Opinions of the Public Officials and the Local Community Members Regarding the Administrative Activity. Survey at the Level of the City Hall Institution of Horodnic de Sus Commune, Suceava County, Romania

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Abstract: Society, in general, and every local collectivity, in particular, needs public administrations to carry out administrative activities dedicated to concrete social needs. Starting from this necessity, through its content, this paper aims to analyze the opinions of dignitaries and civil servants, as well as members of the local community regarding the administration activity carried out at the Institution of Horodnic de Sus City Hall in Suceava County. Achieved by ensuring the comparability of the data collected, this micro-research reveals that both those who manage and those who are managed show a favorable attitude in relation to almost all aspects surveyed: the adaptation of administrative activities to the needs of the local community, the promptness and efficiency of the administrative activity in the City Hall Institution, the, the satisfaction regarding the management of both the City Hall Institution and the locality. However, the study highlights the fact that regarding the existence of bureaucracy in the administrative activity and in the relation with the members of the local community, the opinions expressed by the two categories of respondents are different. If in the perception of dignitaries and civil servants alignment of the administrative activity with the development priorities of the locality, the answers are unfavorable to the bureaucratic phenomenon, by contrast, from the opinions expressed by the locals, it results that the City Hall-citizens relation is affected by bureaucracy.

Keywords: *public officials, civil servants, local collectivity, locals, questionnaire-based survey, administrative activity, public institution, development priorities, bureaucracy, public management*

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1. Methodological framework of the micro research carried out

From a geographical point of view, the administrative-territorial unit of Horodnic de Sus commune represents one of the oldest settlements in Bucovina, positioned at the western limit of the Suceava Plateau, between Sucevita and Suceava Rivers, being located in a central position in the Radauti Depression (Scripcariu, 2016). Regarding the size of the commune, it stretches over a distance of about 10 km long East-West and about 3 km wide North-South (City Hall of the Horodnic de Sus Commune, n.d.).

The purpose of this research is to analyze the way in which the administrative activity is carried out in the public sector, with particularization at the level of the City Hall Institution of Horodnic de Sus Commune from Suceava County.

The tool used to conduct this study is the questionnaire (Nedelea, 2017). As the micro-research will be carried out on two levels, both among those who manage and among those who are managed, in order to ensure the comparability of the data, two questionnaires will be constructed:

- Questionnaire 1 - for dignitaries and civil servants within the Institution City Hall of Horodnic de Sus Commune
- Questionnaire 2 - addressed to the locals from Horodnic de Sus Commune.

Therefore, the micro-research on the activity carried out at the level of the City Hall Institution of Horodnic de Sus Commune is based on the investigation of two populations:

- P: The population of dignitaries and civil servants within the Horodnic de Sus Commune City Hall, which will generate the perception on the way in which the activity is carried out at the level of this public institution. The population comprising dignitaries and civil servants is as follows (see Table 1).
- E: The sample formed by the inhabitants of Horodnic de Sus Commune who will answer the questions asked and whose answers will favor the identification of their perception on the administrative activity at the level of the same public institution.

Table 1. The population of dignitaries and civil servants from the City Hall of Horodnic de Sus Commune

Criterial no.	Functions	Category	Total respondents	
			Number	Percent
1.	Demnitarari aleși	Mayor	1	3.13%
		Deputy Mayor	1	3.13%
		Local councilors	15	46.87%
2.	Funcționari publici	Leading civil servants	2	6.25%
		Execution civil servants	13	40.62%
		Total	32	100%

Source: processing apud Organization chart of the City Hall of Horodnic de Sus Commune (n.d.b)

According to the information presented on the website of the National Institute of Statistics in Romania (n.d.), the population of the Commune on January 1, 2016, amounted to 5,240 inhabitants. In order to contact as many locals of Horodnic de Sus Commune as possible and to obtain the most representative results, the questionnaire was made on the platform of the *isondaje.ro* (n.d.) website, being completed by a number of **118** inhabitants.

The age of the interviewed persons from the studied sample varies between 18 and over 55 years as it is observed: 11.7% are aged between 18-25 years, a percentage of 37% is held by respondents aged between 25-35 years, people aged 35-45 years is almost 1/3 (32.9%) of respondents, the share of those aged 45-55 years is 16.7%, and only a percentage of 1.7% said they are over 55 years (see Figure 1):

Fig.1. Age in years of locals respondents

Source: Authors' own conception

2. Adaptation of the activities carried out by dignitaries and civil servants to the needs of the local community

Society is constantly changing and for the public administration to keep up, the latter must adapt its activities to real social needs and requirements. The registered data show that the implementation of such an action is confirmed at the level of the City Hall of Horodnic de Sus Commune (n.d.a).

On the one hand, evaluating the way in which they adapt their administrative activities to social needs, most (81.3%) of the responding dignitaries and civil servants declare that, at the level of the institution in which they exercise their function, this adaptation is very good (46.9%) and excellent (34.4%).

On the other hand, the answers received at the level of the sample containing locals, show that most (60.2%) of them say that the adaptation of the staff of the City Hall institution in the locality is good (30.5%) and very good (29.7%).

However, contrary to the opinions of dignitaries and civil servants, the locals state in a percentage of over 10% that the adaptation of the administrative activity is inadequate (5.9%) and only adequate (6.9%) (see Figure no. 2):

Fig. 2. Adaptation of administrative activities to the needs of the local community

Source: Authors' own conception

3. Promptness and efficiency of the city hall institution from the locality

The activity of the public administration must be undertaken promptly and efficiently in order to add value to the community in which it operates.

The population of dignitaries and civil servants declares almost entirely (96.9%) about the locals that the latter are satisfied (43.8%) and very satisfied (53.1%) with the promptness and efficiency of the Institution.

On the other hand, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the members of the local community (72.1%) say they are satisfied (22.9%) and very satisfied (49.2%) with the receptivity and efficiency of the City Hall institution from the locality. In addition, at the level of the sample containing locals, however, there is a percentage of almost 10% of respondents (9.3%) who say they are dissatisfied (5.9%) and very dissatisfied (3.4%) (see Figure 3):

Fig. 3. Promptness and efficiency of the administrative activity in the City Hall Institution

Source: Authors' own conception

4. Alignment of the activity of dignitaries and civil servants with the development priorities of the locality

By its nature, any institution, whether public or private, tends and must strive for improvement. This improvement does not mean limitation within the institution and in a personal name (institutional and private self-improvement), but it means, especially in the public sector, focusing on the development priorities of the locality.

In this regard, almost all (93.8%) of the dignitaries and civil servants strongly agree (56.3%) and agree (37.5%) with the statement that the activity of the City Hall institution in which he exercises his/her function is aligned with the development priorities of the locality.

The local respondents declare in a proportion of almost $\frac{3}{4}$ (73.8%) that they strongly agree (47.5%) and agree (26.3%) with the assertion stated above. However, 10.9% of the local community surveyed disagree (6.8%) and strongly disagree (4.1 %) about the same statement (see Figure 4):

Fig. 4. Alignment of administrative activity in the City Hall Institution with the development priorities of the locality

Source: Authors' own conception

5. Bureaucracy phenomenon in relation to the members of the local community

Bureaucracy often hinders the activity of public institutions, as excessive attention is paid to formalities to the detriment of the interests of citizens.

From the perspective of the population of dignitaries and civil servants, $\frac{3}{4}$ of them (75%) strongly disagree (43.7%) and disagree (31.3%) with the fact that the institution in which it operates is too bureaucratic in relation to locals. However, at the opposite pole, there are almost $\frac{1}{4}$ (21.9%) of the respondents in this population who agree (6.3%) and strongly agree (15.6%) in relation to the previous statement.

On the other hand, from the results recorded at the level of the sample of locals, it can be noticed that over $\frac{1}{3}$ (33.9%) of them show an equidistant position, declaring neither agreement nor disagreement. Surprisingly, an exactly identical percentage (33.9%) of members of the local community surveyed agree (21.2%) and strongly agree (12.7%) with the statement that the City Hall in their locality is too bureaucratic. By contrast, a similar share (32.2%) of locals disagree (20.3%) and strongly disagree (11.9%) in this regard.

It can be stated that, if in the perception of dignitaries and civil servants, the answers are unfavorable to the bureaucratic phenomenon, by contrast, from the opinions of the members of the local community, it results that the City Hall-locals relation is affected by bureaucracy (see Figure 5):

Fig. 5. Bureaucracy of the City Hall Institution in relation to the locals

Source: Authors' own conception

6. Satisfaction of community members in relation to the management of both the city hall and the locality

From the visualization of the collected data it is found that for the most part both the City Hall Institution and the Horodnic de Sus locality are properly managed and satisfy the expectations of the local community members.

The answers of dignitaries and civil servants indicate that almost all (96.9%) of them say about the locals that they are satisfied (59.4%) and very satisfied (37.5%) with the management carried out at the level of the institution, as well as at the locality level.

Likewise, at the level of the sample of the local community members there is a satisfactory attitude, over $\frac{3}{4}$ (78%) of those surveyed say they are satisfied (46.6%) and very satisfied (31.4%) in relation to the administration activities of the City Hall institution, as well as at the level of the locality they belong to. It can also be seen that a share of 16.9% of local respondents shows a neutral position, declaring neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and only 5.1% say they are dissatisfied (1.7%) and very dissatisfied (3.4%) (see Figure 6):

Fig. 6. Satisfaction regarding the management of both the City Hall Institution and the locality

Source: Authors' own conception

7. Conclusions

In the light of the lines presented in the pages of this paper, we can write the conclusion that the approach allowed the analysis of the opinions of dignitaries and civil servants, as well as members of the local community regarding the public administration activity carried out within the City Hall Institution of Horodnic de Sus commune in Suceava county.

With reference to *the adaptation of the activities carried out by dignitaries and civil servants to the needs of the local community*, the answers collected at the level of these two surveyed populations indicate that at the level of the analyzed public institution the existence of such an action is found. In this regard, both those who administer and those who are administered are of the opinion, in the largest share (81.3% / 60.2%) that the activity in the City Hall institution in the locality is adapted to social needs.

In order to respond to local needs, *the management activity must be carried out promptly and efficiently*. From this perspective, most (96.9%) of the dignitaries and civil servants surveyed, as well as most (72.1%) of the locals say they are satisfied and very satisfied with the receptivity and efficiency of the City Hall institution in the locality.

The alignment of the activity of dignitaries and civil servants with the development priorities of the locality is required in any public institution. The answers recorded in connection with this need for alignment show that, at the level of both categories of populations surveyed, most (93.8% / 73.8%) strongly agree and agree with the assertion that the activity of the City Hall is aligned with development priorities of their locality.

In connection with *the bureaucratic phenomenon existing in the administrative activity and in relation with the members of the local community*, from the registered answers there are different perceptions between the two categories of surveyed populations. From the perspective of the population of dignitaries and civil servants, $\frac{3}{4}$ of them (75%) strongly disagree and disagree with the fact that in the institution in which they operate is too bureaucratic in relation to the locals. On the other hand, only a 32.2% share of local community members disagree and strongly disagree in this regard. Therefore, it can be concluded that, if in the perception of dignitaries and civil servants, the answers are unfavorable to the bureaucratic phenomenon,

by contrast, from the opinions expressed by locals, it results that the City Hall-citizens relation is affected by bureaucracy.

Regarding *the satisfaction regarding the management of both the activities of the City Hall Institution and the locality*, from the interpretation of the collected data results the fact that the largest share of respondents belonging to both surveyed populations (96.9% / 78%) says satisfaction with the management at the level of the institution, as well as the locality. Therefore, it can be concluded that both the City Hall Institution and the locality of Horodnic de Sus are properly administered and meet the expectations of members of the local community.

Overall, the micro-research conducted in the pages of this paper allows us to conclude that the administrative activity carried out at the level of the analyzed public institution is adapted to the requirements of the local community, is prompt and efficient and it focuses on development priorities of the locality, meeting local expectations to the management carried out at the level of the institution, as well as at the level of the locality, although the phenomenon of bureaucracy seems to be present in the relation between the City Hall-citizens.

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