



„Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University - Iasi



Doctoral School of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences

Field of Educational Sciences

## **PHD THESIS SUMMARY**

### ***DIDACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR CONTINUOUS TRAINING IN THE POLICE FORCES***

**Scientific coordinator:**

**Professor PhD CONSTANTIN CUCOȘ**

**PhD student:**

**CRISTINA UDREA**

**Iasi, 2015**

## Introduction

Modern society is being continuously submitted to many waves of changes and evolutions that are happening at a fast pace and it inclusively affects the educational field. Current day professional training grows into new dimensions, as it is influenced by various contextual elements such as: exponential growth of specialties; the rise in the competition inside the job markets; the variety of employers' requests for their potential candidates; tackling difficulties in finding or keeping one's job; the broadening of the range of professional skills required for solving specific tasks; the ever increasing ability to reach new sources of information.

Consequently, nowadays organizations need to find different solutions for reaching their specific targets and missions. For that matter, they invest more in human resourcing, as the multiple advantages of an efficient and permanent course of training is beneficial both organization-wise as well as for its members.

The Romanian Police is one of the strongest public institutions, with a fundamental duty in which concerns maintaining social security, prevention and assuming affirmative action against a broad range of crimes. In order to achieve its mission, this institution naturally requires the service of competent employees to solve their tasks by means of a professional manner and with due diligence thereof. In which concerns policemen, professional training for them should be consistent, permanent, specific and a confirmed source for assimilating theoretical notions, attitudes and practical skills that are by all means necessary in order to successfully solve their tasks.

The decision to carry out an efficient training process for police officers is indubitably conditioned by a responsible, systematic and carefully planned approach. Planning and implementing specific training programs for police forces must be carried out by taking into consideration their specific training needs and their professional features. With this doctoral thesis, our intention was to identify a series of educational initiatives in the interest of improving the process of continuous training for the policemen by starting from their social representation of the professional training and their specific training needs.

**Key words:** *policemen, professional training, social representation, continuous training needs.*

## The theoretical framework of the thesis

The theoretical framework of the thesis consists of five chapters, organized in a progressive manner, from a general to a particular point of view.

Thus, **the first Chapter** contains a discussion over the concept of „professional training” in an educational context. Namely, we have presented the conceptual outlining of the available terminology, moving to the identification of the relationship between professional training and adult/continuous education, as well as a brief presentation of European and national policies and strategies in professional training. As our focus was adult training within an organization, we have outlined the concept of “learning”, we have presented the particularities of learning within a given organization and we have discussed the main theories and studies available which yielded the main attributes of adult training.

In **the second Chapter**, we have focused on the specific stages of professional training in organizations. The content of such stages has been thoroughly detailed and we have also provided a personal approach of the subject. However, pursuing further education is indelibly based on a course of action. By focusing more on the teaching field, we have analysed the concept of “didactic strategy” as well as the value of its components in the process of training in an organization.

Our scientific research was focused on professional training for police forces, thus, we have presented a general overview of police as an organization. Consequently, **the third Chapter** mostly consisted of a general presentation of the police forces as integrated in current society, by approaching subjects such as: organizational and functional structures, organizational culture, specific tasks of its members and the idiosyncrasies of working as a policeman.

In **the fourth Chapter**, we discussed two of the most important actions in any organization, which are crucial within the police forces, namely: recruitment and selection. By working from the usual theories on these two processes, we have presented recruiting and selection patterns of likewise European police forces, outlining at the same time the Romanian angle on this matter, which is characterized by a high degree of rigor and difficulty.

Recruitment and selection are naturally followed by professional training, consisting of two main dimensions: initial training and continuous training. Both have been largely discussed in **the fifth Chapter**, where we mentioned their characteristics, strategies and their importance for police forces. After outlining a series of European professional training

procedures, we have delved further in the Romanian methods of initial and continuous training for police officers. In our opinion, training strategies could be improved and identifying a series of effective solutions in professional training for policemen should be established as a constant prospect of the appointed persons of interest.

## **Methodological approaches**

The research that we have pursued was outlined over the course of four chapters.

In **the first Chapter**, we have integrated our subject of interest in the current educational context and we have formulated our purpose, targets and suggested hypotheses. The purposes of our research were to identify a series of solutions in order to improve professional training process for the police forces as well as to discover new sources of inspiration in the matter of designing police training programs by using policemen's social representations of professional training and their needs for continuous education further on, with both aspects analysed from an organizational, departmental and individual perspective. Having in mind the above aspects, we have suggested six specific targets, we have set the general research hypothesis and we have proposed 14 specific hypotheses, researched during three separate studies.

Further on, in **the second Chapter** we have described our research methodology. Thus, we have presented the four independent variables: *ranking position* (within the organization, in the department, individually); *structure of work* (operative or non-operative); *recruiting source* (internal or external); *professional experience in the police forces* (up to 10 years, 10 to 20 years, over 20 years) and we have defined the two dependent variables: *social representation of the process of professional training* and *the need for professional training*. Our group of subjects consisted of 59 police officers from county units (representing the organizational level), 42 police officers on leading positions at Neamt county's Unit (representing the departmental level) and 464 lower ranked policemen at the same county unit (representing the individual level). Our research methods were SWOT analysis and questionnaire filling; for the latter, two questionnaires with open answers (for Study 1) and three questionnaires with closed answers (for Studies 2 and 3).

**The third Chapter** describes the way we carried out the three studies, their results and our argumentation. Thus, during **the first study**, we wanted to discover policemen's social representations of professional training on an organizational level (policemen who have

the role of general management of continuous training), on a departmental level (policemen who design continuous training activities) and an individual level (police officers who attend training activities). The most important conclusions of the first study were the following:

- In general, police officers believe that they do possess a series of ***professional and personal attitudes*** with regard to continuous professional training: they consider themselves to be available, motivated, open, and involved in this process; they also believe that they have a vast experience and a superior level of professional training.
- ***Current policy in the field of continuous training*** for the police forces is not proportional to the actual achieving possibilities of the employees.
- ***Educational resources*** of the police units are not sufficiently capitalized or may need improvements.
- ***Police officers who are in charge with planning and carrying out professional training activities*** on a continuous basis do not exert the psychological and pedagogical skills needed to perform their tasks.
- Maintaining ***a consistency of the dedicated domestic legislation*** can constitute a positive consequence upon police training.
- ***Multiple external training sources*** could prove to be real opportunities to improve training in the police forces.
- A proper continuous ***professional training*** for police forces is a positive ***asset*** both for the organization and for the professional and personal development of the police employees.

In **the second study** we have focused on police officers' perspectives about professional training (conditioned by the organizational, departmental and individual levels) and also on assessing specific training needs for managers and lower rankings within the police forces. After collecting and running statistical measurements, our findings state that:

- Organizationally-dependent policemen focused on the pedagogic side of training, believing that police forces require learning theory and practice as related to specific police fields of expertise (law, general police legislation, self-defence, rifle handling, development of professional attitudes in which concerns the organization's assumed values) and according to said police officers, teaching should be conducted in the dedicated educational facilities of the Ministry of Interior, by utilizing specific training methodologies for adult training and by enlisting aptly skilled persons in this field (i.e. trainers, instructors). In which concerns policemen who were categorized by departmental and individual levels, their approach is much more practical, as it is their

belief that policemen should be acquainted with theoretic and practical aspects of their tasks (work procedures, police tactics, computer literacy, how to draw up procedural documentation, developing professional manners with civil citizens); furthermore, in their opinion, training should be conducted at police units by specialized police officers or experienced officers, nonetheless, by using training methods that would outline working individually as well as in groups.

- ***Continuous training needs of policemen*** in a leadership position are ***different*** from lower ranked police officers in terms of content, methodology and assigned trainers.

In **the last study**, we have gone further on in our investigation, with the purpose of drawing a comparison between training needs of policemen depending on certain professional characteristics they exert, such as: operating structure, source of recruitment, position and professional experience for the Ministry of Interior. After assessing our data, we found that:

- ***Police officers with leading positions from operative structures*** of a police unit seem to have different training needs as opposed to ***police officers with leading positions from non-operative structures*** in which concerns: training content, methodology and forms of training; however, we have registered ***similar opinions*** about their options of who should design training programs, the duration of such training activities and which educational resources should be used.
- Training contents, educational resources and the duration of training activities are received in the same way by ***externally and internally recruited police officers with leading positions***. We did register a number of contrasts between the two categories in the matters of: training methodology, forms of training and who should carry out training activities.
- ***Police officers with leading positions and little experience*** (up to 10 years) are more open to a variety of training methods, wishing to consult various sources of information from many fields, with a far greater desire to experience different forms of organizing such training sessions as opposed to ***police officers with a higher level of experience*** (10 to 20 years or over 20 years), who exert a more conservative opinion and reticence towards variety.
- ***Lower ranked policemen from operative structures*** of a police unit seem to have different training needs as opposed to ***lower ranked policemen from non-operative structures*** in which concerns: content that targets training/developing a set of practical skills; didactical methodology employed in training/developing activities for professional

- attitudes; educational resources and who should design training programs. In which concerns other dimensions of the aspect of training needs, their opinions seem to concord.
- ***Recruitment source of lower ranked policemen*** (be it internal or external) is not a capital condition for the occurrence of different continuous professional needs between the two categories.
  - ***Lower ranked policemen and with different professional experience in the Ministry of Interior*** (from 0 to plus 20 years) expressed different opinions about their training needs in the matters of: training content focused on acquiring/developing practical skills, methodology of acquiring/developing practical skills or professional manners, educational resources and the duration of training activities. In which concerns forms of training, training content in the interest of acquiring theoretical knowledge and professional manners, methodologies employed for transmitting/comprehending theory and who should carry out such activities, police officers' opinions are similar, regardless of their experience in the police forces.

## **Conclusions and future research directions**

The final Chapter of our thesis collected the entirety of our results, thus helping us formulate a series of conclusions and suggestions regarding the theoretical and practical dimensions of continuous professional training in the police forces. Most of our hypotheses were confirmed, a fact that lead us to believe that continuous professional training for police forces should be designed according to their needs and having in mind their professional profile.

Our research also carries a series of **limitations**, for instance: the impossibility of generalizing the results due to the fact that they reflect a temporary situation, registered in a geographically limited area; the absence of previous scientific studies during professional training process in the police forces leads to a lack of a theoretical background of our studies; questionnaire-based methods of inquiry do not reveal the reasons for which our subjects made certain choices; usage of qualitative studies has lowered the neutral level of our results.

Far from pretending to offer a thoroughgoing approach, we believe that our research may represent a viable source for carrying out **future scientific studies** to target subjects such as: identifying the type of motivation that drives policemen to learn; the positive aspect of using active participatory methods in the continuous training activities of policemen on their

work field; outlining an educational profile of the employees of the Ministry of Interior (be they police agents, peace officers, customs officers, fire fighters etc.).

Our thesis also contains a number of 12 appendices in which we have detailed our methodological instruments for our research, our results after running statistical measurements as well as two pedagogic elements that we suggested to the assigned personnel for continuous professional training in the police forces, namely: *Planning and Delivering Continuous Professional Training Activities for Police Forces – A Practical Guide* and several examples of *Complementary Programs for Professional Training Activities for Police Forces*, designed on the basis of their professional profile.



## Selected references

1. Albulescu, I. & Albulescu, M. (2000). *Teaching and learning socio-human subjects. Elements of applied didactics*. Iasi: Polirom.
2. Armstrong, M. (2006). *A handbook of Human Resource Management Practice* (10th ed.). Londra și Philadelphia: Kogan Page.
3. Cerghit, I. (2006). *Teaching methods* (4th ed., revised and added). Iasi: Polirom.
4. Cole, G. A. (1993). *Personnel Management Theory and Practice*. London: DP Publications.
5. Conaway, W. (2009). *Andragogy: Does One Size Fit All? A Study to Determine the Applicability of Andragogical Principles to Adult Learner of All Ages*. Minnesota, S.U.A.: Walden University.
6. Cornescu, V., Mihăilescu, I., & Stanciu, S. (2003). *Organization's management*. Bucharest: All Beck.
7. Crank, J.P. (2004). *Understanding Police Culture*. Waltham: Anderson Publishing.
8. Crețu, C. (2000). *Curriculum theory and contents of education*. Iasi: Ed. „Al. I. Cuza” University.
9. Cristea, D. (2011). *Treatise of social psychology*. Vol. II. Bucharest: Renaissance.
10. Cucuș, C. (2002). *Pedagogy*. (2nd ed., revised and added). Iasi: Polirom.
11. Cucuș, C. (2008). *Theory and methodology of evaluation*. Iasi: Polirom.
12. Dantzker, M. L. (1999). *Police organization and management – yesterday, today and tomorrow*. U.S.A. – Massachusetts: Butterworth – Heinemann.
13. Doise, W., Deschamp, J. C. & Mugny, G. (1999). *Experimental Social Psychology*. Iasi: Polirom.
14. Golu, P. (2001). *The psychology of learning and development*. Bucharest: Humanitas Foundation.
15. Haberfeld, M.R. & Clarke, C.A. & Sheehan, D.L. (2012). *Police Organization and Training – innovations in research and practice*. New York: Springer Science - Business Media.
16. Holton, E. F. & Swanson, R.A. (2011). *The Adult Learner*. U.S.A.: Elsevier Inc.
17. Ionescu, M., & Radu, I. (coord.) (2001). *Modern didactics*. (2nd ed., revised). Cluj – Napoca: Dacia.

18. Kratcoski, P. C. & Das, D. K. (2007). *Police education and training in a global society*. Maryland – U.S.A.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lexington Books.
19. Kumar, R. (2011). *Human Resource Management – Strategic Analysis Text and Cases*. New Delhi: International Publishing House.
20. Mathis, R.L., Jackson J.H., (2011). *Human Resource Management – Essential Perspectives – 6e*. U.S.A.: Cengage Learning.
21. McConnell, J. H. (2003). *How to identify your organization's training needs – a practical guide to needs analysis*. New York: AMACOM.
22. Momanu, M. (2002). *Introduction to the theory of education*. Iasi: Polirom.
23. Moscovici, S. (1997). *Social psychology or a machine for making gods*. Iasi: Ed. „Al. I. Cuza” University.
24. Mucchielli, R. (1982). *Active methods in adult pedagogy*. Bucharest: E.D.P.
25. Neculau, A. (1996). Social representations – current developments. In A. Neculau (coord.), *Social psychology - contemporary issues*. Iasi: Polirom.
26. Pânișoară, G. & Pânișoară, I.O. (2010). *Human resource management – practical guide* (2nd ed.). Iasi: Polirom.
27. Roșca, C., Vărzaru, M., & Roșca, I. Gh. (coord.) (2005). *Human resources – management and administration*. Bucharest: Economică.
28. Sava, S. & Ungureanu, D. (coord). (2005). *Introduction to adult education*. Timișoara: Mirton.
29. Simmonds, D. (2008). *Planning and delivering training programs*. Bucharest: Codecs.
30. Swanson Wilson, L. (2005). *A test of andragogy in a post – secondary educational setting*. Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, Louisiana, S.U.A.
31. Șoitu, L. (2003). *Adult Education - course*. Iasi: Ed. “Al. I. Cuza” University.
32. Vaughn, R.H. (2008). *Professional trainer's guide*. Bucharest: Codecs.
33. Vodde, R. F. (2009). *Andragogical instruction for effective police training*. New York: Cambria Press.
34. Zlate, M. (2004). *Treatise of organizational psychology*. Iasi: Polirom.

### **On-line sources:**

1. Cornescu, V., & Bonciu, C. (1999). *Human Resource Management*. Bucharest: Three, available on <http://www.lefo.ro/carmensylva/Carmensylva/ppap/>
2. Dodu, M., Raboca, H., & Tripon, C. (2011). *Human Resource Management – university course*, „BABEȘ-BOLYAI” University - Cluj-Napoca, available on [http://www.apubb.ro/wpcontent/uploads/2011/03/Managementul\\_resurselor\\_u mane.pdf](http://www.apubb.ro/wpcontent/uploads/2011/03/Managementul_resurselor_u mane.pdf)
3. Ministry of Interior. *The outlook of personnel professional training for period 2013-2017*, available on <http://www.mai.gov.ro>
4. Ministry of Education. *Needs analysis regarding education and professional training in Romania*. Accessed on September 10, 2014 at <http://www.anc.edu.ro/index.php?page=statistica>
5. Neyroud, P., QPM Chief Constable, *Review of Police Leadership and Training*, Volume One, available on <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk>
6. Pagon, M. (2008). *Policing in Central and eastern Europe: The Rol and Importance of Cooperation, Training, Education and research*. Accessed on June 28, 2014 at <https://www3.cepol.europa.eu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/5818/PAGON3.pdf?sequence=1>
7. State, O., (2004). *Organizational culture and management*. Bucharest: ASE, - a course in digital format, available on <http://www.biblioteca-digitala.ase.ro/biblioteca/carte2.asp?id=332&idb=>
8. Career Management Strategy 2011 – 2014, available on [www.mai.gov.ro](http://www.mai.gov.ro)
9. Vlăsceanu, M. (1999). *Organizations and culture of organizing*. Bucharest: Three, available on <http://www.lefo.ro/carmensylva/Carmensylva/ppap/>

### **Legislation:**

1. Government Decision no. 991 of 25.08.2005 for approving the Police Force Code of Conduct and Ethics.
2. Law no. 218 of 23.04.2002 regarding the Romanian Police organization and functioning, as amended and supplemented.
3. Law no. 360 of 06.06.2002 regarding the statute of the policeman, as amended and supplemented.
4. The Order of the Minister of Administration and Interior no. 69 of 28.04.2009 for approving the career guide of the policemen and military personnel of the Ministry of Administration and Interior, as amended and supplemented.