

**CASE MANAGEMENT, SUPERVISION AND
COMMUNICATION IN CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE**

HABILITATION THESIS

PATRICIA-LUCIANA RUNCAN

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WEST UNIVERSITY OF TIMI OARA

Abstract

In a dynamic, tempestuous, and hasty world in which, sometimes, there is no time to even scrutinize our professional past, this thesis of habilitation is, for me, *a halt, a stop* and, at the same time, *a challenge* I have been waiting for quite some time, a halting place that helps me stopping *running* to thoroughly analyse my professional past and that also provides an opportunity to plan in detail, with more efficiency and even more specifically, my professional future. This holistic process in which I attempt at *analysing my past and future through the prism of the present* is neither easy, nor difficult – it is, more likely, extremely challenging!

My professional contributions mentioned and presented in detail in the thesis concern mainly the last 4-5 years, but they reflect the experience accumulated in the 11 years of teaching and research.

My professional voyage started in 2003, when I became a preparatory at the Department of Social Work of the Faculty of Sociology and Psychology of the West University of Timi oara. Because of the dynamics mentioned above – which also characterises the higher education system in Romania, I had also often had to seminars and, later, to teach extremely diverse disciplines in the field of social work such as national minorities, family social work, child and family protection, protection of the elderly, case management, supervision, social work system, intervention techniques, emotional communication with victim-children, etc. All these teaching activities have been doubled by my interest in researching and publishing in these diverse and complex sub-domains of social work.

The publications of the last years have been numerous and diverse: over 19 books as author and coordinator (17 in English and 2 in Romanian), 3 ISI-rated articles with impact factor, 21 articles indexed in more than three international databases, etc. I have carried out different researches in the field of child and family protection and welfare in Romania, analysing needs, risks, challenges, and opportunities Romanian children, youth, adults, and elderly are confronted with. On the other hand, due to the discipline “Case Management” that I have been teaching at the West University of Timi oara, I needed to learn in detail the “case management method” and, particularly, the protection of child and family rights. Studying carefully the case management, I realised how important supervision is in case management, in general, and for the professionals working in the field of the protection of child and family welfare, in particular.

Due to the post-doctoral scholarship won in 2011, I had the chance to research more in detail the need for supervision in Romanian professionals working with the human factor, and in the field of child and family welfare, in particular. The same post-doctoral project also allowed me to study such phenomena as *burn-out* and *drain-brain* that some of our professionals in the field have to face.

These multiple and extremely demanding studies have made me decide to present my past and present professional results in my habilitation thesis titled *Case Management, Supervision and Communication in Child and Family Welfare*. Communication is the process that underlies human interaction relationships both within and outside families. Supervision

focuses on communication without which neither the process of supervision, nor the case management process would be possible.

The structure of the thesis is stipulated by law in the *Guidelines for Habilitation Thesis*. **In the first part**, I present, based on documents, my professional achievements after obtaining the title of PhD in Sociology with my doctoral thesis *Depression in the Elderly: Psycho-social Issues*; my achievements emphasise the originality and relevance of my academic, scientific and professional contributions so far, certifying the development of a future professional career. Case management is presented in detail in *Chapter Two*, where I analyse theoretical and practical approaches of case management at both national and international levels. *Chapter Three* presents in detail the theoretical and practical approaches of supervision in the field of the protection and welfare of child and family, emphasising both the need for supervision in professionals working with the human factor, and its advantages. Supervision can prevent such phenomena as *burn-out* and *brain-drain* among professionals in social work. *Chapter Four* contains several publications presented diachronically from 2010 until now, publications that capture some of the important aspects that influence positively or negatively the life of children and youth and the interaction relationship between parent and child. **The second part of the thesis** contains my three main directions of professional development: **research projects** in the field of the triad workaholism-burn-out-depression among professionals in social work active in the field of protection and welfare of child and family and of the analysis of child neglect in Romanian families; **publications** in the field of protection and welfare of child in Romania and also in the field of childhood and parenthood; **scientific events** such as participating in international conferences in the field of protection and welfare of child and family, or the organising – together with my colleagues from the country and abroad – of three scientific events I have coordinated in the last years for the West University of Timi oara: the International Conference of Applied Social Sciences (ISSA 2012), the Series Applied Social Sciences (ASA 2013), and the International Christian Conference *The Power to Be Different* (PFA 2014). **The last part** of the habilitation thesis contains bibliographical references associated to the first two parts.

After obtaining the habilitation certificate, I intend to carry out research as a member of multi- and inter-disciplinary teams in the field of protection and welfare of child and family involving young PhD students in different domains.

Finally, I would like to mention that all my professional achievements in the last five years – that I have included in the habilitation thesis – have been possible due to God and support from a few extraordinary people I have cooperated with over the years. I thank them all and I particularly thank my family who have supported me constantly, originally, and unconditionally!