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SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

**CAREER MANAGEMENT IN INSTITUTIONS
WITHIN THE FIELD OF NATIONAL DEFENSE**

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KEY WORDS

Management, public management, human resource management, public institutions' management, human resource management in public institutions in the field of defense, national defense, reform of public institutions in the field of defense, organizational reform, competitiveness, efficiency, organizational performance, careers, individual careers, the management of individual careers

Timeliness, importance and substantiation of the present research

The list with the main objectives that a responsible and competent leadership should account for and fulfill with maximum efficiency in order to achieve the sustainable development of a nation should not neglect the extremely intricate process of institutional consolidation and the institutional reform required to achieve a perfect alignment to the economic, social, political or cultural processes that take place in a society at a particular moment in time.

Reforming the management system in the Romanian public institutions continues to be a necessity, since many of these institutions are struggling to keep up with a constantly evolving Romanian society and the changes caused by the accession to the European structures. Achieving an optimal management system for the Romanian public institutions would materialize the desiderate of institutional consolidation and, implicitly, reinforce the ability of the public administration sector to carry out the process of reform within public institutions as part of a protocol of self-improvement. Accomplishing this would translate into satisfying the needs and requirements of both the citizens and the personnel of public institutions, considering that in the budgetary system, especially in public administrations, the level of efficiency depends on the professionalism and behavior of the employed staff.

All the research that has been carried out both nationally and internationally has shown that the human resource remains an indispensable component to any institution or organization that simply cannot be replaced by technology or data processing equipments, no matter how advanced, in fulfilling the missions of a specific institution.

Our scientific research paper has aimed to highlight the depth of the phenomena that are being carried out within the framework of a major public institution by focusing on aspects pertaining to the phenomenon of *management* and the way it relates to *public institutions' management* and *career management* within public institutions under the new security conditions that are currently in progress both regionally and globally.

Over the course of the 3 scientific research papers, we also sought to emphasize that, within the framework of public institutions, the term *career* can take of variety of different meanings, from that of an ascending trajectory of an individual in his or her specific field of activity to that of the dynamic framework in which a specific employee perceives his or her life as a whole.

The different meanings of the concept of *career* also imply a solid understanding of the exact stages that an individual needs to reach, as well as the concrete manner in which that particular individual needs to act, namely the specific

functions and tasks he or she needs to fulfill in order to advance or promote to a higher position. Therefore, *career management* should and will account for the manner in which employees can advance within the scope of a specific institution in accordance with that institution's needs, performance levels and potential, as well as with the personal preferences of the employees, all in perfect congruence with the way in which the institution's leadership accesses the resources required to fulfill the established objectives with maximum efficiency and effectiveness. A proper management of the individual career is the most efficient tool for harmonizing the organizational objectives to the individual objectives of the employees.

In order to accomplish our intended objectives, we have constructed an extensive document base that comprises works of both Romanian and foreign authors, articles, laws and regulations, Government decrees, web-based works of research and other sources that provided us with relevant information on our subject, since our PhD thesis captures different aspects of the management of human resources particularized to the institutions in the field of national defense.

Therefore, we started out from the premise that every one these organizations needs to maintain the highest level of defense possible. Consequently, any strategy that is aimed at changing the structure of forces would inherently entail ensuring a high quantitative and qualitative level for the professionalized human resources available in the field of defense.

In light of that, it is mandatory that the main public institution/organization in the Romanian field of defense, the Romanian Army, should be modern, flexible, properly scaled and equipped, as well as capable to carry out a wide range of missions both inside and outside the country's borders in accordance with the undertaken missions: defending the Romanian state, participating to collective defense according to the provisions of the military commitment taken on by Romania in NATO and the EU, participating to multinational operations of crisis management and to both regional and international counter-terrorism operations. Achieving these goals required reforming the military institution on both a conceptual-theoretical and an organizational level in terms of its human resource management along with the phasing out of compulsory military service.

This situation demanded a reassessment of human resource management and other specific concepts and policies in order to eliminate the distortions generated by the enactment of the current rules under the new conditions while observing the planning of the evolution of the institution and that of the individual careers of the people employed in the field of defense.

Generally, the principles, methods and techniques used in individual career management are derived from those employed in human resource management, which means that reforming human resource management also entails reforming individual career management.

In the present scientific paper, we aim to emphasize certain ways of streamlining human resource management and the career management system, even though we will only address this issue using a tiered approach.

The issue of research

Like any other concept needed to correctly accomplish the institutional and organizational reform in defense institutions, individual career management also depends on the political factor and, implicitly, the way in which it allocates public resources. An efficient and effective institution, namely an effective, supple and mobile army, requires a reform of its fundamental elements – human resources. Especially in the current context, there is a need for adequate people who possess the right abilities, knowledge and experience required by the positions that fit their skill sets, and who can occupy these positions at the right time and with minimum costs. Any inconsistency or conflict between the needs and aspirations of the individuals and those of the institution should be handled and resolved beforehand.

The implementation of individual career management could nourish the charisma of the individuals and, to a certain extent, encourage the democratic participation of the individual to the institution's decisional and functional process. As demonstrated in the present paper, the implementation of individual career management could enhance the moral involvement of the individuals while truly empowering them and rendering them more accountable in their mission of defending the citizens of the state and the state itself.

The type of institution in which this process of reform is most obvious, but also the easiest to implement, is the military institution. In fact, the reform of this institution first became noticeable after the fulfilling of the first missions outlined by NATO in the theatres of operations, where Romanian forces are still active today.

Therefore, the process of professionalizing the Romanian military service was also accomplished through the planning and implementation of a modern military career management in compliance with the experience of NATO and EU member states.

In the context of reshaping the forces, concepts and capabilities, the Strategy for the transformation of the Romanian Army displays the medium and long-term directions of scaling, training and equipping the Romanian Army with respect to participating in future missions.

As mentioned before, the primary aim of reforming the military institution is to achieve a modern, numerically low, professionalized, properly equipped, deployable, interoperable, self-sustaining structure that accounts for multidimensional protection and has a flexible leadership that is capable to make prompt decisions based on optimal intelligence and data.

The implications of the said reform are also rooted in the fact that the volatility of the security environment no longer refers to the domination of the interests of some states over others, but mostly to asymmetric threats, which have become a common form of warfare throughout the world and require a reorganization of military actions and military institutions in order to be addressed properly. The asymmetric risks have diversified, amplified and expanded significantly, which means that the increasingly challenging task of countering and containing such threats should concern all the nations.

In the event that the Romanian national interests were threatened or the security of the allied states was jeopardized, the Romanian armed forces should be prepared to act independently against any kind of threat, whether conventional or asymmetrical. Now that NATO has adopted a broader approach of the range of

missions an army should be able to fulfill (crisis prevention, humanitarian operations, high-intensity warfare), the Romanian military institution must be able to respond promptly and with utmost efficiency. Achieving the optimal maximum of operations requires improving the civil and democratic control mechanisms over the military organism while enhancing the institution's ability to adapt and react, as well as to cooperate with other agencies in handling these operations. Given the dynamic and complex nature of the military reform, material, financial and human resources need to be used with maximum efficiency.

Our research also highlights the impact of certain factors of the organizational and institutional reform, as well as the transformation of the individual in the defense institution. The theoretical background was established after studying various documents and papers in this particular field of work. The scientific research was conducted by means of questionnaire surveys of a wide sample of respondents, and was accomplished using a multiple case-study approach that combined both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

At the same time, the paper seeks to define strategies that are useful for implementing career management in institutions operating in the field of defense under the new security context, as well as possible solutions of overcoming the obstacles generated by the processes of aligning organizational structures and management policies to those demanded by the process of adhering to international security institutions.

Therefore, on the basis of the established documentation, we can assert that the laws in force are founded on the idea that career evolution simply means filling a function that is superior to the existing rank by the process of promotion, and that this advancement is also a consequence of filling a function corresponding to the new rank, as long as the employee/individual fulfills certain performance requirements. Yet this turns out to be false, as it starts out from a set of false premises that are contradicted by real circumstances, which prove that in fact the entire staff fulfills the said minimum performance requirements.

The main difficulty we encountered over the course of our research was the limited access to specific data on management activities that have been classified by the military institution.

Our gradual analysis points towards the conclusion that the career development of an individual can take different forms and paths. Managing this development, adjusting its direction vector under the constraints of rigorous/strict rules, requires developing concepts of evolution applicable to both the military institution as a whole and the individual members of its staff.

The management structures of the individual career need to be in continuous contact with the employee in order to achieve the following goals:

- Identifying the exact course of actions that an individual needs to take in order to advance to the hierarchical step immediately above or to change the path of his or her career;
- Counseling the individual on the existing career development opportunities and the right steps to take in the immediate future;
- Maintaining an ongoing connection with the individual in order to sustain the accuracy of his personal information, including his or her career background;

- Training and providing selection committees with the documentation necessary to promote and/or reassign individuals in other functions, as well as the documentation needed for taking up various forms of training.

Developing and implementing individual career management should be beneficial to the military institution and should not trigger a heightened sense of individualism, a lack of involvement, avoidance to take initiative in the organization or, in extreme cases, a pronounced tendency to reject individual or group responsibilities under the pretext that initiative is neither encouraged nor stimulated, but rather ignored or punished. The indirect negative impact of such attitudes is felt at the core of the relational and the intellectual capital, where it generates the so-called *self-sufficiency* of the individual.

Aims and objectives of this research

The aim of the primary empirical research showcased in the present doctoral thesis is to offer a clear view of the situation of the individual career management specific to these organizations. The empirical research was accomplished by analyzing both the extremely intricate dimension of the staff operating in public institutions within the field of defense, and the people outside these institutions. Starting from the questions that are fundamental to this research effort, the primary research objectives are as follows:

- to identify the different factors that enable or hinder the reforming of institutions in the field of defense;
- to identify the errors registered by previous attempts at implementing various individual career management strategies;
- to identify the various forms and multidirectional vectors of individual career development, to correlate these developments and to rectify the direction of the actions;
- to identify the typology of the individual that contemplates a possible career within the public institutions in the field of defense.

Research hypotheses

The scientific hypothesis serves as a connecting bridge between previously gathered knowledge and the anticipation of the evolution in the future¹. The issuing of hypotheses plays a central role in research, as they need to respect a specific set of features. Therefore, hypotheses should be logical, plausible, observable, verifiable, and measurable and lead to generalizable results². The research hypotheses that we have drawn up for our analyses are as follows:

H1: There lies a direct connection between the military institution reform and the integration of the Romanian state in international (security) structures;

¹ Marinescu V., *Cercetarea în comunicare. Metode și tehnici*, Publisher: C.H. Beck, Bucharest, 2009, p. 12.

² Chelcea S., *Metodologia cercetării sociologice. Metode cantitative și calitative*, p. 3, Publisher: Editura Economică, Bucharest, 2009, p. 57

H2: There lies an indirect connection between the external sources of pressure and the human resources management within the organizations subjected to reform;

H3: The organizational reform exerts a direct influence over the attitude of the employee;

H4: There lies a direct connection between the commitment of organizations and the commitment of their employees.

Research method typology

The research covered by the present paper is deeply anchored in the field of management, yet given the critical importance of management to the very existence and sustenance of the Romanian society, we can assert that our current endeavor is in fact characterized by interdisciplinarity, whose instruments and methods were combined in order to reach the objective pursued³.

Drawing up a scientific research paper in the field of management requires accessing the knowledge base of multiple different disciplines, including statistical mathematics. Since we have also relied on statistical mathematical methods to accomplish the empirical research comprised by the present paper, our research is defined by and complies with the principle of unity between quantitative and qualitative approaches⁴.

Structure of the paper

The first chapter of the thesis captures the defining aspects of human resource management within public institutions in the field of defense and their specific strategies (internal rules of procedures, codes of conducts, military career guidelines) with a focus on emphasizing their differences from the civil sector.

These representations were based on a series of studies by Romanian specialists on the theoretical and practical specificities of human resource management in defense institutions, but also on critical analyses of these aspects, since the optimization of such aspects is crucial to the development of individual career management inside the said institutions.

Chapter 2 provides a detailed look of the human resource management processes in defense institutions while accounting for their advantages and disadvantages. The nature of these institutions makes it possible to deploy human resources rapidly and without prior notice over great distances, over indefinite periods of time, in various types of terrains and climates, while entering in direct contact with different unfamiliar civilizations and cultures. These human resources are required to act in modern, complex, computerized and asymmetric battlefield conditions, which demands the highest possible levels of training and motivation.

³ Zaman Gh., Goschin Z., *Multidisciplinaritate, interdisciplinaritate si transdisciplinaritate: abordări teoretice si implicații pentru strategia dezvoltării durabile postcriză*, p. 3-20, Theoretical and applied economics, vol. 17, no. 12 (553), 2010, p. 5.

⁴ Chelcea S., *ibid.*, 2009, p. 29-34.

Any multidimensional development of the Romanian state exerts a significant influence on defense institutions, and the effects of these processes are noticeable over medium- to long-term. The most conclusive example of this is provided by the effect of correlating the processes of discarding compulsory military service, the small or even negative economic growth and the migration of the young workforce to other countries, which impacts the process of recruiting and selecting the staff required by the struggling military institution/organization and, inherently, poses a series of risks and vulnerabilities to and brought for by the national security system itself.

Previous scientific research papers have proven that shortening the period of accomplishing the reform of the management system in public institutions in the field of defense, without sacrificing the efficiency of the institution over implementation speed, can serve as an example for future reforms of other public institutions. Even though over the course of the evolution of a society many institutions/organizations emerge, develop or cease to exist, the institution/organization in the field of defense (the military institution) is an exception to this rule.

In order to strengthen the doctrine and to maximize the efficiency of the country's defense mechanism (the armed forces), one needs to account for and emphasize individuality, a person's experience, as well as the environment in which he or she wishes and is capable to work without succumbing to the routine and the strictness of the activities and tasks.

Numerous Romanian researchers in the field of management and human resources claim that, irrespective of the theoretical evolution of the terms that closely relate to individual career and individual career management, the specific traits and personal experience of the individual will eventually exert an influence over its development on both a personal and a professional level. It is understood that most individuals strive to polish their abilities and competencies, and thus seize every opportunity they can to accomplish that.

Chapter 2 also discusses the complexity of individual career management in defense institutions and highlights specific *elements of military strategy and features of the operations in the field of defense* under the context of regional and international security in which Romania is currently active and the reformation of the concepts of national security and defense that is currently in full progress. The current situation leaves no room for error or for issuing unrealistic or unsubstantiated decisions, since that could significantly impact the operation of institutions in the field of national security.

Chapter 3 addresses the reform established in Romanian defense institutions and the obstacles encountered by said institutions in doing so in order to identify possible strategies that can help to improve the individual and the management of his or her career while streamlining the activities of the whole defense institution.

In order to highlight the need for further reforms – or at least for new approaches to reform – within defense institutions, we decided to conduct a survey of the staff so that we could identify the need for new perspectives of approaching individual career management, a need that is underlined by the mandatory character of proper operation of military institutions as the main instrument of ensuring state security and its actual functioning. Simultaneously, we highlighted the possible limitations and obstacles generated by this process of reforming human resource management, namely of implementing individual career management.

As part of our research, we studied both the internal elements of the military and the way in which the military institution is perceived in the external environment. For this reason, in this chapter we also analyzed the sources of pressure arising from the reform of defense institutions.

The proposed research topic is part of the new trends of research in the field of career management, which is why we decided to place an emphasis on the multiple case-study method. In this chapter, we used stratified probability sampling and accounted for both *nominal* socio-demographic variables (gender, the environment in which individuals operate and the position they occupy within the organization), and *ordinal* socio-demographic variables (education).

The research presented in this chapter served to highlight the impact of certain factors of organizational and institutional reform on the individual as an integral part of the institution of defense. At the same time, the scientific research carried out was substantiated on the surveys of a large sample of respondents.

The present paper aims to identify useful strategies of implementing career management in institutions operating in this field that can cover for all categories of employees in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination in the context of developing new strategies and policies for human resource management while accounting for a psychological approach of the employees working in these institutions.

Our analysis, which was carried out gradually over the course of two years, concluded that the development of an individual's career can and should assume different forms and different multidirectional vectors. Linking these developments and performing adjustments of the direction of the actions by observing the rigid rules in effect within military institutions can support future projections of the institution's development as a whole and the development of its staff.

Previous analyses on human resources management in military institutions (that focused mostly on professional structure, patterns of accessing human resources and individual opportunities for career progress) have highlighted a number of *confusing* situations where certain positions designed for civilian personnel were too broadly defined in spite of the elaboration of internal documents that attempted to match these positions to military personnel.

On a practical level, these regulations have been avoided, often even ignored, which has led to sporadic conflicts in the workplace. The shortcomings of the current development system for civilian personnel within military institutions, in conjunction with the lack of salary differentiation based on responsibility and competence level, are the main reason why highly competent individuals are reluctant to occupy positions in military institutions or, as concerns already existing employees, determines such individuals to resign after 1-5 years and occupy higher-paid positions outside the military system.

On a practical level, it has been shown that the optimal functioning of the organizational capital elements generally translates into increased productivity of the public institution, namely maximal goal achievement rates.

Chapter 4 contains a survey undertaken in order to highlight both the impact of certain factors of the organizational and institutional reform on the individual as an integral part of the institution of defense, and the perception of the military institution in the external environment, in other words, the external potential of the military institution. We have also drawn up a possible profile of the individuals

contemplating a career in the institutions of defense, whether military or civilian, regardless of the subcategories under which they fall.

In the effort of building a theoretical model of the individual attracted to a career in defense-related institutions, we have sought to determine the factors which influence the processes related to human resources management in these institutions in the context of a public form of management. To achieve this, we used questionnaire-based surveys and aimed to identify the sociodemographic and motivational characteristics of those particular individuals who opt for military status or a career in the field of defense.

Our sociological investigation included a sample of 186 people (residing in Bucharest, but stemming from different parts of the country) delimited according to gender, age (18-30 and 31-40 years), level of education and military status, allowing for a margin of error of $\pm 3\%$ for a 95% probability.

We should note that, similarly to the research conducted and presented in Chapter 3, the questionnaire used was comprised of generic questions about the public institution of defense, social and economic information concerning its activity interspersed with questions on human resource management in defense institutions. The questions were grouped on different themes pertaining to human resources and were selected to reflect an accurate picture that would ensure the veracity of our scientific research drawing upon the established assumptions and the persons surveyed. Completion of the questionnaire was carried out both directly and indirectly, via the internet (e-mail).

The importance and novelty of this research paper resides in the fact that, in the present condition of the society, it is necessary to accomplish a comprehensive approach to the career management of individuals in institutions in the field of national security, in spite of any potential hindrances raised by its national and international implications. The main difficulty of this approach lies in the rigid nature of this type of institution, which is limited by rules and regulations, its own resources and the false perception that this kind of environment doesn't allow for any manifestations of emotional intelligence.

This research of the phenomena happening within the military institution had to perceive the institution like a living organism, a system of systems, that calls for an optimal management of the careers of individuals within it, namely optimal personnel policies related to modernization of the institution/organization, in order to ensure national security.

Methodological coordinates

The empirical research efforts presented in this paper are of the same nature, which is why we will illustrate the research methodology in a cumulative manner, making the required specifications where appropriate. Our quantitative empirical research was materialized through the conducting of surveys.

Questionnaires were among our most important tools (the first questionnaire was formulated in the form of 17 closed questions and demographic information about respondents, while the second one consisted of 22 questions), and they were designed and drafted under the observance of specific rules regarding the size, structure and formulation of questions.

In conducting the scientific research, we used a stratified probability sampling while respecting equal proportions for the categories, gender and job environment of the staff. The first layer of the sample considered the individual as the key element of research, while the second layer placed a focus on the military unit perceived as an essential subdivision of the military institution (viewed as a system of systems).

The socio-demographic variables were of the nominal type (gender, the environment in which the individuals operate and the positions they occupy within the organization) and ordinal (the level of education). For the processing of data, we chose to use central tendency indicators, the median, the frequencies and the percentages of responses for each particular item.

To verify the quality of the message, the information in the questionnaire, as well as the relationship between the items, the questionnaire was initially applied in a pilot research. After completing this preliminary research, we used the gathered results to determine the final form of the questionnaire by eliminating the items deemed irrelevant for the research.

The filling in of the questionnaires was carried out in the respondents' spare time in order to allow them more time to formulate their answers and to eliminate the pressure exerted by the formal environment of the institution, while respecting the security rules required by law (classification of information). After they completed the questionnaire, the respondents were studied and subjected to blind interviews, while the data obtained by these methods were then correlated with those obtained by means of the survey responses.

The questionnaires were administered during the period May 2014 - December 2015. The data gathered from the questionnaire, which was designed and operated in tabular form, were digitally processed using applications developed in Google Docs and Microsoft Office Excel. Version 18.0 of the program for statistical analysis SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) was also used.

Given the theme of questionnaire no. 1 that was applied, the surveyed sample was comprised of **513** people, and only **327** questionnaires were validated. Survey respondents were civilians and military with secondary and higher education that occupied various jobs within the military institution, and the data collection was achieved by self-administered questionnaire technique.

The levels for the responses were established on a five-step Likert scale (1 representing the minimum level of support and 5 representing the highest level of confidence), with level 3 being chosen by respondents either by default, either because they did not want to challenge existing regulations, in which case the manager was considered the supreme, uncontested leader.

The following research, which was conducted by direct observation and blind interviewing, has shown that choosing a neutral response (3) meant that the respondents did not want to upset their superiors in case the study should become public. At the moment of interpreting the results, the total statistic population was rendered irrelevant, since the nature of the survey was non-exhaustive, and the details regarding the organization and functioning of the military institution are considered secret.

In the event of a random sampling, in order to determine the sample size we will account for a permissible error level of 5% and a confidence level of 95%. Since we cannot accurately determine the value of p , we will set it at 50%. The following formula was used:

$$n = \frac{z^2 \cdot p \cdot q}{E^2}$$

where n is the sample size, z is the coefficient used to build the confidence intervals, p is the probability of success, q is the probability of failure, and E is the permissible level of error expressed as a percentage. By applying this formula, we can determine that the recommended sample size⁵ is that of 327 persons. Thus, the sample size used for this study will be 327 respondents.

The testing of the statistical hypotheses (a process by which, according to certain rules of decision, we can reject or accept a hypothesis on a particular parameter of the population or a particular distribution) was carried out based on the types of the variables, the formulated hypotheses and the size of the population that were taken in account, and by means of applying parametric tests, which entail a good knowledge of the shape of value distribution, or nonparametric tests.

When the data is ordinal, or categorical (Likert), as in the case of our study, it is advisable to use nonparametric tests. To be more specific, in order to test our statistical hypotheses, we will use the Wilcoxon test and Cronbach's Alpha index.

The Wilcoxon Test is a bivariate non-parametric test used when there is a need to verify the statistical significance of the differences identified for the variables originating from dependent samples (repeated instances of the same measurements or two variables measured for the same respondents), which are measured by ordinal scale, regardless of the distribution of the population they originate from.

The responses to this first questionnaire⁶ were distributed on a dichotomous scale, a trichotomous scale, a nominal scale and an interval scale. In this case, the data consistency analysis was performed using Cronbach's Alfa indicator⁷, which is normally used for measuring the accuracy of a test, as well as the internal consistency and the reliability of the instrument being used. The value of this indicator ranges between 0 and 1. To be able to assert that the scale is consistent, the value of this index should be as closest to 1 as possible, with the minimum accepted value being 0.70.

As far as the second questionnaire is concerned, in order to fulfil the object of our research, we chose to analyze the factors that influence the processes related to human resources management in order to identify the sociodemographical and motivational characteristics of the individuals allured by the prospect of military status or a career in the field of defense.

Questionnaire no. 2 was comprised of a total of 22 general questions about the public institution in the field of defense, as well as economic and social information regarding its activity interspersed with occasional questions on human resource management. Also, the questionnaire contained questions aimed at identifying particular sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents.

⁵ <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>

⁶ See Appendix 1.

⁷ Gabor, M.R., *Prospectarea pieței prin metoda statistică*, Publisher: C.H. Beck, Bucharest, 2013.

To verify the quality of the message, the information in the questionnaire, as well as the relationship between the items, the questionnaire was initially applied in a pilot research. After completing this preliminary research, we used the gathered results to determine the final form of the questionnaire by eliminating the items deemed irrelevant for the research.

Our sociological investigation included a sample of **186** people (residing in Bucharest, but stemming from different parts of the country) delimited according to gender, age (18-30 and 31-40 years), level of education and military status, allowing for a margin of error of $\pm 3\%$ for a 95% probability. The questionnaire was applied both directly, in printed form, and indirectly, via electronic mail (email).

The present study was aimed at accomplishing a nationally representative research, yet the scarcity of the resources allocated for the research has been an obstacle in achieving this goal. Therefore, we can account the lack of resources among the limitations of our research.

The questionnaires were administered during the period May 2014 - December 2015. The data gathered from the questionnaire, which was designed and operated in tabular form, were digitally processed using applications developed in Google Docs and Microsoft Office Excel. Version 18.0 of the program for statistical analysis SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) was also used.

Given the theme of the applied questionnaire, the surveyed sample was comprised of 450 people, and only 186 questionnaires were validated. The answers to the questions of the questionnaire were measured using a dichotomous scale (yes/no), a trichotomous scale (yes/ no/ I don't know; yes/ no/ maybe), a nominal scale and an interval scale (age groups 18-30 or 31-40).

Conclusions

The empirical research conducted in this thesis was preceded in the early years of doctoral studies by three preliminary works of research through which we tried to gradually achieve a realistic picture of human resource management and career management in public institutions operating in the field of defense, namely of the status of this particular type of management in the Romanian society.

The conclusions drawn from this research initially revealed that the designing and implementation of a modern and effective individual career management system for all categories of the staff should particularly aim to increase transparency and ensure equal chances and opportunities in the processes of promotion, as well as professional and career development, so as to meet the needs and aspirations of the individual, to ensure an improvement of professional performance and the development of the individual's potential, to increase the motivation for pursuing the military career, job satisfaction rates, the level of commitment to the military institution and to retain the well-performing staff.

At the level of the staff operating in institutions of defense, the reform initially induced a gap between the expectations and the actual chances of achieving professional goals.

Given that the society is facing a widening of the state of poverty, the social dependence of the individual is on the incline, the primary reason for that being the increasing dependence on the welfare system (as a means of offsetting poverty). In this case, the career comes to be perceived as a means of survival, which is why

many individuals currently strive for vertical and diagonal career jumps (with frequent changes of profession) in the aim of earning more financial resources. This trend contributes to a fading out of the perception that achieving a particular socio-professional status offers better professional security, and a diminishing of many aspects of personal life. To use a more vulgar expression, people are chasing money to the detriment of the institution of the family, society, the institutions they work for and so on.

Reforming the institution and, implicitly, its management (understood in the light of the human resource management and individual career management reform) envisions the wish that employees should be capable to understand the changes (in nature and intensity) and react by being less resistant to change, retaining their high morale, motivation and, therefore, efficiency.

Accepting that there is a need for change/reform produces the opportunity and willingness to act in favor of the change, namely to maintain or increase the trust in superiors and hence to support their decisions and actions.

At the same time, the prospect of reform means that it is possible to willingly learn new skills, ideologies and mindsets while gradually abandoning the old habits. It is difficult to successfully implement a reform if the patterns of attitudes/behaviors and mind patterns of the individuals stay the same, or the individuals manifest no openness to change whatsoever, even when faced with the risk of perpetuating negative factors such as financial and material deprivation.

Ongoing displays of mental stress and discomfort are especially dangerous in institutions of defense considering the purpose of these institutions. It is hard to imagine what could happen in the event that the people intended to defend the territory, the citizens and assets of this state would end up being too distracted to carry out their duties optimally. In the light of the current tendency to create new value scales/systems founded on financial criteria, in the actual context of increased corruption, unemployment, social inequity, etc., the situation becomes even more critical when the staff in defense institutions is concerned. The discrepancies between expectations (income, social and professional status) and the actual results induce a massive demotivation of the individual, reducing everything to a matter of survival. In theory, it can be asserted that these sudden and successive changes in the society and in the field of military defense determine a growth of pragmatism and individualism.

Although it is often stated that increasing the wages would be a solution to these problems, this claim is invalid, as the monetary stimulus, although important, isn't always enough or even necessary. On the battlefield, it is the partners, the commander, the group climate that actually matters.

Therefore, in terms of finances, the implementation of individual career management initially determines an increase in wage costs in relation to the number of newly created jobs, possible expenses arising from the granting of allowances for relocation and installation, compensations for rent expenses, transport expenses, expenses for training career managers, as well as other expenses generated by an optimal functioning of the designed structures. However, from the standpoint of retaining and perfecting the staff that has a high potential to develop their careers and that of the long-term benefits, this is the only process capable to ensure that the competence of the individuals are garnered to its full benefit so that the military institution can achieve the intended success.

Similarly, the responses provided in the second questionnaire support the fact that the financial factors are decisive in substantiating the decision to become a member of the Romanian military institution.

As shown above, it is easy to note that the financial aspect is mentioned by a high percentage – 60.5% - of subjects with ages between 18 - 30 (compared with the 57.7% of people aged 31 - 40).

The correlation of results showed that employment in the military institution is a viable option for young people seeking an active job and a secure financial income. Persons with ages between 18 and 30 rather tend to envision the prospect of employment in the military field on short term, since they are less interested in the long-term benefits and facilities (14.8% versus 18.4% of persons aged 31-40 years).

The survey results have revealed that, although there is interest in the Romanian military institution, there are currently other factors that determine the option for a military career. There are also other factors that exert a negative influence on attitudes and erode the motivation to become a part of this professional body. The decision to express disagreement is higher for the whole sample (with an added 20 percent in the age group 31-40 as compared to the 18-30 age group) regarding particular aspects including:

- the effectiveness of informing citizens about the exact conditions and criteria that a young person, irrespective of sex, needs to meet in order to become a voluntary reserve (over 80% of the subjects);

- the salary rights granted; according to the opinions of the respondents, there is a general dissatisfaction regarding the size of the income, which doesn't really come as a surprise considering that they are invoking the issue of the current living expenses, and a desire for concrete measures of raising said salaries (21.51% of the subjects); about half of the subjects who didn't express their opinion on the status of voluntary reserve claimed that they might become interested in the military career if the entitlements were more attractive.