

Organizational Structure of Romanian Universities. Differences and Similarities

Roxana Elena TEODOROIU¹

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to identify the main forms of representation of the organizational structure of Romanian higher education institutions. The first part of the study will consist in analysing the scientific literature in the field of management, regarding the company's organizational system, after which I will describe the representation of the organizational system of some of the most important Romanian universities.

The analyze will reflect that Romanian higher education institutions have very different structures, considering legislative provisions, as well as institution strategy, its mission and its objectives.

Keywords: *organizational chart, Romania, structure, university*

Jel classification: M12, M54

1. Introduction

As the activity sector named Education is a very important one, the organizational structure of the Romanian higher education institutions should be made respecting the principle according to which the Education system should represent a national priority. Projecting an organizational chart must take into account some managerial principles, legislative provisions, as well as institution strategy and the mission and the objectives undertaken by this.

The organizational structure of the state higher education system institutions from Romania must consider two aspects: one referring to the didactic process and another one referring to the administrative process.

As the representation of the organizational structure must undertake the university's mission and strategy, as well as the complexity of the education process (number of faculties, number of students, the number and type of the study programs), we can say that there is no organizational structure that could be available for every Romanian university.

Therefore, in this article I will analyze the managerial principles and demands that must be undertaken when elaborating an organizational chart and moreover, the main provisions imposed by Romanian legislation in what concerns

¹ **Roxana Elena TEODOROIU**, Bucharest University of Economic Studies,
E-mail: roxana.teodoroiu@ase.ro

the university organization. The result of this paper will consist in identification of the main differences and similarities between the organizational structures of Romanian universities.

2. Literature review

The proper functioning of an organization cannot happen outside its structural organization that allows the personnel to get to know its objectives and its tasks. (Burduş, E., Căprărescu, Gheorghişa, Androniceanu, Armenia, 2008) The structural organization entwines the projection of all compartments of an organization, the defining of the jobs within its structure as well as the regulation of organizational relations between them. (Deac, V., 2014)

According to specialists, a firm's organizational system consists in all organizational elements that ensure the framing, the division, the combination and the functionality of work processes as to reach the provisioned objectives. (Nicolescu, O., 2003). A company's organizational structure is formalized through organizational charts, that make a graphical representation, in order to highlight the form of the organizations' structure, the hierarchical levels as well as the relations between the compartments. (Bărbulescu, C., Dumitru, Nicoleta, Adelina, 2008) Another definition of the organizational structure is presented by Burduş E. according to whom the company's organizational structure is represented by "all people, the organizational sub-divisions, as well as the connections that get established among themselves, with the purpose of achieving the organization's objectives". (Burduş, E., 2012 a)

According to specialized literature, in order to form one company's structure, it's important to make notice of certain theoretical principles which refer to its vertical organization. According to specialized literature, these are represented by:

- a) The authority delegation principle to the managers that have the power to achieve the objectives (Nica, P., 1994) meaning that a compartment will become more efficient as long as it's closer to the place where its activity is organized;
- b) The complete responsibility principle, on hierarchical levels so that these carry the responsibility for their actions as well as for the actions of the employees that they are coordinating; (Dixon, R., 2003)
- c) The authority/competences and responsibilities correspondence principle (Nica, P., 1994) infers the fact that among these compartments must exist a balance so that the relations between managers and subordinates be functional;
- d) The management uniqueness principle so that one person/compartment is subordinated to one manager. (Brătianu, C., Lefter, V., 2001)

Moreover, the organizations must take into account the horizontal organization as well. Some of the most important theoretical principles are:

- a) The limiting the scope of authority principle (span of control) according to which one person can efficiently coordinate a certain number of

people directly coordinated, depending on the specifics of the activity and the complexity of the work. (Dixon, R., 2003)

- b) The balance principle, according to which a well designed structure ensures the harmony between the organization's objectives and the managers' responsibilities. (Nica, P., 1994)
- c) The flexibility principle, according to which a structure adopted at a certain point must not remain the same, this in turn could be adopted depending on the evolution of the organization. (Burciu, A., 2008)

The most important components of the organizational structure of a company are given by the specialized literature as follows:

- a) The job, which represents the simplest organizational sub-division is defined through all objectives, tasks, competences and responsibilities that come with it all and needs to be presented regularly to an employee of an organization. (Gavrilă, Tatiana, Lefter, V., 2007)
- b) The position, represented by all jobs with the same main characteristics. These can be two main types: managerial and executable. (Nicolescu, O., Verboncu, I., 2008)
- c) The compartment, which represents the reunion under the same hierarchical authority of a certain number of people, respectively jobs with well-defined tasks. (Gavrilă, Tatiana, Lefter, V., 2007). These perform homogenous labors that contribute to achieving the same derivative objectives and are subordinated under the same manager. (Nicolescu, O., Verboncu, I., 2008)
- d) The organizational relationships, that represent the formally established connections between the organizational sub-divisions. (Deac, V., 2014)
- e) The hierarchical levels, which represent all organizational sub-divisions positioned at a balanced distance of the organizations' superior management. (Burduș, E., 2012 a)

Therefore, we can conclude that the organization structure of a company must be compiled of:

- a) Formal tasks to be assigned to compartments and to people
- b) Formal leadership relations
- a) Systems designed so that that they ensure the employees' efficient coordination (Nedelea, Ș., 2008)

Establishing a company's organizational chart represents the last of the steps of a company's organization process. In order to design it, specialists enunciate the following steps from Figure 1.

According to specialized literature, organizations charts can be classified following these patterns:

- a) By coverage: general and partial organizational charts.
- b) By representation: pyramidal, circular and left-to-right organizational charts.

- c) According to the organizational system type: hierarchical-linear, functional, staff bodies, functional-hierarchical, matrix-type. (Nicolescu, O., 2003)

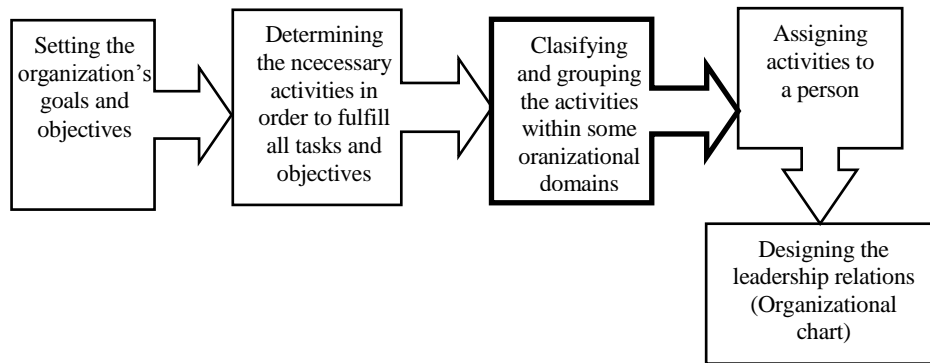


Figure 1 The steps of a company's organization process

Source: Adaptation of Nedelea, Ș., 2008

3. Romanian legislative regulations concerning the organization of the higher education institutions

According to Romanian legislation, higher education institutions benefit of university autonomy which reserve them the right to set their own mission, institutional strategy, structure, activities, organization and its own operation, the management of human and material resources, but strictly respecting the current legislation. (Law no. 1/2011, 2015)

According to Law no. 1/2011, any Romanian higher education institution can comprise the following organizational components: faculties, departments, institutes, centers or laboratories, design units, consultancy units, university clinics, studios and artistic shops, theaters, museums, centers for the continuous work for human resources, micro-production units and, service providing, experimental stations or other production activities or knowledge and technology transfer entities. Also, there are technical-administrative services that deploy within the structure of higher education institutions' system.

In order to determine the way in which a university's optimal structure must be conceived, one must have in mind its components, the way they are defined by the legislation in force.

According to the Romania national education law, the faculty is the function unit that elaborates and manages the study programs. This can very well include one or more departments, doctoral schools, post-university schools and university extensions that are responsible with organizing the study programs.

The same normative act defines the department as being the functional academic unit that ensures the production, the transmitting and the capitalization of knowledge within one or more specialized fields.

Law no. 1/2011 of national education mentioned which are the leadership structures within the private or state higher education institutions:

- a) The university Senate and the Administration Board, at university level;
- b) The faculty Board, at faculty level;
- c) The department Board, at the department level.

Along with the leadership structures presented earlier, Romanian legislation enclosed the leading positions that need to be found within a higher education institution as follows:

- a) Rector, vice-rectors, administrative general director, at university level
- b) Dean, vice-deans, at faculty level
- c) Department Director at the department level

Thus, it can be noticed the fact that the Romanian legislation within the higher education domain clearly specifies what the didactic process components for the state universities should be. In what concerns the administrative organization, the university's administrative director is mentioned, without having to enforce a certain structure of the didactic auxiliary and administrative component.

The same normative act that regulates the Romanian education organization legal frame mentions also the attributions found in the structures and leading positions mentioned above.

Thereby, according to the law, within the Romanian higher education institutions, the university Senate is the highest decision-making and deliberation body with the role of representing the academic community. As main attributions, the body has to approve institutional development, structure, organization and functioning plans of the university, also has to approve the budget project and the budgetary execution as well as the methodologies and regulations concerning the good functioning of the university. More than this, the university Senate has to sign a management contract with the university's rector and has the task to control its activity and the Administration Board's through specialized commissions.

Another structure of the Romanian universities indicated in the legislation is represented by the Administrative Board. This is led by the institution's rector and represents the operative leadership of the university, with the role of applying the university Senate's strategic decisions. Also, this leadership structure of the universities has the role of proposing to the university Senate long and medium term university strategies and certain policies depending on the university's interest areas.

At faculty level, the decision and deliberative body is composed by Faculty Board. Its main attributions are those of approving the structure, organizing and functioning of the faculty and the study programs managed by the faculty. Moreover, this leadership structure has the role of controlling the Dean's activity.

In what concerns the leading positions in a university, Law no. 1/2011 also stipulates the general attributions that they need to undertake.

Therefore, the rector of a university is the legal representative of university when it comes to third parties, is in charge of the executive leadership and coordinates the university's credits. The rector has the task of negotiating and signing the institutional contract with the resort minister, the task of proposing towards

approval to the university Senate the structure and the regulations of governing over a university and runs the university's Administrative Board.

While the rector's attributions are provided by law, the establishing of attributions for the vice-rectors is a university decision through the university Carta.

The leading position at faculty level is represented by the Dean. This represents the faculty, it answers for its management and conducts the faculty's Board. The faculties' Deans must apply the rector's decisions, the council's and those of university Senate's.

The management and the departments' operative leadership within the universities are conducted by the department director who receives support from the Department's Board. The department director answers for the study plans, the positions, the research and quality management and the financial management of the department.

4. Analysis of the representation of organizational structures of Romanian universities

In order to elaborate this section of the present article, I have analyzed the already existent organizational charts from the websites of the most important higher education institutions from Romania. Thus, to take to an end the proposed analysis, I monitored the organizational charts for the following universities:

1. Aurel Vlaicu University from Arad
2. University of Bucharest
3. Bucharest University of Economic Studies
4. Bucharest Technical University of Constructions
5. Transilvania University from Brasov
6. Lower Danube (Dunarea de Jos) University from Galati
7. West University from Timisoara

Analyzing the documents that Aurel Vlaicu University from Arad has put at our disposal, I've come to the conclusion that it represented its own organizational structure through three organizational charts, hierarchical-linear, pyramid like. These represent three partial organizational charts that emphasize the management structure within an institution, central administration and support services as well as education and research structures.

The partial organizational charts put at our disposal by the Aurel Vlaicu University from Arad allow a very clear identification of the relations between compartments as well as the deliberative and decision management represented by the university Senate and the executive management represented in turn by the rector and by the university's Administration Board.

The management's structure organizational chart highlights the university Senate and its commissions, the faculty commissions and department commissions, having two levels. This organizational chart also puts an emphasis on the executive management consisting of rector, vice-rectors, deans, vice-deans and head

departments. According to the organizational chart, the vice-rectors and the deans of the university are under the direct coordination of the rector of said institution.

The organizational chart for the central administration and that of the support services is organized on three levels and it represents the relations between the administrative compartments. The organization chart for the education system's structure and research system represents the relations between faculties, departments and research centers. Still under the same organization chart it is represented the structure of the university's Administration Board. It can be noticed that the most important organizational structures are on the first hierarchical system, directly subordinated to the rector of the institution. Also under the rector's direct coordination are the Financial Office, the Human Resources Office and the General Secretariat.

The organizational chart for the University of Bucharest is a general one, where there are represented all structures of this higher education institution, administrative and also education and research. This is an organizational chart pyramid like, hierarchical-linear, structured on four levels. And for the organizational chart for the University of Bucharest, the deliberative and decision management is emphasized separately from the executive one. The executive compartments are grouped depending on their activities' characteristic, part of them handling double coordination. Within this organizational chart it is mostly emphasized the technical-administrative structure of a university.

It can also be noticed that the first level of this organizational chart is represented by the vice-rectors which coordinate the main technical-administrative tasks in collaboration with the general administrative director. The only body that's under the exclusive coordination of a vice-rector is the General Secretariat Office. According to the organizational chart, the faculties Deans are part of the Administrative Board and come subordinated directly under the rector of the university.

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies has chosen that the representation of its organizational structure be made through two organizational charts, one of the education and research structure and the other of the administrative structure. Both organizational charts are pyramid-like, hierarchical-linear with four levels.

One characteristic is represented by the fact that none of the partial organizational charts adopted by the institution indicate the structure of the Administration Board. Another characteristic is the fact that all components that are subordinated to the administrative general director are coordinated by one of the pro-rectors. Also, within this institution it can be pointed out that it is the only university amongst those we have analyzed where the general Secretariat is not under the direct coordination of its rector or of one of its vice-rectors.

Another higher education institution whose organization chart has been studied over the course of this research is represented by the Bucharest Technical University of Constructions. This has put at our disposal a general organizational chart, pyramid-like, hierarchical-linear, structured on six levels. Within this

institution it is represented the decision management as well as the executive one emphasizing the structure of the university's Administration Board. One particular characteristic for this university is the fact that according to the representation, all faculties are under the direct coordination of the university's chief secretary and Administration Board. Also, again under the Administration Board's coordination we locate five more compartments. Judging by the analysis of this organizational chart I can find that the accent relies on the research and education structures, the technical-administrative structures being very little represented. It can be noticed that within this structure the vice-rectors' responsibilities are not represented and that the economic-administrative structure is under the direct coordination of the rector of the university.

The organizational chart for the Transylvania University from Brasov is a pyramidal one, hierarchical-linear, structured on four levels. This is a general organizational chart, where there are presented the research and education structures as well as the technical-administrative ones. Still, like in the case of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, neither the organizational chart presently analyzed emphasizes the structure of the Administration Board. It can be noticed that a single department is under the double coordination of a faculty as well as a vice-rector's. By analyzing the organizational chart of the Transylvania University from Brasov it emerges that the accent falls on the technical-administrative structure as the faculties and their structure is very little represented. The main technical-administrative compartments can be found under the vice-rector's and the general administrative director's coordination where we can locate one of the most important compartments within universities, respectively the Financial and Accountancy Office and the Human Resources Office.

The organizational chart represented by Dunarea de Jos University from Galati is the only organizational chart organized from left to right. This is a hierarchical-linear organizational chart from where we can draw out the hierarchical relations between the compartments responsible of this aspect. By consulting the university's official website I have noticed that each and every one of these faculties has its own organizational chart available on the webpage. A characteristic for this university is the fact that all compartments located on the first hierarchical level are under the direct coordination of the chancellor because the pro-rectors are not accounted for. Also, another aspect that is not present in the cases of the other universities is the fact that the General Administrative Office does not have under its wing the compartments that refer to human resources or to the financial-accountancy activity of the institution.

The West University of Timisoara is another important university whose organizational structure is represented through two partial bodies representing the technical-administrative and the research and education structure. Both bodies are pyramidal, hierarchical-linear structured on three levels. Although this university represents two structures, the faculty deans can be mentioned also representing the technical-organizational. We can observe that the faculties are under the pro-rectors' coordination, each one of them having at least one faculty under his coordination.

5. Conclusions

By analyzing the organizational charts put at our disposal by the higher education institutions previously mentioned, we notice that these have very different structures. The seven universities whose organizational charts have been analyzed represented the organizational structure differently, but still obeying the main legal provisions.

Therefore, we notice that all universities whose organizational structure has been analyzed, the deliberative and decision management is kept separately from the executive one. The education and the technical-administrative structures are under the chancellor's, the pro-rectors' or the general administrative director's coordination while the education and research structures are either under the chancellor's coordination or pro-rectors'.

Moreover, in all organizational charts that we've analyzed we can notice the compartments grouping into structures that emphasize their main activity.

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