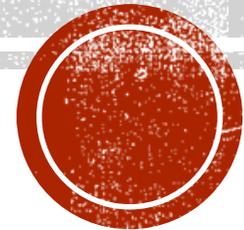




UNIVERSITATEA
DIN BUCUREȘTI
— VIRTUTE ET SAPIENTIA

TIME AS A PREDICTOR FOR PLAGIARISM IN ROMANIAN HIGHER EDUCATION



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OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

- The rationale/ The Romanian context
- Literature review
- Research hypotheses
- Methods
- Data
- Findings
- Discussion
- Conclusions



THE RATIONAL

- **The pretext of the research** – the incidence of plagiarism might be higher in cases of PhD students with a regular full-time job during their doctoral studies.
- **Time** - an indicator for the quality of doctoral productivity.
- **Time** - an indicator for the occurrence of plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty.



THE ROMANIAN CONTEXT

- Plagiarism in PhD theses - a matter of high interest starting with 2012.
- The PM of Romania, Victor Ponta, accused of plagiarism by *Nature*.
- More than 20 Romanian officials, accused by local media of plagiarism.
- Political responses to plagiarism accusations.
- 47 official accusations of plagiarism in doctoral theses (8 doctoral titles withdrawn, 6 maintained and 33 titles analyzed).



THE LITERATURE REVIEW

- Reasons of cheating indicated by students, according to various studies:
 - - time management;
 - - lack of time to complete assignments;
 - - insufficient study time;
 - - time pressure
 - - employment status (full-time, part-time).



RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- The study aims to approach two key issues:
- (1) **How anyone could do research if he/she does not have time?** (i.e. how doctoral students conduct research given insufficient time resources);
- (2) **To what degree time can be addressed as an estimator of the likelihood of plagiarism in a doctoral thesis?** (i.e. time as a predictor of academic dishonesty).



METHODS

- **Purposive sampling** – to select the group of research.
- This non-probabilistic qualitative sampling technique is generally deployed for cases wherein researchers are interested in measuring specific observations which fit theoretical criteria (Palys 2008).
- **Secondary data analysis** - used for the time budget design and for the analyses of the national legal provisions (Heaton 1998).
- **The ideal-type method** – used to construct two ideal-types of time budget for a full time doctoral student and for a group of research member (Weber 1949).



DATA

- The data provided by the Romanian Minister of Education, the Police Academy and the National Intelligence Academy.
- **Unique characteristic of the 22 group members:**
- - were enrolled as doctoral students while holding full-time official positions or demanding jobs;
- - had the same doctoral supervisor - a professor who has been stripped of doctorate in 2016, after plagiarism accusations;
- - the professor was one of the most influent Romanian politicians;



DATA

- - 8 PhD students have also been publicly accused of plagiarism;
- - 3 have voluntarily asked to relinquish the doctoral degrees; they are suspected of plagiarism as well;
- - they obtained the degrees in *Public Order and National Security*, from two military universities;
- - the group members were enrolled in *extramural doctoral studies*, with duration of three years;



DATA

- - the data for the Police Academy were not available;
- - the students from National Intelligence Academy (13 of 22) were required to have an average work time of 10 hours per week;
- - the Romanian Labor Code provides that the normal working time is 8 hours per day and 40 hours per week.



FINDINGS

Table 2. Group members time for studying according to educational legislation

Note. *The surnames and names of the doctoral students from the sample group have been anonymized.

Individuals in the sampled group*	Year of enrolling	Year of defending	Total legal time for studying in years	Total legal time for studying in hours
X1	2003	2004	1 year and 5 months	unknown
X2	2003	2004	1 year and 5 months	unknown
X3	2003	2006	3 years	unknown
X4	2003	2006	3 years	unknown
X5	2003	2006	3 years	unknown
X6	2003	2004	3 years	unknown
X7	2004	2007	3 years	unknown
X8	2004	2007	3 years	unknown
X9	2004	2007	3 years	unknown
X10	2007	2010	3 years	1440h
X11	2007	2010	3 years	1440h
X12	2007	2010	3 years	1440h
X13	2008	2011	3 years	1440h
X14	2008	2011	3 years	1440h
X15	2008	2011	3 years	1440h
X16	2008	2011	3 years	1440h
X17	2008	2011	3 years	1440h
X18	2008	2011	3 years	1440h
X19	2008	2011	3 years	1440h
X20	2010	2013	3 years	1440h
X21	2010	2013	3 years	1400h
X22	2010	2015	5 years	2440h



FINDINGS

Ideal-type of time budget for a full-time doctoral student and for a group member in workdays

Activity	Activity indicator	Time spent in hours by a full-time doctoral student in a workday	Time spent in hours by a group member in a workday	Type of time
Work	Paid activity	0h	8h	Work time
Transport	The ride from home to work and back home or other destinations	1h 30'	1h 30'	Mobility needs
Eating	Breakfasts, lunch break, dinner, crunch	1h 30'	1h 30'	Private needs
Family interaction	Child care, conversation, common activities	2h 30'	1h 30'	Domestic needs
Media/IT use	Watching TV, reading newspaper, social networks activities, e-mailing	1h	1h	Passive leisure
Social activity	Visits of friends, speaking on phone, attending events, entertainment out, eat out	1h	30'	Social life
Studying	Reading, writing	8h	2h	Personal development
Personal time	Hobby, shopping, bath, dressing	1h 30'	1h	Private needs
Resting time	Sleep	7h	7h	Private needs



FINDINGS

Table 3. Studying load differences between ideal-types and individuals in the sample

Type	Hours per week (seven days)	Hours per month	Hours per year	Hours after three years
Ideal-type/full time	40h	160h	1920h	5760h
Individuals in the sample	10h	40h	480h	1440h



DISCUSSIONS

- Romanian doctoral system permitted an “institutional anomaly”: it allowed extramural doctoral studies and still allows part-time doctoral studies.
- A full-time and a part-time candidate can receive identical doctoral degrees, after three years, but under different numbers of studying hours.
- Full-time doctoral students need to study four times more compared to their part-time peers.
- Future replications might open up a seminal research direction in the field.



CONCLUSIONS

- Plagiarism and academic dishonesty are phenomena in higher education.
- *Time* might be a factor for unethical behavior.
- The decision-makers need to adjust the provisions in at least two directions.
- 1. To eliminate the discrimination between full-time and part-time doctoral students, in terms of the time required for receiving the doctoral degrees.
- 2. To better control the time allocated to studying and research activities.



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THANK YOU!

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