

SUMMARY OF THE HABILITATION THESIS

Social Work Practice Across Multiple Levels of Social Organization: Theoretical Perspectives, Intervention Models, and Outcomes Evaluation

Candidată: NEAMȚU G.C. NICOLETA - CHIVUȚA

This habilitation thesis, submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for obtaining the qualification to supervise doctoral research in the field of Social Work, provides a comprehensive synthesis of the author's academic, professional, and scientific development and highlights her original contributions to the advancement of knowledge and evidence-based practice in social work. The thesis proposes *an integrative analysis of social work practice across the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of social organization*, with a particular focus on intervention outcome evaluation, social service management, and the use of empirical research to inform professional and institutional decision-making.

The first part of the thesis presents the evolution of the author's academic, professional, and scientific career, emphasizing the continuity and coherence of a trajectory developed at the intersection of higher education, applied research, and social service practice. Academic training completed at Babeș-Bolyai University, professional experience acquired within the social service system, and ongoing development through specialized training programs and international collaborations have contributed to the construction of an integrated perspective on the relationship between theory, research, and social intervention.

The author's teaching activity is distinguished by contributions to the development of undergraduate and graduate academic programs, particularly in the field of social service management, as well as by her involvement in the education of future professionals and the promotion of a competency-based educational approach grounded in critical reflection and the application of research findings to practice. These activities have strengthened the connection between academic training and the contemporary requirements of the social work profession.

An important section of the thesis is devoted to the evolution of the research program developed after the completion of doctoral studies. The main research areas include social service

management, evaluation of social programs and services, child protection, family-centered social work, gerontological social work, community development, and rural social work. Although diverse in scope, these research themes are unified by a sustained concern for the effectiveness of social interventions, impact evaluation, and the development of empirically grounded models of practice.

The central part of the thesis is dedicated to the analysis of the author's original scientific contributions, organized according to the intervention levels commonly recognized in social work. At the micro level, the research contributes to the development of knowledge regarding person-centered and family-centered intervention by promoting ecosystemic, participatory, and strengths-based perspectives. These studies highlight *the importance of family relationships, resilience, and the active involvement of service users in processes of social change and inclusion*. The resulting contributions provide relevant theoretical and methodological frameworks for professional intervention in situations involving social vulnerability, chronic illness, family difficulties, and risks of social exclusion.

At the mezzo level, the author's contributions focus on social service management and organizational development. Her research has supported the development of conceptual models and practical tools designed for the management of social work organizations, performance evaluation, and service quality improvement. A distinctive contribution is *the promotion of a results-based approach to social service management and evaluation, positioning client outcomes at the center of managerial processes*. Within this framework, the thesis addresses organizational effectiveness, professional supervision, human resource management, organizational climate, and the prevention of professional burnout. The findings demonstrate the relationship between organizational conditions and the capacity of social services to generate meaningful change for service users.

At the macro level, the author's scientific contributions address the analysis of communities, social policies, and social service systems. Research focusing on rural social work represents one of the most visible and practically relevant areas of her scholarly activity. These studies identify the distinctive features of rural contexts, shortages of professional and institutional resources, and the need for intervention models adapted to local community conditions. The findings have informed

recommendations aimed at improving social service provision, strengthening administrative capacity, and enhancing the professionalization of social work practice in rural communities.

A major contribution concerns *evaluation research* in the field of child protection and family foster care. The studies examine the effectiveness of child welfare measures, placement stability, and family reintegration processes, thereby contributing to the advancement of *outcomes-based research* in Romania. The originality of these contributions lies both in the longitudinal approach adopted and in the development and application of indicators designed to evaluate permanence, continuity, and stability in children's living environments. These findings provide valuable evidence for the development of child welfare policies and practices.

A cross-cutting component of the entire research program is the *evaluation of social intervention outcomes*. The thesis argues that evaluation should be understood not only as a mechanism of monitoring and accountability but also *as a tool for organizational learning, professional development, and evidence-informed policymaking*. From this perspective, evaluative research is regarded as a fundamental component of professional practice and social service management, supporting the development of evidence-based social work.

The scientific impact of the author's research is reflected in publications including academic books, book chapters, and articles published in internationally indexed journals, as well as participation in national and European research projects. The international visibility of her work is supported by citations in the scientific literature and by active involvement in international academic and professional networks. These achievements demonstrate the relevance of her contributions to the advancement of social work knowledge and the consolidation of applied research in the field.

The final section of the thesis presents future academic and scientific development directions. These include *further research in social service management, social program evaluation, family-centered interventions, social service innovation, and practitioners' professional well-being*. A strategic priority is the development of a *doctoral research agenda* focused on *evaluating the impact of social interventions, evidence-based management, and the scientific grounding of social policies*.

Overall, the thesis demonstrates the existence of a coherent, mature, and relevant research program in the field of Social Work, characterized by thematic continuity, interdisciplinarity, and a strong orientation toward addressing social problems. The contributions presented highlight the author's capacity to generate original knowledge, transfer research findings into professional practice, and supervise doctoral research of both theoretical and practical significance. Through *its emphasis on outcome evaluation, social service management, and evidence-based practice, the thesis contributes to strengthening social work as an academic and professional discipline oriented toward quality, effectiveness, and public accountability.*

18 septembrie 2026

Întocmit de Neamțu Nicoleta Chivuța.

Semnătura: 