

**“ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA” UNIVERSITY IAȘI  
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION  
DOCTORAL SCHOOL**

**MANAGEMENT OF  
PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF  
ADULTS**

**SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS**

**Scientific coordinator,  
Prof. dr. Octavian JABA**

**Candidate for a PhD,  
Irina-Ioana RUSU**

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## INTRODUCTION

The European Union politics is oriented to the choices identification for education and professional training and offers suggestions for adapting the national politics on education and professional training . In the European Union politics the necessity for national, regional and local authorities' responsibility in education and professional training is underlined.

It is important to say that the European Union politics do not impose common rules but debates to identify points of convergence and actions to address current and future challenges.

The main objective of education and professional training is, in the European context, the assuring of European citizens self development and integration in society through valuing common values and experience.

It is relevant to the work to mention that among the first works on adults education is "Cyropaedia", written by Xenofon<sup>1</sup>, a work on adults formal instruction in the old Persia. The conducted research evidenced the fact that in China and India professional training courses for adults have existed from ancient times. In Europe, among the first attempts to establish an educational institution for adults was recorded in England in 1597, when Gresham College was founded for preparing the local merchants and artisans. From the XVIII th century on the professional training programs for adults have known a great progress.

The first high education institution for adults is still considered the *Popular high school*, organized by Grundtvig in Danemarca, ment to be a post -elementary instrument for citizen education in order to increase the efficiency of peasants husbandry.

Development and implementation strategies to improve access to lifelong learning programs depend on the design and implementation of management systems and procedures.<sup>2</sup>

### 1. The Theme Importance and Topicality

The subordination of the entire research issues to the continuous changing labour market requirements and individual professional training needs, as well as

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<sup>1</sup> Xenofon (n. 427 î.Hr. - d. 355 î.Hr.) was a soldier, mercenary, disciple and admirer of Socrates. Xenofon papers are of great value for studying Greek history and philosophy. (<http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenofon>, accesed online on de 21.01.2010).

<sup>2</sup> Nica, P.; Prodan, A.; Iftimescu, A., Management – concepte și aplicații practice, Sedcom Libris Publishing House, Iași, 2002, p. 32.

with the activities conducted by adults professional training providers, imposed our research the identifying of specific problems and solving them.

For this purpose the entire research was directed to finding answers to the following questions:

- Which are the individual professional training needs?
- Who are the applicants for professional training courses and what is their motivation?
- Which is the degree to which the activity of adult training providers respond to labor market requirements?
- Which are the effects of adult professional training activities?
- What factors influence adult professional training process?
- What are ways that can lead to implementation of appropriate solutions for continuous improvement?

Each component represents a research area with specific and relatively separate but strong related elements. In our opinion, adults training process, its content and goals is a result of research and at the same time its domain.

In the Management of adult training is necessary to know the peculiarities of the conditions in which it is organized and conducted, such as:

- ✓ Structural changes in economic, social and political environment;
- ✓ Major changes in occupational structure of the population;
- ✓ Failure to obtain complete information and operative on labor market developments;
- ✓ Insufficient information on the prospects for economic and social development;
- ✓ Romania's Accession to the European Union.

Studying the mentioned features led us to the conclusion that only taking into account all the elements and interrelationships can get a "picture" unit showing "the whole, the totality and interdependence".

In our opinion, the systemic approach is needed to develop and implement strategies for adults training Systemic approach to research implies an increased interest of the researchers for *multidisciplinarity, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity*.

The quality of decisions on organizing and developing adults training activities depends on organization of the management process and managerial structure. There are connected. The management structure is embodied in the forms of labor division and the management process in the organization and implementation of various specific activities of adult training. Improving links between process management and management structure is based on dynamic linking of management needs with the managerial structure possibilities.

For most of adult training providers there is no such correlation. The complex needs in the management process have no counterpart in the management structure.

Furthermore, the requirements of management process are amplified and the managerial structure remains the same. Organizing the management process in adult training consists in defining step by step activities (identification of training needs, organizing training, training plan development, training program development, establishment of work stages, the selection of trainers, training program evaluation, trainers assessment, etc.).

In this paper, in addition to the arguments in favor of a systemic approach to adult training activity, the assumptions and methodology of such an approach is presented.

## 2. The Purpose and Objectives of the Research

The purpose of the research has focused on identifying how the adult *training process has been organized and ran in conjunction with influence factors from Iasi County..*

*The Main objective, MO, of investigation is finding solutions to assure improvement of management system of adult training quality system in relation to labor market needs and individual desires and training needs.*

There are some *derived objectives*, with a significant contribution to achieving the research requirements. These are:

- **O1.** Getting information on carrying out training of adults in Iasi county during 2004-2011.
- **O2.** Highlighting the key issues of how to realize the interrelationship between:
  - adult training activities organized and run by training providers and training needs ;
  - the adapting ability of training providers and evolution of professions, qualifications and competencies.
- **O3.** Identifying of the influence factors of adult training process.

## 3. The Research Hypothesis

Tracking the goal of this research we have considered the following hypothesis:

- ❖ **H1.** Training providers use different specific methods to identify the training needs;
- ❖ **H2.** Training providers give importance to the selection and evaluation of trainers activity;
- ❖ **H3.** Training providers appreciate in a different way the necessity to evaluate the training program;
- ❖ **H4** Training providers have little concern regarding the introduction of quality management standards;

- ❖ **H5.** Training courses are partly correlated to the graduates needs;
- ❖ **H6.** Students appreciate that during courses there is little usage of an appropriate methodology regarding age and training level;
- ❖ **H7.** Students appreciate that during courses the stress falls on theoretical aspects rather on the practical ones;
- ❖ **H8.** Information gathered from training program evaluation is insufficiently used to improve its content;
- ❖ **H9.** Students appreciate differently the methods of assessing progress in acquiring theoretical and practical knowledge;
- ❖ **H10.** Students / graduates appreciate in a different way the quality of adult training programs.

#### **4. The Methodology of Research**

As part of the explorative research type, the used methodology was meant to assure a representativity as big as possible for the collected data in order to make a real response to the research purpose and objectives.

In the choice of the research instruments have been taken into account the characteristics of the investigated groups, namely: *unhomogeneity* and *dispersial characteristics*.

Development tools used to get the information relating to the main factors which interfere with the proper conduct of the process of vocational training of adults has been based on *bibliographical documentation*. This is carried out on the basis of specialty literature study in the field of vocational training of adults, as well as of specific legislative rules. These have been conceptually theoretical support facing us to: develop research objectives and assumptions, the instruments of research, the organization and conduct of research.

Among the best-known and used techniques for the collection of data are: observation, meeting, the interview and the questionnaire, the Delphi method and the projective method. In our research *observation and investigation based on questionnaire* were used.

*Observation* has been made during a long period of time, whereas the work of the vocational training of adults began to develop in 2004, at which time the first databases were created. For example, using the method of observation, have been obtained information about work organization, providing spaces for theoretical and practical training, carrying out activities of teaching and learning, the organization and conduct of final assessment (exam).

Reasons for the choice of certain occupations by the trainees, the appraisal of degree of vocational integration of graduates and their satisfaction in connection with such training has been carried out using investigation on the basis of

questionnaire. In its framework, particular attention has been given to establish the sample.

There were made five questionnaires addressed to five groups of respondents: 80 providers of vocational training, 51 instructors, 70 trainees, 86 graduates of qualification courses and 164 graduates of vocational courses.

The measuring of attitudes, preferences, behavior of participants to vocational training courses has been carried out by means of appropriate scales.

In our research, for measurement of data collected, from the four main types of scale (nominal scale, the ordinal scale, the range and proportional scale) *the nominal and ordinal scale* have been used.

## 5. The Paper Structure

The paper is structured in five chapters.

*Chapter I*, "***The need, organization, policies and strategies of adult professional training in Romania***", shows the main problems concerning the objective need of the professional training process, terminological and methodological details, the evolution of vocational training in Romania, the legislative and institutional framework. A particular emphasis is placed on policies and strategies resulted also of documents drawn up at European and world-level: (The Treaty of Rome (1957), Community Charter of the fundamental social rights of workers ( Social Charter 1989 ), Green paper of the European Commission, the White books of the European Commission, the Treaty of Paris (1952), the treaty for the European Economic Community (EEC Treaty, known later as the European Community Treaty), the Euratom Treaty (Rome, 1957), the Maastricht Treaty (1992), the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), European strategy for employment (1997), Lisbon Strategy (2000), the meeting at European level in Stockholm (2001), the high-level meeting in Barcelona (2002), the integrated lines for economic growth and jobs 2005-2008, Council Decision nr. 2005/600/EC on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States, the National Reform programs, the Memorandum on lifelong learning of the European Commission (2000), Statement of European Ministries of Education and Vocational Training and of the European Commission (Copenhagen, 2002), the common evaluation document of employment policies of (JAP).

In *Chapter II*, "***Adult vocational training in other Member States of the European Union, and of the world***", are presented european regulations in matters of employment and vocational training. A comparative study on the process of vocational training of adults in Romania with those from other member states of the European Union is submitted. There are emphasized good practices of initial and continuing training of trainers in the system of continuing vocational

training in the countries: Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, the United Kingdom, Portugal.

In *Chapterl III* , "**Management of adult vocational training**", are presented the main concerns of quality management in the process of vocational training and the principles of management and quality management process adapted to the specific of the vocational training of adults. It is also presented the financing of vocational training as well as the integrated system model of vocational training of adults and the main "actors" of this system.

A particular emphasis is put on finding ways for continuous improvement of the system of vocational training of adults in Romania. In this respect, has been developed, taking account of the recommendations of the European Quality Assurance Reference framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQARF) a system of *descriptors* and *indicators*, with the help of which it can be appreciated the quality management in activity of the providers of vocational training of adults ( *tables 3.2 and 3.3* . ).

*Chapter IV*, "**Management of authorization processes and the monitoring of providers of adult vocational training and the certification of professional training**", is split into three subsections.

In this chapter is dealt with the systemic approach of adult vocational training process, giving it the basic concepts of systems theory and an adaptation of systems theory to the process of vocational training of adults. An important place in this chapter is occupied by the premises and arguments for systemic treatment of the process of training as well as of a possible methodology, which will be used for its systemic research.

Also, there are presented aspects relating to the categories of providers of adult professional training. These are widely described, accompanied by the new procedures developed within the framework of research (Annexes 1, 2 and 3), the main moments of the training process, namely: *authorisation, monitoring and certification of skills (final evaluation)* .

In the first section of *Chapter V* , entitled "**Research of adult vocational training process in Iassy County**" , are presented the foundations of theoretical research concerning the purpose of research, the research phases, the techniques, procedures and instruments for research, as well as the methods of data analysis, the purpose, objectives and assumptions of research. An important place in this chapter is occupied by the results of the research training process. Using the tables and graphs the indicators dynamics is analysed, which characterises the process of training, namely: the number of authorized programs of vocational training, the total number of graduates who have obtained qualifications, the total number of graduates who have obtained certificates of graduation, the total number of graduates and their structure on graduated training programs (*Annexs 11 - 30*).

The study of the influence factors of the process of vocational training of adults has shown subjective and objective components in order to obtain the information necessary to support decisions that aim at continuous improvement of the quality of vocational training of adults. The main factors identified by us are the lack of particular concern, maintaining skills and attitudes (resistance to change), lack of time, lack of self control and self evaluation capacity.

## **CHAPTER I.**

### **THE NECESSITY, ORGANIZATION, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES OF ADULT PROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN ROMANIA<sup>3</sup>**

The adult professional training process is an objective necessity determined by economical and social phenomena, as it is useful to each individual as well as society in general.

In the development and implementation strategies for sustainable economic development basic condition is *human capital*. The Concept has a relatively long history. In Adam Smith' " *Nations wealth* " <sup>4</sup>, as though he does not expressly uses the term of human capital, the idea comes from the texts referring to "capacities acquired and useful for all residents or members of society" seen as expenses refunded together with a profit <sup>5</sup>. In the same work, A. Smith compares a man for whose training was spent much work and more time with any expensive, but high-performance machine.

The concept of *human capital* has entered the economic literature by the studies of G. Beker (Nobel prize 1992), I. Mineer and Theodore Shultz (Nobel prize 1979).

The definitions given to human capital concept has not always been converged. The variety of definitions was also a result of how this concept was interpreted, and accepted or rejected by the academic world or the political class.

From this study we have picked the definitions significant and useful in dealing with our theme.

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<sup>3</sup> fragments of this chapter are to be found in the book "Abordarea sistemică a procesului de formare profesională a adulților", copyright drd. Rusu Irina-Ioana, published by the publishing house Lumen, Iassy, 2012, book in which they have been most comprehensive detailed certain aspects of research carried out with a view to drawing up this thesis of doctorate.

<sup>4</sup>Smith, Adam, „Avuția Națiunilor”, edition I, Publica Publishing House, 2011.

<sup>5</sup>Schultz, T., *Investment in human capital*, American Economic Review 51 (1), 1961, p. 12-17.

T. Schultz, who introduced the term of human capital, characterized it as follows: "all human skills as being either possessed or inherited, qualities which are valuable and may increase through certain investments, are part of human capital" <sup>6</sup>

D. Bartolo appreciates the human capital as "estimate of the ability of a person to produce income by work" <sup>7</sup>.

Bogdan Voicu, defines human capitalul as consisting of educational and biological capital<sup>8</sup>.

In the economics dictionary two definitions of the human *capitalul*<sup>9</sup> are formulated:

- the stock of professional knowledge, skills and health which may lead a person to enhance capabilities of its creative and implicitly of the expected income;
- the people ability to efficiently produce goods and services;

M. Bulgaru defines human capital as "that human capacity to express all the humans physical, intellectual, psychic and moral skills to accumulate knowledge, experience, to innovate and invent for the purpose of creating goods, spiritual values and other human values put in the service of humanity " <sup>10</sup>.

Vocational training of adults provides a particular production, necessary to continue the development and efficient use of fixed capital. which is why expenditure for the organization and conduct of training of adults, a lifelong learning are considered an *investment in man* or *investment in human resources*.

The quality of human capital, i.e. its capacity to contribute to growth and development of the economy as well as to increase its own revenue, shall ensure, by experience, by vocational training, through lifelong learning. The idea is submitted also by Gary Becker as "an essential aspect of individuals within their role as producers of value in the economy is the sum of their capacities, experience, and knowledge" <sup>11</sup>.

It appears that adult training, life-long learning, are the result of an objective need. Studying the specific literature, the comments on the process of training, discussions with experts in the field, as well as with the participants in the training courses and graduates gave us an opportunity to draw some *conclusions* as follows:

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<sup>6</sup>Schultz, T. , self reading

<sup>7</sup>Bartolo, D., *Modern Capital Analysis: Estimation of US, Canada and Itali Earing Function. Lis Varking, Luxenburg* , 1999, p. 212.

<sup>8</sup>[Http://www.revista.calitateavietii.ro/2004/cv-1-2-04/11.pdf](http://www.revista.calitateavietii.ro/2004/cv-1-2-04/11.pdf)

<sup>9</sup>*Dicționar de științe economice*, Publishing house Arc, București, 2006, p. 107.

<sup>10</sup> Bulgaru, M. , *Sociologie* , volume I, Chisinau, 2003, p. 98

<sup>11</sup>Becker, G. , *Human capital*, Publishing house All, Bucharest, 1997, p. 32

- Economic and social development is based on main resource, *the value of each member of society*. That is why permanent renewal of skills of each individual is a potential for society. Practically, the changes in the labor market lead to the need for reorientation of adults on adult age learning<sup>12</sup>;
- Barriers created in social integration of individuals by fast rhythm of the development of society are exceeded using lifelong learning;
- Avoiding discrimination, equality of opportunities is the result of *lifelong education*;
- The connection between the state of individuals and economic progress necessary for proper statuses shall ensure only through *lifelong learning* ;
- Integration of the concept of lifelong learning is done at the individual level but also at organizational level. Companies can cope changes only if employees are concerned about *lifelong learning* .

Statistical data on total number of graduates from Romania training in adult vocational courses during 2004 - 2011 proves both individual and organizational permanent concerns for lifelong learning. On December 31, 2011 the number of graduates of our country was of 1672757 persons, out of which 916962 *graduates with certificates of qualification* and 755795 *graduates with certificates of graduation*. The number of *approved training programs, until the first trimester of 2011*, was 24146<sup>13</sup>. ( *Annex 29*)

In the activities organised to evaluate the professional training programs, I've got some of the information that emphasize positive effects of lifelong learning on each individual, as follows:

- The adult training courses are significant for the knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses. The given answers have confirmed the idea according to which "the more we read the more we become aware of what we don't know";
- Courses open path to new activities, to professional opportunities and challenges;
- Training courses help people to change their behavior in relation to changes in the economic and social life;
- Increases the capacity to adapt to changes as a result of skills gained to search for solutions in order to solve new problems;
- Courses develop understanding and the ability to assess the need for active participation of individuals in formal and informal learning.

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<sup>12</sup>Palos, R. , *Învățarea la distanță*, Educational and pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, p. 32.

<sup>13</sup> statistical data processed in the National Authority for qualifications (ANC), former National Council for the Training of adults (CNFPA), during November 2011 - February 2012.

Information processed will be used as arguments in the activities for the promotion of training programs.

In Romania, the state exercises its powers in lifelong learning through the Parliament, Government, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Protection and Aged Persons, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Ministry of Health, as well as the Ministry of Administration and Internal Affairs <sup>14</sup>

But the main role in the management, coordination, process control of vocational training of adults, as defined by specific normative acts <sup>15</sup>, have, from the institutional point of view, the *Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Protection and Aged Persons, National Authority for qualifications* and other specialized agencies (sectoral committees, ministries and central authorities which have responsibilities in the field of education and training for the occupations covered by special laws - *regulatory authorities; social partners* – associations, trade unions and employers' associations) . (Figure 1.1 )

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<sup>14</sup>Law No 1/2011, the law on education, with subsequent amendments and additions, Article 335.

<sup>15</sup> O. G. No 129/2000, on the vocational training of adults, reissued ,with subsequent amendments and additions, Law No 1/2011, the law on education, with subsequent amendments and additions,



## CHAPTER II.

### VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF ADULTS IN OTHER STATE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE WORLD

Employment is set out in the EC Treaty in a separate section from the social policies<sup>16</sup>. It shall certify the importance of range of employment in an Europe in competition with other major economic powers of the world. EC Treaty provides its mission and purpose.

The mission and purpose of the Treaty can be achieved through the introduction of a common market, of an economic and monetary union, as well as through the implementation of common policies or actions laid down in the Treaty. An important part in these joint actions is occupied by the labor force.

The Member States, through their national policies for employment, contribute to the achievement of the objectives referred to in correlation with the general guidelines of the economic policies of the Member States and the Community.

Community's role is to develop, in collaboration with the Member States, the objectives to be achieved in order to ensure appropriate framework to achieve the objectives.

In our opinion, in a learning society, individuals should be validated basic, technical and occupational skills, irrespective of the manner in which they have acquired. This may apply to certain areas of basic understanding, which may be divided relatively easy on levels, such as: communication, mathematics, management, computing, legislation and economy, some areas of technical knowledge, which shall be assessed for the companies, as well as: accounting, financing, export, or even occupational areas.

Validation of skills creates conditions for persons who do not have attended vocational training programs approved or accredited to engage in specific job skills. An important place in the work occupies the comparative study of adult vocational training process in Romania with those from other Member States of the European Union and of the world. I considered it necessary for the purposes of formulating conclusions useful in the training system in Romania too.

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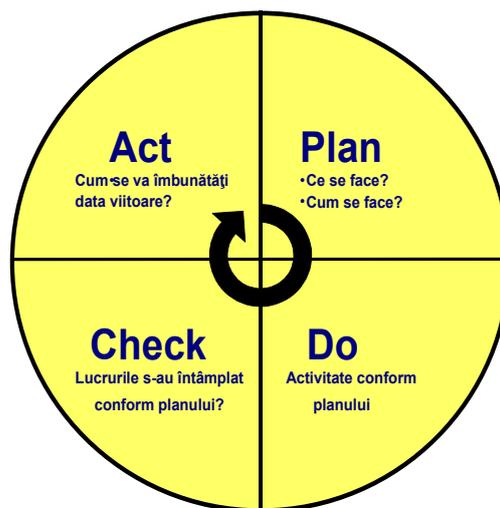
<sup>16</sup>*The Treaty of Amsterdam* (1997), amendments and additions EC Treaty in Rome with the introduction of a title dedicated to particular employment, Title VIII (consolidated version of the Treaty Ec) "employment" separately from social policy under Title XI (consolidated version of the Treaty Ec) "Social Policy, education, vocational training and youth".

## CHAPTER III.

### MANAGEMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF ADULTS

Broad treatment of the functions of management and of their operationalizing activity within the framework of the vocational training of adults and the principles of quality management in vocational training constitutes the theoretical support work for analysis quality management in the process of vocational training of adults as well as for the purposes of formulating solutions for continuous improvement of the system of vocational training of adults in Romania.

Joseph M. Juran, in the work *Quality Control Handbook (1951)*, has developed the conceptual trilogy "quality" - the quality planning, quality improvement, quality control - which can be found in the PDCA system<sup>17</sup>.



*Figura 3.1. PDCA System (Plan – Do – Check – Act) (Cercul lui Deming)<sup>18</sup>*

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<sup>17</sup> Nica Panaite; Iftimescu, Aurelian *Management. Cconcepte și aplicații*, Sedcom Libris Publishing House, Iassy, 2008, p. 33.

<sup>18</sup> Hohan, Ion.; Cucu, Luminița - *Managementul proceselor și managementul organizațiilor bazat pe procese*, FiaTest Publishing house, 2006.

In our opinion, in this system are also to be found the functions of management, considered by most specialists as: *forecasting, organization, coordination/command, the motivation/drive and control/evaluation.*

Within the framework of research, we have identified the elements that make up the PDCA system, taking into account the specificity of vocational training of adults. In our opinion, they are:

- *Forecasting.* The forecast is aimed at developing guidance on future conduct of business activities, reflected in the establishment's mission, objectives, strategies, in connection with identifying the needs of the labor market and the organization of, and carry out the activities that can best suit the needs of the market, improving training methods, etc. It should be mentioned that, to the realization of this function depends on fulfilment of the other, this for the fact that, the schedule provides correlation and orientation efforts toward achieving the objectives set out, i.e. the trainees acquiring the skills under the occupational /vocational standards of training OS/SPP.
- *Organizing activity* is to establish an organizational framework which will permit the attainment of vocational training of adults. The result is that the organization of work involves ensuring a rigorous achievement of what has been established in forecasts step, but also a continuous adaptation of the work to a more dynamic labor market.
- *Coordination /command* is carried out, as well as through the preparation plan and training program through which shall ensure the correlation of human, material and financial resources.
- *Motivation / entrainment* is a concern of the National Authority for qualifications as well as of the training providers. This authority shall draw up rules periodically, reports, and studies to argue the importance of vocational training of adults for each person and for society. At the providers level, the motivation is related in particular to instructors and can be intrinsic and extrinsic. The intrinsic motivation is the most efficient, as it is related to the trainers ways of thinking and their behaviour. A trainer selected on objective criteria is the one who, in addition to material interests, solves specific tasks with pleasure as well as with passion. Here the need for a rigorously selection of trainers. Extrinsic motivation shall be carried out in particular by negotiating salary. As regards learners, motivation is very different from a trainee to another and may be grouped in intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. On most trainees the extrinsic motivation is manifested determined by various interests (getting promoted, getting a job, obtaining additional income, etc. ).

- *Controlul / evaluation.* It consists in continuous ensuring of planing and achievements correlations. For this reason, are compared the achievements with the provisions of the occupational / training standards OS/SPP, as well as with the preparation plan and the training programs and deviations, their causes and corrective measures shall be determined to ensure continuous improvement of the quality of the vocational training of adults.

Studying the way quality management can be implemented in the process of vocational training of adults has led us to the same *conclusion*, namely that *organizational structure of most providers of training does not allow performing the functions of the management system.*

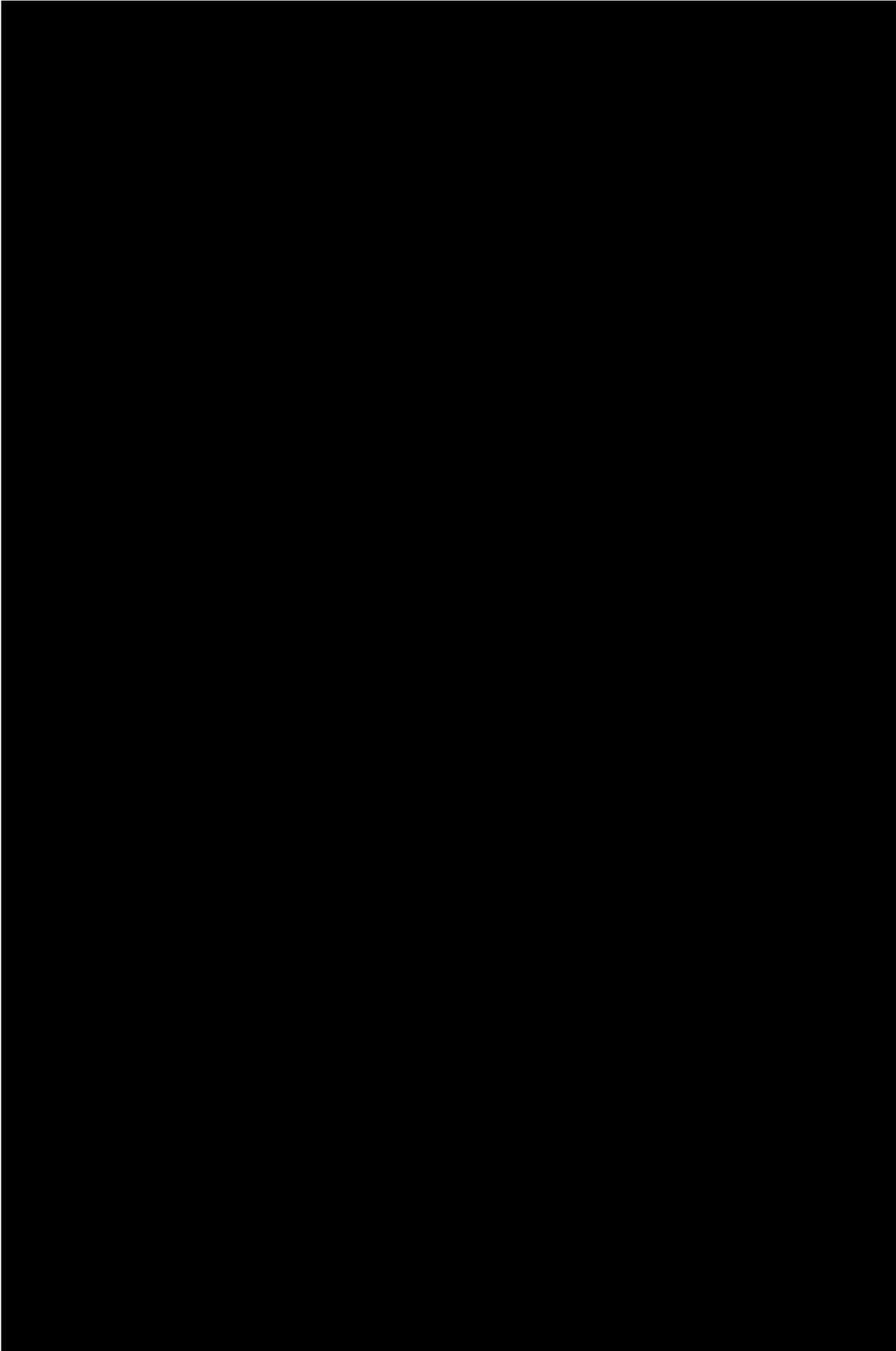
The model shown in figure 3.1 evidentiates relations between the main components of the process of training, starting with training needs arising from labor market, continuing with the activities and participants in the process of training, and finishing the model with labor market influenced by graduates of the integrated model.

Labor market characterised by an increased dynamism, is generating multiple and diverse training needs. On the market of professional training the needs are manifest in the form of training request. This may take two forms: request coming from actual needs of the labor market and the one coming from personal desires, both determined by the hope to find a job or the income increase.

Processing the application for training shall be carried out in an organized manner in the process of vocational training of adults. The structure of courses is determined by the structure of the training request, in coonexion with the actual needs of labor market and of individual training needs.

To accomplish the process of vocational training of adults the following "*actors*" take part:

1. National Authority for Qualifications (ANC);
2. The County Commission for Authorising the providers of vocational training of adults and County Technical Secretariat;
3. Providers of vocational training of adults (FFPA);
4. Trainees.



*Figure 3.2. Integrated model of adults professional training process*

## CHAPTER IV.

# MANAGEMENT OF THE AUTHORIZATION PROCESS AND MONITORING OF ADULT PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROVIDERS AND CERTIFYING OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

The study<sup>19</sup> of the complex adult professional training process has led us to the conclusion that a thorough knowledge of it can be achieved only by means of a systemic research. Systems theory is increasingly used in technical, natural sciences, psychology, sociology and pedagogy.

In our opinion, at present *systemic method* is a way to approach the complex phenomena research in any field of activity. It is also an explanation for that, the category system itself has become an object of study<sup>20</sup>.

Training of adults is a complex activity, consisting of an assembly of elements among which there are multiple interdependences. *The existence of vocational training system for adults is attested by interrelated elements which, in turn, may be systems or subsystems.*

The main elements to be considered in the process of training are: *identifying the needs of training, planning and organizing courses, conducting courses and final assessment.* Among these components permanent relationship of interdependence are created. Within the framework of the EPC system each component is a subsystem. Taken separately, the component is a system. The evaluation, for example, is a system, treated separately forms the assessment system. The process of vocational training treated separately, constitutes a system. The relationship with the system of education and vocational training in Romania is a subsystem.

In our opinion, training of adults is an *open system* which *receives and transmits influences in and from external environment.* In *Figure 4.2* are suggested the inputs and outputs to the system.

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<sup>19</sup> fragments of this chapter are to be found in the book " Abordarea sistemică a procesului de formare profesională a adulților ", copyright drd. Rusu Irina-Ioana , Lumen Publishing House, Iassy, 2012, book in which they have been most comprehensive detailed certain aspects of research carried out with a view to drawing up this thesis of doctorate.

<sup>20</sup> Săhleanu, V. , *Teoria sistemelor o cale către o antropologie abstractă*, Revista de filosofie no 7., 1972, p. 813 -815.

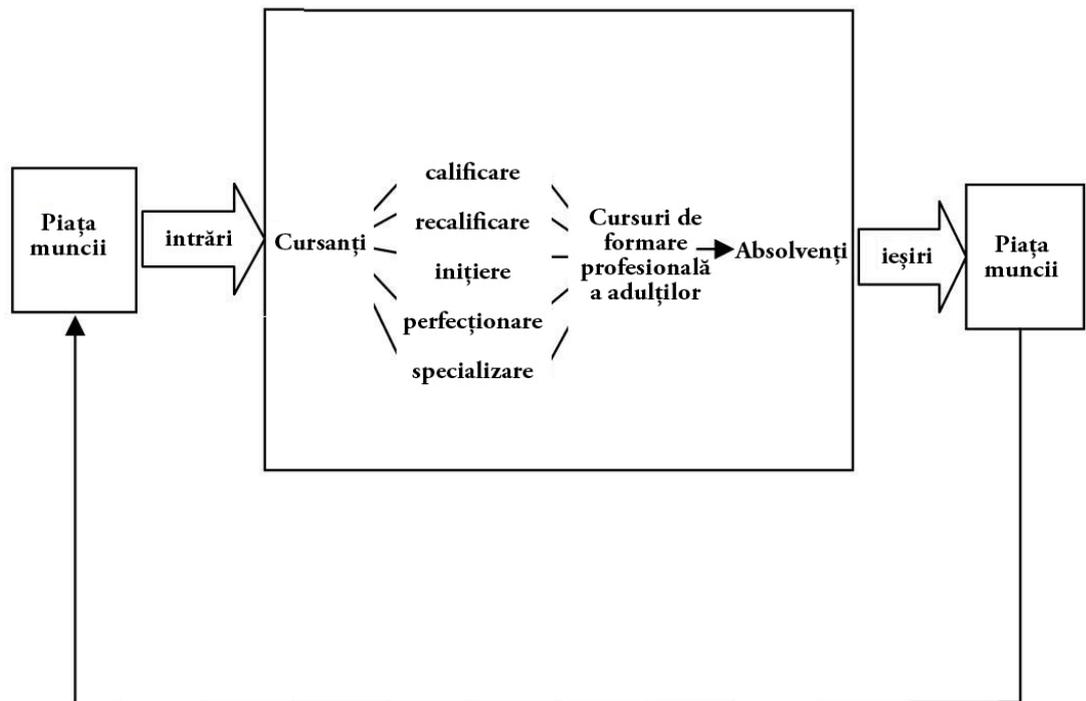


Figure 4.1. Inputs and outputs in vocational training system of adults

Entries influences on the system are received from the environment, and the outputs of the system are influences of the system on the environment. The entries in the system of training, namely learners who are trained for various occupations, are the result of the labor influences. The outputs from the system, namely graduates of courses, influence labor market, changing structure after qualifications and occupations, the number of people seeking employment.

“We may conclude that the system is influenced by the environment of action and influence it in turn to achieve a state of dynamic equilibrium.”<sup>21</sup>

The *complexity* of the system depends on the content and interrelationships created.

Relationship established within the system will affect both inputs and outputs and are constantly changing.

Research has led us to the conclusion that interrelationship created in the vocational training of adults may be used for the purposes of an activity useful only if they are very well known. Knowledge was the result of scientific, systemic

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<sup>21</sup> Jaba, Octavian, *Managementul producției industriale*, Sedcom Libris Publishing house, Iași, 2005, p. 93.

research, carried out by us, and it has been in regard to two components: *descriptive* and *explanatory component*.

The study process of vocational training of adults go through two stages:

- description of the existing system;
- the study of the interrelationships determined by the influence factors.

Solutions, in our vision, consist first in organizing the existing system to create the conditions necessary for the realization of management functions and the principles of quality management system. The basic rule requires that when it is desired the introduction of the new in an existing scheme, it must first be well organized to operate normally with a view to achieving the programmed objectives. We support the idea of new rules for authorisation providers as a necessity, to provide specific conditions concerning the existence of organizational structures capable of providing performing the functions of management, applying the principles of the quality management system and the *PDCA* principles (*the system Plan - Do - Check - Act*) (*Deming circle*)<sup>22</sup>.

Organization and management of the training process may not be a random conjunctural calling or for purposes other than those which are known. It is a scientific activity in which it is necessary to closely intertwined ideological-political factors with those scientific, metodological. To do this, we appreciate that the identification of interdependencies, deliberate creation of some kind of interdependencies can be carried out only in a *multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary* approach. Such approach is required also by the fact that the process of training is different from other systems through the existence of a significant number of subjective factors, together with the objective ones. It should kept in mind that human behaviour places an important part in the system of vocational training of adults.

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<sup>22</sup>Hohan , Ion.; Cucu, Luminița - *Managementul proceselor și managementul organizațiilor bazat pe procese*, FiaTest Publishing House, 2006.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE STUDY OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROCESS OF ADULTS IN IASI COUNTY

Studying the database of theoretical research, namely the content, scope and stages of research, the methodology of research, have been used for the research process of vocational training of adults in Iassy County.

Data concerning the number of providers of authorized training, the number of graduates who have obtained *qualifications* and the number of graduates who have obtained *certificates of graduation* from 2004 to 2011 in Iassy county are presented in table 5.1 .

**Table 5.1.** *number of suppliers of authorized vocational training programs, the number of training programs, number of graduates during 2004 to 2011 from Iassy County*

No crt	Years	Number of suppliers of training			Number of approved programs	Number of graduates who have obtained qualifications	Number of graduates who have obtained certificates of graduation	Total number of graduates
		Total	From which					
			Public	Private				
1.	2004	10	1	9	48	3326	680	4006
2.	2005	12	2	10	65	3252	1685	4937
3.	2006	21	5	16	93	6058	2540	8598
4.	2007	39	6	33	119	8120	7320	15440
5.	2008	12	1	11	153	5820	9780	15600
6.	2009	20	2	18	103	5329	10,250	15579
7.	2010	23	2	21	97	4976	12762	17738
8.	2011	30	2	28	174	5029	10652	15681
TOTAL						<b>41910</b>	<b>55669</b>	<b>97579</b>

*Source: data processed after statistical files of the Commission for the approval of providers of vocational training of Iassy County*

The work shows the dynamic of the total number of graduates and its structure during 2004 - 2011.

The analysis of the data obtained using questionnaires, resulted in the relationship between the number of graduates and the factors which have influenced the process of vocational training of adults.

Aspects shall relate in particular to the use of specific methods to identify needs of vocational training, the sources of selection of trainers, the importance of activity assessment of trainers, the need to evaluate programs of professional training, motivation for participation in vocational training programs (courses), the extent that the courses have met the needs of participants, etc.

In the research performed, we have identified a number of factors, largely of subjective nature, which may have a negative influence on organization and the flow of the process of vocational training of adults and, therefore, the entire system. They are:

- *lack of special concern for improvement of the process of vocational training of adults,*
- *sincere but wrong views,*
- *maintaining of some skills and attitudes,*
- *lack of time,*
- *lack of own checks;*
- *the vanity and interests unrelated to the process of vocational training of adults.*

Data processing was conducted using the *application SPSS 13.0*. Analysis of adjustments responses has been carried out using the Crosstabs method.

Results of the research were as follows:

The first relevant result shows that the methods used for the analysis of individual needs for training are used differently depending on the importance of the supplier shall grant the use of this principle of individual needs of vocational training ( $\chi^2= 115,115$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) which **confirms the first assumption** of the work, in accordance to which " *Providers of vocational training use in a different way specific methods for identifying the training needs.*"

A second result shows that *sources of selection of trainers* do not differ depending on how important the training provider considers to be the pedagogical education of the trainers ( $\chi^2= 89,568$ ,  $p = 0,166$  ). We expected that those who considers important or very important the pedagogical education of the trainers to choose from among the teaching staff that have this preparation, but distribution of replies does not confirm this hypothesis, **partially infirming the second hypothesis** of the work, according to which " *providers of vocational training attaches importance to trainers selection and activity assessment of trainers.*"

Another relevant result shows that *methods used for the assessment of trainers* are different, depending on the significance of the supplier shall grant to

the need to carry out this assessment of trainers ( $\chi^2 = 75,069$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This result **partially confirms the general hypothesis** for research, "*H2. Training providers give importance to the selection and evaluation of trainers activity.*"

Similarly, another result statistically significant shows that we use different assessment criteria for efficiency of vocational training programs on the basis of the significance of which the supplier attaches to the need to carry out this assessment of the programs ( $\chi^2 = 122,419$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), which **validates the third hypothesis** of the work according to which "*H3. Providers of vocational training considers in a different way the need to evaluate the training program.*"

Those who appreciate as necessary to introduce these standards, shall be at the rate of 100%, but don't use it, while suppliers who considers it very necessary to introduce these standards, in the ratio of 65 %, use ISO standards, results that **validates the fourth hypothesis** "*H4. Suppliers of training have reduced concerns regarding the introduction of quality management standards.*"

How will they use information obtained from evaluations of training programs differ significantly as far as they considers they should use such information ( $\chi^2 = 86,895$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), which contributes to **confirmation of the eighth assumptions** of work "*H8. The information resulting from program evaluations for training are insufficiently used to improve its content.*"

There is a significant difference between the average rate of trainees who appreciates, in total, the course as less favorable than the average of those who appreciates in general as the best course and very good; unexpectedly, the trainee who appreciates that course is weak, have higher marks to meet expectations than those who make a good overall assessment ( $df = 2,609$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), but also than those who make a very good overall assessment ( $df = 4,285$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This result **confirms that the tenth hypothesis** according to which "*H10. learners appreciate in a different way the quality of training courses for adult.*"

There is a significant difference between the average trainees who appreciates, in total, less favorable rate, and the average of those who appreciates in general course as irrelevant, good and very good; unexpectedly, the trainee who appreciates that course is weak, have higher marks to the appraisal methodology in accordance with age and with the preparation to trainees, than those who make a general assessment irrelevant ( $df = 4,000$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), good ( $df = 3,190$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), but also than those who make a very good overall assessment ( $df = 4,727$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), which contributes to **partial validation of the sixth hypothesis**, according to which "*H6. Learners appreciate that, during courses there is little usage of an appropriate methodology regarding age and training level.*"

Research has shown that there is a significant difference between the average of trainees who appreciate, in total, the course as less favorable, and the average of those who appreciates in general course as being irrelevant, good and very good; unexpectedly, the trainee who appreciate that the course is weak, they

have higher mark regarding the existence of clear explanations than those who make a general assessment irrelevant ( $df = 3,909$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), good ( $df = 3,097$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), but also than those who make a very good overall assessment ( $df = 5,285$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), which also contributes to **partial validation of the sixth hypothesis**, according to which "*H6. Learners appreciate that, during courses there is little usage of an appropriate methodology regarding age and training level.*"

There is a significant difference between the average trainees who appreciate, in total, less favorable rate, and the average of those who appreciate course as general irrelevant, good and very good; unexpectedly, the trainee who appreciates that course is weak, have higher marks to cover practical aspects than those who make a general assessment irrelevant ( $df = 4,363$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), good ( $df = 5,190$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), but also than those who make a very good overall assessment ( $df = 6,727$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) which contributes to **the partial validation of hypothesis seven** "*H7. Learners appreciate that, it is placed a greater emphasis on theoretical aspects at the expense of those practical.*"

There is a significant difference between the average to trainees who appreciate, in total, less favorable rate, and the average of those who appreciate in general the course as being irrelevant or good; unexpectedly, the trainee who consider the course is weak, they have higher marks to assess adequacy of assessment methods of progress than those who make a general assessment irrelevant ( $df = 3,090$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), but also than those who make a good overall assessment ( $df = 2,804$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) which also contributes to **partial validation of hypothesis nine**, according to which "*H9. Learners appreciate differently the methods for the evaluation of progress in acquiring theoretical knowledge and practical experience.*" There is a significant difference between the average of trainees who have never participated to a course and those who have been involved in a course or those who have been involved in more than four courses. Just as we expected, the trainee who have not participated in a course until now are less demanding and have higher marks on appreciating the methodology than those who have been to at least one course ( $df = 2,265$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), but also than those who have participated in more than four courses ( $df = 2,324$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ) which contribute to **the partial validation of hypothesis five**, "*H5. Training courses are partly correlated with graduates concerns.*"

There is a significant difference between the average trainees who have not participated in any other course and average of those who may have attended more than four courses. As expected, learners who have not been involved in a course until now are less demanding and have larger environments to the appraisal methodology toward the people who have participated in 4 or more courses ( $df = 2,615$ ,  $p = 0.015$ ) which also contribute to **the partial validation of hypothesis six**, according to which "*H6. Learners appreciate that is used too little a methodology suitable to special features in the age and preparation.*"

There is a significant difference between the average to trainees who have not participated to any other course and average of those who participated in a course. So, learners who have not participated in a course until now, there are less demanding and have higher marks on the assessment methods for the evaluation of progress than those who have been to at least one more course ( $df = 2,419$ ,  $p = 0.000$  ). There is also a significant difference between the average to trainees who have been involved in another course and the average of those who have been involved in more than 4 courses, average being significantly higher ( $df = 2,727$ ,  $p = 0,004$  MG ) which also contributes to **partial validation of hypothesis nine**, according to which "*H9. Learners appreciate differently methods for the evaluation of progress in acquiring theoretical knowledge and practical experience.*"

Graduates of qualification courses are more involved and more motivated of the importance of their participation in such a course as opposed to those who make a course for occupations (tables 4.39.1 and 4.39.2 of Annex 32 ), which contributes to **validation of hypothesis ten**, "*H10. Trainees/graduates appreciate in a different way the quality of training courses of adults.*"

A final relevant result is the one for comparison of distribution of staying motivated to participate in a course according to the type of a high school graduate - of course of qualification or of graduation, which reveals a significant statistical distribution ( $\chi^2 = 44,893$ ,  $p = 0.000$  ) - in which more than 68 per cent of graduates of qualification course have been motivated to participate in for suitability for taking up a job, while only 28 percent of the current graduates of graduation course have had the same motivation, the ratio being reversed when it comes to a matter of safety to maintain the current job, where 29 percent of graduates of courses of occupations admit this motivation, while in the qualifications graduates only 22 % have this motivation.(figure 4.42), which contributes to the validation **of the hypothesis five**, according to which "*H5. Training courses are partly correlated with graduates concerns.*"

## **GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION**

### **1. General Conclusions**

Profound and rapid changes affecting economic and social environment require vocational training of adults a certain content that can help people to survive a life with *larger and larger individual responsibility*. Frequent changes require people to be ready for *autonomy*, for decision-making and for rational choices in everything undertaken. These requirements may influence curriculum which may not be focused only on acquisition of skills once for all.

For this reason, the orientation of the vocational training of adults, it is and will be oriented toward acquiring skills of "*know it*" and "*know being*". Such an orientation develops ability to humans in a given environment and makes it able to actively participate to one of the processes in which he lives.

It should be borne in mind that economic and social development influences the vocational training activity of adults whereas *new skills and performance* are continuously required.

Economic world has become a strong inducement of education in general, and in particular of *continuing education*.

Various roles which man is forced to play in every experience of life, shall require that training and education should not be limited only to a certain period of life, but also to extend over time, *as a continuous process*. *The prerequisite of human adaptation to the changes which take place in the context of rapidly evolving occupations, skills and labor market is a lifelong learning*.

The information gained and continuously updated, is an important tool of knowledge, mastery of complexity and reduce uncertainty in economic and social development.

Research carried out on the manner in which the vocational training of adults is organized and carried out has led to some conclusions, including, but not limited to the most important ones:

- ✓ The request for vocational training of adults is growing ever larger, resulting from the number of graduates during 2004 – 2011 in Iassy county. Throughout the period in question, 97579 persons have completed the training courses, of which 41910 have obtained *certificates of qualification*, and 55669 have obtained *certificates of graduation*. The number of graduates who have obtained certificates of graduation represents 57,05 % of the total number of graduates.
- ✓ The figures indicate an orientation of the activity of professional training as a priority *by quantity and less by a response to the changing needs of the labor market*. The application is dominated by individual needs determined by training graduates hope that there would be more opportunities to get a job or to obtain better wages.

The aspect is attested by the following data:

The appearance is attested by the following data:

- 9354 graduates with certificate of graduation to pursue the occupation of "*trainer*" with a share of 16,80 % in the total number of graduates;
- 5616 graduates with certificate of graduation to pursue the occupation of "*project manager*", with a share in the total number of graduates of 10,09 %;
- 3281 graduates with certificate of graduation to pursue the occupation of "*mentor*" with a share in the total graduates of 5.90 %;

- 3220 graduates with certificate of graduation to pursue the occupation of " *inspector/specialist in human resource*"s , with a share in the total number of graduates of 5.78 %;
- 2986 graduates with certificate of graduation to pursue the occupation of " *auditor in the field of quality*" , with a share in the total number of graduates of 5.36 %.

The number of graduates for the five occupations is 24457 and is 43,93 % of the total number of graduates with certificate of graduation. As it is about the 64 occupations referred to in Annex 11, it appears that graduates of 101 of occupations have a share in the total number of graduates of 56,07 %.

The request for training being on the rise, has led to an increased number of providers of vocational training and at the time of the processing some of them in " *universal suppliers*" which shall arrange for the conduct of any type of vocational training of adults, creating potential trainees or trainees the illusion they may get a job. For example, in 2007 there were 39 providers of vocational training of adults, and in 2011- 167 suppliers, which represents an increase of 328,2 %.

Within the framework of the "competition" between the suppliers are carried out different rates, with the result that individual application of vocational training should be directed to the suppliers with the smallest duties. This phenomenon is negative because quality is not planned, but obtaining a certificate.

*Providers of vocational training with a view to more than their short-term and less long-term strategies.* Such practice is reflected, as will be shown below, in the content of the activities too.

The concept of curriculum is linked to the idea of a vocational training aware and organized. It does not involve the imposition of educational content to the potential recipient, it offers to the one who wants to learn a variety of purposes, indicating the ways of achieving them and the means used for the evaluation of the results<sup>23</sup>. So, vocational training content manifest itself through training programs and the curriculum which are intended to ensure *the organized character for the activity*.

In our opinion, training programs may include all the elements of which depends on their quality only if they are drawn up within the framework of a *collective specialist*, consisting of formers within the same provider of vocational training and specialists from the operators. In practice there does not draw up a curriculum with an appropriate structure, there are still many improvisation, programs being drawn up by a single trainer, even within the same provider of vocational training. There are cases in which training programs are taken in

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<sup>23</sup> Cucoș, C., *Pedagogie*, Polirom Publishing House, Iassy, 2002, p. 67-68.

informal mode from various sources and adapted to a greater or less extent on training needs.

- Evaluation of trainers is not organized, priority on the basis of the results of the graduation 70 %, 22% based on the rating trainees and 8 % informal. Measuring programs efficiency of vocational training is carried out in most cases on the basis of the final results (48 % ). Other criteria are: 16 %, number of graduates employed, and 29% do not use criteria for the assessment.
- The results of the questionnaire to obtain information from trainees in relation to the evaluation of the programs of professional training have been distributed as follows: 76% are used very often, 20% are used frequently; 7% very rare; 3% said they did not use the questionnaire; 2% irrelevant.
- Quality assurance systems to providers of vocational training of adults are very little present. Some of the components of the quality assurance system envisaged by FFP is all about, many times, only to compliance with the criteria to be carried out in order to obtain an authorization;
- For the progress assessment of participants in the few times will be worked out in regard to the competences that had to be acquired during program. The aspect resulting from distribution of the replies interviews in connection with evaluation of progress of participants in the training process. 82% of instructors have stated that they use conventional methods, 10% used a methodology of their own, and 8% said they did not have a methodology.

To these are added the replies of graduates surveyed for the question " *what changes would be necessary for the organization and conduct of a course of training*, 62% of respondents referred to the need of a more demanding in the authorisation and monitoring training providers, and 68% were referred to the need of a more demanding in the process of final examination.

The aspects are also related with the answers given by instructors to the question " *How do I use data obtained from evaluations training programs made by the participants in courses*", 9% have replied that they do not obtain such information. The other answers were distributed as follows: 26% use data to improve curriculum preparation; 34% for improving curriculum; 31% for selecting appropriate communication methods.

- There is a poor collaboration with economic operators as a result of the fact they do not have the funds needed for vocational training or they do not give due importance to training. 44% of training providers questioned replied that they are missing their relations with economic operators.
- Subjective and objective factors have a negative influence on the process of vocational training of adults. The main factors are: lack of special

concern for improvement of the process of vocational training of adults, views sincere but wrong, maintaining skills and attitudes - the resistance to change, lack of time, lack of self –control(own checks) and self-assessment.

## 2. Personal Contributions

Constant concern about the design and conduct of training of adults in correlation with changes occurring in the companies shall be entered as a component of the whole economic and social developments. Being a *development factor we will not be tempted to reduce vocational training in matters relating to the profit* . Of course, this factor cannot be ignored, but neither *can be admitted that the system of vocational training may not have any other purpose than that of obtaining income*. In our reasonable opinion, a company may not be renovated without a permanent renewal of knowledge, of spirits regardless of the costs.

From the information obtained in the course of research, the study of documents, interviews and talk with individual suppliers of training, with formers, with teachers with experience as well as graduates and trainees I have identified the main directions of orientation of the process of vocational training of adults, which shall be made in personal contributions to the continuing improvement in the quality of lifelong learning. We are convinced that it is not possible to make a research of this kind, only in the theoretical sphere, without trying to suggest some solutions that will bring some more knowledge and, by default the progress of some points of view, suggestions for improving the content of vocational training of adults process.

Here are the main suggestions which, in our reasonable opinion, can contribute to continuous improvement of the process of vocational training of adults:

1. Organizing research in which we have established research program, sources of information and methods of data collection;
2. Processing and presentation of data using tables and graphs. In documenting with a view to the practical knowledge of phenomena had been carrying out research being prevalent the method "direct observation of the activity of vocational training in the period 2010 - 2011 ". This was needed since the training activity has been extended since 2004 and as a result concrete information to characterise the phenomenon investigated were missing. The information which has been harvested gave us an opportunity to identify the purpose, objectives and assumptions, scope and content research;

3. Processing and presentation of data have been also reflected in the development of the scheme with which it was presented traceability documents concerning evaluation with a view to permitting, monitoring and certification (final examination);
4. Identify special features which distinguish capital investment of investment in man. Practical significance delimitation consists in ease selection purposes, objectives and means necessary to organization and process development of vocational training;
5. Systemic argumentation approach of the process of vocational training of adults is needed. Description of existing interdependencies in the process of adult education, as well as the development of deliberate interdependencies with a positive impact on your entire activity. In connection with that we elaborated a possible methodology for systemic research;
6. To analyze the role of curriculum preparation, the preparation of the plan and the support course in the development and implementation of policies of vocational training of adults providers authorised for use in the process of vocational training of adults. To do this, contents of document in question and the way they are made is specified. A particular emphasis was put on setting the objectives and the appropriate learning methods.

In our opinion, these documents must materialize supplier policy of vocational training of adults regarding the content of the training process. To this end it is necessary to take into account:

- avoid duplication, repeating if some themes are to be found in training programs of more than one module (disciplines);
- inclusion in training programs only those contents which have direct link with the objectives deriving from the occupational /standards of training OS/SPP.

***Schedule of training***, in our reasonable opinion, should become, to all providers of vocational training of adults, a document with *unitary character and essential*. by *unitary character*, program of training will ensure a scientific content, and by *the binding* requirement is to be carried out according to which all formers (and all personnel trained in such activities) shall be under an obligation to carry out exactly its provisions.

In our opinion, a curriculum of training well prepared removes non-systematic notification and incomplete and avoids arbitrary introduction of knowledge without connection with the reference objectives of the course.

By ***the plan of training*** shall be determined subjects (modules) to be studied, their logical sequence, the number of hours for each discipline (module),

these components must provide the basis for the training program and course development support.

Schedule of training must be the result of collective professionals design, respectively formers under that program of vocational training of adult and specialists in the economic operators. Such a program would remove subjective factors and the unexpected effects in the end resulting projects of training in accordance with the requirements which should provide the basis for them.

In our opinion, in the process of adult education a significant role it has *the curriculum*. The developing of a curriculum should not rely only on specialist knowledge, but also on thorough knowledge of training skills, to ensure that the trainer has the capacity for the selection, essentializing, organizing and explain virtually to know: "*what? how?, when?, what? and to whom?*" provides expertise. The result is that neither the curriculum nor the course(lesson) may not be bound by data and to the greatest possible number of pages.

In developing curriculum, it is important to know what does not represent interest for training: In our opinion, *a curriculum may be more valuable through what does not contain*. This for the fact that the curriculum is "the book", which selects, essentialize and explains knowledge provided for in training programs and in occupational standards /standards of training OS/SPP.

It should be mentioned that a well designed is an important instrument for trainees, whereas performs three main functions : *the function of information, the function of self-training and self- evaluation and the role of coordination of the learning activity, whereas it gives specific guidance to trainees*.

7. The identification of the influence factors specific to vocational training of adults. This shows a great practical importance in determining concrete solutions with the aim of eliminating or improvement of negative influences of the progress of this process of vocational training of adults;
8. Adaptation to the process of vocational training content of components that make up the PDCA. system It gave us an opportunity to indicate an exact concrete contents of each of the components and the way of achieving them;
9. Adapting general principles of quality management to the specific of vocational training of adults. We appreciated it as an objective necessity as suppliers have very few concerns for the introduction in business of quality management. We have argued the importance of implementing quality management principles in the training of adults;
10. Adaptation CERAC reccomandations to the system of vocational training of adults by developing educational descriptors and indicators which may be used for the evaluation of the quality of

education and vocational training at the level of providers of vocational training of adults;

11. Elaboration of Procedure „Evaluation of providers of vocational training of adults“;
12. Elaboration of Procedure „Monitoring of providers of vocational training of adults“;
13. Elaboration of Procedure „Organizing, conduct and complete final exam“;

The possibility of practical application of the procedures has been tested using pilot research in the course of which a restricted group of specialists *Commission for the approval of providers of vocational training of adults of Iassy County* have used these procedures in the activities concerned. On the basis of the representations have been made improvements on procedures and has expanded their use in the entire system in Iassy county. The results obtained are important for the specialists worked together and for the objectivity of their assessments;

14. Development of the "*Code of Ethics for the specialists of Committee Approval Training Providers for adults (CAJ)*" which played an important role in improving their behavior;
15. Develop a "decatalogue" which has a significant role in the training and developing specialists skills in connection with compliance with legal norms, moral values and principles;
16. Research has provided information that have stated at basis of *proposals* for furtherimprovement:

❖ Most of the problems the quality of vocational training of adults depend can be restricted to two, namely: a) *organization of the work by FFPA who were able to have an organizational structure to ensure performing the functions and principles of management qualities* and b) *instructors* , central elements in the process of FFPA. In this respect, we strongly recommend the introduction of concrete, measurable *criteria, on the basis of which to authorize only suppliers who can provide necessary organization and business to the FFPA*. Such a measure would lead to the removal those training suppliers who do not have any other purpose than obtaining income. The negative effects of the existence on the market of FFPA which do not have an organizational structure ensuring management functions are multiple. Firstly, it creates an unfair competition, the criteria to attract trainees being only taxes as small and a program of work as easy as possible.

The large number of FFPA went and to choose "trainers of opportunity", the purpose of which being only obtaining income.

In the second place, on the market of vocational training of adults, so many vendors are "universal". As a result, they organize courses on the basis of the opportunities to attract trainees. Lack of specialisation of FFPA is the main factor affecting quality of activity.

We believe that improving the skills of trainers could be, for example, by way of exchange of experience, through the use of knowledge that they have already acquired, thereby exposing themselves and their views, listening to them, reflecting on discussions and thereby exposing the results of their own preparations. This exchange of explicit knowledge (what someone knows that actually knows) could add further knowledge to that already acquired.

Therefore, in connection with *formers*, we suggest introducing selection criteria to reveal specialist and pedagogical knowledge specific for vocational training of adults, as well as the ability to communicate. At the same time, we appreciate that it is necessary to have a regulated system, which must specify the qualities of a trainer, as well as his routes for professional development.

- ❖ *Improving business providers of vocational training of adults by calling to "learning from the outside", i.e. a way to learn from other organizations, from other suppliers. This would be possible by adopting technique of learning by marks<sup>24</sup>, which consists of the comparison of the results of an organization of its own, with better results obtained by other organizations, but of course, as it was also made clear in the literature, this technique has advantages and disadvantages. Suppliers of training must be aware of the fact that it is difficult to compare two organizations, which even if they are similar, activates under different conditions on the labor market. Learning through marks also represents a technique used to learn from each other, not only to see, by comparison, the best supplier of training. In using the technique of learning by marks, the provider of vocational training has to find out what needs and in what field wishes to become more powerful in the sense that it has to identify another "mark" vendor;*

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<sup>24</sup> to consult [www.benchlearning.com](http://www.benchlearning.com) and sites adjacent.

- ❖ *Establish a minimum number of trainees to participate in a course* (training program). The fact that you can start courses with a small number of trainees (1 to 5 persons) does not allow the organizing of the learning activity, so there are no conditions for the use of appropriate methods laid down by teaching methodology in the field. Virtually, are canceled all of the benefits of working in a team, working on groups. It may be out of the question the group valuing for acquisition of professional skills;
- ❖ Establish a minimum number of study hours for programs of graduation and a minimum period of time during which it can be carried out. At present there are large variations in the number of hours for the same occupation from a supplier to another (in the range of 40 to 120 hours). In many cases, they shall be arranged in a very short period of time (from some days a week). Such an organization does not allow the formation of skills and acquisition of knowledge, as a result of the fact that it is not able to comply with any of the requirements of a learning process efficiently. It cannot ensure transmission in whole of knowledge, evaluation of progress in acquiring knowledge and no strengthen them through repetition;
- ❖ Although the quality of vocational training depend to a large extent, on the activity of trainers, the existing methodology does not offer instruments to focus to their specific obligations. *The written consent of trainers* is a non-sense, as long as their activities as trainer are very much applied for and, in most cases, they are not intended to improve the quality of vocational training of adults, which is why we suggest that *the agreement writing* of the trainer to be replaced with a *commitment* to not be missing following obligations: participation in drawing up the plan of training and the training program; curriculum development; knowledge of and efficient use of specific methods of adult learning; knowledge of and correct use of the forms and instruments for the evaluation of the way in which they acquired their competences laid down in the occupational standards /standards of training OS/SPP;
- ❖ A complex problem in the process of training of adults is that of *choice and combination of the methods of learning in the course* . Methods suitable to objectives allow the trainer to behave like *competent carrier of the theme content* and as *an organizer of the training process*. In this respect, it is appropriate to a

rigorous training methods to be used in the courses to avoid improvisation, and examples should represent concrete cases of study to be solved by appropriate methods and, more particularly, through interactive methods of group learning;

- ❖ It is also noted the need for correlation of knowledge when they are vocational training programs developed on a number of modules. Correlation of knowledge from a module with other modules is performed based on the knowledge of content by the trainer training programs from all modules. Correlation eliminates *duplication and overlaps*, simplifies programs, and as a result, the hours affected to corresponding module are used more efficiently. Each trainer, by knowing the content of the programs in the preparation of the related modules, without going into detail, may only refer to certain topics to be reviewed by the trainees.
- ❖ A complex matter that imposes a permanent treatment is that of *evaluation*. Methods and means of assessment must arise from its objectives, which is why *it is necessary to include in the curriculum, assessment tools for all of those who are to use them*. By assessment tools we understand: samples, tests, assessment guides, means of self evaluation, questionnaires of opinions, etc.

Assessing the efficiency of the training process of adults could not be done at random or as fashion (such as, for example, upholding as absolute grid tests, without taking account of the specificities of reason, of the specific characteristics of age, and the preparation of trainees), whereas the results of an assessment may have negative consequences of an economic nature, social, psychological, which is why a correct assessment cannot be achieved only by means of a single method. To cover *the whole essential problems of evaluation*, it is necessary to use *multiple tracks and methods*, depending on the specific characteristics of the activity and the aims pursued.

- ❖ To achieve multiple goals, we appreciate that it is necessary to *draw up plans, programs of preparation in the framework of joint commissions* at the level of each supplier of training, consisting of qualified personnel (instructors), expert in the content disciplines, but also in adult education pedagogy. Such a commission should have a systematic activity, in the sense that to certain periods to lay down and analyze how curriculum is carried out, strictly related to the influence factors; to discuss

- topics of training skills to substantiate theoretically certain activities such as development objectives, methods of education, methods of assessment, etc. ;
- ❖ Good results can be obtained if in all these activities, the emphasis will be placed not on *quantitative* but on *qualitative side* . Only through critical debates may ensure the quality of the training activity and can grow the ability to self- esteem.
  - ❖ Positive effects can be achieved through the development and support for *model courses* by specialists from the list of experts of the County Commission for the Approval of Providers of Vocational Training (CAJ). In these courses the principles, methods and means of education accompanied by explanations and reasons for such can be presented.

### **3. The Research Limits**

The extended research carried out by us has shown the limits determined by multiple causes, which will be identified even better in the future.

The main factors identified by us and which determine the research limits are:

- Data relating to the need for vocational training of adults are insufficient. The research carried out so far, the specialty literature has little information about real need training. "The most comprehensive problem is to determine a future needs of the labor force on fields, occupations and degrees of qualification, as well as the distribution of active population on various branches and spheres of social labor" <sup>25</sup>;
- Insufficient data on labor market dynamics, the permanent changes that take place on this;
- There is a large number of influence factors both objective and subjective that act with different intensities and directions in time and space. They are, in particular, a direct link with the behavior providers of vocational training, as well as to that of the trainees and potential trainees;
- The large number of providers of vocational training of adults that make up a heterogeneous mass determined by different organizational structures, different aims and objectives for the organization and operation of vocational training of adults.

Specific characteristics of the activity of professional education and training of adults, the lack of research in this field, turned us to permanent identification and

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<sup>25</sup> Stan, Constantin, *Managementul resurselor umane* , Aero-G, Timisoara, 1998, p. 25.

use of methods and techniques suitable for the purpose and research objectives pursued. We know that our research topic is complex, whereas the work examined is influenced by many objective and subjective factors, the economic, social, educational, psychological and administrative. As a result, we have not proposed, nor would we have been able to respond to all the problems involved. That's why we tried to carefully select ideas that, in our opinion, can be recovered in the development decisions which aim best result in the process of vocational training of adults in Romania.

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