THE MANAGEMENT AND CONTENT OF MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS IN ROMANIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract
Although pan-European universities became autonomous institutions, their governance structure is still organized under the laws of each state, which expressly states the functions and management structures together with their attributions. For the past two years, the Romanian academic environment experienced a consistent reform. The old ground of the educative system was reinforced by the new Law of National Education which represented, for our country, the starting of the modernization of the academic education. By modifying the regulation framework, certain key-objectives were envisaged, such as: the modernization of higher education institutions management, reinforcing university autonomy and the public liability, insuring quality in academic education, enforcing measures for stating university ethics, competition financing, supporting performant private education, developing trans-borders cooperation, both at the Community level and globally. In the university management, the changes followed: a review of governance structures and leaving behind the traditional self-governance model, focusing on the new models, which re-distribute the decision making power and responsibilities between stakeholders, internal and external. Now, Romanian academic education can be found in the middle of the crossroad since the reform is not completed but must go on in order to improve educational results.

Key-words: Academic management, administrative management, normative approaches, educative function, management functions.

JEL Classification: H75, I21, I23

1. Introduction
Academic education is particularly important in the development of any society because it creates long-term effects both in terms of human resources development and in the creation and dissemination of knowledge [1].

In Romania, education is considered of national priority, aiming to permanent development and modernization in order to harmonize with EU standards [2].

The concept of university management, as a leading process, continues to adapt to the request of a modern economy. In the year 2011, the modification of the national framework implied, among others, the modernization of the academic education institutions. As a result, the rectors’ and deans’ executive power was augmented in the same time with an increase in the Senate’s control power, respectively an increase in the power of Faculties’ Councils on the faculties themselves.

This article is part of a wider research that will materialize into the doctoral thesis entitled “Financial and accounting management in higher education public institutions.”

2. Normative approaches concerning Romanian university management

In our country, the educative function is most commonly insured through direct administration by the public institutions but coexists also with private educative institutions, a situation that, in time, has generate and animate major divergences, especially on those forming categories that need to be addressed by the public education system [3].
The public education system, but also the private and confessional one are regulated by the Law of National Education [4]. Higher education is regulated by the third title of this law, in twelve chapters. The university board is regulated by the XIth Chapter – University Boards.

Thus, based on the law, the **management structures** from the academic education institutions (private and public) bring together: from the university – the University Senate and the Board; from the faculty – the Faculty’s Council; from each department – Department’s Council.

About the **management functions**, in the university, they include the rector, the pro-rectors and the general administrative manager, in the faculty, the dean, the pro-deans, and, in the department, the department manager. Also, the pro-rector is the director of the Council for Doctorate University Studies, if the institution organizes such studies (IOSUD).

### 3. Establishing and selecting management structures and functions

Legislative provisions are complemented by specific rules set out in universities’ statutes (The University Charta) which provide information concerning the election and appointment of management structures and functions. A detailed overview of the management of the Romanian higher education institution is presented in Table no. 1.

The rector should be appointed through the vote of professors and of the students, at least 6 months before the election. After the election, in 30 days, the appointed rector is confirmed through Order received by the tutelary ministry. Immediately, a management contract is stipulated between the rector and the university senate, a contract in which are mentioned the managerial criteria and performance indicators and the parts’ rights and obligations.

The **University Senate**, as a management structure, consists of 75% teaching and research staff and 25% students’ representatives, all members being elected through universal, direct, secret vote from all teaching and research staff, respectively all students. The structure of the university senate is established on the grounds of certain quotations, stipulated in the University Charta so that each faculty is represented. The Senate’s meetings are conducted by a secret vote-elected president that will represent the Senate in its relations with the rector. The University Senate is the highest decision and deliberation body and its main attribution is to represent the academic community. Among other, it elaborates, debates in the academic community and approved the University Charta, approves, at the rector’s proposal, the budget and the budgetary execution, controls the activity of the executive management (the rector) and the Board through specialized commissions, closes management contracts with the rector. The Senates comes together at rector’s demand or in certain conditions, established by the University Charta.

The **Board** of the academic education institutions is composed of: the rector, all pro-rectors and deans, the general administrative manager and a students representative. In the private universities, the structure of the board is decided by the founders. The board insures the operative management of the institution and adopts the decisions of the University’s Senate. Among others, establishes the annual budget, gives to the University Senate strategic proposals, approves the vacancies and the new study programmes.

The **Faculty’s Board** represents the decision making and deliberative forum of the faculty and can be gathered at the dean’s initiative or in certain conditions, established by the University Charta. The most important attributions of the Faculty Board can be seen in Picture no. 1.

Table no. 1 – A detailed presentation of the management functions in a Romanian higher education institution.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management position</th>
<th>Appointment</th>
<th>Main responsibility</th>
<th>Other attributes</th>
<th>Removal from office</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECTOR</strong></td>
<td>Through public competition. Through universal, direct, secret vote of all didactic staff and students from the University Senate and Faculty’s Council.</td>
<td>Is responsible for the elaboration of the management and executive and operative administration of the higher education institution.</td>
<td>Is the executive manager and the credit representative of the university. Represents the institution in front of third parties. Negotiates and signs the institutional contract with the Ministry of National Education. Leads the Board. Proposes to the Senate the institutional organization, the functioning regulations, the management. Prepares the Senate the budget project and the report on the budgetary execution. Is responsible for planning university's strategic activities. Is responsible in front of the Senate. Presents the annual report on the academic education institution condition. Can give away some of his competences and attributions to pro-rectors.</td>
<td>The removal from office appears when the obligations coming from the public liability principle were not fulfilled. The rector can be removed from office by the Ministry of National Education or by the university senate, following the conditions from the management contract or from the university charts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRO-RECTORS</strong></td>
<td>Are nominated by the confirmed rector, after consulting the University Senate.</td>
<td>Are responsible for the management and the monitoring activities and issue assigned by the rector.</td>
<td>How specific attributions established through the University Charters and can take over some of the rector's competences.</td>
<td>The removal from office appears when the obligations coming from the assumed missions are found not to be fulfilled. Pro-rectors can be removed from office by the Senate, after consulting the University Senate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER</strong></td>
<td>Is nominated by the rector, after the consultation organized by the board.</td>
<td>Conducts and is responsible of the higher education institution administrative structure.</td>
<td>Has specific attributions established through the University Charters. Is responsible for the good financial and accounting functioning of the university, the implementation strategic decision adopted by the university’s authorities.</td>
<td>The general administrative manager is maintained in function as long as he agrees with the execution of the rector’s managerial plan.</td>
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<td><strong>DEANS</strong></td>
<td>Based on public contest, organized by the new rector. In the contest are welcomed persons from inside or outside of the university, from the country or from abroad, as long as they have the approval of the Faculty’s Council (the Faculty’s Council must approve at least 2 candidates).</td>
<td>Conduct and are responsible for the Faculty’s management.</td>
<td>Are subordinated to the faculty’s council, the rector and the university senate. Lead the meetings of the faculty’s council. Present, in an annual basis to the faculty’s council a report on the faculty’s condition. Participate in the board’s meetings and also the meetings of the university senate. Can give away some of their competences.</td>
<td>The removal from office is possible if the management contract has not been fulfilled. Dean can be removed from office by the rector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRO-DEANS</strong></td>
<td>Are nominated by the dean, and need to be part of the teaching staff.</td>
<td>Are responsible for the management of the activities and problems given by the dean.</td>
<td>How specific attributions established by the dean and can take over some of their competence.</td>
<td>The removal from office appears when the obligations coming from the assumed missions are found not to be fulfilled. Pro-deans can be removed from office by the dean, after consultations with the faculty’s council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEPARTMENTS DIRECTORS</strong></td>
<td>Through public contest or through elections, from the didactic and research staff.</td>
<td>Departments’ management and operative administration.</td>
<td>Are responsible for the educational plans, pay rolls of the teaching and research staff, research management, quality management, financial management, propose the vacancies for teaching and research jobs. Take part in the Faculty’s council meetings.</td>
<td>The removal from office appears when the obligations coming from the assumed missions are found not to be fulfilled. Department director can be removed from office through vote, at the initiative of the department.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The department’s council is the forum that supports the department director in the operative management of the subordinated structure. The department council is composed from representatives elected from the department’s staff and can be gathered at the initiative of the department director or in certain conditions, established by the University Charta. Its attributions are graphically represented in Picture no. 2.

4. Academic management and administrative management

In our country, the management of higher education institutions is divided in two directions: academic management and administrative management, both subordinated to the rector as the rector is the one responsible in front of the state for the university success and performances. Compiling, approving and assessing university politics options are part of the academic function while applying decisions and execution in general belong the administrative function.

In the 3rd picture, we put together a draft of the university management on the two main directions. It can be easily noticed that the pro-rectors coordinate the departments for the academic management while the general manager coordinates the departments for the administrative management. The pro-rectors’ points of view are completed by the administrative interpretation of the general manager when it comes to choosing between various possible solutions for a problem or when the projects to be presented to the rector or to the senate need to be prepared.
Equally, at the faculty’s level, the academic management, is subordinated to the dean and pro-deans and the administrative management is coordinated by the chief administrator of the faculty.

Generally, the administration of a Romanian higher education institution includes the organization subdivisions as shown in Picture no. 4. Besides current activities, the university administration offers information and reports when asked by the academic management or when the administration itself finds it necessary and useful.

The relations between the academic management and the administrative management are:

- **Hierarchic relations** – the academic management is responsible for compiling and approving university policies options, while the administration is responsible for their rigorous and efficient application (the administrative management is subordinated to the rector);

- **Functional relations** – the relations between the two distinct functions must be clearly one of close cooperation, with the same main objective – that of insuring, now and for the future, the university management, while respecting the fundamental principle of autonomy that awards to each higher education institution the freedom to organize itself freely. Also, the administrative staff, together with the academic management, applies the valid laws and the principle of public reliability towards managing budgetary and extra-budgetary funds.

5. Conclusions

We consider useful to separate between the academic and the administrative function since taking precious time from the academic staff to commit it to the difficult administrative tasks would mean to divert it
from its main tasks, namely the knowledge progress through research and dissemination through teaching. Also, we consider that the universities have become true corporations, and not in the commercial sense of the term as they aim to profit, but because they have to manage various and complex activities, mobile and immobile goods, to manage different projects, especially projects financed by external funds, to put together pertinent provisions, to intensify and to consolidate the relations with the social and economic environment, but also the international cooperation relations.

Therefore, we can now come to the pertinent conclusion that cumulating the academic with the administrative responsibility would attract negative results for a true, modern management, a management centred on strategic development but also immixtures that would have a negative impact on the academic freedom concerning research and dissemination through teaching. We find that a separation between the academic and administrative functions represents one the instruments that would allow the university management to become more modern, a support in adapting to the evolutions forced by the society’s progress and the evolution of international relations since the modern university is a living organism in a continuously changing world.

Currently, we think that managerial-type higher education institutions are increasingly been promoted and encouraged to start entrepreneurial initiatives, especially through the stimulation of the public-private partnership. An accent is being placed on developing management abilities by increasing competition between universities for obtaining the financing they need for fulfilling their assumed missions. More than that, we must not neglect the increased responsibility of leaders and leading structures from universities, through the extended freedom they received in administrating study programmes, or they internal organization, structure and functioning.

However, after a critical analysis of the situation, we now think that, despite significant progress registered by the Romanian academic education institutions, one needs to admit that not all universities currently benefit from an authentic leadership, as the system continues to face serious faults in management. For fulfilling their public mission and their strategic objectives, all Romanian higher education institutions need professional managers, committed and performant leaders, both academically and administratively. An improvement in the current situation can be accomplished through intense training of existing managers considering international examples or through promoting those employees with increased leadership abilities or through attracting new, highly qualified professionals.

6. Bibliography