grantor or GWCL fully indemnified the Operator against all lawful costs, claims, demands and liabilities made by any third party to the Operator, unless such credits or the debts, liabilities and obligations were caused by gross negligence of the Operator.

5. The only visible benefit that accrued to the Grantor under the contract was the right to reasonable access during normal working hours to premises, works and sites of the Operator for the purposes of inspection and certification. This right was however restricted with a caveat that such access should be honoured to the extent it does not disturb the Operator's performance of its obligations under the Management Contract.

This was the extent to which the contract left GWCL with virtually no benefit. The Operator, on the other hand, walked into the contract empty handed except for the three-million-dollar performance security provided, which was again surrounded with caveats favourable to the Operator. The only benefit the Grantor could have ever hoped to derive from the contract was improved performance from the Operator. Sadly, this was snatched the very instant the contract made the payment of the base fee mandatory and also, the moment GWCL relinquished control over the Revenue Collection Account to the Operator.

The Overwhelming Powers of the Grantor- GWCL

Contrary to PS theory, the Operator was given many benefits, but very little power over control of affairs, whilst the Grantor was granted overwhelming power with little benefit. The grand powers of the grantor are listed below:

1. One of the major flaws of the contract had to do with the management of seconded staff. Under the partnership, the seconded staff continued to work on the terms and conditions of their employment with the Grantor. They remained employees of the Grantor per the contract and the Operator in consultation with the Grantor determined their salaries. More fascinating was section 7.2.2. of the contract which required the Operator to assign duties, work location, manage and discipline the Seconded Staff in order to accomplish the objectives of the Management Contract. Yet, the Operator was not granted the sole mandate to decide on issues of sanctions and rewards pertaining to the seconded staff. Such requirement only served to grant a disgruntled Grantor the power of reprisal attack.

2. Furthermore, many aspects of the contract tied the output of the Grantor to the input of the Operator which worked to strengthen the hold of the Grantor on the Operator. For example, programmes such as the procurement and installation of bulk meters were important requirements for the reduction of NRW. Surprisingly, these were made the responsibility of the Grantor.

3. Moreover, it was the responsibility of the Grantor to secure finance for the capital investment programmes by the Operator. Furthermore, the Grantor had to assist the operator in its relationship with the Republic of Ghana authorities including but not limited to obtaining any authorizations as may be required and tax exemptions.

4. Last, but not least, the definition of Customer Response Time was also to be determined jointly by both the Operator and the Grantor.

By the forgoing provisions, the hands of the Operator were tied in terms of making any meaningful progress in the enforcement of the contract considering the questioning of the competence of the Grantor in managing urban water service in Ghana. It should be logically expected that the Grantor would attempt to stall the performance of the Operator. According to Shang-Quartey, "*Forcing a group of people to declare themselves as incompetent could be a bitter pill to swallow but when a step is taken further to put key decisions for the success of the 'competents' in the hands of the strategically placed incompetents, then the 'competents' are likely to suffer reprisals*" (Shang-Quartey 2013, p. 51).

The Interplay of Unbalanced Power and Benefits

Why did the quality and quantity of services remain unchanged under the new manager?

The answer to this can be found in the unbalanced distribution of benefits and power between the two main organisations placed in charge of enforcement of the management contract. This assertion finds support in the work of Therkildsen (2000) that there is likely to be substantial resistance in many line ministries to changes in power relations that will result from reform and that ministries and political-administrative elites may support reform initiatives that create new opportunities for them.

The presence of grey areas and contractual provisions that required some decisions to be made jointly by the two parties created room for the Grantor to stifle implementation of the reform. For instance, the two parties were supposed to jointly define Customer Response Time (CRT), but they could not come to a consensus on that. The absence of clarity in the definition of some of these concepts created loopholes for GWCL to stifle the enforcement of the contract.

Respondents considered that the presence of these grey areas translated into delays in implementation. As confirmed by the audit report, at the end of the fourth year, the Grantor had not agreed to the Operator's definition of customer response time (Technical Audit Report, 2010). Had the contract made the determination of CRT a sole responsibility of Operator or probably a responsibility of the Operator and an independent partner such as the Public Utility Regulatory Commission-PURC, there might have been a better chance of swift resolution of disagreements. One respondent captured the confusion over CRT as follows.

"... for instance, Customer Response Time, the Operator understands the interpretation as, if a customer reports any problem he has, then I respond to the customer, whether it solves the problem or not, I have responded, but the Grantor also says no, our interpretation of CRT means by response you are solving the problem, yet some of the complaints were beyond the powers of AVRL" (Personal interview, 2012).

By the foregoing quote, it seems there was confusion on the form customer response should take, that is, does responding to customers include resolving a customer's problem? GWCL might ask the question why to monitor a problem, if you cannot fix it? The difference between a competent and an incompetent organisation would lie in the ability of the competent to fix problems of the customers. Since the competence GWCL was in disrepute, they were not going to allow the Operator to take the easy path. This could be achieved by ensuring that the Operator fixed problems of the customers and did not merely monitor problems.

Another important service standard the Operator was tasked to meet was the reduction of Non-Revenue Water-NRW, by 5% annually, which should sum up to 25%, by the end of the fifth year. However, there was a major imbalance regarding the arrangement of power and benefit under this service standard. The contract granted Grantor the responbility to embark on projects such as the procurement and installation of bulk or zonal meters, which were directly linked to the reduction of NRW. The Grantor was also supposed to embark on capital investment up to the tune of $80 million, during the contract period, to facilitate the reduction of NRW. In other words, the output of the Grantor had been a direct and important input of the Operator, if NRW was to be reduced. The procurement and installation of meters were supposed to be done prior to the commencement of the contract. Surprisingly, an examination of the Technical Audit Report (2010) revealed that at October 2010, that is one year to the expiration of the contract, bulk meter installation was not completed and no bulk meters had been commissioned. This was detrimental for the successful implementation of the contract. An informant expressed the difficulty with the reduction of NRW in the excerpt below.

"… you realise that to achieve some of the goals, certain things were needed to be done, which were not done. We talk of baselines, if for example you want to reduce NRW; it always needs to be reduced from a certain starting point to somewhere . . . now this starting point who knows it? It was not known and it can only be known by doing certain things properly, like measuring, before you can measure you need to put in place meters" (Personal interview, 2012).

The late procurement and installation of bulk meters may be cited as one of the reasons why the Operator was unable to reduce NRW. At the end of the fifth year, NRW still remained at 50%, the same as the Operator met it. This was viewed as some form of resistance on the part of the Grantor to hinder successful enforcement by AVRL (Abubakari, Buabeng & Ahenkan, 2013; Hirvi & Whitfield 2015). Meanwhile, the Grantor's implementation of the capital investment programme to expand water networks also lagged behind, investing only $30 million out of the $80 million that was supposed to be invested during the management-contract period (World Bank, 2011, in Hirvi & Whitfield, 2015). The Operator attributed the failure of the Grantor to implement the capital investment programme to lack of willingness to facilitate the implementation of the programme (Shang-Quartey 2013; Hirvi & Whitfield, 2015).

Furthermore, the secondment of 2,887 staff of the asset holder (GWCL) to the Operator (AVRL) also provided grounds for the Grantor to delay enforcement. This arrangement granted GWCL enormous power regarding the punishment or rewarding of seconded staff. Contrary to the view by sixteen of the nineteen respondents, which the human resource designated for the enforcement of the management contract, was adequate, the Operator complained of inadequate manpower (Technical Audit Report, 2010), which could be attributed to the lack of control over seconded staff by the Operator. One respondent is quoted on the issue of the seconded staff below.

"… AVRL was supposed to work with seconded staff to the extent that they became an albatross … The operator's hands were tied, because there were certain clauses in the contract that made it difficult for the operator to discipline those staff because they did not recruit them. They did not have the authority to discipline them and that affected performance because precious time was spent on litigating labour issues. If certain things were done right and if freedom was given to the operator, I think we should have achieved better results" (Personal interview, 2012).

An analysis of the quote shows that the secondment of staff to AVRL affected performance, as predicted and the Operator mainly blamed this on the lack of control over seconded staff. Thus, if the Operator was granted enough power and control over the seconded staff and probably over many other issues, the enforcement of the management contract could have been smoother and maybe better results could have been achieved.

Non-Renewal of the Management Contract

Finally, it is the goal of this paper to explain why the management contract was not renewed after the fifth year. Shang-Quartey (2013) in his study attributes the non-renewal of the contract to the effect of civil society mobilization and pressure against the PSP. Also, Hirvi and Whitfield (2015) stated that it was not renewed officially because AVRL could not achieve many of its targets and the same as Shang-Quartey, they also cited increased anti-privatisation campaigns against the renewal of the contract. These reasons cited by the two authors are valid but they do not establish the causal links between such pressures and the poor performance of the management contract leading to non-renewal of the contract.

The exposure of Khan (2010) on the concept of holding power is useful in this regard. An institution with holding power has many tools it can deploy to frustrate the efforts of other organisations. The Grantor had holding power that it used against AVRL. For example, it was able to mobilize supporters to absorb costs and more importantly, it was able to mobilize prevalent ideologies and symbols of legitimacy to consolidate it. Most of the civil society organisations and groups such as NCAP, ISODEC and the Utility Workers Union of TUC supported the Grantor in its campaign against a management contract. These groups used their resources on many platforms, to push against the management contract. It was even much easier to mobilize ideologies and symbols of legitimacy, since the process was already politicised (Hirvi & Whitfield, 2010). The NDC, which was a social democratic party at the time, in opposition, had been vociferous against the management contract, it therefore did not come as a surprise that once the NDC regained power, it hid to calls by staffs of both AVRL and

GWCL and to calls of civil society organisations not to renew the management contract.

Elsewhere in this paper, mention is made of litigations brought by staff against the Operator, this wasted precious time of the Operator in performing its obligations. Thus, the Grantor was not only successful in stalling the operations of the Operator, it was also successful in mobilizing support against the management contract which affected performance of the Operator, thereby, leading to non-renewal by the NDC government.

Conclusions

The objective of this article was to explain why successive public-sector reforms have failed to yield the desired results and to establish the nexus between institutional powers; institutional benefits and outcomes of reforms, with focus on NPM reform, specifically, reforms that focus on restructuring or the nature and division of responsibility within and outside government. An example of a PPP in the form of a management contract was used to support the arguments in this article. Also, the political settlement theory with focus on the distribution of power and benefits among enforcement institution was deployed to this effect.

Many studies on the management contract in Ghana used different theoretical perspectives. While no doubt the findings of these researchers and the various theories they deployed in the respective studies are very relevant, they do not give an all-encompassing explanation to the outcome of the management contract in Ghana. The political settlement approach drew our attention to the relative power and benefits that the management contract allocated to the two main implementing institutions, namely, GWCL/Grantor and AVRL/Operator. This is happening to the extent that a reform grants undue benefits without corresponding power to one institution that might result in resistance to the enforcement of the reform by powerful institutions with little or no benefit at all.

By applying the PS theory to the management contract in Ghana, it is observed that, policy makers disregarded the relative power and benefits in the institutional analysis leading up to the reform. As a result, the contract granted numerous benefits but little or no power to AVRL, while it granted enormous power with little or no benefit to the GWCL, at the same time. This led to resentment on the part of GWCL, which had more power, but little benefit. Consequently, GWCL used the power granted it to stall enforcement of the contract in many respects. These machinations by GWCL made it difficult for AVRL to make any meaningful progress towards the attainment of the service standards.

It is therefore believed that, if the power and benefit of implementing organisations were incorporated in the institutional analysis prior to the adoption of the contract, enhanced performance of the private partner would have been observed. With the political settlement approach, attention is given to the context of the reform, the benefits that accrue from the reform and the distribution of power to the institutions.

The interest of stakeholders, especially powerful and influential actors capable of thwarting the realisation of reform goals are taken care of ex-ante.

Ghana's experience presents several lessons for reforms that involve the restructuring or division of institutions. First of all, in any reform situation, there are gaining and losing institutions with interests. The interests and concerns of the losing institutions should always be taking into account and appropriately addressed in designing reforms. Secondly, it should be noted that reforms distribute benefits along with power to the institutions involved in the reform process. The political settlement theory expects reformers to take cognisance of this dimension of reforms; caution should be taken so as not to disproportionately allocate power and benefits. The two should be well balanced. Thirdly, whenever reforms distribute benefit that is against the interests of powerful groups or institutions in the reform process, the powerful groups are likely to resist enforcement of the reform, especially if they possess what Khan referred to as holding power as witnessed in the Ghanaian case.

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THE REFUGEE CRISIS IN EUROPE AND ADDRESSED SOLUTIONS[1]

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Abstract: *At the beginning of 2015, the developed European states faced successive waves of refugees (over 100,000 people in the first months of the year), most of them being from Syria and Iraq – countries torn apart by conflicts and internal violence. Unlike the immigrants that leave to seek work, the refugees are forced to leave their own country and benefit by social assistance, offered by the host country. Some states members of the European Community dealt with the intense pressure of the waves of refugees, especially Germany, Italy and Sweden, a fact that led to a crisis in the process of absorption of the immigrants. The EU leaders proposed, as a general solution, the distribution of the refugees according to shares, in each member state of the community space. Other countries, as Hungary, Austria and Romania, advanced the idea of increased security of the national borders, and the stopping of the waves of refugees. The third solution was proposed by Australia, which supported the ceasing of violence and military actions, in the countries that permanently supply the fluxes of refugees.*

Keywords: *the refugee crisis; the Mediterranean Sea tragedy; solutions of the refugee crisis; the legal background of the refugee problem; the strategy of Romania on addressing the immigration.*

Introduction

The refugees are people who had to leave their native place, due to the occurrence of a situation that threatened their lives and that of their families, who requested protection or asylum from another country, whose territory they chose to settle on. Along their way towards another country, they face numerous risk situations and difficulties and,

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when they reach another country, they deal with even more difficulties, related to their acceptance/rejection by the native population, or by the interest of the authorities to help them receiving a shelter and to access an effective programme of adaptation and integration within the new society.

The refugee is still a migrant, but not one who willingly choses to look for work in another country, to study or to reunite with his family, but a person determined by the circumstances to find another country to live in, because he cannot return to his own country of origin. Refugees are protected by the international legislation defending the human rights, starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UNO General Assembly, on the 10th of December 1948, and continuing with other numerous international conventions, up to nowadays.

The actual international context is characterized by an increased number of instable and unsecure areas around the world, fact that influences the phenomenon of migration world-wide. If we are referring only to Iraq and Syria, there can be noticed that these countries have experienced permanent conflict and chaos: Iraq, since 1980, when starting war with Iran, then enduring the state of permanent violence for the elimination of the dictator Saddam Hussein, and, in 2003, having to face the invasion of the American and British troops; Syria has been in an internal military conflict for over 6 years, which has made victims reaching hundreds of thousands of deaths, and millions of citizens leaving the country. Both countries constitute a major source of waves of refugees, which are moving towards Occidental Europe, encouraged by the attitude shown, especially by Germany, a country that has out rightly demanded the right to free circulation – a fundamental principle in the international legislation on human rights.

Basically, we can assert that civil wars, terrorist actions, political persecution, oppressive regimes and poverty are major factors that can determine people to leave their own country and seek a better life in other countries.

Poverty is a global social phenomenon that permanently feeds the geographical migration. In 2007, it was estimated that the world poor population was of 4 billion people, representing 72% of the entire world population, and living especially in Asia and in the rural regions, in conditions of malnutrition. For example, around 2.86 billion people were earning between 1.5 and 4 dollars a day, being especially concentrated in Asia and Middle East, which means that those geographic and demographic areas represent an important source of emigration. To them, over 468 million poor people who live in Africa and, other 360 million in Latin America are added.

A report of the World Bank, from 2015, was showing that over 700 million people on the globe were living below the threshold of poverty (with 1.9 dollars a day), that is 9.6% of the world population (as confronted by 13%, in 2012). The coverage of the basic needs – alimentation, dwelling, energy supply, transportation, health services, consumption of non-food goods – have constituted decisive reasons for searching new income sources, and, therefore shifting to better developed countries, more able to offer favourable living conditions.

The tragedy of the refugees on the Mediterranean Sea and the reactions of the European Commission

The increasing of the violence cores and the civil wars from several countries on the globe, as Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Syria, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Congo Republic etc., generated a mass migration of a part of the population of these states. The information offered by the International Organisation for Migration indicates a growth in the number of refugees, from 26.4 million, in 2011, to 33.3 million people, in 2013, in the entire world (International Organization for Migration, 2014, p. 2).

In Libya and Syria only, countries confronted with chaos, due to the violent fights, millions of people left their homes. For example, in Turkey, there are around 2 million Syrian refugees in improvised camps. There is estimated that, in 2014, the forced emigration brought about, internationally, around 60 million people.

The waves of illegal immigrant, who came from some Arab and African countries, on the Mediterranean Sea, over 100,000 people in the first five months of 2015 (according to the data provided by International Organization for Migration), along with the repeated loss of lives (about 1,865 people within the same time interval), after the sinking of over-loaded ships, forced the EU decisional departments to adopt urgent measures of intervention. Moreover, Italy, Greece and Spain acknowledged that they could not face anymore the massive immigration phenomenon, requiring support and financial assistance from the other UE member states. The tragic event that involved the sinking of a ship with almost 950 clandestine immigrants (most of them Libyan), from which only 30 were rescued (on the night of 18th to 19th of April 2015), hurried the reaction of the European Commission that, in an urgent *summit*, on the 14th of May 2015, adopted concrete measure for the management of the immigrant crisis, on the routes from the Mediterranean Sea.

Thus, the *European Agenda on Migration* was shaped, based on a new philosophy and acting policy that was the gradual absorption of the illegal immigrants, designated to replace the rejecting policies, so far promoted through the military protection of the national borders and the repatriation or firm expulsion of the people who had entered clandestinely in the EU space. The inquiry of a group of 20 European journalists and specialists has recently revealed that, from 2000 to the present, the EU countries have spent 1.6 billion euro for the protection of the frontiers, and 11.3 billion euro for the repatriation of the immigrants, the average costs with the expulsion of an immigrant being of 4000 euro (half of them being assigned for the transport towards the countries of origin).

The European Commission put forwards for proposal a system of responsibilities that all the member states are to assume, as related to the impressive number of refugees and people who request asylum. According to Eurostat, only within a year (March 2014 – March 2015), there were registered almost 700,000 requests of asylum, among which: 250,000 in Germany, 82,000 in Sweden (most of the requests, for the both countries, coming from Syrian refugees), 73,000 in Hungary, 63,000 in Italy, 57,000 in France, 31,000 in Austria, 30,000 in Great Britain, the rest of the options being expressed for Holland, Belgium, Greece etc. (Eurostat, http://ec. europa.eu/eurostat, http://ec.europa.eu/

homeaffairs). Since the beginning of 2015, approximately 450,000 refugees have arrived in Germany, 37,000 of them in the first week of September, according to the information presented by vice-chancellor of the country.

The initial proposal of the European Commission (May 2015), to accept 40,000 immigrants that would be annually received on the territory of the EU states members, which were to be divided on quotas, according to the population and the economic power of each state, was, generally, well-received, but it also raised adverse reactions too, especially from the British Prime-Minister and the Hungarian Premier. The later one expressed the idea to build a protective fence, in order to stop the illegal immigrants from the border with Serbia, which he actually put into application. The wired barrier could not face the massive invasion of refugees, from the last decade of August 2015, which entered themselves into the train stations, and, then, formed improvised camps, with the hope to cross in Austria, and afterwards into the other western countries. Young and old, men and women, entire families with children endured for several weeks the difficulties of travelling, the lack of resting conditions, of water and food, with the only thought to restart their lives, in a new society, after having lost everything in their country.

On the Mediterranean corridor of migration towards the European continent, there are permanently moving citizens chased by the internal wars and conflicts from their countries (Syrian, Libyan, Iraqi etc.), their number continuously growing, over-dimensioning the phenomenon of forced migration. Until August 2015, there was thought that the establishing of certain absorption quotas of the immigrants into the EU space, is the main solution to solve the most severe most crisis of illegal immigration, since World War II. For Romania, it was calculated, in a first stage, a number of 2,362 extra-community citizens, among which 1,023 refugees allocated from Italy, 682 from Greece and 657 from the outside EU areas, which needed international protection (*Evenimentul zilei*, June 2015, p. 10). Later on, the national quotas of absorption were recalculated, for the 22 countries that were to receive refugees, our country being registered with 6,300 people.

After the growing wave of refugees of August 2015, which suffocated Macedonia, Serbia and Hungary, the Western Balkans *summit* was urgently summoned in the capital of Austria , with the purpose to discover a fast solution for overpassing the crisis unleashed by the assault of the immigrants, under the circumstance of the European principle of open frontiers. The German minister of the external affairs requested a new plan of redistribution of the immigrants, and the EU leaders offered monetary help, for the solution of problems encountered by the immigrants in the transited states. The proposal was considered insufficient by the minister of the external affairs from Serbia, who pronounced himself in favour of a general plan, appreciating that all the countries, directly affected by the explosive emigration from the Middle East and Northern Africa, needed to get involved.

The measure taken for solving the refugee crisis, through the mandatory allocation of national quotas, divided the EU states and the public opinion from those countries, most accessed by the immigrants. In 2015, a poll from Great Britain unravelled that, in the context of crisis aggravation, more than a half of the population were in favour of

the exit from EU, an unprecedented situation. In a referendum, on 23 June 2016, 51.9% of the participating UK electorate voted to leave the EU. The UK is thus on course to leave the EU on 29 March 2019

Another poll, made concomitantly in France (at the beginning of September 2015), was evidencing that 55% of the citizens did not agree with the receiving of refugees, although the president accepted the share imposed by the European Commission. A poll made in our country, during 10th-15th of September 2015, by INSCOP Research (ordered by *Adevărul* newspaper) showed that 56.2% of the questioned citizens appreciated that "Romania should not receive refugees", and 35.5% were in favour of receiving them www.adevarul.ro; www.digi24.ro).

Illegal immigration has recently become an explosive phenomenon, a worldwide one. *International Organization for Migration (IOM)* was appreciating, in 2014, that there were 50 million illegal immigrants in the entire world (over a fifth from the total number of the international migrants), among which 11,100,000 in U.S.A. (2011), a country in which, annually, around 3 million people enter clandestinely. In 2013, there were detected approximatively 345,000 illegal immigrants in the EU states (especially from Syria, Eritrea and Afghanistan), estimating that 55,000 migrants are illegally introduced in the community space (International Organization for Migration, 2015, p. 4-5).

The major risks implied by the illegal immigration

Frequently, illegal immigration implies major costs and unpredictable risks, such as frequent transport accidents on illegal routes, organised crime networks for illegally cross of the borders, risks that the migrants become victims of forced/black labour or sexual exploitation, risks of terrorist acts. Moreover, there are not excluded the risks of diseases and epidemic contamination either, if we are to consider the group travelling and the lack of minimal conditions of hygiene. The IOM statistics shows that a the number of 20,900,000 people were victims of forced labour in 2014, which indicates an accelerated increase, confronted by 2005, when there were registered 12.3 million victims. Furthermore, last year, there were recorded 4.5 million victims of forced sexual exploitation (among which 98% were women and girls).

Between January and the beginning of December 2014, 4,900 world migrants died, on their way towards the destination countries, 3,200 deaths being registered in the Mediterranean Sea (66% of the total deceases), the maritime emigration corridor becoming, at present, the one with the highest risk, from the entire world. It is followed by the Bay of Bengal, where 11% lost their lives, then the Horn of Africa – 6% and the frontier between U.S.A. and Mexico – 6% (International Organization for Migration, 2015, p. 6-8).

According to IOM, the migrants who lost their lives came, mainly from Africa and Middle East. From 2000 to 2014, on the world transit routes, over 40,000 immigrants died, from which 22,400 are estimated "to have lost their life while trying to reach Europe" (International Organization for Migration, 2015, p. 9).

According to the confession of some refugees, the route from Syria, through Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Serbia to the western countries of Europe, costs between 1,000 and 6,000 euro/per person, money used for paying the guide that helped them crossing the Mediterranean Sea and the frontiers of the transited European countries. The travelling took place in an organised way (usually approximately 50 people), often on foot, on rather long distances, and, not seldom, after taking the money, the guides abandoned them, many of the immigrants suffering from dehydration and malnutrition. Many refugees did not have identification papers, appearing the possibility that members of the terrorist group Islamic State, which controls wide areas from the territory of Syria and Iraq, may be infiltrated among them.

A recent result of the exodus through the Mediterranean Sea, offered to publicity by the International Organization for Migration on the 1st of September 2015, shows that over 350,000 people (380,000 according to the data offered by UNO, over 500,000 according to the official information supplied by *Frontex* European Agency) crossed the sea in the last eight months (confronted by 219,000 in the entire year 2014), on their way towards the countries from the Western Europe. On this route of emigration, 2,850 people lost their lives or were reported missing, during January-August 2015, according to the UNO High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which considers that almost 400,000 people will have reached Europe by the end of 2015. So far, about 220,000 people have already arrived in Greece, 115,000 in Italy, over 2,000 in Spain etc.

The immigrant fluxes to the UE developed countries are continuously on-going, on the 10th of September 2015, appreciating that approximately 5,000 refugees, chased from the Middle East, arrived in 24 hours at the border between Serbia and Hungary, and at the beginning of the year, more than 160,000 people illegally crossed the Hungarian frontier. On the 8th of September 2015, the Budapest authorities announced that the police had registered, up to that date, 169,337 "illegal immigrants" and held in custody 955 traffickers of refugee people, while the Office for Immigration recorded 157,646 immigrants. The numbers are not exact, as the statistical information offered by different official sources does not correspond, both at national and European level, because of the impossibility to rigorously register such daily territorial shifts of masses, through different countries.

Political solutions for solving the refugee crisis

In the context of the massive and uninterrupted afflux of refugees (for example, in one day, the 12th of September 2015, it was appreciated to have passed the border from Serbia and Hungary, the highest number of illegal immigrants until that date, of over 4,000 people) heading towards Europe, in the governmental policies, up to beginning of 2016, three solutions for stopping "the world crisis" have been shaped (as the immigrant crisis has recently been called a world crisis, by Julie Bishop, the Australian minister of the external affairs) and, implicitly, to avoid the appearance of a chaotic situation in Europe.:

1. The proportional distribution of those who require asylum in the European countries (based on the mandatory quotas) – a measure that is firmly supported by Germany, to which France and Sweden joined, while the other states members of the EU were

reticent or against it, such was Great Britain, Denmark, Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovenia and Slovakia, (rejecting the measure on the grounds that it encourages the traffic with people etc.) Other European state leaders declared that do not have the hosting facilities or the necessary logistics to manage operationally the waves of refugees.

We underline that the German authorities expressed their availability to receive approximately 800,000 refugees until the end of 2015 (four times more than in 2014), a situation that increased the waves of refugees from the Middle East, for the discontentment of many EU state members leaders . It should be noticed the statement of the German vice-chancellor, Gabriel Sigmar, who, at the beginning of September 2015, affirmed that his country was able to provide good management for the annual receiving of a half a million of refugees, for several years on.

As regarding the division of countries of the refugees arrived in the EU space, the European Commission elaborated a mechanism of solidarity among the community states, in May 2016?, on addressing the relocation of 40,000 refugees, and, in August, other 120,000 (except for the economic immigrants). The refugees were to be distributed on proportional and mandatory quotas, according to specific criteria (such was the GDP and the population of each country, the previous number of requests for asylum, the unemployment rate). In the situation that a state did not desire to participate to the mechanism of refugee redistribution (due to objective causes, such as natural disasters), it needed to participate to the EU budget, with a financial contribution of 0.002%, from its GDP.

On the 9th of September 2015, the president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, presented a document about the condition of the Union, in which he proposed a concrete plan for relocation, based on mandatory quotas, of 120,000 refugees from Italy (15,600), Greece (50,400) and Hungary (54,000), to other 22 states members of the EU, in variable proportions (the other 6 countries were exempt from receiving the quotas of refugees, being already affected by the phenomenon of illegal immigration).

Most of the refugee devolved upon Germany (31,443 people), France (24,031) and Spain (14,931), and the fewer were to be transferred to Malta (133), Cyprus (247) and Estonia (373). For Romania the imposed share was of 4,646 refugees, from which 2,091 from Hungary, 1,951 from Greece and 604 from Italy.

The scenario for 160,000 refugees implied an increase of the national quotas, during the following years, especially as regarding Germany, France and Spain. For Romania, it was mentioned the number of 6,351 refugees that it would be received. Moreover, the European Commission considered necessary to allocate 780 million euro in the EU budget, to finance the implementation of the refugee repartition plan (for example, it was provisioned 500 euro for the transport of each refugee, transferred from Italy, Greece and Hungary, along with 6,000 euro for each person hosted by the other states members of the EU). In addition, the European Commission also proposed the constituting of a fund of 1.8 billion euro, for stopping the emigration from Africa.

The press release, published on the site of the European Commission, informed that, starting from the beginning of 2015, approximately 116,000 illegal migrants came in Italy, more than 211,000 in Greece and over 145,000 in Hungary, a situation that would explain their absence from the list of the relocations.

The reactions to the proposals of Jean-Claude Juncker were against, one of them even extremist. The system of repartition on quotas, of the asylum seekers were mainly accepted, but on certain conditions, such the establishing of the number of refugees on volunteering quotas, freely agreed (as related to the possibility of hosting from each country), and not the mandatory ones, a position preferred by Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Latvia and the Romanian officials (justified through the capacity of management of a strict number of 1,785 immigrants).

It must be remembered that the EU leaders considered only the assigned quotas of the refugees, but not their willingness/acceptance of being residents of a country or another, their main orientation being towards the wealthy countries;

2. The security of the national borders has been increased and a more rigorous checking at the border crossing points has been introduced. Hungary installed a barb-wired fence of 175 km at the border with Serbia, a country that provided the transport of the refugees towards Hungary, Austria reintroduced the checking at the frontier with Hungary Romania, fearing that the refugees would change their route through the country, adopted a supplementary plan to secure the borders with Serbia.

The attempt of the Hungarian authorities to block, in a first phase, the circulation of trains with refugees towards Austria, caused a revolt of the thousands of migrants from the Eastern Station from Budapest, along with manifestations of solidarity with them, in Wien, Munich and Berlin, and, later, in London or Paris. Eventually, a first group of 3,500 refugees was allowed to leave towards West, the rest of them remaining to wait in the public places. In the end, at the half of September 2015, Hungary closed its border with Serbia, stopping the entering of the refugees on its territory, and making them open a new route, through Croatia, Slovenia and Austria, after violent confrontations between the Hungarian authorities and the refugees blocked on the Serbian territory. On the last ones, there were used water cannons and tear gas, resorting to physical violence. Over 39,000 refugees reached Croatia, in less than a week.

Learning the news about the desperate situation of the blockage and abuse made by the authorities or aggressation of refugees on the territory of Hungary, other groups of refugees from Syria resorted to an alternative route towards the occidental countries: from Turkey, to Georgia, near the Black Sea, then crossing the western territory of Russia and entering Norway (this country having a legislation that does not provision the checking of the identity documents, for those who cross the border on bikes).

3. The fight against the terrorist group of the Islamic State has been intensified through the massive bombarding of the territories occupied by ISISm in Syria and Iraq. This solution was proposed by Julie Bishop, the head of the Australian diplomacy, who requested the European states to become involved as quickly as possible in the forces of the coalition, along U.S.A. and Australia, for applying extended and decisive air raids to the terrorist movement from Iraq and Syria, which was destroying the two states and was causing the

mass exodus of their dwellers in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, or other neighbouring countries.(http://agerpres.ro/externe/2015/08/31/australia-cere-europei-sa-atace-statul-islamic-pentru-a-opri-refugiatii-04-38-20).

In this way, they would be able to stop the wave of refugees at leaving point (in their origin societies), and not at destination, avoiding that terrorist elements would enter Occident countries, and eliminating the burden of the transit countries, which have to endure the consequences of being daily crossed by the migratory fluxes.

The solution seen by the minister of the external affairs of Australia was shaping as the most realist and efficient under those circumstances, when the European countries, menaced by the aggravation of the immigrant crisis, were looking for radical solutions and consensus in their actions. The first leader to respond the request of the Australian leader was François Hollande, the president of France, who, on the 7th of September 2015, announced the preparations for launching air attacks against the militants of the Islamic State group, from Syria.

The legal background for regulating the refugee issue

The management of the refugee waves, which arrived in several societies of the EU space, is an issue that concerns the entire European community, and it is not only a strictly national one, which affects directly the states on whose territory large groups of refugees settled. The harmonisation of the national legislation with the one from EU, should create a unitary legal background for approaching the problem of the refugees or asylum seekers, of the immigrants in general, but not all the states members agreed on. There were the permissive measures, adopted by EU, on addressing the control of the immigrants, that provoked the dissatisfaction of Great Britain, which decided, through referendum, to exit EU, and, consequently, to manage the problem of the immigrants according to its own interests (through a severe policy of limitation and rigorous control of the yearly fluxes of immigrants).

The recognition of the right to free circulation of the people and the facilitating of the refugees' journey constitute basic norms in the international law and primary values, promoted by the democratic states. There must be mentioned that, starting from 1959, it was signed, at Strasbourg, by the governments of the states members of that period, the *European Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees*, which Romania ratified through Law no. 75, from the 16th of March 2001.

In art. 1 of the Agreement, it is stipulated that the refugees are to be exempted from the "formality of visas" when entering and exiting the territory of some countries, on the condition that they possess a valid travelling permit, and do not overpass three months of stay. As it is known, the international legislation specifies that they should be provided with a dwelling, food and other temporary material conditions, by virtue of the human solidarity spirit.

On the 1st of December 1980, the *European Agreement on the transfer of responsibilities for Refugees* entered into force, in which there is mentioned the preoccupation of the signatory states to mention, "in a liberal and humanitarian spirit, the conditions in

which the responsibility of issuing a travelling permit is transferred, from one signatory side to the other" (Moroianu Slătescu, Marinache, Şerbănescu, 2007, p. 349).

On world level, there is functioning, starting with the 1st of January 1951, a High Commissariat for Refugees, founded on the basis of the decision of the UNO General Assembly, its headquarters being established at Geneva, in Switzerland. Its purpose is to protect the refugees internationally, through the support of the governments and organisations that deal with the social assistance and the facilitation of the refugees' voluntary repatriation, or their harmonious integration within the new socio-cultural environment and national community. "Normally, the state is responsible with the protection of its stable citizens, but in the case of a mass of refugees, it is overwhelmed with the complexity of their problems. In such circumstances, the international community is the one that deals with their situation, through the adopting of certain legal instruments, and the granting of social assistance" (Otovescu, 2008, p. 262).

The problem of the refugees was regulated in Romania too, through Law no 122/2006 and the Government Decision no. 1596/2008, on the share of absorption of refugees, established for 40 people each year, and the main criteria that they have to meet, to be able to relocate in our country (Necula, Mircea, 2010, p. 21-22). It must be noted that the institution that deals with the situation of the refugees, in Romania, is the Ministry of Administration and Internal Affairs, and that it has been elaborated a *National Strategy on Immigration for 2015-2018*. Moreover, the number of the people relocated in Romania raised to a few thousands, according to the agreements established within the EU, during 2016.

The analysis of the legal status of the refugee/asylum seeker, evidences that it is founded on the obligation to be given protection and assistance, by the authorities of the refuging state. The protection refers to "the right to enter" into the country of asylum, the right to have a "protected stay" and a "privileged legal situation", compared to other categories of foreigners (Cloşcă, Suceavă, 1995, p. 356).

The European and international conventions on addressing the protection of the refugees' rights do not condition observing on the number of people who request asylum, but they establish the legal background for the treatment of the people from such a circumstance. Nonetheless, the problem of the refugees from the Europe of 2015 and 2016 was generated by the fact that certain countries of transit, as Greece, Macedonia and Hungary were suffocated by the massive fluxes of people, while other countries of destination, as Germany and Italy, could not absorb such a great number of refugees, who came in successive waves.

Conclusions

The absorption of the refugees on the territory of the EU states was unavoidable, in the circumstances that a selection of the immigrants is practically impossible (in order to make the distinction between those who fled from the war or the political persecution, from the extra-community space, and those who emigrated to work, in Europe), along with the repatriation in their countries, now devastated by war, because of the the fact that they do not have a place to return to.

As a matter of fact, the reduction of emigration from the conflictual and insecure areas implies a basic and long-term solution, such as the ceasing wars and violence, the reconstruction of dwellings destroyed by war, the insurance of minimal living conditions and, later on, the socio-economic development of the destabilised countries. Certain political leaders perceived the invasion of refugees as a great threat for the EU project, while others regarded it as a solvable problem, as the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, asserted. Nonetheless, for the political world and the public opinion, the wave of refugees from August 2015 produced strong emotional reactions and contradictory attitudes.

Nowadays, European countries, and especially EU, which represents a significant actor on the international political stage, are looking for appropriate solution to face simultaneous challenges, as the rational distribution of the refugees, the terrorist menace of the Islamic State and the expansionist tendency of the Russian Federation. The later one, after the illegitimate annexing of Crimea and the support given to the pro-Russian separatist forces from the Eastern Ukraine, involved military and politically in Syria, supporting, along with Iran, the dictatorship of Bashar Al-Assad (through the displacement of fighting equipment and over 1,000 soldiers, on the Syrian territory).

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THEORETICAL APPROACHES REGARDING THE MOBBING PHENOMEN

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Abstract: *All work situations can potentially generate conflicts, which can lead to risks of abuses, aggression. In any organization, there are divergences of opinion, conflict, power struggle as normal manifestations of the organization. Some of these conflictual situations are solved, but another can degenerate into aggression. Mobbing is that form of psychological aggression, exercised over a period of minimum several months by one or more colleagues over another, through a series of actions designed to discredit and isolate that person. The role of the employee in the organization and his/her professional capacities are deliberately underestimated through various discredits, humiliations, in order to remove the person from organization. Victims of mobbing in most cases end up resigning because they no longer deal with pressure. Repercussions are psychical and social: falling confidence in professional skills, stress, deteriorating family relationships on the background of stress but also physical: depression or health problems. Also, there are consequences for the working environment of the organization regarding work performance and employee relationships. Therefore, organizations should take preventing measures to tackle this problem, as behaviour codes, prompt response to such behaviours from HR leaders.*

Keywords: *mobbing, aggression, victims, behavior, organizational environment, stress, health problems.*

Introduction

For a long time, looking at the risk factors at work, organizational psychologists have considered only the physical environment of work and the risk factors related to the types of physical environment. Over the past three decades, there have begun to gain weight approaches related to psychological well-being in work environments, employee

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morale and job satisfaction. (Leymann, 1996; Einarsen, 1999; Davenport, Schwartz, Elliott, 2002; Bogathy, 2002)

Step by step, organizational psychology work has begun to give space to various organizational dysfunctions with psychosocial impact on employees, including the phenomenon called mobbing or moral harassment at work. The term distrimination was far more familiar at that time, but beyond discrimination, moral harassment was a different phenomenon, that could be based on discrimination in some cases, but it was not limited to that. Mobbing has considerable psycho-individual and psycho-organizational effects, affecting the performance of the person at work and his/her health.

The characteristic of the mobbing is the aggression at the level of expression and communication and at the level of relationships, seldom in the form of humiliation in front of colleagues. All these behaviours can be practiced by work colleagues or by the employer and are aimed at compromising the image and performance of an employee, undermining his position in the organization, determing him/her to resign or even give up working in his field of activity. For certain behaviours to be classified as mobbing, they must be repeated for at least six consecutive months.

In Sweden, surveys conducted (Leymann, 1996) show that out of a total of approximately 4,400,000 employees, 154,000 employees (3.5%) were exposed to one or more mobbing-related aggressions weekly for 6 months. Also, 25% of those prematurely retired suffered from mobbing-specific treatments. As a result of this finding, the Swedish government has set out projects to protect the national budget against such financial losses.

Between 1993 and 1994, a normative act (Vocational Rehabilitation Act) enforced that obliges employers to submit rehabilitation / integration plans to the Social Insurance Office when an employee has been sent on sick leave for one whole month or one countless times over a year.

In Germany, sudies show that, out of 40 million employees, 1.4 million (3.18%) suffered from mobbing, and in France, out of 27 million employees, 950,000 (3.51%) suffered mobbing. Globally, gender distribution shows that 55% of those affected are women and 45% are men.

In Romania, several researches talked talked abot the phenomenen of mobbing since 2010. A study delevoped in 2011 by the Association for Socio-Economic Development and Promotion CATALACTICA, within the SOPHRD/97/6.3/S/54973: "Support for Women Discriminated on the Labour Market" with financing from the Social European Fund, showed that a percent of 8% of the work force at national level was a possible victim of such a phenomenon. (Tomescu, Cace, Preotesi, 2012).

One of the first sudy in Romania on mobbing phenomenon was developed by researchers from The Research Institute for Quality of Life, Colfasa Association and other several partners, in 2010. The figures referring to mobbing, on national sample were similar. The same study shows that 25.7% of the participants said that a colleague was repeatedly offended by other colleagues or bosses, a percent of 24.7% said a

colleague was repeatedly criticized or reproached and 19.5% said a colleague was discordant and did not integrate into the team. A percent of 41% of the subjects admitted that their boss or colleagues repeatedly scream at each other at work, situations that can generate into conflicts. (Tomescu, Cace, 2010).

Since 2010, the trend of disscussion about mobbing in Romania was an ascending one, a part of the Romanian employee understanding the phenomenon and searching for information on internet and recognising the behaviour and their workplace. The team of researchers, which we were part of, was several time contacted by people who were victims of mobbing in order to seek help/advice/consultance and better understanding of the phenomenon. The advice was always to seek psychological help and juridical help.

The trauma is so overwhelming that people need to be confirmed that they have really lived that, and that what they have live was called mobbing (as the victim begins to think in time, under the pressure of the aggresors that she/he has a psyhological problem or generate problems and not the abusers). The legislation in Romania, in the field, is behind other more developed European countries and subsumed to the legislation regarding discrimination, but discussion are taking place under society's pressure to change that in order to better support these victims. A series of Romanian psychologists offer support now for the victims, offer lectures or group support for psychoterapy as the psychologists of Institute of Trauma for exemple.

What is the mobbing

Mobbing is a form of psychological aggression, exercised over a period of several months by one or more colleagues over another, through a series of actions designed to isolate the person concerned. Practically, the role of the employee in the organization and his / her professional capacities are deliberately underestimated through various humiliations, in order to remove the person from that work place. Victims of mobbing in most cases end up resigning because they no longer deal with negative pressures and atmosphere.

Repercussions of mobbing are tremendous, psychical and social: falling confidence in professional skills, stress, deteriorating family relationships on the background of stress but also physical: depression, health problems. Also, there are consequences for the working environment of the organization, with implications for work performance.

The term mobbing comes from the word mob, which refers to a disorganized crowd engaged in rule less violence (Davenport, Schwartz and Elliott, 2002) and derives from the Latin "mobile vulgus", which means oscillating, hesitant crowd. The first researcher to use the term mobbing was Konrad Lorenz, in describing behaviors in animals. He calls it the attack or the menacing behavior of a smaller animal group on a larger animal. Later, Heineman (Heineman, 1972) becomes interested in this phenomenon. He studied the behavoiur at children and he described mobbing as destructive behaviour, directed by a group of children to another child.

Leymann noticed the existence and action of phenomena of injustice, violation of employees' rights, harassment at the workplace, to which some of the employees are subjected. These acts of injustice generate personal and organizational damage. The effect beach ranges from work-related isolation to suicide acts triggered by harassment over a long period of time.

Leymann introduces the concept of mobbing into the organizational environment, delimiting it from that of bullying, which, Leymans says, is sometimes used synonymously by some authors. In Leymann's view, bullying is different from mobbing, as bullying puts accent on physical aggression and physical threat. Physical violence is rarely found in the phenomenon of mobbing, characterized by subtle, psycho-social behaviours that, by cumulative effect, lead to undermining the victim's respect, social isolation of the victim, failure to perform service tasks. (Leymann, 1996)

Mobbing is initially a hidden, subtle behaviour, which is why the aggressor is aware of his existence quite late. Mitrofan (1996) considers that "*aggression is any form of intent-oriented behavior toward objects, persons or self, in order to cause harm, injuries, destruction and damage, and mentions three approaches to aggression: inborn, the reaction to frustration (the environment) and the learned behavior (education and / or the environment)*".

Leymann (1996) states that "*Mobbing or psychological terror at the workplace involves hostile and unethical communication, which is systematically directed to a single individual, which is consequently pushed into a situation of helplessness and in which can defend; the victim is held in this situation on Monday (even years) days, while the attackers continue to mobbing "(...)" Mobbing is a destructive process; it is constituted by hostile actions which, taken in isolation, may seem anode, but by constant repetition they have dangerous effects (Mobbing is defined by repetition of actions: at least once a week and at least 6 consecutive months)* "(Leymann, 1996, p 26-27).

Einarsen (1999) defines mobbing as the systematic persecution of a colleague, subordinate or superior; persecution in a continuing form, can cause serious social, psychological and psychosomatic problems to the victim. Unison (1997, in Rayner, 1999) defines mobbing as *"offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting or humiliating behaviors, abuse of authority or authority that attempts to undermine an individual or a group of employees and may cause disturbances stress-related "*.

Bogathy (2002) includes mobbing in the sphere of interpersonal conflict that he defines as follows: "*Interpersonal conflict involves two or more people who perceive themselves as opposed to each other in terms of their pursued purposes, attitudes, values, or the manifest behaviors* ".

Brodsky (1976, in Einarsen, 1999) defines harassment as "*all those acts that repeatedly and persistently aim to disturb, harass or frustrate a person, ... comments that ultimately scare, intimidate or cause discomfort to the receiver.*" In this sense, sexual harassment, but not necessarily mobbing, can be included.

For Leymann, mobbing can be moderate or aggressive, depending on the type of effect it exerts on employees. Moderate acceptance refers to harassment at work. Radical acceptance defines mobbing as psycho-terror at work.

Hence, not every employment relationship between employees goes into the sphere of mobbing, but only hostile, aggressive situations involving confrontation, moral harassment, contempt of personality, mockery, etc. and repeatedly repeated, not accidental or transient. Errors, ironic remarks, ridicule, sarcastic replies, etc. are part of our everyday life, but they become mobbing when they are practiced systematically and over long periods and when actions become disturbing, painful and dangerous for the mental and physical health of individuals who are under such pressure.

Behaviours that can be mobbing

In order to understand the essence of mobbing, it is necessary to know the behaviors that the aggressors use in relation to their victims. Leymann listed 45 such behaviors, which he disposed of in five categories: 1. Preventing the victim from expressing himself; 2. Isolation of the victim; 3. Disapproval of the victim to colleagues; 4. Discrimination of the victim in his / her work; 5. Compromising the victim's health (Leymann, 1996, p. 42-43). The behaviours described by Leymann constitute a good operationalization of the concept of mobbing.

What characterizes each of these categories of behaviour:

1. The first group of organizational mobbing actions includes behaviours that prevent the victim from expressing himself. This category includes the following types of actions: hierarchical superiors refuse the victim the opportunity to express themselves; the victim is constantly interrupted when he speaks; colleagues prevent the victim from expressing himself / herself; colleagues scream, offend the victim; the victim's work is criticized; criticizing the victim's private life; the victim is terrorized by phone calls; the victim is verbally threatened; threatening the victim in writing; denial of contact with the victim (avoiding visual contact, rejecting gestures etc.); ignoring the victim's presence (for example, addressing another person, as if the victim was not present, would not be seen).

2. The second group of mobbing actions within a work team aims to isolate the victim. The aggressors do not talk to the victim; the victim is not allowed to address another person; she is assigned another post that removes/isolates him/her from colleagues; it is forbidden for colleagues to speak with the victim; the physical presence of the victim is denied.

3. The third group of actions, defining organizational mobbing, according to Leymann, aims to disregard the victim in front of his colleagues. The victim is spoken of evil or slander; rumors are being issued to the victim; the victim is ridiculed; it is claimed that the victim is mentally ill and victim may be compelled to attend a psychiatric examination; a victim's infirmity is invented; the actions, gestures, the voice of the victim are imitated to ridicule it better; the political beliefs or religious beliefs of the victim are attacked; jokes about the victim's private life; is joking on account of her origin or nationality; the victim is obliged to accept humiliating activities; the unfair and unjustified marking of the victim's work; the victim's decisions are questioned or challenged; aggression of the victim in obscene or insulting terms; until the victim's sexual harassment (through gestures or proposals).

4. The victim's professional discredit characterizes the fourth type of action: assigning difficult or impossible tasks; depriving the victim of any occupation and watching for the victim not to find any occupation on his own; entrusting unnecessary or absurd tasks; providing activities below the competencies; always assigning new tasks; imposing the execution of humiliating tasks; entrusting tasks that are superior to qualification to discredit the victim.

5. The most serious form of mobbing leads to compromising the victim's health by: entrusting dangerous and harmful tasks to health or an unhealthy workplace / environment; the threat of physical violence; physical aggression of the victim, either without gravity, as a warning, or severe physical aggression, without retention; it is intentionally caused to the victim a damage; causing inconvenience at home or at work; even sexual assault of the victim.

The effects of mobbing affect three major plans: individual, organizational and social. Individually, mobbing directly affects the victim's psycho-physical integrity, by causing anxiety, panic attacks, post-traumatic stress syndrome, behavioral disorders such as anorexia, bulimia, alcoholism, drug abuse (more commonly with medication), loss of motivation for activity, decreased satisfaction, performance and labor efficiency, premature medical retirement, dramatic decline in self-confidence, professional competence. It finds that the effects are highly destructive, being sufficient for a socio-professional disability of the individual on a medium term.

Conclusions. Social consequences

At the level of the work and organizational group, mobbing translates into effects such as: degradation of professional relationships, communication impairment, absenteeism, staff fluctuations, sick leaves. All this means consistent costs. Interestingly from this point of view is the research undertaken by the Swedish economist Johanson (apud Leymann, 1996), who developed a methodology for calculating the costs of mobbing, showing that it would be more profitable for the enterprise to provide employees with rehabilitation programs, to reorganize the work environment rather than continue to neglect this internal phenomenon.

At the societal level, the effects of mobbing also reach social dequilibrium. On the one hand, the individual's ability to maintain and develop natural relationships with family, social group, social institutions is altered. On the other hand, society, through its social protection institutions, has to pay extra for longer or shorter periods of unemployment, sick leave, health programs and treatments and psycho-socioprofessional recovery programs.

Mobbing is a process that takes place over time. It can be said that all work situations potentially generate conflicts, which, in turn, through degeneration, can lead to increased risks of mobbing. In any organization, there are divergences of opinion, conflict, power struggle as normal manifestations, even necessary, under certain conditions, for the progress of the organization. Some of these are solved by themselves, but another part degenerates into mobbing. In the course of time, the psychic balance of the victim is affected, self-destruct self-confidence, the symptoms of

stress appear. The higher the number of aggressions a person is subjected to – even if they do not come from the same person, but from more, the more mobbing will be. At the time of mobbing, it is necessary to intervene the organization's leadership.

Often, this intervention does not take place, the conflicts being left to power, and the aggrieved people are not defended; or the intervention occurs too late when the situation can no longer be controlled. Leymann said that "*Mobbing ... must be of the same interest and the same preventive measures as accidents at work. Because this is the case for psychosocial accidents that often lead to serious and even fatal sequelae* "(Leymann, 1996, p. 67). It should not be forgotten that most of the high costs left by mobbing will be borne by employers and even by employees, although neither, nor anyone else, initially realizes it.

Prevention is one of the most desirable forms to be practiced, since mobbing once installed is difficult to annihilate without leaving psychological sequelae on the victim and destabilizing the working environment. One of the measures in the prevention action area consists of educational programs addressed to managers. Through trainings, managers can build up some capabilities to identify potential sources of conflict and mobbing, and conflict resolution / resolution skills when they arise. Early managerial interventions are very important. In order to intervene promptly, the manager must be able to read the first signs of the mobbing process. Preventing mobbing in the organization involves inventorying communication and networking issues in the company, monitoring their dynamics, and formulating ethical and behavioral norms.

The anti-mobbing support group is one of the main ways to combat the effects of this phenomenon and to restore the feeling of well-being in people's lives. In mobbing, there is always the intention of persecution. Psychological pressure is being made to get the employee to leave his post or be removed from the organization, as dismissal is not possible, the person being a competent employee with very good results before the onset of mobbing.

As a form of psychological abuse, mobbing occurs insidiously, harassment is often a subtle one, the victim rarely being aware from the beginning of what is happening to him. Things usually start from a conflict and gradually evolve processually into persecution or psychotherapy at work, the attacks being repeated, continuous, systematic. Mobbers (haters) act directly or indirectly, subtly or obviously. Confusion may occur and often things are not properly understood by those around, so aggressors can become ignored, tolerated, encouraged or even sustained and instigated by the organization.

Mobbing is also characterized by inequality between the victim and the aggressor. The aggressor's power is given on the one hand by the hierarchical position (when it is a hierarchical superior) or, on the other hand, by the fact that the aggressor is collective (there are more employees who co-oppose one, even if the latter may be even boss). Mobbers instinct others who act as a group or mob.

The person, identified as the target of mobbing, no matter how strong and competent, will feel the full effects in all life plans. This way she can feel confused, anxious, extremely tense, physically ill, depressed, irritable, does not know who to trust, she is self-isolation.

In the most serious cases where the person does not receive support and counseling, he can develop a sense of persecution or paranoia, become inappropriate, engage in destructive behaviors for himself or others, may develop acute anxiety or post-traumatic (PTSD), may suffer permanent physical or emotional trauma. Not only will the personal balance be broken but also the couple and family, social and professional.

The consequences for the working environment of the organization regarding work performance and employee relationships ist o be taken into account. Therefore, the organizations should take preventing measures to tackle this problem, as behaviour codes to be respected or prompt response to mobbing behaviours as they are noted by HR leaders. The unsolved problem can cost the organization more than preventing or taking action at right time.

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