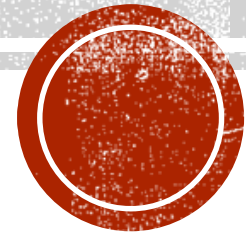




UNIVERSITATEA  
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— VIRTUTE ET SAPIENTIA

# **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- 47 official accusations of plagiarism in doctoral theses (8 doctoral titles withdrawn, 6 maintained and 33 titles analyzed).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
<b>Work</b>	Paid activity	0h	8h	Work time
<b>Transport</b>	The ride from home to work and back home or other destinations	1h 30'	1h 30'	Mobility needs
<b>Eating</b>	Breakfasts, lunch break, dinner, crunch	1h 30'	1h 30'	Private needs
<b>Family interaction</b>	Child care, conversation, common activities	2h 30'	1h 30'	Domestic needs
<b>Media/IT use</b>	Watching TV, reading newspaper, social networks activities, e-mailing	1h	1h	Passive leisure
<b>Social activity</b>	Visits of friends, speaking on phone, attending events, entertainment out, eat out	1h	30'	Social life
<b>Studying</b>	Reading, writing	8h	2h	Personal development
<b>Personal time</b>	Hobby, shopping, bath, dressing	1h 30'	1h	Private needs
<b>Resting time</b>	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
<b>Ideal-type/full time</b>	40h	160h	1920h	5760h
<b>Individuals in the sample</b>	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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