

University of Bucharest
Doctoral School of Administrative Sciences

Habilitation Thesis

**Culture and Gender Organization:
The Gender Dimension of Public Administration**

Abstract

General domain: Sociology, administrative sciences, and communication sciences

Habilitation domain: Administrative Sciences

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I started my academic career in 1996 as a research assistant at the Romanian Academy, the Research Institute for Quality of Life (ICCV) after finishing my bachelor's degree in psychology. I then pursued a master's and a doctorate degree in sociology at the University of Bucharest, attaining the title of Doctor in sociology in 2004 with a thesis about legitimacy and social support for social policies. After finishing my PHD studies, I combined teaching with research as an associated lector at the Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu (2004 – 2011), at the University of Köln in Germany (2012-2016) and at the Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf, Germany (2015-2016). As of 2022 I have been working as a university lector in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Bucharest. In 2019 I received by Habilitation in Sociology and starting in 2020 I joined the School of Advanced Studies of the Romanian Academy as a PHD supervisor.

An important part of my career has been dedicated to research within the social sciences field, with my position at ICCV between 1996 and 2011, starting off as a scientific researcher (CS) and then promoted to CS III and CS II from 2007. I returned to ICCV as a CS II after spending several years as senior researcher at GESIS Institute Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences in Köln, Germany. As of 2019 I have been working as a CS I and I have been coordinating the research team working on *Demographic and cultural changes in Romania: the role of the ecologic and institutional factors*, where I supervise the activity of a group of ten researchers and PHD students.

The domains in which I have specialized throughout the course of my career are as follows: gender studies, social policies, sociology of values, quantitative research methods and comparative research. Over the course of my 27 yearlong academic career, I have carried out research activities in both national and international projects while working in multicultural teams and took advantage of both the opportunity to work alongside world renowned names within the field such as Ronal Ingelhart, David Voas or Christian Haerpfer and taking advantage of the occasion to capitalize on my research results by getting them published within international publications that heighten the visibility of the articles such as indexed ISI journals in quartiles Q1 and Q2, collective books or single author books. I have always been invested in presenting the results of my labor to the academic community as well as to the general public and to make my results service the general interest.

The results of my work can be seen within 22 published articles in ISI indexed journals with impact factor, as well as within 22 articles in indexed journals in other databases. They can also be observed within the 14 book chapters published by internationally prestigious book publishers (A1 list) and another 14 book chapters included in collective volumes published by prestigious Romanian book publishers (A2 list).

Furthermore, I have published three solo written books two of which have been by prestigious Romanian book publishers (A2 list) and I have edited three books published by internationally prestigious book publishers (A1 list). My professional prestige reflects within the number of citations that my publications have received (319 of citations are indexed in ISI Web of Science publications and another 1638 citations are indexed in Google Scholar, with indicted

values of respectively $h = 10$ in ISI Web of Science, and $h = 22$ and $I = 36$ in Google Scholar). As another point of reference of the quality of my research, I can mention the three rewards that I have been given by the following academic organizations: the Romanian Academy (2007) the Dimitrie Gusti award for the best published book in Sociology, Sao Paolo University (2019) award for the best paper about the management of innovations within public administration present at the SemeAd conference and the International Public Opinion Research Association (2020) which awarded me the Elizabeth Nelson award for the best work presented by a researcher originating from a transitional country.

Following the end of my PHD studies, my research interests focused on several topics that are essential for understanding the gender dimensions of public administration. The gender dimensions of public administration require the understanding of the complex reports that exists within these organizations, between the organizations and the staff such as those between the beneficiary and the staff, and the those between the beneficiary and the organizations. However, within the context of providing public services, the recipient should not be seen as a passive element rather they should be seen as an active actor that has their own contribution to the design and implementation of legal decisions surrounding the production of public goods with gender playing and important role within this regard (Gorovitz, 2009).

Literature surrounding the subject of gender within public administration uses three types of explanatory mechanisms: the approach of representative bureaucracy, the approach of gendered organization and the approach centered on accountability. Gender culture causes these three factors to intersect thus influencing the representation of women within administration, gender organization and responsibility.

Gender culture has been one of my key research topics. Studies surrounding gender culture lie within the analysis of the support for gender equality, the attitudes towards gender role and the factors which potentiate or diminish the attitudes towards nontraditional gender roles. Another dimension which I have addressed within my studies is the way path dependency plays in shaping public policies and culture orientations. A third topic resides in studying civic participation, a dimension of political culture, having a direct impact on providing and accessing public services.

Within my research, I investigated multiple facets of the gender culture such as measuring the attitudes towards gender roles through a comparative perspective, the relation between gender culture and welfare regime, factors which model gender culture and mechanisms of attitudinal change which allow the understanding of how resocialization occurs with exposure to a new organizational environment or different life experiences.

Path dependence explains the difference which appears between societies as the outcome of history relying on the idea that “past events influence future ones” (Mahoney, 2000, p. 510). Path dependence shapes a societies culture and institutions such as the organizational model and the function of the public administration and the process of elaborating public policies. In the research I have done after finishing my PHD, I have analyzed the impact of path dependence in the provision of public services in different administrative and cultural contexts such as the effects of

past events on political and administrative culture and the way in which cultural change occurs in different societies.

Civic participation represents an essential component of political culture and plays a key role in the mobilization of public service clients to be actively involved in the provision of services such as within the design, calibration, and accountability of the involved actors in the public services according to the theory of New Public Management. In the research which I have done so far, I have addressed the emerging divide between established democracies and post-communist states in terms of civic engagement, the role of civic involvement in the resocialization of citizens regarding gender culture and the impact that the welfare state and the principles underlying the provision of social services influence civic participation and other components of social capital in different societies across Europe.

The research project that I propose for the next period resides in the theoretical consolidation of a theoretical model based on the gender arrangement concept proposed by Pfau-Effinger (1998) and applied to the study of public administration. My goal is to analyze how the type of public administration and the administrative culture promoted by it influences the relationship between passive and active and symbolic bureaucratic gender representation. Using survey data and administrative data I intend to answer the following question: what is the connection between the type of public administration and gender representation? Are the meritocratic and open systems more effective in leading to results that favor women? To what extent does administrative culture moderate the relationship between the three types of representation, and what are the values that drive the relationship between the three? Within a practical plan, the answer to this question can help promote and consolidate the values which favorize the relationship between the three types of representation so that women can be better represented.

Within my research activity I want to use the comparative approach to investigate the mode in which the type of administration (gender order within administration) and the administrative culture (the gender culture within administration) mediates the relationship between passive and active and symbolic bureaucratic representation. Using a quantitative research design, based on data from various large-scale opinion surveys combined with administrative data, I aim to analyze how professionalism and closed nature of administrative recruitment promotes gender equality within the administration, as well as in the societal output, such as improving the situation of women at the level of the entire society.

This thesis includes a presentation of the state of art in the field of gender analysis in public administration accompanied by a detailed exposition of my contribution to the development of the field, followed by a presentation of my teaching experience and teaching philosophy. The second part of the thesis proposes a theoretical model of analysis of gender in administration and draws the lines of the development of my future research as well as plans linked to teaching and research management activities.