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Master of Science in Economics and Business Administration, International Marketing

The implementation of Internal Marketing in the multinational enterprises, in the perspective of the Romanian culture

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Executive summary

The marketing literature speaks about the satisfaction of the external customer by firstly satisfying the internal customer through the establishment of an Internal Marketing plan (Wasmer et al., 1991). Reflecting on the topic and based on the literature, it could be proved that the concept of Internal Marketing doesn't apply the same way everywhere; the Central-Eastern European countries, with strong communist influences showing that culture of a nation may influence the Internal Marketing implementation. Based on the literature regarding the implementation of IM in the CEE, several propositions have been formed, related to the way the CEE countries are adapting to the IM implementation

Willing to validate the assumptions taken, a qualitative study based on non-participant observations (Kuada, 2010), depicted from semi-structured interviews has been conducted in Romania, member of the CEE, willing to find matching patterns between Romania and the CEE, regarding the extent of IM implementation.

The study showed that the MNEs are aware of the IM practices, but that they are not effectively implementing it. Propositions related to IM elements such as Internal Communications have been proved right as there are issues related to the IC in the whole region, including Romania. On the other side, contrary to the neighbor countries and to the literature, the MNEs are sending to Romania expatriate senior-managers born outside of Romania but in a country with very similar culture and values. Moreover, if it was thought that in the countries with a communist past the society relates to following norms, the findings of this study indicate to an open to change behavior of the young employees within the MNEs.

Keywords: Internal Marketing, Internal Communication, Employee Empowerment, Job Satisfaction, Romania

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Figure 1. Table of Acronyms

IM	Internal Marketing
CEE	Central and Eastern European Countries
MNE	Multinational Corporation
IC	Internal Communications
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resources Management
IMC	Internal Marketing Coordinator
OC	Organizational Culture
OI	Organizational Identity
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
URSS	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
IT	Information Technology

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Context

The market is a very complex living environment that evolves from a day to the other. Its evolution is mainly represented by the interaction between the seller and the buyer. Because of the high number of competitors within the market, it is getting harder and harder to sell the product. Thus, the companies are seeking the novelty in their way of establishing loyal relationships with the customers. In order to create stronger bonds with the customers, the organization has to provide better quality in their services. To do so, the marketer should rather swift the focus from the actual buyer to the employee by offering him the right environment to nurture high quality business activity (Wasmer et al., 1991).

This is the case of Aerotek who won the award of the *"Coolest place to work of 2016"*, with the mention that *"Empowered employees keep Aerotek cool"*, Coridor Business Journal (2016), an American company whose employees declared themselves highly satisfied with the work environment and with the recruiter's positive impact over their careers.

In the employee's benefit the company offers various incentives as office gatherings and meals together. However, these are not the perks which aided the company to earn the award. The employees of Aerotek are working under a different mindset, one which recognizes the progress of the company by celebrating it together, empowers every employee to be a decision maker and also to share his ideas with the whole organization. To put it in a nutshell, the management uses the *"everyone controls what we produce"* philosophy (Ben Rothan – Director of Business Operation Aerotek Hiawatha).

At the moment, Aerotek develops its business in the United States and Canada. Simultaneously, the European economy environment is slightly different, especially in the Eastern European countries. In an interview for the most important Romanian financial magazine, Dale S. Richards – Certified Valuation Analyst explained the issues faced by the organizations developing their business in Romania. The most important problems addressed by him are the specialized human resources deficit, the poor brand display and the lack of balanced management (Ziarul Financiar,

2015). Given the odds, the usual Romanian business management would rather cut off some of the expenses instead of coming up with the right solutions to the addressed issues. He agrees that the international financial environment is influenced by the global instability, but it could be neutralized by a set of modern actions that should be taken by the Romanian entrepreneurs. Some examples can be the decision-making decentralization, empowering thus the employees occupying lower positions, and the company – customer relationship enforcement through a stabilization of the company – employee partnership.

1.2 Problem statement

The above mentioned issues are in fact the exact premise of **Internal Marketing,** Pervaiz et al., (2003) suggesting that the organizations could deliver top quality for its customers by seeing the employees as own customers and satisfying their needs first.

In addition, the internal marketing comes with advantages; rising the business efficiency, a positive financial impact and more important, the employees' happiness Anselmo et al., (2008).

Hence, this paper will research the implementation of Internal Marketing of companies established in Romania, a developing country, who adhered to the European Union in 2007. This research wants to assess the level of internal marketing awareness by conducting interviews within corporations of Bucharest. The end goal is to deliver actionable insights to the interested organizations in implementing modern internal marketing techniques, in order to deliver best quality services to their customers.

1.3 The problem formulation

- How is the concept of internal marketing implemented in the international organizations running their business in Romania? – An empirical research.

Two research questions have been formulated, in order to answer to the above question;

• How are the Eastern and Central-Eastern European countries adjusting the internal marketing adoption?

• How important is the culture of a country in the successful implementation of internal marketing?

1.4 Research motivations

The purpose of this dissertation is to study how the MNEs are adopting the implementation of the IM practices in Romania, a country with a strong communist past. From an academic point of view, this research wills to fill in the gap of the existing literature as there are a large number of studies done in the Western countries where the IM implementation is nourishing while in the Eastern Europe there are several obstacles and issues which have been highlighted but never explained. Understanding from the literature that there are issues related to the empowerment and the IC, the research also develops towards these themes and obtains precious data regarding the source of these problems. From the managerial perspective, the findings of the study could come up as missing links of the right IM implementation and could help the senior management of the MNEs in a better satisfaction of the internal customer, hence the external one.

Chapter 2. Theory and theoretical considerations

This second chapter is meant to describe the concepts and theories which are underlying the research questions. In order to explain their core concept; the internal marketing, this chapter will also put in the highlight the elements of internal marketing.

Moreover, the literature review will describe the ideal way of implementing internal marketing, based on the general knowledge of IM, built by scholars since 1990 to 2017. Afterwards, the research will narrow down to the Central-Eastern and Eastern European area where it will research the extent of IM implementation within the international companies. This way, the research will lead to building up a framework for the data analysis chapter where this concept will be applied to an empirical research in Bucharest, the capital of Romania, country which can be found in the above mentioned geographical area of focus. Given the differences between countries and cultures, the second part of literature review will highlight the level of acceptance and implementation of internal marketing in the Eastern and Central-Eastern European countries. The research questions to be answered by the second part of the literature review are:

• *How are the Eastern and Central-Eastern European countries adjusting the internal marketing adoption?*

• *How important is the culture of a country in the successful implementation of internal marketing?*

2.1 Search method

The starting point of conducting this literature review was represented by identifying keywords related to the problem statement of this research paper. Since the main interest of the research lays in the internal marketing of international organization established in Romania, the dominant key words used in the search were "internal marketing", "human resource management", "job satisfaction" or "internal communication".

Consequently, as the research develops from a global perspective to a country specific one, among the keywords the research also used the names of the countries from the Central-Eastern European area, such as: "Albania", "Croatia", "Czech Republic", "Estonia", "Latvia", "Lithuania", "Slovenia", "Hungary", "Bulgaria" and "Romania".

The above mentioned keywords were the input for several databases searches. However, only four databases provided by the Aalborg University library displayed a relevant amount of research-based academic journals, articles or books. Thus, the databases used in this research were Emerald Insight, Proquest, Scopus and EBSCO.

Having so many variables, the research firstly revealed the general knowledge of the topic, by using the string: "internal marketing" AND "human resource management" AND "job satisfaction" AND "internal communication", using the time framework of 1990 to 2017. This way, scholar works related to the general understanding of the topics where extracted. In order to come up with geographically localized studies, the same string was used for every country mentioned before but also in relation with the key words; "Eastern Europe" OR "East Europe" OR "Central Eastern Europe".

For a higher accuracy of the outcome, options of narrowing down, offered by the data bases search engines were used. Thus, the search requests were represented by articles and chapters only written in English, between the 1990 and 2017. However, for a better understanding of the development of Internal Marketing since its appearance, a broader time framework was used. In a separate search, the key word of "Internal Marketing" was sought between the 1970 and 2017, revealing four articles describing the incipient forms of Internal Marketing.

As the databases offer the option of previewing the articles and reading their abstracts, an even more narrowed down selection could be conducted. The final result stays in an amount of 42

articles for the general literature of Internal Marketing and 15 articles for the Central and Eastern Europe localized studies.

2.2 Theoretical framework

This section will describe the main theories underlying the concept of internal marketing. In order to display the image of internal marketing there is a need to describe its components as well.

2.2.1 Internal Marketing

Since its appearance, the IM does not have a stable definition due to its volatility and subjective cognition. However, scholars agree on a common understanding of IM, describing it as a tool whose organizational implementation raises employee satisfaction and consequently customer satisfaction, by seeing the organization's employee as the first customer to satisfy.

Its origins are found at the beginning of the 20th century, but it was first introduced in the literature in the early 70's Varey et al., (1999) and defined by Berry et al., (1976) as an employee oriented marketing strategy, preaching the communication with the employees, their personal development within the organization and their stimulation through motivation in order to provide better service for the customer. Following up, Gronroos (1983) describes it as a *"state of mind"* of the employees that will ensure a better customer satisfaction. Later on, Ahmed and Rafiq, (1993) describe the IM from the organizational perspective as a cumulus of marketing techniques, human resources and knowledge meant to facilitate organizational objectives accomplishment. Supporting the idea, Varey and Lewis (1999) describe the IM as a tool whose capabilities are used to position in a safety place the organization. The actual trend of IM consists in seeing the employee as the core of IM, the one able to obtain the organizational quality, brand image and profit, Proctor (2010). Supporting this perspective, the organizations are trying to implement IM strategies in their way of increasing the quality of services and better customer satisfaction. Doing so, they emphasize on the internal customer's skills, attitudes and behaviors, which are the essential factors for providing better service quality (Salehzadeh et al., 2017).

Conducting this literature review, the research revealed that the IM is a concept with a complex form, whose borders are hard to be defined. Despite its variety of understanding, applicability and domain of activity, three main general clusters of theories incorporated in the concept could be drawn. The three clusters are (1) IM as management tool; (2) IM as employee development tool; (3) and IM as organizational culture development tool.

In order to establish the borders of these three clusters, the dominant theories have been isolated. In addition, every cluster will also incorporate supportive theories, whose recurrence during the research was lower but with a high importance in completely defining the concept of IM.

2.2.2 Internal Marketing as Employee Development Tool

Figure 2. Table of theories - IM as employee management tool

Dominant theory	Internal communications	• Wasmer et al., (1991) • Rafiq et al., (2000) • Grundey et al., (2009) • Ali N., (2012) • Yu-Ting Huang and Sharyn Rundle-Thiele (2015) • Kaplan (2017
	Employee satisfaction and performance	• Ahmed and Rafiq (2003) • Ahmed and Rafiq (2000 • Vasconcelos (2008) • Boukis et al., (2015) • Kaplan (2017) • Yung-Ming Shiu and Tsu-Wei Yu (2010) • Opoku et al., (2009) • Podnar and Golob (2010)
Supportive theory	Employee communication	• Davis (2001) • Rafiq et al., (2003) • Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) • Levin (2011)
	Employee emotion	• Davis (2001) • Rafiq and Ahmed (2003) • Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) • Levin (2011)

	Employee empowerment	• Papasolomou (2006) • Ali N., (2012) • Lamontagne (2016
	Charismatic leadership	• Levin R (2011) • Wieseke et. al (2009)

Source: own creation

The table above presents an overview of the dominant and supportive theories of IM. Even though they focus on different areas of the concept of IM, they have a relationship based on interdependency on each other, coexisting at the same time and contributing with an equal share to the good IM implementation. The two main theories of IM regarded as employee development tool, are represented by the internal communications theory and the one of employee satisfaction and performance. The first one focuses on the good collaboration in the organization while the other one focuses on the individual's proficiency at work, attained through his needs accomplishment. However, their synergy comes from the fact that the internal communications are the ones to nurture the satisfaction among the employees and thus their performance. Kaplan (2017) suggests that for a higher job satisfaction of the personnel, an effective communication method should be used.

The supportive theories revealed by the research are given by: employee emotion, his empowerment and the charismatic leadership. Even though they describe different traits of the employee behavior in the organization, the aforementioned theories are gear wheels in the mechanism of employee satisfaction and performance. The focal point of the three theories stays in the employee's emotional perception towards his activity at the workplace but also regarding the external factors influencing his development. Thus, the employee emotion theory refers to the individual's needs of feeling motivated and valuing the trust-based relationships. Acquiring this state the employee needs also to feel empowered. He has the need of involvement in the decision making of the organization, need whose fulfillment can be attained under the wand of a leader with advanced skills of coordination. The fourth supportive theory, the one of employee communication represents the link in the whole mechanism, helping the employees to achieve the adequate state in the IM implementation but also aiding the organization in providing the internal customer satisfaction.

The first pillar of IM consists in a cluster of theories putting the employee in the focal spot. The dominant theories revealed by the research within this theme are given by the **internal communications** in the organization, the **employee satisfaction and performance** and the **management of the human resource**. In the support of employee satisfaction and performance theory, the research will also analyze the employee communication, emotion, empowerment and IM coordination theory, through the charismatic leadership.

Internal communications

In a study conducted by Yu-Ting Huang and Sharyn Rundle-Thiele (2015), the results showed that IC are the main denominator in the literature of IM measurements, mentioning that the IC have a major impact on the employee development and organization's effective management. Wasmer et al., (1991) describe it as the flow of information between the firm's management and employees. This way, the management's desires regarding the quality in services are distributed to the employees. Moreover, Grundey et al., (2009) need to point out that IC predetermines the external communication by allowing the performing flow of information to nurture cooperation with the present and future partners. Together with it, the IC is the tool to implement the vision from a managerial level to the employee level, by communicating the organizational goals and the contribution that each party takes into the achievement of the goals. Due to its complexity, IM is the tool to solve many organizational problems. Starting at the managerial level, the good IM implementation leads to a better communication in the organization, which will lower the departmental isolation. In addition, through a good communication of the information, the ambiguity at the workplace will be lowered, making it easier for the employee to accomplish his tasks and making him satisfied of his contribution to the organizational goal (Rafiq and Ahmed, 2010).

Besides the hierarchical communication described above, the scholars identified a type of horizontal **employee communication**, the one used in the employee to employee interaction and employee to customer. In this sense, Levin, (2011) suggests that developing interpersonal relations will enhance the flow of information, and the satisfaction of both internal and external customers. Developing such bounds requires interpersonal skills and he suggests that the

organization whose employees lack verbal skills should be trained in this way. In his study in the dental industry, he proved that organizations with such skills of communication can obtain better customer satisfaction in a minimum of 90 days, skills which can be measured through customer satisfaction surveys.

When it comes to the organizational communication as a unit, even if the information is communicated from the managerial level to the workforce, still there can be problems in interpreting the information. Organizations should avoid the impersonal or one-way communication means because they consist in the lack of personal implication and lack of credibility (Davis, 2001). Such media streams should only be used for keeping a permanent record of the information. Thus, it is advisable that the communication will be done personal, face to face or through technological means which can ensure a faster interaction and lower information spill-over: telephone, voice-mail or e-mail.

Employee satisfaction and performance

Starting from the common understanding of IM that the employee has to be seen as the internal customer, this explanation will use the same principle as for the external customer. This way, by focusing on the achieving of employee satisfaction, with the purpose of obtaining the desired quality, the organization will be able to also satisfy the needs of the external customer (Pervaiz and Rafiq, 2003). They argue that by fulfilling "*the employee needs, the organization will also enhance the employee motivation and retention and consequently, higher external satisfaction, leading to loyalty.*" However, this discussion is not necessarily a philosophical one, Vasconcelos, (2008) displays a set of practicalities to enhance the employee satisfaction, seeing IM more as the environment where the employee satisfaction proliferates. Among them there is to mention; the enthusiasm of the employee, his conduit but also his respect for the marketing strategy and organizational goals. Starting his research from the idea that the employees are the most important asset for the organization, Vasconcelos, (2008) suggested that firms should provide the right environment for its employees so they can achieve the *"happiness in the workplace"*. In order to achieve this state of mind, Podnar and Golob, (2010) suggest that the jobs within the organization should be seen as the products able to meet the needs of the

employees. Supporting this idea, Boukis et al., (2015) develop the **theory of equity** which consists in the cumulus of benefits for the employee resulted from the application of IM. As the organization's management understands and manages the needs of its internal customers, the employee will acknowledge the management's positive attitude which will also raise the employee's positive perception related to the value of his job and consequently will encourage him to attain higher goal effectiveness, thus performance.

Related to attaining the employee satisfaction and performance, there are more supportive theories to discuss. Hence, the following section will be developed by analyzing psychological traits of the employee involved in the IM, such as his emotions and feeling of empowerment but also supportive theories regarding his interaction in the organization with the other employees and his employer.

Employee emotion

The organizational communication nurtures relationships between the individuals involved in the IM. The relationships are built up on the perceptions of each other displayed by the employees but also on the emotions shared in their way of reaching the organizational goal (Wasmer, 1991).

In the case of employee motivation, the need of accomplishment comes from a set of firm's material and psychological incentives but also from the employee's perception towards the organization. This is the reason why (Ahmed and Rafiq, 2003) suggests that firms have to accomplish a *"high contract partnership"* with their employees. They come up in the aid of firms by establishing three main ingredients meant to ensure the safe collaboration in the organization; understanding, trust and commitment.

From the employee's perspective, the performance at the workplace comes from acquiring the psychological safety which will allow the employee to feel safe regarding his feelings and perceptions. In addition, the employee performance requires trust. The trust is the result of acknowledging intimately the needs and opinions of the individuals, resulted from the inter-personal interactions. Through a good assessment of the employees' requirements regarding the

trust, the company will be able to show respect and value towards its customers, nurturing reciprocity of commitment (Ahmed and Rafiq, 2003).

Employee empowerment

Another IM prerequisite in the organization is the balancing between the managerial and workforce's decision making. The IM comes in the aid of the lower hierarchical positioned employees by better distributing the decisional implication. Aerotek, the company who obtained the award of *"The coolest place to work 2016"* (Aerotek, 2016) brings to the same table the opinions of all the employees, allowing them to share their ideas and offering them the feeling of having a contribution, a voice. Moreover, (Ali, 2012) claims that empowered employees are much more satisfied at the workplace, thus more likely to value the high quality delivery to the external customer.

Charismatic leadership

Aerotek, (2016) is the exceptional case where all the employees have a natural born leadership skill; *"We do not rely on leadership to give us direction because we hire employee leaders in every role.* However, researchers suggest that all the companies willing to implement IM should have a leader able to influence and coordinate on his followers. According to (Wieseke et. al, 2009), this charismatic leader has to prove understanding of organizational environment and followers needs, being able to provide vision and inspiration to his fellows. Moreover, Levin, (2011) draws the job description for this IM coordinator as a part-time employee, whose tasks are given by the implementation, tracking and reviewing the application and development of IM in the company. He adds that the IMC doesn't necessarily have to be fully aware of the organization's industry field but to coordinate 95% of the IM together with his team.

Human resources management

Finally, the HR management dimension incorporates all the above mentioned IM theories. Through HRM the organization solves the recruiting and training of employees, and manages the whole organizational activity together with the IMC (Shiu and Tsu-Wei Yu, 2009).

As suggested by Ali (2012), successful IM application starts by recruiting the right employees. They have to be the ones to match the values of the organization as it is too difficult to come up with changes in the behaviors and attitudes of the individuals. In order to attain the highest employee and external customer satisfaction, Ali recommends that the best employees are the customer-oriented ones.

The next step to go through is represented by the employee training which consists in filling the knowledge gaps of the employees but also creating awareness service value through a good communication of the firm's vision.

Lastly, after attaining the performance in providing the service, companies will want to retain the internal customer, in order to have a sustainable relationship with the external customer. The employee retention can be done through a good relationship with the employee, by understanding his needs and attitudes regarding his workplace (Ali, 2012). Moreover, the employee has to be motivated through benefits such as financial motivations, friendly environment through the possibility of working efficiently in a team, but also reciprocal feedback over the activity of both employer and employee (Grundey and Daugelaite, 2009).

2.2.3 Internal marketing as organizational management tool

The second pillar of IM is represented by the Organizational management orientation, seeing IM as a management tool meant to optimize the processes within the firm. The theories incorporated in this cluster are given by the **IM mix, the IM strategy** and the **IM** seen **as managerial activity**.

Figure 3. Table of theories - IM as management tool

Dominant theory	IM mix	• Piercy and Morgan (1990) • Rafiq and Ahmed (2000), (2003) • Ballantyne (2000) • Yung-Ming Shiu and Tsu-Wei Yu (2010)
	IM strategy	• Wasmer and Bruner (1991) • Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) • Levin (2011) • Chang and Tseng (2012) • Munteanu et al. (2014)
Supportive theory	IM as management tool	• Wasmer and Bruner (1991) • Davis (2001) • Rafiq and Ahmed, (2000)

IM mix

This theory shows up in different works under many designs and constructs but with the same philosophy behind it; the one of understanding the IM through a cumulus of elements with different areas of activity but with a common goal. The pioneers of the first IM mix model are Morgan and Piercy (1990) who proposed that IM applicability should be seen just as the standard marketing mix strategy (Burnett, 2008). Their framework formalizes the marketing mix into an *"IM programme"* divided in four elements; *the product, the price, the communication and the distribution*.

The product in this case is given by the marketing strategies and the organizational marketing plan built up on the attitudes and conduits needed to attain the marketing success.

The price is not given by any currency but by the psychological costs and the sacrifice of other employee's personal tasks and resources in order to add his contribution to the marketing plan.

The communications are the only physical aspect of this IM mix, consisting in the media used to inform the employees. It can vary from the physical interaction; face-to-face, to the technological means as e-mails, reports, etc.

The distribution represents the streams and means of communicating and developing the marketing plans, such as; meetings, trainings, boot-camps, seminars, etc.

Furthermore, Ahmed et al., (2003) also encourage using external marketing-like methods in dealing with the implementation of IM.

Doing so, they isolated the 11 elements of IM; *"strategic rewards, IC, training and development, organizational structure, senior leadership, physical environment, staffing-selection and succession, interfunctional co-ordination, incentive systems, empowerment, operational process changes"*. It is important to state the distinction between the two motivation-related elements; strategic rewards focusing on the employee's actions towards the organizational goal while the incentive system comes as the financial reward used by the company in order to develop a company's culture.

Afterwards, they built up the IM mix based on the 11 elements mentioned above, calling the outcome of using these elements in an IM program as *"organizational competencies"*. In the end, the organizational competencies are the ones to have the last word in the performance of the organization, as displayed in the image down below.

Figure 4. Conceptual model of IM, based on IM Mix (Ahmed et al., 2003)
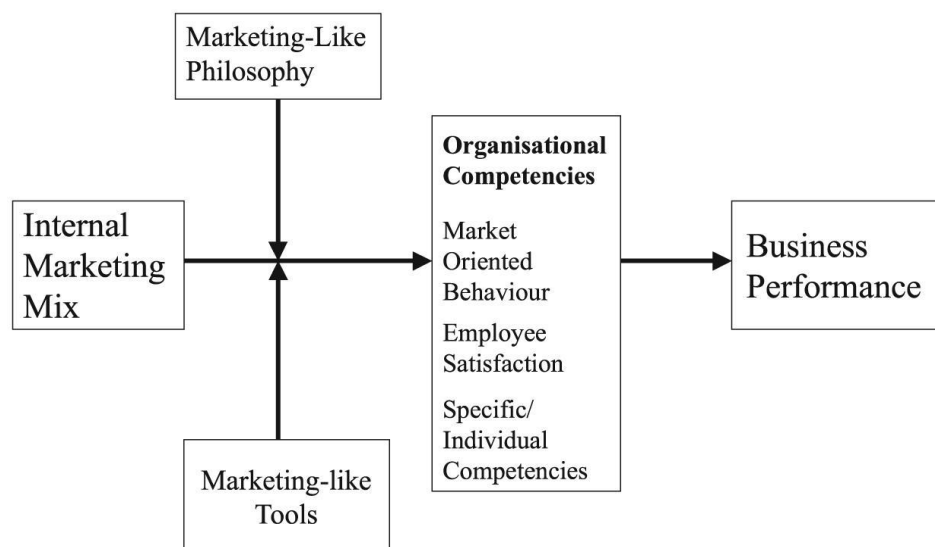
Source: Ahmed et al. (2003)

The IM strategy

IM is by its nature a strategy for the organizational development. The starting point of designing the IM strategy stays in the clear image over the goals for the marketing program. In regard of the goals, they vary from firm to firm but Bruner and Wasmer (1991) distinguish the two main goals, common to most of the organizations as; teaching the employees towards the value of great customer service and leading them into having a positive attitude regarding the service quality that has to be delivered.

Based on Ahmed and Rafiq's (2008) view, the IM is a *"vehicle for strategy implementation"*. The metaphor suggests that IM is a strategy implementation mechanism with valences in the complexity of the organization. It can either manage the human resources or to integrate the marketing into the personnel's duty.

IM as management style

Even if the literature does not make a strong differentiation between IM as a management mechanism or social process (Lewis, 1999), it is clear that the usage of IM has managerial implications. Moreover, the IM is an integrative process of developing positive relationships in the organization, in order to achieve the external customer's, the internal customer's and the organizational satisfaction. In this way, Davis (2001) describes *"IM as a management style"*, adding that the managers will use the IM as a toolbox for inspiring and displaying the organization vision to the employees.

Consequently, under the development of IM as a managerial technique, the employees will be able to obtain a feedback over their performance at the workplace. This way, the unilateral interaction and change of information with the scope of attaining higher performance translates into a well-structured climate which nurtures the great quality delivery. Rafiq and Ahmed (2008) top up the idea and suggest that the main criterion for a good IM management stays in the good organizational communication. By having a good common understanding, the IM will lower the employee role ambiguity, thus increasing the job satisfaction.

Concluding, the IM is a prerequisite for the implementation of future marketing strategies and for the organizational management. Its main utility stays in the capability of filling in the gaps between the organizational issues and in the successful inbound relationships. However, the dispute between IM as a managerial technique and IM as social process, opened by Sweeney (1972) and Fisk (1986) is still open, thus the next section will discuss the societal part of IM.

2.2.4 Internal marketing as organizational culture development tool

Figure 5. Table of theories - IM as organizational culture development tool

Dominant theory	Organizational culture	• Yung-Ming Shiu and Tsu-Wei Yu (2010) • Wasmer and Bruner (1991) • Ahmed and Rafiq (2003) • Wieseke et. al (2009) • Kaplan (2017)
	Internal Branding	• Aurand et. al (2005) • Boukis et. al (2015) • Matanda and Ndubisi (2013)
Supportive theory	Learning Organization and IT	• Morgan (2004) • Varey and Lewis (1999

Source: own creation

Lastly, the third cluster of theories regarding the IM as organizational culture development tool will incorporate theories focusing on the organizational capabilities such as the **organizational citizenship behavior, the internal branding** and the latest trend; the one of **learning organization** development through the newest technological tools.

Organizational culture and organization citizenship behavior

The third large theme of IM stays in the organizational culture. Scholars have been considering it as the core element of their IM studies, and this paper will also go through a detailed assessment of the theory underlying it.

According to Bruner (1991), organizational culture is synonym to the set of conduits, attitudes and values which are building up the organizational identity. In a parallel to the external customer, organizational culture can be seen just as the lifestyles of the internal consumers; the marketers.

In order to understand the implication of the employees in the OC (organizational culture), it is important to mention that the OC involves the organizational goals, the marketing program, the personnel's right conduit and the pre-established organizational principles of functioning, which cumulated will generate the strong organizational identity. Given its scale implications, the IM enforces the employee's performance but also the whole organization, generating a collective way of thinking thus, the corporate identity (Ahmed and Rafiq, 2003). Moreover, complementary to the organizational culture is the cultural network (Kaplan, 2017) which helps in the implementation of cultural values through the communication system. Thus, the organizational culture is determinant in the obtaining of the organizational success which can be achieved through the development of common values and attitudes in the employee-manager interaction (Shiu and Yu, 2009).

Consequently, the organizational culture nurtures the idea of *"organizational identity"* which refers to the self-perception of every employee in a ratio with the company they are working for, regarding their common shared values. As a more practical explanation, the OI is the social identification with a group for the organization members, similar to the corporate identity but involving also the emotional traits of the individual. The study of Wieseke et al., (2009) actually proved that the OI of the employees and managers have a positive impact on their performance thus importance for the IM framework.

Supporting the same theme, Chang et al., (2012) suggested through a study that the *"organizational citizenship behavior"* (OCB) is the set of conduits specific to the employee with a strong organizational identification. They believe that the employees in this spectrum will show high organizational commitment, perception of fairness, leadership supportiveness, good morale and certainly high job satisfaction. An example given in their work stays in the employees' participation in an online community. This contemporary method comes as a feasible, quicker and more accessible solution to fully personnel engagement. Mirroring the external customer's knowledge enrichment by being part of a community, the online community works as the right

environment for the knowledge exchange, thus for a better cooperation of the employee (Zhu, 2007).

The learning organization

Based on the latest findings regarding the need of the employee to be part of a community or a group with common values, scholars have agreed on the idea of the learning organization. Halal (1996) sees the team-working as the process of sharing knowledge and experience, thus learning in the way of solving organizational problems. Lewis and Varey, (1999) support this view and state that the learning organization will create the climate where the innovation will lead a growth in the job satisfaction and goal attaining effectiveness. Their good argument in this matter is represented by the interaction between departments. Employees from different fields can bring to the table their knowledge and share it with others, this way creating something new which may lead to overcoming the organizational issue. Consequently, Cahill (1995) shares the same thoughts and believes that the effect of IM application within the firms comes also with the shift from a standardized organization to a learning one.

However, this organizational behavior is still ambiguous for some senior managers, mostly because of the limitation of switching from a lifestyle to another one. In order to be a learning organization, synchronization to the actual technological development is required. Morgan (2004) identified this gap as the IT paradox and believes that it was created by the individuals' cultural background, cognition over the technological means but also the high financial costs for the technological infrastructure.

Internal branding

Lastly, based on the aforementioned, it is suggested that the company should enable means of enriching the personal knowledge and should allow the personnel to be part of the philosophy which runs the organization. However, just as the IT paradox issue, sometimes the employees won't feel a strong bound to the core value of the firm. In order to help organizations to cope with such problems, the scholars developed the internal branding initiatives.

The internal branding is meant to motivate and guide the employees in understanding the core values and also delivering them to the external customer (Matanda et al., 2013). What scholars want to emphasize is that the internal branding is not a philosophy that sustains itself from own inertia. The example comes from the interaction with the external customer as there is a difference between telling to the customers which are the values of the brand and showing them. Thus, the scholars suggest that in this matter not only the external customers have to be educated but also the internal ones to get the right information regarding the company they are working for (Boone, 2000).

Even though intuitively scholars thought that IM branding should be done by the HR, a study of Aurand et al., (2005) revealed that the HR has a weak influence in branding internally and consequently externally the organization. Their suggestion is that the HR personnel should work together with the marketing personnel to deliver the right brand message to the whole team of employees. This kind of unilateral alliance between the firms' departments will allow the proper internal branding development and raise dramatically the business performance.

Concluding, given its complexity, the IM incorporates many dimensions which were discussed in the section above. The international market is a forever changing environment, thus the marketing literature is a domain of continuous development. This explains the decision taken in this research, of creating a new IM paradigm, based on the scholars' common understanding of the above discussed theories of IM.

2.2.5 IM Implementation

Just as the IM framework, there is no unanimous chosen IM implementation strategy in the literature. However, all the scholars agree over the need of formalizing the IM into a plan. To support the idea, Davis, (2001) states that many organizations fail to implement the very good ideas because of the way they are promoted and applied.

In order to understand the way scholars are designing the implementation models, it is important to identify the issues meant to be solved by IM. Lewis and Varey, (1999) isolated some of these issues solved by a good IM implementation such as:

- The need of recruits to retained employees development
- Management-employee relationship enforcement

- Competitive advantage through high quality delivery

- Building up the corporate brand

- Organizational communication development

- Team-work

Based on the philosophy that everything matters, Ahmed and Rafiq, (2003) stated that the integrated effort is the main challenge of IM implementation. The integrated effort has a direct impact over the organizational costs because the IM is a multi-scaled strategy inflicting changes to the whole organizational system. Hence, its whole implementation effectiveness is influenced by the well-done implementation of IM in each sub-system of the firm.

With a similar view of everyone's contribution for a successful business, Davis (2001) proposed a model of IM implementation based on the participative approach of the management and divided it in seven steps;

1. Based on the principle of trial and error, they suggest that the managers should only share their pilot proposals with the key individuals from the personnel as they are offering the most valuable feedback.

2. In the IM implementation, the organization will have the task of converting the proposals into marketable products for the personnel. Davis suggests that if the manager treats the proposals as products, it will be easier to accept the criticism and to convert them, with the employees' contribution, into a useful idea meant to help everyone.

3. Before coming up with a proposal the management has to assess the needs of the personnel. It is suggest so because the proposals should also attain some support before being present in a formal meeting.

4. Building relationships based on trust and commitment with the key decision makers will make it easier in obtaining the needed support.

5. Because of the human limitations it is difficult to influence all the members of the organization. Intra-departmental alliances are thought to be a way of enriching the personnel support.

6. It is important that the proposals are well explained and they do not ignore anyone. Moreover, they have to incorporate the contribution and appraisal of the personnel involved in designing the idea.

7. Lastly, even if the six steps before were successfully passed, the manager should keep promoting the advantages of their proposals even after their approval.

Switching from the micro-level (the managerial one) to the macro-level (the organizational one), Munteanu et al., (2014) designed a seven steps model of IM implementation meant to overcome the implementation difficulties through a sequential assessment of the organization's goals and capabilities.

Figure 6. IM implementation model (Munteanu et al., 2014)
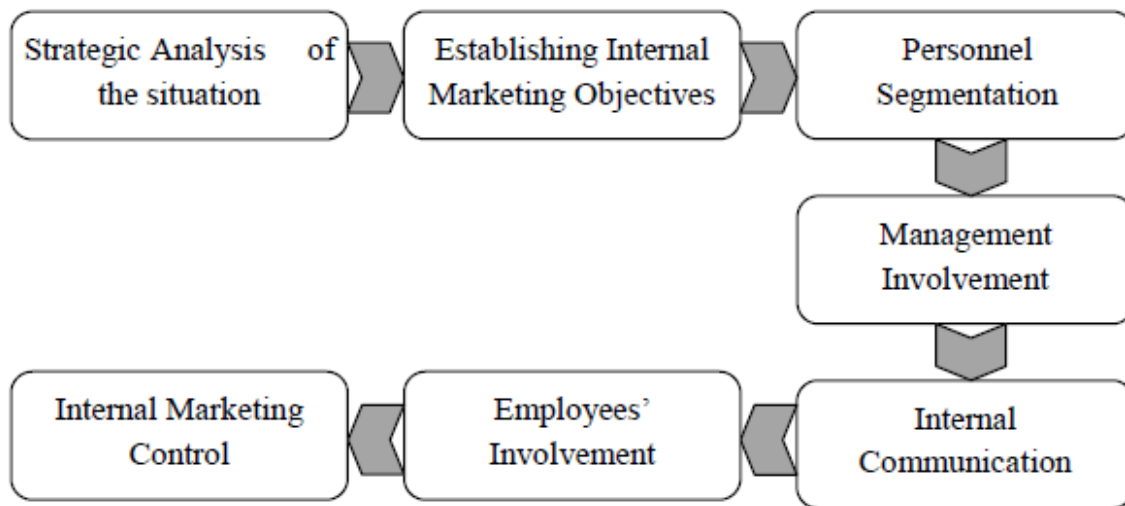
Source: Munteanu et al., (2014)

1. As shown in the model above, the IM implementation starts with the analysis of the current situation of the company. Doing so, the analysis will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the internal-external customers' relationship, the employer-employee relationship, the organizational culture and the style of leadership.
2. The second stage develops under the establishment of the internal marketing objectives, mainly the personnel motivation and satisfaction which are the mirroring of the successful customer loyalty engagement.
3. The personnel segmentation can be used to discover the right people to be recruited, to understand the employee's expectations for different positions and also to differentiate the internal customer segments (Ali, 2012). In their work, Munteanu et al., (2014) came up with an internal marketing segmentation matrix incorporating six groups: *"survivors,*

seekers, transcendentalists, participants, enthusiastic and addicts", being mainly differentiated by their personal goal; money, personal achievement, organizational achievement, happiness, necessity, etc.

4. The managerial involvement in IM is critical to the effective IM implementation as the management has to implement the vision of working as a team. The leadership skills are the ones to make the difference between a good management – IM implementation as through them the manager can create the trust based organizational environment.

5. As discussed previously, the internal communications are the physical and digital means of transporting the information in the organization and the tool for the management to display their proposals. Consequently, the IC has to be used by the employees for the daily collaboration with the other team members but also to send feedback to the management.

6. The 6th stage is actually what Davis, (2001) proposed; IM to be inspired to everyone. The organization has to work as a unit build with the participation of every individual. This proposes bidirectional cooperation between the managers and their employees.

7. The last step stays in the internal marketing control, an assessment of IM activities impact over the development of the employees, over the relationship with the customers and on the organizational goals achievement. David (2008) supports the importance of having a feedback of the IM implementation, thus the organization will have to always assess the positive or negative effects of their IM strategies.

2.2.6 IM Measurements

To have a complete view of IM implementation, the following section will discuss the 7th stage of Munteanu et al.'s model of implementation, whose importance was above explained.

Once again, because of the intricacy of IM, the studies done during the years had different approaches regarding the measurements of the IM. However, scholars agreed that the most efficient method of quantifying the effects of IM is given by the feedback producing queries distributed to the employees Munteanu et al., (2014).

Huang and Thiele's (2015) approach is the one of IM surveys whose questions find the answer through the five-point Likert scales Rowley (2014). They argue their chose as more than five items would confuse and exhaust the respondents in answering. Conducting a study they were able to test their "*internal marketing practice pool*", a query divided in three sections. The first one contains questions regarding the IC within the organization. In this stage the researcher's scope is to find out which are the IC programs in the organization and the extent of clarity regarding the requests and feedback of the participants in the IC. The second stage is represented by questions regarding the effort put by the organization in training its recruits, approaching also the level of satisfaction of the employee. Lastly, the third set of questions regards the internal market research and seeks to analyze the organizational involvement in gathering the employee feedback, and understanding and fulfilling the employee's needs.

However, this research concerns employees in leading positions, of three multinational companies located in Bucharest, while the method described above had been used on a larger scale. This way the researchers increased the data validity of the research, which refers to the requirements of the scientific method used in the research process, Cohen et al. (2007). In the case of this study, the limitations of time and of a very small sample of respondents led to difficulties in obtaining a very accurate overview of the extent of implementation of IM in Romania. Thus, the questioning will avoid the Likert scale answers, providers of numerical data which would be not suitable to the research. In order to assess the extent of IM implementation, this study will be based on semi-structured interviews targeting employees working in international organizations. They will answer to open ended questions focusing on the main IM themes that will be studied in this research.

2.2.7 Critique to the IM literature

Even though scholars emphasize more on different dimensions of the IM, they all recognize its importance in matching the organizational external market's challenges (Morgan and Piercy, 1990). As previously discussed, the perception towards the IM is different from an author to another; some believe that IM is a mindset, a strategic approach, or a cumulus of initiatives that have to be implemented in the organization (Huang and Thiele, 2015). However, the main practical denominator of IM understanding stays in its usefulness of satisficing the external customer by creating all the means for the internal customers, in his way of delivering excellent service (Kaurav et al., 2016).

All the aforementioned lead to the understanding that the IM is the patch meant to fix organizational issues internally and externally, no matter of their source and nature. Still, the IM described in this literature review might not be able to apply to any organization or to any issue. The above mentioned scholar works described the IM as the tool for organization developing their activity in a utopian universe where contemporary factors such as cultural differences, economic crisis or communication problems given by the differences in the language interpretations were disregarded. Moreover, the studies that led do the discovery of the theories given in this literature review are covering a variety of methodologies such as case study researches, in depth interviews, online queries, etc., which brings the advantage of testing the IM applicability hypothesis on more perspectives but also the disadvantage of not having a clear and accurate understanding of the concept and its theories. In addition, the studies targeted different industries from different countries; Taiwan insurance companies (Opoku et al. 2009), Taiwan hospitals (Tang and Tsai, 2008), Australian retail chains (Matanda and Ndubisi, 2013), tourism industry of Australia and Taiwan (Huang and Thiele, 2015), the UK bank industry (Papasolomou, 2006), or the business industry in US (Aurand et al., 2005). Consequently, the samples to be assessed in the way of obtaining insights about the IM practices were diverging. If in the Aurand et al., study the subjects of the study where seminar participants who filled in online surveys, whose answer were quantified using a six-point Likert-scale, in Matanda's and Ndubisi (2013) work, the subjects were strictly senior marketing personnel with activity in the retail chains. All these interconnected variables prove that there are inequalities between the

studies and that using the same methodology on another industry or country might reveal different outcomes.

In order to avoid such issues, this study will seek to synchronize the understanding of IM to the geographical area of interest; the CEE and then to test it in Romania.

2.2.8 Conceptual Framework

However, the different views on IM throughout its development led to difficulties in establishing a common definition and applicability of IM at the level of organization, creating misconceptions and contradictions (Ahmed and Rafiq, 2000). Thus, it is difficult to define the perfect framework for the organizational IM.

There are many models proposed but this research will point out the most recent one, the one proposed and tested by Nada Ali (2012), as it is built on dominant theories of IM, the same ones discovered during this research.

Figure 7. IM Framework (Ali, 2012)
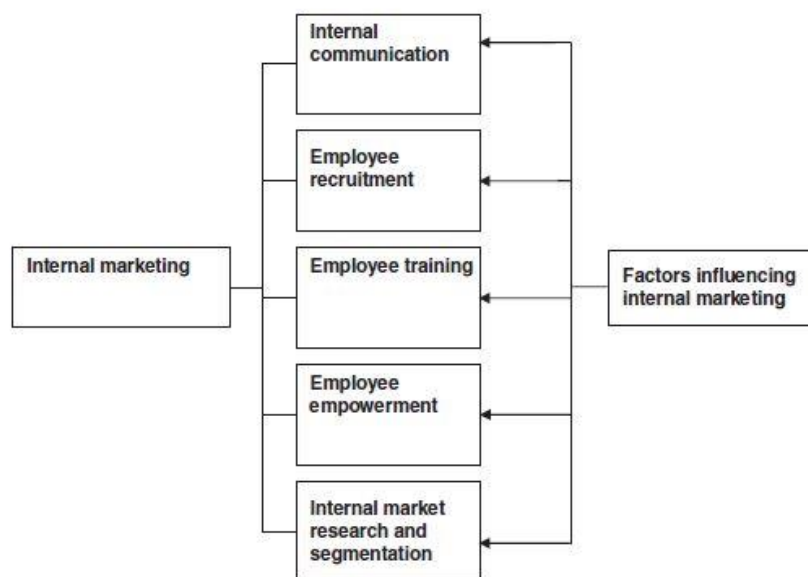
Source: (Ali, 2012)

Even though it has a strong focus on the employee recruitment, retaining, satisfaction, and on the internal management and internal market research, this model is incomplete, lacking of any discussions and theories regarding the environment of IM, the third dominant pattern of IM theories.

In order to provide a complete view and understanding of IM, the framework will be designed using the three main pillars of IM; **IM as human resources tool**, **IM as management tool** and **IM as organizational culture development tool**, given by the dominant theories with a high recurrence between the articles and books studied for this research. In addition, supportive theories will help in going in the depths of the elements of IM.

The picture below is a visual conceptualization of IM but also a framework summarizing the main elements discussed in the literature review above.

Figure 8. IM conceptual framework
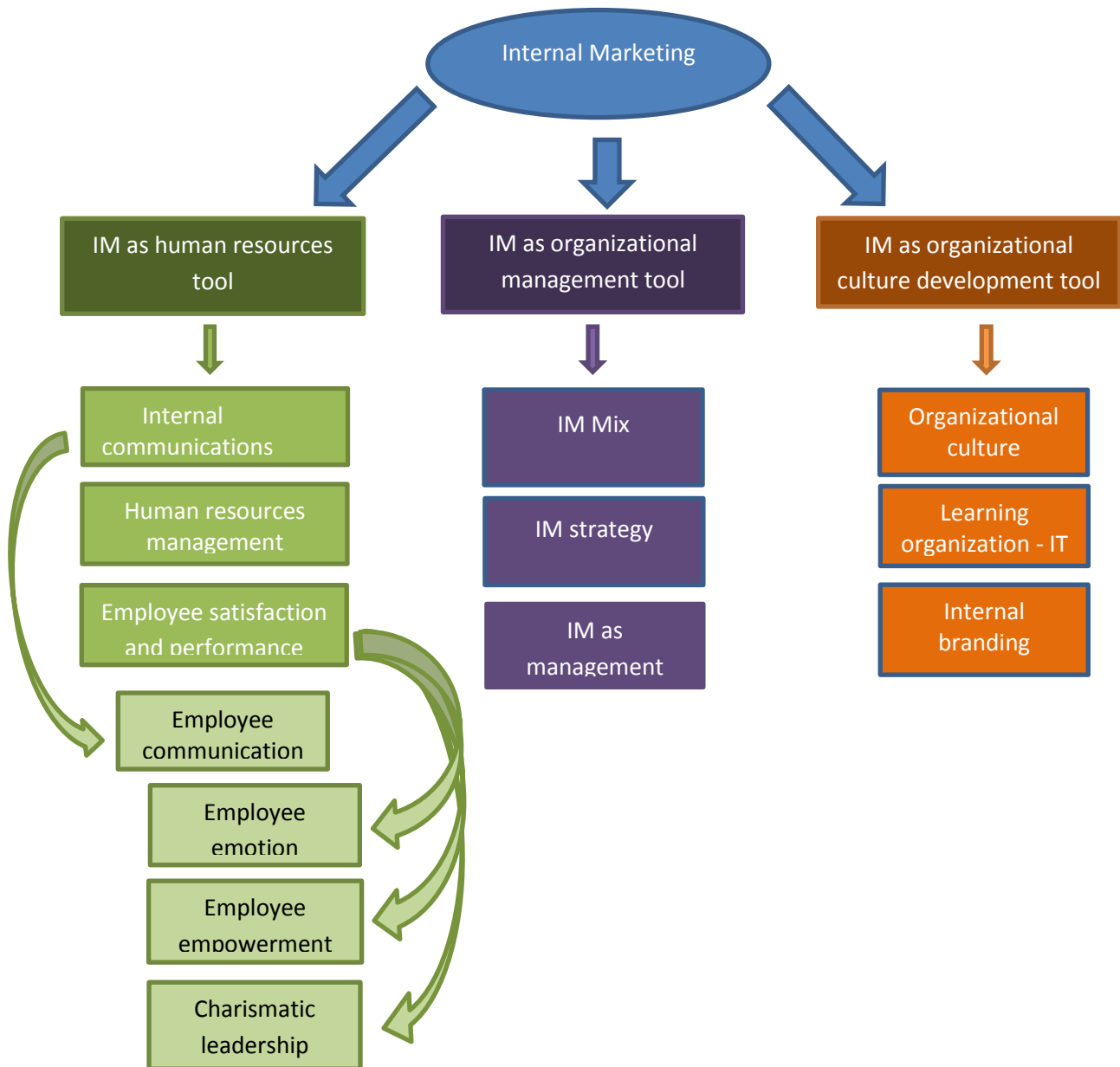
Source: own creation

The framework above represents the concept of IM, built on the available literature of the last decades. At this point, the framework serves as a blueprint for the ideal IM implementation and represents the corner stone of the global understanding of IM.

However, the following section will discuss the extent of IM implementation in the Central Eastern Europe, where differences of IM implementation might be revealed. Thus, the scope of the next chapter of this literature review is to come up with propositions about the organizations' behavior towards the implementation of IM strategies in the CEE and also will design a new IM framework meant to help in the testing of the hypothesis.

2.2.9 The Internal Marketing in Central and Eastern Europe

Before analyzing the IM implementation in the CEE, an explanation of the area's acronym will be done. Geographically, the Central Europe includes Austria and Germany but the common denominator of the countries, meant to be studied, besides the geographical placement, stays in their communist past and their former membership to the URSS. Thus, the CEE refers to the countries within the Central and Eastern area of the continent which are recovering after the fall of communism (Bedo et al., 2011). The shift in paradigm happened at 1989 when the communism fell through a chain of population revolutions. This led to a liberalization of the political and economic systems in the CEE, serving as an opportunity for the foreign companies to exploit. According to Schuh, (2007), there is an enormous gap between the Western and Eastern area, in regards of marketing approach, the CEE being isolated from the Western norms of consumption culture. However, a slowly homogenization started almost three decades ago, with a spillover of knowledge from the Western to the Eastern markets, in order to bring the two areas to a common ground. In his studies, Schuh identified the multinational corporations (MNEs) as the orchestrators of the process, shaping and motivating markets into growth through capital investments, infrastructure building up and most important by sharing and implementing their own technology and knowledge of developing business activity.

MNEs acquiring access to the CEE also brought the Western human resource management thinking, component of the IM implementation, thus of high importance for the topic of this research. In their study focused on the CEE, Taylor and Walley (2002) described the Eastern

countries as the *"test-bed for the Western HRM"*, admitting that this area is marked by a brutal changing environment, characterized by transition. In their Croatian focused study, they have identified that it is actually challenging to apply a Western paradigm in the Eastern organizations, mainly because of the cultural differences and the mindsets of the countries' populations. These findings were also confirmed by Littrell and Lapadus (2005), stating that the communism created a *"unique cultural syndrome"* at the level of the organization, characterized by the collectivist cultural trait of the employees. Even though, the former communist countries differentiate themselves by their very own norms and values, they all provide the MNEs with obstacles in implementing Western ways of improving efficiency and productivity in the organization.

The culture in CEE

The literature revealed that most of the IM related studies, done in the CEE developed the researches around two main elements; the **culture** and the **job satisfaction**. This section will describe the culture around the countries of Eastern Europe and the supportive theories underlying the concept, based on empirical researches done in several countries and industries.

As described above, the communism inducted a certain culture in the countries where the regime has been adopted. The most popular display of cultural differentiation, adopted by the majority of scholars in the studies done on the CEE, stays in Hofstede's (2017) model of cultural dimensions described in the figure down below.

Figure 9. Hofstede's 6 dimensions model
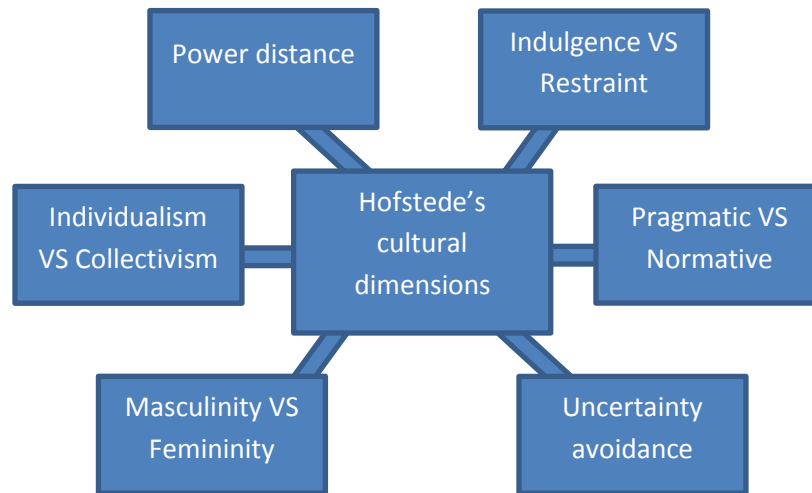
Source: Adapted from Holstede-Insight.com

Hofstede's work, transmuted in a digital tool, can help every person to compare countries around the world in terms of their cultural dimensions. Because of the large number of countries within the CEE, and due to the difficulties of display, for the sake of this project, four country names will work as input for the digital tool; Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine and the UK. The reason of choosing these countries also stays in the fact that they are neighbors and they shared the same communist past while the UK are used as sample of Western organizational culture.

Figure 10. Country comparison within the Hofstede model
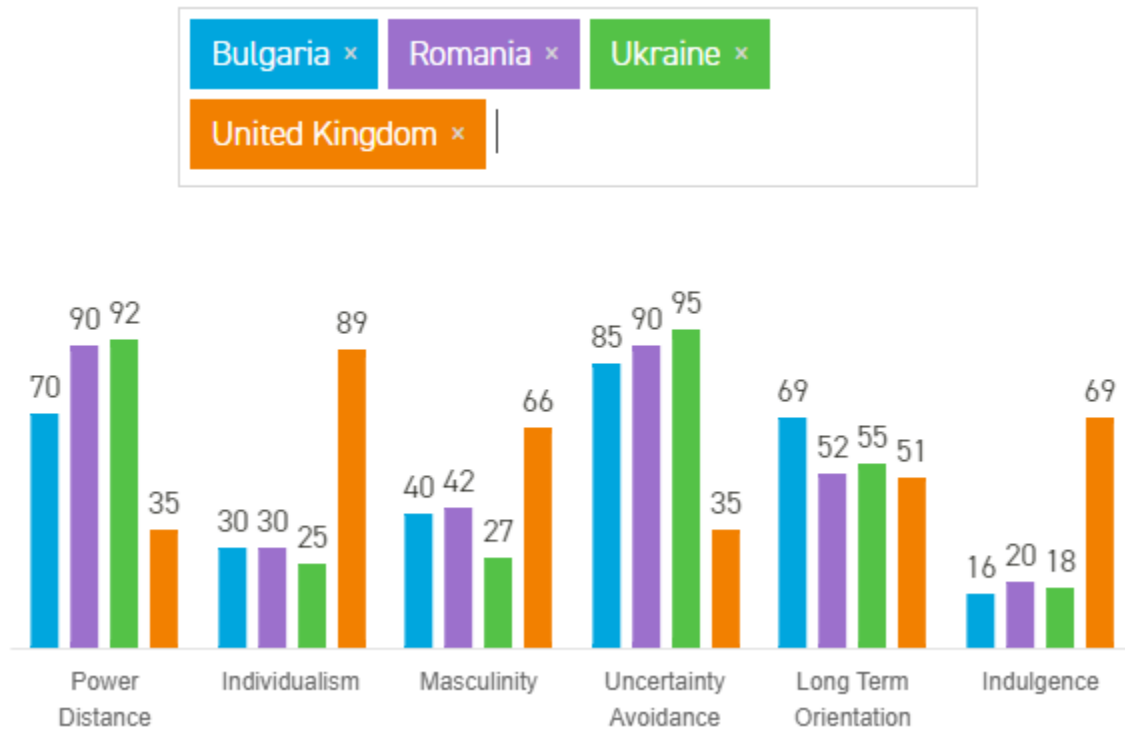
Source: Holstede-Insight.com

Because of the very similar results of Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine, the interpretation will be done as a cumulus while the UK results will be used for comparison reasons. Thus, the CEE countries scored a high **power distance** which means that people accept the hierarchical order, where every individual knows his place without seeking any justification. In term of organization, the CEE employee will want to be told what to do. Consequently, the UK scored very low, translating in society's belief that inequalities should be abolished.

The CEE countries are represented by a strong **collectivism**, proving that the individuals of this society are working as a team and take the responsibility for their group. However, the UK are exactly the opposite, reaching a very high score which translates in the individual's capacity of being independent.

The **masculinity** is only evident for the UK, being success oriented while the CEE countries are represented by a low femininity which means that the people are focusing on well-being and that they are keen to having solidarity and quality during their careers.

In terms of **uncertainty avoidance**, the CEE countries scored high which means that in these societies the norms and the precision are more important than the shifting from the routine (innovation). At the same time, the UK is more creative in solving the problems and they are more comfortable with the ambiguous situations.

When it comes to the **long term orientation** Romania, Ukraine and UK cannot display a specific behavior while Bulgaria's society is more oriented to pragmatism, people believing that there is a correlation between truth and the given situation.

Lastly, the CEE countries are characterized by cynicism and pessimism. These restrained societies inflict the feeling that indulging yourself is wrong. Opposite to it, the Britons have an indulgent society, enjoying their lives and being optimism oriented.

Narrowing it down from the national level to the organizational level, the culture within the companies in the CEE is also quite different from the Western one. The unanimous understanding of **organizational culture** stays in the set of values, rules, beliefs, attitudes and conduits characterizing the way in which people interact in order to achieve the organizational goal (Chis, 2002 and Armstrong, 2006). The collectivism among the population of the CEE diminished the development of the management, practices of risk-taking, own initiative, creativity and transparency at the work place, not being addressed (Lapadus and Littrell 2005).They suggest that the key factor in adapting to the Western practices stays in the redesigning of the organizational culture in the manner that will promote **organizational change** which refers to the responses of the company towards the external and internal pressures (Vadi and Alas, 2006). As stated by them, the employees own more skills and aptitudes than the ones that the organization uses. However, if the organization wants to access that set of extra-talent, they should also offer more in exchange. Doing so, the organizations will have to analyze and understand the needs of the internal customer, in order to satisfy them. Vadi and Alas start from the fact that the needs of the internal customer have a very important role in shaping the employee's attitudes, influencing them to act in a certain way. Given the fact that the attitudes

are also influenced by the cultural context, the scholars emphasize on the people attitude of wishing to get involved in the process change as the determinant factor of organizational change.

Studies done by Alas et al. (2012) on 137 top management teams of Estonian companies proved that the Western IM strategies started to spread in the country and to positively affect the organizational development. Based on the literature review done by the researcher, they started from the hypothesis that the employees resist to the social change even more than the technological one. However, by interviewing the Estonian top-management they proved that that the first steps were taken by the management, in raising awareness towards the need for change and by setting up the vision of the companies. Moreover, the Estonian managers gave a higher importance to the empowerment and involvement of the employees.

The same challenge of implementing IM in the CEE was identified by Blace et al., (2014), in a study conducted with the same methodology of in depth interviewing but on a different segment; the one of Croatian marketing experts with years of experience within medium and large companies. They also agreed that the biggest obstacle in implementing the IM stays in the human factor which can be reluctant to the changes implementation. The research of IM implementation within the Croatian companies revealed that the familiarity with the concept is low, just as the implementation of it. However, some of the marketing experts with an experience of over 10 years within the field came from international companies. In their case, the results were explaining a better understanding and effort into the organizational change strategies.

The researchers believe that the promoters of organizational change and thus the designers of organizational culture are the managers, the leaders. They are the ones to inspire the need of change and also to create the set up for employees in accepting it (Vadi and Alas 2006). In the literature this kind of behavior stays under the name of **organizational leadership.** Most of the studies done in this field only took in consideration the Western societies while on the CEE there is only one study, concerning the Romanian companies. In a paper from 2010, Fein et al., (2010) conducted a research on 324 managers from the commercial and service organizations of Romania. Through their empirical research they could prove that the organizational leadership of the Romanian organizations has gone through a remodeling. A very important to mention factor of the outcome stays in the fact that the age of the managers could differentiate two groups of people with different organizational leadership preferences. Thus, the people who have no

communism-related memories and who are younger than 34 years would prefer a more transactional style (based on performance environment optimization) while the ones older than 35 preferred a transformational one (based on the self-perceptions of the individual). They argue that the choice of the younger managers comes from the economy decline of Romania after the 1989 events and that the transactional style of leadership promotes faster the change in the Romanian economic environment.

As discussed before, in order to accept the change, employees have to be educated in this way by their leaders. However, the studies showed that also leaders lack of understanding towards the IM implementation. The recommendation in this sense comes from a recent study, of 2016 conducted by Zoltan Buzady towards the talent management in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. He conducted a research on 1108 managers from the aforementioned countries by asking them to fill in online anonymous questionnaires. To be mentioned that the sample contained local managers and expats involved in the management of the organizations. The reason of collecting data from both types of managers stayed in the will of obtaining intelligence regarding the disagreement between the expats and the local managers. As the MNEs came to the Eastern Europe they also brought the Western HRM techniques which could not fit the local way of doing things. Thus, his empirical-research based recommendations are that the MNEs should invest in developing and training the local management, this way filling in the knowledge gap between the expatriates and the local managers. The practical arguments stays in the fact that the local manager inherits the local knowledge of the country but consequently he already has experiences related to the Western markets as usually such individual takes abroad education where he acquires experience based knowledge.

The manager in the organization works as the "pack leader". He is the person to implement the strategic plans of the organization and to ensure the good relationships with and between subordinates. Besides managing, he has to ensure the high level of satisfaction of the employees for a better common organizational outcome. This way, the problems in the CEE are extending from the managerial level to the employee level as there is also a gap considering the **job satisfaction** between the Western and Eastern countries. In a study involving econometrics, conducted on data from 20.000 employees from both Western and Eastern European countries, Borooah, (2009) proved that the satisfaction at work comes from the employers focus on the

internal aspects of the job such as responsibility, team-work, involvement, rather than the external factors represented mainly by incentives like holidays, promotion or remuneration. Putting it in a nutshell, for a better job satisfaction the MNEs should provide a non-competitive and cooperation based work place for the employees.

Topping up, Alas and Vadi (2006) tested and approved their hypothesis on the Estonian companies that in the emergent markets there is a strong positive correlation between the job satisfaction and the willingness to be involved of the employee. If the job satisfaction is higher, then the employee will be keen to participate in the organizational change.

An important factor which raises the employee implication and job satisfaction stays in his level of empowerment into the decision making. More than 80% of the employees from a Romanian capital based company within the steel industry showed themselves interested in taking part in the decision making of the organization. However, they believe that there should be equality between the amount of contribution and the team-work. In the same study, conducted by Sonea et al., (2010) on three Romanian companies (only one of them having foreign capital) discovered that, just like in all the other CEE countries, the IC have serious deficiencies. Moreover, in the purely Romanian companies, they could identify a lack of discontent among the personnel regarding the lack of sincerity of the management, fact that can seriously affect the good communication in the organization. Consequently, the foreign capital based company also invested in communication related training groups which are helping the whole organizations in achieving a better communication internally but also a better customer relationship.

The above mentioned issue related to the personnel's lack of trust towards the management can also affect the company as a brand, also case of hotel industry in Croatia (Galicic and Laskarin, 2014). The good relationship between the manager and employees will create a two-ways loyalty relationship, employees becoming potential brand ambassadors (Blace et al., 2014) Assessing the Romanian IT market during the last economic crisis, Racolta-Paina and Mone (2010) recommends that the MNEs should implement IM plans and that they also should focus on the company branding, creating long-term relationship with the employees, thus offering a feeling of security for the internal customer and enhancing the retention rate. Just like for the job satisfaction internal aspects discussed before, the people seeking a job will rather chose the company with a good reputation, friendly atmosphere and professional challenges instead of the

financial promise, as suggested by a research done based on secondary data about the employer brand perception of young unemployed Romanians.

In conclusion, the literature consists in a very small amount of studies done strictly on the IM implementation in the CEE countries. However, there are several researches done in the CEE, concerning different elements which are composing the IM. At the same time, the variety also spreads within the samples of study, such as a wide variety of industries housing public and private organizations with local or Western investment and targeting different level of the hierarchy of the organizations such as top-management, bottom-line employees or simply unemployed students.

In the beginning of this literature review two research questions have been raised;

- *How are the Eastern and Central-Eastern European countries adjusting the internal marketing adoption?*
- *How important is the culture of a country in the successful implementation of internal marketing?*

Based on the existing literature regarding the IM implementation in the CEE countries, different trends and facts have been revealed. The IM is non-existent in the public sector's organization and there are no efforts of creating awareness about it. However, the private companies, represented by the MNEs have a different approach, focused on the managerial level of the organizations. They have identified that the circulation of expatriate managers around the globe is not as efficient as hiring and developing the local talent. Once the management of the company with activity in the CEE countries is "g-localized", the implementation of the IM plan can develop from the managerial level to the bottom line of the organization. Consequently, the MNEs also invest in the communication in the organization, willing to create a friendly atmosphere but also to put the management in synergy with the employees.

Regarding the culture of the country the MNEs learned fast that the national culture of the societies with a communist past have opposite cultural traits towards the Western societies. The reason of choosing to acquire and to train the local talent stays in local manager's knowledge of the specific CEE markets but also in their adaptability to change, learned from their previous

experiences abroad. The adaptability to change is something that lacks from the mentality of the CEE societies and the MNEs will have to cope with it.

Previously done researches

Figure 11. Table of previously conducted researches

Country	Employee Position	Author and year of publication	Methodology	Finding
Estonia	Top management	Alas et al., (2012)	Interview	Need for adaptability to change
Croatia	Marketing Experts	Blace et al., (2014)	Interview	Need for adaptability to change
Romania	Management	Fein et al., (2010)	Questionnaire	Shift in organizational leadership style
RO-BG-CZ-HU-PL-SK	Management(locals and expats)	Buzady (2016)	Questionnaire	Need for focus on local management
Estonia	Employees	Alas and Vadi (2006)	Survey	Need for employee empowerment
Romania	Employees – companies with local and foreign investment	Sonea et al., (2010)	Survey	Need for empowerment Poor communication
Croatia	Employees	Galicic and Laskarin (2014)	Questionnaire	Poor communication
Romania	Unemployed IT students	Racolta-Paina and Mone (2010)	Questionnaire	Branding through satisfaction

Source: compiled based on the existing literature

The table above describes the empirical studies done in the CEE regarding the implementation of IM in the organizations of both foreign and local capital from multiple industries. The methodologies differ from a study to the other, just as the area of focus (local and foreign

employees from different positions), the number and the type of subject analyzed or even the area of interest within the IM concept.

2.2.10 Study argumentation

The studies conducted in the CEE, regarding the IM implementation are few in number. However, the literature revealed the extent of different IM related practices in the CEE countries. Summing up the researches done in the last decade it could be shown that the focus of the researchers has been on the senior management for its power of coordination and high involvement in the organizations or on the bottom-line employees due to their ability of having a customer-relationship. This situation leaves a gap in the studies done towards the intermediate management of the firm, the team leaders who are marking the synergy between the top management and the lower tier employees. Hence, this research paper will only target the mid-level employees, the ones who are getting involved in the decision-making but also who are getting direction from the senior level management.

The studies done on the Romanian market revealed unemployed youth's wishes but also the working population's preferences regarding their understanding of job satisfaction or their trust into the brand of foreign MNEs with activity in Romania. The results showed that the younger employees are open to change in the organization's internal activities, thus the subjects of the study will be employees under the age of 30, who did not take part to the communist past of Romania.

Moreover, the researches conducted in Croatia (Galicic and Laskarin, 2014) and Romania (Sonea et al., 2010) demonstrated that there are miscommunications between the higher and the lower employee levels, without finding out the reason of the communication inconsistency.

Two different studies from Estonia (2006 and 2010) but also from Romania (2010), described the employees desire of getting involved in the decision making. This need showed up as the employees' inability to promote their ideas, their voices being ignored by the managers. However, there are no studies related to the intermediate level of employees regarding their empowerment in the organization.

Given the odds described above, this research wants to collect data regarding the IM implementation from the young leaders from the MNEs with activity in Romania. The three

main topics of interest for the research will be given by the employee's level of satisfaction at the workplace, the internal communication in his organization and his extent of empowerment and involvement in the decisions. The goal of this research is to test the propositions resulted from the literature review of IM in CEE and to obtain important data which will then be analyzed and interpreted, willing to fill in the gap of literature regarding the extent of IM implementation in the foreign MNCs with activity in Romania.

Given the findings, this research wants to discover if the propositions resulted are valid in relation to the IM implementation in the Romanian branches of the western MNEs:

P1: The satisfaction of the young Romanian employees comes from the internal aspects of their jobs such as: team-work, friendly atmosphere, and professional challenges, instead of remuneration.

P2: In the Romanian branches of the multinational corporations there are internal communication deficiencies.

P3: The multinational corporations invest in the internal communication development and employee skills development.

P4: The Romanian employees are not open to organizational changes.

P5: As resulted from the literature, the employees want to get a higher involvement into the decision making.

P6: It is expected that the multinational corporations won't use expat managers in developing the internal marketing campaigns in Romania.

The propositions above are covering the three main themes of concern for this research; the employee satisfaction, the internal communications and the employee empowerment, area which were not studied before in Romania and especially at the level of the leaders in the organizations. Based on the above mentioned propositions a new IM framework has been designed, with the scope of being applied on the further research.

Figure 12. IM framework applied on the empirical research in Romania
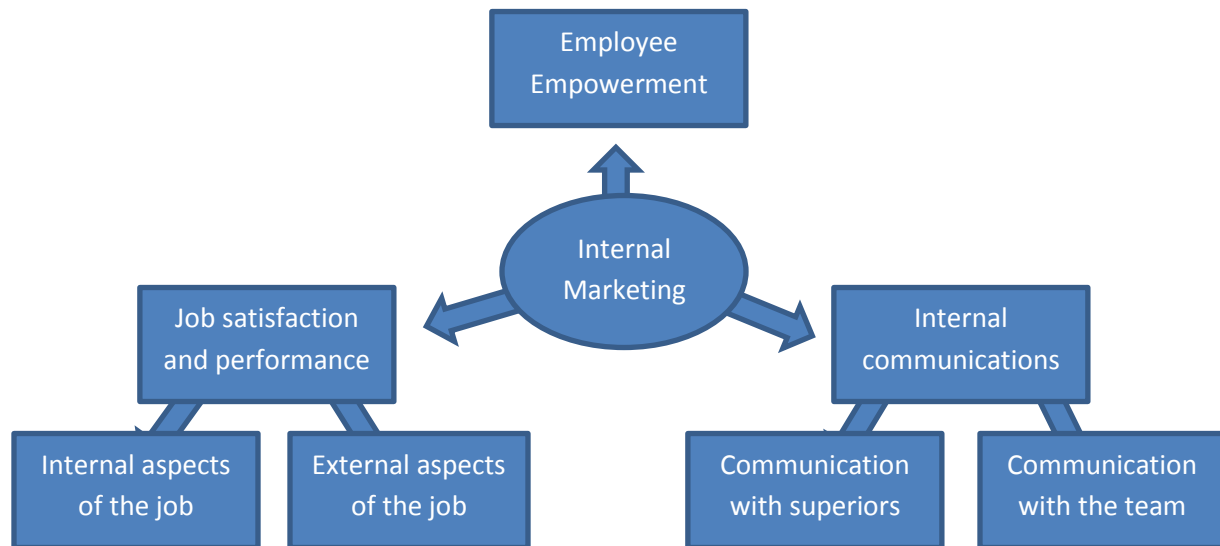
Source: Own creation

The model above will be the final foundation for the questions in the interview. It will help in collecting the data regarding the three areas of interest for this research; the job satisfaction and performance at the workplace, the internal communications and the employee empowerment. Moreover, as the literature review revealed differences between the general idea of IM and the IM application in the CEE, the interview will also contain questions regarding the internal and external aspects of the jobs and will serve as a map for identifying communication problems for the leaders in the organizations.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Theory of science

Before starting this chapter, it is important to mention that there is a duality in the source of knowledge obtained and used in this research. Firstly, the literature based knowledge has been displayed in the second chapter of the project, the one of literature review and it described the general understanding of Internal Marketing and following up, its development in the CEE countries, everything based on previous studies and writings done by scholars.

Secondly, this research incorporates an empirical part meant to generate the new knowledge about the IM implementation in MNEs with activity in Romania. The chapter to assess this issue is represented by the one of the analysis. The reason of these sequential arrangement of knowledge stays in the need of firstly understanding the concept underlying the internal marketing phenomenon and then analyzing its implementation in Romania.

The outcome of this process stays in the enrichment of related literature in a geographical and organizational area that has never been explored, but also in the identification of possible obstacles which are prohibiting the IM development.

Given the above argumentation, this methodological chapter will display the way the research has been conducted, whose scope was to find valid answers for the previously formulated research question, as suggested by Kuada (2010).

However, behind every research paper, there is a chapter discussing the philosophical stance of the researcher. This way, this chapter will reveal the position of the author in the field of study and will allow the right techniques usage in analyzing the obtained data.

Following the Saunders et al., (2009) guide of research methods, it is mandatory to analyze the ontology, epistemology, and axiology related to this research.

Consequently, study approaches have to be established; study approaches represent the research strategies used for the undergoing project. As stated in their book (Saunders et al., 2009), there are two main types of approaches; the deductive and the inductive researches. The deductive one is specific to the scientific research, where everything is law based and phenomena can be predicted, testing propositions generated from theory. The inductive research approach is a

theory generating approach, based on data collection. The results generated can be arranged by themes or patterns and then they can form theories which can be tested in similar contexts. However, Saunders et al., (2009) believe that the two can be combined in the absence of limitations. No matter the choice of research approach, they will have an influence towards the research design used, the methods and the results of the research.

3.1.1 Research paradigm

The paradigm is the way of studying social phenomena, generating a common understanding which can be further researched. The questions used into reaching this outcome, the frameworks and techniques used in the research, all are composing the idea of paradigm (Saunders et al., 2009; Kuada, 2010). Consequently, the paradigms consist in four sets of assumptions; ontological, epistemological, methodological and assumptions regarding the human nature (Kuada, 2010) or ontology, epistemology, axiology and to a lower extent, the data collection techniques (Saunders et al., 2009).

Ontology – regards the researcher's perception towards reality, about what is considered to be real and also the way the world works. There are two perspectives regarding the ontology; objectivism and subjectivism (Saunders et al., 2009) or the objectivist one (realism) and the subjectivist one (nominalism) (Kuada, 2010). The objectivism consists in the existence of reality, in an external plan from the individual. The lack of involvement of the individual means that there is a common truth universally accepted. At the other hand, the subjectivism suggests that the reality can be built through the participation of the individual and that the truth can be different from an individual to the other.

Given the research question that underlies the whole project, the purpose of the study is to identify the extent of IM implementation in Romania, compared to the Western countries, and to establish if there are any challenges in the process of implementation. Doing so, a perspective of the analyzed actors will be drawn. That means that the reality will be seen through their perception towards the social world. This way, the phenomenon will be studied empirically from three perceptions which are related to three different environments, thus realities, translating into a subjectivism-based ontology.

Consequently, the research has an objectivism-related nature due to the theoretical development around the concept of IM, done by analyzing the past literature regarding the topic. Although, for the literature enrichment in the research's area of focus, it is required to gain the perceptions of individuals involved in the phenomenon and to understand their stance.

Epistemology – represents the nature of knowledge and the ways of obtaining these insights. It explains what the researcher perceives as being truth (Kuada, 2010). Moreover, it analyzes the possibility for an external observer to know the truth or whether the world can only be understood if the observer takes the place of the individual who is subject for the study. Saunders et al., (2009) identified three epistemological delimitations; positivism, realism and interpretivism. Positivism and realism relate to scientific enquiry, supporting the idea of reality as an external environment to the human. The first one regards an observable societal reality while the realism describes the existence of reality separated from the human mind. In the end, the interpretivism requires the empathetic stance of the researcher in order to understand the phenomenon studied, laying into subjectivism.

This study starts with the literature review; the researcher being in the position of an outsider, observing the social world and also studying the causal relationships developed within the phenomenon (Kuada, 2010). However, the research had to also occupy a point of reference within the studied phenomenon (the empirical research), thus combining an objectivist perspective with the subjective one, or the positivism with the interpretivism. Kuada, (2010) suggests that such mixes can lead to a wider image of the studied phenomenon

Axiology – refers to the researcher's perception towards value, which might consist in the aesthetics and the ethics of the research process (Saunders et al., 2009). This research will follow Heron's (1996) suggestion, the one of expressing the researcher's values in relation to the topic discussed. Thus, as a researcher, I am looking forward to enlarge the literature related to the topic by generating knowledge from the mixture of the two opposite stances; the one of the objective researcher, in the way of understanding the theoretical concepts depicted from literature and the subjective one, in the way of obtaining insights from the subjects of this research.

Given the above described ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions taken, a positioning of this thesis could have been done. Turning back to the research philosophies, more specifically to the outer layer of the onion model designed by Saunders et al., (2009), four positioning stances can be described;

1. Pragmatism – focusing on the idea that the research question is the main determinant of the ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions.
2. Positivism – the stance suitable to a natural sciences researcher who is an external observer.
3. Realism – suggesting that there is an independently working reality to the mind of the individual
4. Interpretivism – the philosophy that the researcher has to gain access to the social world in order to study the phenomena.

The suitable positioning of this dissertation is the one of interpretivism as through the empirical research, the researcher targets to obtaining understanding of the employees' perception of their organizational life as suggested by Saunders et al., and Burrell and Morgan (2006, 1982). A good argument for this positioning stays in the fact the IM is a very complex phenomenon which is built by the human to human interaction and it can only be understood through the eyes and perception of involved actors.

3.1.2 Research approach

Discussed in the *"theory of science"* subchapter, the research approaches can be of two types; inductive and deductive. However, this subchapter will argue and describe the approach suitable to this research paper.

This research starts by reviewing the literature of IM and its constituents as given in the general understanding, continuing with a secondary literature review of IM in the CEE. Thus, the whole study is a theory driven one. Supporting the idea, the literature review discusses the IM and the influence of the communist culture towards its implementation. Moreover, a set of propositions based on the literature - generated knowledge, have been created, which will be further applied on the analysis chapter. The role of this approach is to test if the propositions can be confirmed

or infirmed for the Romanian market. Therefore, the approach used is represented by the deductive one. However, in the second part of this dissertation, the approach will transform into an inductive one, as the study will want to assess the perception of three subjects towards the implementation of IM in their companies. Three interviews will be conducted with the scope of understanding the phenomenon in a section that has not been studied before and they might generate new theory. Moreover, Saunders et al., (2009) suggest that the usage of both inductive and deductive approach will only lead to a larger understanding of the IM implementation.

3.1.3 Research design

This subchapter will map the whole process of answering the research question (Saunders et al, 2009), describing the objectives resulted from the research questions, the data sources and the limitations shown during the research.

Starting with the research purpose, Saunders et al., (2009) suggest three types of research reasoning: descriptive, explorative and explanatory.

This research is an exploratory one as its scope is to understand the extent of IM implementation in Romania, a country with a strong cultural influence, and a declared lack of adaptability to the Western norms. The exploration within the issue presented in this thesis starts with the literature review towards the general idea behind the concept of IM and the compounding elements. Then, a secondary literature review concerning the concept has been conducted upon the countries with a similar mind-set from the Eastern Europe. To be mentioned that, in this second section of the literature review the component of culture has been introduced and used to disseminate the two understandings of IM implementation. Based on the theory-based framework resulted from the whole literature review, the exploration can go further by studying the IM implementation in three MNEs with activity in Romania. By synchronizing the objective knowledge obtained from the literature review with the subjective one obtained from the analysis, this thesis will come up with findings and recommendations for the Romanian managers.

Following up the explorative research design, the research strategy consists in the method meant to solve the research question (Kuada, 2010). It involves the objectives raised by the research question, and the resources such as the knowledge or the time spend for the study.

As the main target of this study is to enrich the literature by identifying new theory regarding the topic, the qualitative research has been chosen (Kuada, 2010). However, the findings of this research will also have an empirical aspect.

3.1.4 Research methods and techniques

The discussion of this section regards the techniques used in the research for obtaining and analyzing data.

The semi-structured interviews

Observations will be depicted from a semi-structured interview concerning the three main areas of IM practices, discussed before; the job satisfaction of the employee, the employee empowerment and the internal communications. This way, by adopting the questions within the interview to the research question the researcher can get insights regarding the studied phenomenon and can understand and predict the future development of it (Rowley, 2012). For the sake of this project the interview quantification as number of samples and as time spent is the theoretical one. Rowley (2012) suggests that this kind of research requires a lower number of interviews and a volatile structure of the guideline. The argument stays in the cultural component of the research which can only be depicted by going in the depth of the problem. Before sampling, a basic profile of interviewees has been built. The rationale stays in the academic aspect; the lack of literature regarding this group of people and the research purpose related aspects such as the age (it has been demonstrated in the literature review that the young Romanians' lives have been impacted by communism to a very low extent, thus their mind-set might be different from the studies conducted before) and their hierarchical position in the company as this study seeks to explore new areas. All the previously done studies regarding the internal communications in the CEE, for example, have been targeting the senior management or the bottom line employees. The results of both types of studies proved that the internal communications are developing with difficulties. Thus, a research towards the IC and IM implementation regarding the mid-level managers or team-leaders is mandatory in identifying and understanding the issues.

Following up the data collection, Rowley (2012) proposes that the data should be analyzed in three steps and written in the fourth one. The sequence is: organizing the data set, getting

acquainted with the data, classifying, coding and interpreting the data and lastly, putting in on paper.

1. Organizing the data – refers to creating a transcript for every recorded interview and then organizing it by attributing codes for keeping track of everything.
2. Getting acquainted with the data – in this part the researcher tries to identify the key themes among the answers got from the interviewees.
3. Classifying, coding and interpreting the data – this step will represent the theme/patterns establishment and attributing them codes. This will allow the researcher in putting together and comparing the generated knowledge obtained from the interviews which will consequently allow the researcher to interpret the information.
4. Lastly, the writing of the report will be done by transforming the numerical data into text, resulting in a narration, supported by diagrams and tables.

Chapter 4. Analysis

This chapter emerges by explaining the methods used in analyzing the data and the input to output process of the research.

4.1 Case Study

This research wishes to study the IM practices developed by three organizations with activity in Romania. The three cases will work as the screening tool in establishing the validity of the propositions previously formulated. Robson (2002) postulated the case study as a research strategy involving empirical investigation regarding real and actual phenomena. Moreover, the case study will enable the researcher in obtaining a wider understanding of the context of the study, corroborated to the process within the phenomenon studied, as suggested by Morris and Wood (1991). Consequently, Saunders et al., (2009) link the case study strategy to the explorative studies, coming up with answers for questions regarding the "how" and the "why" of the studied phenomenon.

Complementary to the case study strategy, Saunders et al. (2009) suggests the approach of **triangulation** which refers to the usage of multiple sources of data. O'Donoghue and Punch (2003) define the triangulation as *"a method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search regularities in the research data"*, which will also be the case of this study. The data sources used in this research express a wide variety containing academic papers regarding empirical studies within the IM implementation in the developed and the developed but also emerging markets. Together with these, for a nowadays perspective, newspaper articles and company testimonials have been used in order to adapt the concept to the current market situation. Lastly, own empirical evidence has been collected from three companies from Romania. Thus, the data source triangulation brings together primary data given by the empirical study and secondary data based on the findings of other authors, in order to create a whole picture of the concept discussed.

However, the sources for collecting primary data will also be more than one. Related to the case study strategy, Yin (2003) distinguishes two main dimensions; *"the single case VS the multiple case"* and *"the holistic case VS the embedded case"*. The case study strategy attributed to this research is the one of multiple and holistic case study. It fits into this delimitation as the study

concerns the IM implementation in three organizations. The argument stays in the need of identifying patterns or similar approaches of the organizations, regarding the phenomenon studied. On the other hand, this study concerns sees every organization as a whole, making it a holistic multiple case study.

Referring to the time horizons, Saunders et al., (2009) delimitate the case studies as **cross-sectional**, referring to a *snapshot*, a certain moment in time and the **longitudinal** case study, represented by a longer period of time of the phenomenon development.

The time horizon specific to this case study is the one of a particular time, thus the study will be represented by a cross-sectional holistic and multiple case study.

4.2 Pattern matching

The analysis method used in this research stays in the pattern matching as it is based on predictions of patterns revealed by the literature review. Thus, the literature review of IM implementation (independent variable) in CEE helped in building up of a conceptual framework to be tested in the research, in three MNEs from Romania (Saunders et al., 2009). Given their explanation, if the pattern resulted from data matches the pattern resulted from the previously designed conceptual framework, then an explanation has been found. Hence, if the propositions (dependent variables) resulted from the literature, are confirmed, then it means that the results are valid. Contrary, if a proposition is infirmed by the research, then alternative explanations will have to be found, as suggested by Yin (2003).

4.3 The credibility of the research findings

The trustworthiness of the data is the most important aspect of a study when it comes to taking in consideration the findings of a research (Eldridge, 2014). As this research uses multiple sources of information; primary and secondary, an analysis of the data validity and reliability have to be done, in order to ensure a trustworthy outcome of the study (Saunders et al., 2009).

Reliability of data regards the trustworthiness of the sources of information used in the research, but it also refers to the researcher's accuracy in collecting the data. That means that a reliable study will assume the same outcome in the case of a similar future research (Saunders et al.,

2009). Willing to ensure a reliable study, a very wide data source approach has been used. Firstly, the concepts analyzed have been drawn by using secondary data obtained from reviewing academic scholar works such as articles, journals and textbooks written by well-known scholars in the field, and firm testimonials or newspaper articles. Even though the research papers were speaking about the same topic, from different angles and perspectives, this technique has been used in order to compare the findings and to establish the most accurate definitions.

Secondly, primary data has been collected from three different companies located in Bucharest, from employees with leading positions who are identifying with their companies by understanding and sharing the values of their company. In order to make sure that the sample of subjects fits with the requirements of data reliability, the interview questions are also focusing on the aspect of organization's values. Moreover, as the interviewees understood that their participation in the study is anonymous, the risk of being subjects of participant error, described by Robson (2002) has been lowered, and the interviewees felt free of sharing their organization related problems.

The **data validity**, according to Saunders et al., (2009), shows if the means of measuring are accurate and how truthful the results of the research are. A valid research means that the obtained results can be applied on a different future study. In order to establish a higher accuracy of the methods used in the research, a full chapter regarding the methodology and the proper use of paradigms has been displayed in this research, explaining the reasons behind the choices made during the study.

Generalizability

Given the above definition, the validity of the results will translate into a credible output of the research which in consequence will lead to Stenbacka's (2001) idea of generalizability. That refers to the extent to which the findings of this research could be applicable to some other research contexts, more specific, other organizations from Romania where IM implementation emerged. According to Saunders et al., (2009), the current research cannot generate theory applicable to all the population, only to the ones of MNEs with activity in Romania, thus it

cannot be generalized for other contexts. It was previously established that concepts such as local culture can affect the development of a phenomenon from a context to the other.

4.4 Sample selection

The sample selection for this research has been done based on the need of filling in, the existent knowledge gap in the literature but also based on the previously formulated propositions. In the second part of the literature review, the one concerning the implementation of IM in CEE, the secondary data brought to surface issues that the MNEs are facing in the countries with a communist past, at the internal level of the organization.

First of all, the literature proved that there have been studies previously conducted in the CEE at the level of senior management and the bottom line level of employees. Despite the researches done, the literature speaks about internal communication problems between the two levels of employees. In order to obtain more information and to find possible solutions, the research attempts to interview mid-level managers or team-leaders in the MNEs, as they are right in the middle of the problem and they have an equal amount of communication in both ways. Moreover, the mid-level manager position comes with higher responsibilities and offers an extent of implication/empowerment in the decision-making, issue that has been strongly evidenced in the literature as a lack of the Romanian employees.

Secondly, the research will only regard the young team-leaders, the ones born after the fall of communism. The reasoning behind this decision stays is the findings suggesting that the people who have experienced a life in the communism time have a completely different mind-set, being somehow stuck in time and adapted to the practices of that period. However, the youth are open-minded in terms of organizational change, component of IM, thus they might be the pioneers of the correct IM implementation in the MNEs in Romania.

Saunders et al., (2009) describe in their book the main limitation and obstacle that this research had to go through; the **physical access** to the company, which was difficult to attain because most of the Romanian employees cannot see any value that they might obtain by offering information regarding their organizational practices, even though it was communicated to them that the findings might help the future young employees willing to work in corporations, or even

the organizations they are working for. Moreover, most of them are afraid of sharing information related to their company without anonymity. However, three participants to the study, from three different organizations but with a similar position on the organizational chart wished to offer information under anonymity. Since the segmentation of respondents has been so narrowed, the industry of the companies was not an important matter for the study. Thus, the companies are coming from different industries.

Chapter 5. Findings

5.1 Company presentation

In order to maintain the anonymity of the interviewees their names and the MNEs names will not be revealed. However, this section will provide a full description of the companies that have been analyzed, coding their names as company A, company B, and company C. Before commencing the description of the companies, it is mandatory to mention the aspects of high importance in answering the research questions.

First of all, as previously discussed, one of the questions will seek if the interviewee identifies himself with the company and knows the values of his employer. Secondly, the three areas of job satisfaction, internal communications and employee empowerment, components of this research's conceptual framework will be analyzed. Moreover, at a lower extent when it comes to the number of questions, the research will try to see if the MNEs have difficulties in relocating expats in the senior management level in Romania. In the end, the interview consists in two questions regarding the overall experience of the employee in the MNE and his perception towards the Western way of doing things in Romania.

Company A. is a software provider MNE, business to business oriented. At the moment, company A is the European subsidiary of a Brazilian parent corporation, specialized in IT outsourcing, given their description on the website. They incorporate more than 300 employees at the headquarters from Bucharest and they provide support in more than 25 languages and have over 600 accomplished projects. On its website, the company's values are given by integrity, energy, positive attitude and respect for the professionals. They are also stating that the diversity of the staff is the strength of the organization.

The employee: The person to be interviewed was a 25 years old employee who just became the leader of his team of Support Engineers. He understands which are the values of his company and tries to apply them at the workplace: *"working as a support provider for customers… I learned here that the team-work is based on mutual support."*

The job satisfaction: In every of his answers for the job satisfaction questions, the interviewee has expressed the importance of financial remuneration as motivation technique by repeating it at every given chance; *"Money are the main call for me in this job"*. However, he needs fulfilled

internal aspects of the job such as: appraisal, the team-work, the flexibility at work and the job security, things that he is provided with by the employer; *"I am also seeking to be praised for what I am doing ... the flexibility of my workplace ... my contract is on undetermined period."*

The internal communication: As he is working in a team, the interviewee can easily talk directly to the others, enjoying a lack of difficulties in talking to his colleagues and subordinates. However, the interview has been conducted short time after he became the team leader and stated that his achievement might bring him fluctuations in the relationship with the colleagues that were sharing the same hierarchical level with him. When it comes to the communication with the higher level management, he states that there are no problems and that he enjoys transparency. Asked about the feedback he is getting, the respondent says that is a common practice in the organization and that it is very important for him to make sure that he's work is done properly: *"I have the tendency to ask for the negative feedback so I can understand where I should focus for a better performance"*. However, the subject identifies problems in communicating to the other departments, targeting to the lack of a manager able to enhance this process. Sometimes the information needs to go from a department to the other but at his workplace there is the need of a person to coordinate the departments, but this link seems to lack.

The empowerment: The employee believes that he feels empowered in taking decisions as the higher management listens to his opinions and they always try to find the best solution for both parties. However, he stated that sometimes he can be neglected by his colleagues: *"you could be seen as a dreamer by the other colleagues"*. Moreover, the company ensured training for the studied subject where he could be team-mate with same level of empowerment as the subordinates but also his superiors. He stated that the ideas obtained from this exercise provided by the company, were implemented in the real organization: *"That's the moment when all of us were even in power and could come up with suggestions that were further taken and developed"*. To add up that the suggestions that the subject had during his work time in the company were related to his own satisfaction but to the common organizational goal as well.

The foreign influence: Given the interviewees answer, the company A has an expat Senior Director, from Czech Republic (former communist country) and his perception is that the approach of the foreigner manager is a better one compared to the Romanian one: *"you are respected, the approach is friendlier and at the end of the month the paycheck is better than any*

other Romanian led company". In the end of the interview he wishes that the Romanian population *"should have stronger voice as the foreign investors are looking for people open to affirm themselves".*

Company B.

Company B is represented by one of the biggest retailers in Romania, incorporating in their portfolio 306 stores, of which 32 are hypermarkets. According to their web-site section related to the description of the company, this MNE was initially founded in France more than 50 years ago and nowadays it is the second world-wide retailer and the first one in Europe. Reading the strategy description on the website it can be deducted that they focus a lot on the external customers, willing to offer all the possible conditions for a higher customer satisfaction.

The employee: The interviewee in this case is a 26 years old manager of the cash registers. Although there is no clear delimitation of the values of the company B in its brochure, this leader knows that the team-work is primordial to the success of his team; *"at my work it is very important to work as a cell in an organism… we are all benefiting".*

The job satisfaction: This leader believes that the most important motivation offered by his company stays in the salary. However, the satisfaction comes from the friendly atmosphere, and the fact that he is appreciated for his work by the superiors and the subordinates. Moreover, the company does efforts in order to offer a higher job satisfaction to its employees by awarding the performers: *"for a good performance we can be elected as the employee of the month or year, awards such as diplomas or presents".*

The internal communication: *"We are collaborating hierarchically. It is very rare when I have talked to the top management".* Given his statement, it is clear that the information in this organization travels from a level to the other one, up and down. He mentions the fact that the Director has always been involved in the activity of the organization but that he always communicates to the lower level manager who then contacts the cash register leader. Then the cash register leader can share the obtained information to his subordinates. To mention that the leader has a very good communication with his colleagues willing to call them team-mates

instead of subordinates. This might be caused by the training and the boot camps he attended to, events paid by the organization, where the employees got to know to each other and formed friendships. Regarding the feedback distribution, it is equal, and comes from both the team-mates and the superiors.

The empowerment: The interviewee declares himself upset of the way his suggestions are neglected, being told that changes are not allowed and that they should follow the rules which are coming from France: *"the superiors are very strict ... they do not accept any kind of changes".* In the appendix it can be found an example given by the interviewee, related to this issue. Moreover, his voice has no power in the organization, affirming that there are issues that might be fixed by him and his team and that all he needs is the approval of the superior. When it comes to the scope of his opinions he states that they are both personal needs related and organizational related.

The foreign influence: In his company, at his branch, none of the top managers are foreigners; only the General Director of the company, in Romania is a French citizen but he works in a separate headquarter. However, somehow he complains about this fact, feeling that the activities are done *"the Romanian way",* as a euphemism. He actually compares the job as having a lot in common to any other job at a Romanian company. Furthermore, he could identify that *the "foreign way of doing things"* works as an obstacle for a better job performance, suggesting the need for a better adoption of the French activities to the Romanian market.

Company C. The last company analyzed is a Swedish MNE, founded more than 50 years ago and present in Romania for 20 years. Their activity is represented by the sales of cosmetics and wellness products. Complementary, they are permanently investing in research and development of new products and more important in developing their employees. Given the information from their website, it can be found out that contrary to company B, this one puts an enormous emphasize on the internal customer, describing them as *"passionate people".* Contrasting the other two cases, company C has a much elaborated description of their values, mainly based on solidarity, spirit and passion.

The employee: The employee in this case is a Sales Director of 28 years old. When asked about the values of the company she cited them, mentioning that she is developing her activity based on these core principles.

The job satisfaction: The subject of this interview declares herself extremely happy with the job, arguing that she can develop friendships and that *"can even change people's life into better",* contributing to her overall satisfaction. Moreover, she suggests that the company does enormous efforts in this way by offering a substantial salary, a friendly atmosphere: "*General Director of my company stays at my table and speaks to me like just like we are family",* international conferences and events, and a high profile team-work.

The internal communication: "*I am a performer in Bucharest and I believe there should be a better communication between us as I am her main asset".* She believes that her superior neglects the communication with her, this way lowering the chances of obtaining higher performance. The argument for her statement stays in the slow pace of answering to the calls and slow feedback delivery. When it comes to the subordinates, she mentions that during her time in the company she built a team and that she is happy with it. Her team always comes with feedback but the superiors are neglecting this aspect which makes her feel lonely in the goal of acquiring higher positions in the organizational chart. She does trust the superiors but she does feel the lack of proper communication.

The empowerment: When it comes to the suggestions, the superiors are listening but they only implement what is valid. Moreover, the company calls at meetings the Sales Directors and the managers in order to ask for opinions. Also; "*surveys from Brussels which are designed for the Central Europe Sales Directors"* are sent for collecting suggestions. When it comes to the nature of suggestions, she affirms that they only concern the team she is coordinating.

The foreign influence: Even though is a Swedish company, in a Romanian market; "*The Managing Director of our Romanian branch is from Montenegro. She doesn't speak Romanian but she understands everything and makes efforts in communicating to us in our language".* This might be a practice of sending expat managers but with a deep local knowledge as Montenegro has a similar past to Romania. To be mentioned that before the Montenegrin Managing Director the position was occupied by a Bulgarian one. In the end of the interview the Director of Sales

makes important statements in a large contrast to the nowadays situation from Romania: "*The main thing is that my company values the people and not the materials.*", "*I believe that now I am prepared for my work place but also for life*", "*Think about the fact that sometimes I have to take the plane to work and that every year I have at least 4 trips abroad*". All of the above citations express the enormous degree of satisfaction of the employee in the Swedish organizations.

5.2 Cross-case Analysis

As previously described, the pattern matching will seek the reflection between the predicted IM implementation in Romania and the results patterns regarding the phenomenon, resulted from the research in the three organizations. This section will discuss the overall findings of the interviews, seeing the three organizations as a whole unit of IM implementation in Romania, displayed accordingly to the themes used in the interview.

The employee: The three employees interviewed are team-leaders in their organizations, born after 1989. Practically, they have never experienced the life under the communist rule. When it comes to the values of their organizations, all of them knew that the work in a MNE is centered on team-work complemented by solidarity and passion for their job. However, as mentioned before, their job positions, the young age and the knowledge about the values of their company were prerequisites for this study.

The job satisfaction: In the three studied cases, the employees presented satisfied with their work but also satisfied with the treatment of their employer. Their satisfaction comes mostly from the friendly atmosphere at the workplace and from the feeling of fitting in and being useful for the organization, thus internal aspects of their job. They all believe that their employers are making tremendous efforts in offering them satisfaction. Moreover, all the leaders are feeling very motivated by the incentives offered but the dominant motivator stays in the higher remuneration. However, the literature proved that the job satisfaction incorporates other supportive theories such as employee empowerment, employee emotion and charismatic leadership. The empowerment is quite absent in some cases while all the subjects lack of charismatic leader. Anyhow, the extent of these lacks is little in ratio to the satisfaction, the

subjects declaring themselves happy at the workplace and productive, mentioning that the feedback they get is always positive. With a lower recurrence among the answers, for some of the subjects the satisfaction also comes from the security at the workplace, knowing that their future is stable while others understand that the MNEs are getting involved in the personal development of their employees. They do so by investing in boot camps, trainings and abroad conferences. If the employee from Company C travels abroad where she learns new techniques of sales, the employee from company A is instructed by foreign specialists.

The internal communication: The internal communication in this research has two main levels. As the team-leaders are found in the middle of the organization, they have to maintain a communication flow with their superiors and consequently to their subordinates. In the case of the subordinates, in the three cases the communication is flawless, the three cases using mainly direct communication or different technological media. At the other hand, the communication with the higher tier of employees has deficiencies in the three cases; in company A the subject believes that his leader doesn't help him in the communication with the other departments. In company B, the communication is very slow and the senior manager rarely communicates to the mid-level employees. Lastly, in the company C the interviewee complains about a rupture between her and the Area Sales Manager who is very slow in offering feedback and guidance, appearing to have a lack of interest in the organizational goal. The lack of commitment of the senior level management discourages the Sales Director interviewed in attaining higher performance levels.

The empowerment: The direct allowance to decision-making among the organizations from Romania is negative. According to the three case studies, the decision-making is inexistent but also that the employees do not necessarily want to take decision-making without a proper feedback to their suggestion. Their ideas need to be approved by both the bottom line and senior level employees. In company A, the bottom-line employees are the obstacles as they perceive a good suggestion as a competition threat. In company B, the French norms of the firm are too strong and they have to be followed strictly while company C does the best job by doing efforts such as surveys and meetings for collecting suggestions. In conclusion, the subjects would like to participate in the advantage of the organization but they do not want to take the full responsibility. They need a higher entity to validate their suggestions. However, there are cases

where the MNE just wills to follow the norms making it function as a regular *"Romanian national company",* in the perception of the employee who is expecting a more relaxed and open to change behavior. The suggestions raised by the employees are usually team and organizational goal oriented, and not for the personal need. In conclusion, contrary to the literature findings related to Estonia and Croatia, the employees are the ones requesting the change in the organizations, thus it can be concluded that the young Romanian leaders are very open to change.

<u>The foreign influence:</u> In the studied cases the foreign influence can only be felt when at the top management there is a foreign individual, an expat manager who is involved in the activity of the company. Company A and C enjoy the existence of a foreign Senior Director, respectively a Managing Director who are having a much more friendly approach (compared to the national organizations from Romania). Moreover, the two senior are getting involved in the activity of the company and they are trying to break the barriers of culture and language between them and their employees. Consequently, the studied branch of the company B has a Romanian Director who is just following the rules and norms of the MNE with French origins. In this case the employee feels like there is a de-synchronization between the French background of the company and the local culture of Romania. Depicted from the interview with the company C, their Managing Director comes from Montenegro, a country with a similar past as Romania. It is important to mention as the interviewee seemed to be the happiest and the closest to the senior level of management, a possible cause being that the Managing Director understands the local culture as it is similar to the country of origin. The same thing happens with the company A. where the Senior Director is an expat from Czech Republic who attends to the mid-level and bottom line employee's events. The last point to discuss at the level of the foreign influence among the MNEs is that the interviewees declared delighted of working in an organization with a foreign leader as contrasting the national Romanian companies, the MNEs are investing in the personal development of its employee.

The propositions

Given the narrative above, a table of tested and rejected propositions could have been established. Given the propositions formulated before, based on the literature:

Figure 13. Table of propositions validation

P1: The satisfaction of the young Romanian employees comes from the internal aspects of their jobs such as: team-work, friendly atmosphere, and professional challenges, instead of remuneration.	✔
P2: In the Romanian branches of the MNEs there are IC deficiencies.	✔
P3: The MNEs invest in the IC development and employee skills development.	✔
P4: The Romanian employees are not open to organizational changes.	✘
P5: As resulted from the literature, the employees want to get a higher involvement into the decision making.	✔
P6: It is expected that the MNEs won't use expat managers in developing the IM programs in Romania.	✘

Source: own creation

Proposition 1 Has been confirmed as all the employees turned out to be happy with the workplace, mentioning the fulfillment of the literature related aspects of friendly atmosphere, team-work, support, placing the financial motivation on a lower tier.

Proposition 2 has also been confirmed. There are serious deficiencies in the internal communications but they are only at one level; the higher tier management to middle-

management communication. The research suggests that there are gaps of communication between the seniors and the team-leaders, given mostly by the lack of personnel or lack of commitment. Even though the seniors have a strong vision of the organization, the information doesn't reach the team leaders as the managers who are between these two levels are not doing a proper job. Taken the example of company C, where the Sales Director doesn't get feedback from the Romanian Area Managing Director and possibly this information doesn't even get to the supreme power in the company, the Managing Director of company C in Romania.

Proposition 3 shows that the practice of investing in internal communications and personal development is real but that the focus stays mainly on the personal development. Doing so, the companies invest in team-buildings or work-shops with specialists.

Proposition 4 contradicts the literature which said that the employees are not open to the organizational change, in all of the cases. The research proved that actually the employees are the ones to ask and to generate the change in the organization. A possible explanation can be the fact that the young population has a free will and an open mind-set in contrast to the elder managers who were subjects of the past studies, which represent the literature base of this dissertation.

Proposition 5 is confirmed, as the employees showed the desire of having the power of decision but to a lower extent. They do not want to take the responsibility of change, instead they want to propose ideas and then to be unanimous accepted by the other members of the team and management board. They perceive the decision-making as a risk-taking thus they only want to be involved by coming up with proposals.

Proposition 6 Despite the trend revealed by the literature, the MNEs are still sending expat managers to Romania. However, a coincidence or not, the last two expat managers of company C (Swedish company) in Romania are individuals originated from Montenegro and Bulgaria, countries very similar in local culture with Romania. Consequently, company B, with Brazilian origins sent a Czech Senior Director to Romania. This can be seen as an alternative to the long lasting and expensive recruitment of local managers, by circulating managers with expertise born in a communist country.

5.3 Discussion

This section will regard the answering to the central question of the whole dissertation; *how is the concept of internal marketing implemented in the international organizations running their business in Romania?*

The journey of answering the above question has been a long one. First of all the concept of internal marketing, related to the Western practices, had to be explained based on the literature written by the scholars. Collecting data from different angles, a detailed conceptual framework has been realized.

Knowing the ideal form of Internal Marketing, the second part of the literature review sought the practices of internal marketing in the CEE. The second part of the literature review answered to the research questions related to the way the CEE countries are adapting to the IM implementation and to the question related to the national culture of the communist countries as a factor influencing the IM implementation. Based on these findings, a framework of IM has been designed, and applied on an empirical research in Romania, willing to identify the issues related to the employee empowerment, internal communications and the job satisfaction of the employee. The rationale behind the selection of these 3 themes stays in the need of filling in the gap of marketing knowledge related to the topic but also because the literature revealed some problems within the aforementioned themes, in the Eastern countries which proved to be partially applicable to Romania.

Now, as information has been collected, based on the literature and on the empirical research, it can be described how the MNEs are implementing the IM in Romania. Moreover, the discussion will establish which are the issues in the implementation and will come up with recommendations in overcoming the problems.

All the MNEs studied are aware of IM and they are doing efforts in implementing it. However, they do not succeed completely. In Romania the job satisfaction of the employees is highly attained as they enjoy friendly environment at the workplace, solidarity from the colleagues, sense of fitting in and contributing at the common organizational goal, flexibility and incentives in a higher value than any other national company. Feeling satisfied, related to the theory of

equity of Boukis et al., (2015) the employees value even more their jobs and it encourages them to attain higher goal effectiveness.

Even though all the interviewees declared satisfied with the work place they could evidence, when asked, various issues which might affect their performance, hence the organizational performance. In the case of Romania, the internal communications are problematic between the senior management and the leaders. According to Grundey et al., (2009), through internal communication the manager exposes his vision to the lower tier employees. In Romania the mid-level leaders always get the information from the top-management but it rarely happens the other way around, the research identifying several examples. From here, the poor communication leads to ambiguity at the workplace, translating into departmental isolation (Rafiq and Ahmed, 2010). At the other level, the one of employee to employee communication the things are positive, communication being very well developed; a possible being the interest of the MNEs in developing interpersonal relations skills of their employees through the events where all the employees participate (Levin, 2011).

Another aspect studied in the MNEs is given by the employee empowerment, regarding the decision making in the organization and the voice he has in making suggestions. Even though the leaders studied are not empowered employees, being unable to take decisions, they still feel satisfied, contrary to Ali's (2002) statement. However, an explanation can be the fact that they do not want the responsibility of taking decisions. What they need is to come up with suggestions suitable for everyone and also to have their support in implementing them, showing the collectivist nature of the Romanian culture (Hofstede, 2017).

Another important finding is that the young leaders working in the 3 MNEs studied are contradicting the uncertainty avoidance of the Romanian population. Hofstede's matrix suggests that for the Romanians the routine and the precision are important. However, the young Romanians are proposing changes to their organizations. It can be a result of their high job satisfaction, as suggested by Alas and Vadi (2006), as the job satisfaction pulls with it the implication in the organizational change. Another reason for the need for shifting from the norms expressed by the subjects can be the young age of the respondents studied and their lack of education based on restrictions, specific to the people who have experienced the communist past.

Lastly, contrary to the studies and proposals that the MNEs should develop the local management as they inherit the local knowledge of the country (Buzady, 2016), the MNEs from Romania are led by expatriate managers but they all come from countries similar to Romania. From the premise that MNEs need to synchronize their activity to the local culture, a shift in the paradigm has happened. In order to innovate and to fill the gap of Western-Romanian dissociation, they brought people from same European area but with a slightly different "know how" of doing things; Czech Republic, Montenegro, Bulgaria.

5.4 Reflection

Hence, the IM is a present practice in Romania but it cannot ensure yet full performance and equal implementation. However, in the next section recommendations based on the theory will be given for the two main issues; the internal communications and the employee empowerment.

The internal communications problems identified in the three cases are given by the lack of employees in positions of management who should help in the effective communication of the organization. The three studied subjects listen to the superiors and then act accordingly. However, it doesn't happen the other way; the information generated by the middle level managers won't get to the seniors. The recommendation for the Romanian MNEs has the basis on several studies done by the scholars, all of them supporting the existence of an Internal Communication Manager, who should inspire the leaders and the bottom-line employees but also who should work as a vehicle for the information to the senior level management (Linke and Zerfass, 2011).

Consequently, in a study conducted in the US and Italian MNEs, Mazzei (2014) attributes to the Internal Communication Managers the name of facilitators. They have to be the *"enablers towards the line-managers and employees"*, and they must ensure the sense-making process. Their work will only lead to positive results; will lower the ambiguity at work and most important it will create quality relationships between the employees and management.

Given the changing times, the technological developments are bringing to the table new communication media and techniques which can be complementary to the existence of the Internal Communication Manager. Chang et al., (2012) have identified a new trend in the Western MNEs, the one of using social media platforms in communication and incorporating the

employees into an online community. In the case of social media communication, the perks are a variety of issue-solving benefits such as the possibility of reporting online the problem, the stronger engagement of the employees, the effective communication between the employees and even the employee's loyalty development. Consequently, scholars (Koh and Kim, 2004; Zhu, 2007) believe that the online community at the work place will help the employee in solving problems by simply seeking information in the online group of the organization, being thus based on knowledge sharing and enrichment. However, Morgan, (2004) discusses the IT paradox as a residual cultural background thing which might interfere with the adoption of such technologies. Although, it doesn't mean that the MNEs should directly follow the trend and only use the social media communication as the panacea for the communication issues. Lipiainen et al., (2012) studied the social media communication application on the Finish MNEs and they could prove that despite the tremendous potential of the social media platforms, the face-to-face communication should not be neglected.

Regarding **the empowerment** of the employee, Jones et al., (1995) suggest that the top managers *"should shift away from controlling to enabling"* in the way of allowing the employees to contribute more. A method of empowering stays in the sequential plan of Nicholls (1995), divided in three steps;

1. Running an assessment of the employee's capabilities, and helping him in reaching his full work potential;

2. Allowing and training the employees in working above their capabilities;

3. Sharing the vision and the values of the organizations, ensuring this way the employees commitment.

This recommendation goes well for the MNEs with activity in Romania as they already benefit from the prerequisites of such empowering programs, described by Erstad (1997), such as the stimulating atmosphere and well settled rewarding system, perks identified in the three cases studied.

However, the above drawn recommendations are meant to patch the issues of employee empowerment and internal communications (with the team and with the superiors). The third

studied aspect of the IM framework applied on the empirical research in Romania; the one of job satisfaction and performance did not revealed major issues among the studied subjects (see Figure 12, p.41), hence there are no recommendations on this topic.

Although, zooming out from the three studied areas of interest to the general understanding of IM (see Figure 8, p.28), it can be clearly seen the fact that the empirical research of this study was very focused on the cluster of IM as human resources tool. The cluster of IM as organizational management tool and the one of IM as organizational culture development tool have only been explored from the perspective of past literature, lacking any actual empirical proof. It would be interesting to understand the implications of IM practices are, focusing on theories of IM related to the organizational culture, the internal branding or its openness to innovation, this possible study moving its target of analysis from the employee perspective to the one of the culture as a unit.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

As stated in the beginning of this research, the IM strategies are the tool throughout a sequential process leads to the satisfaction of the external customer, thus its importance is enormous in the effectiveness of the organization. Despite its functionality, the concept of IM it is not understood and applied evenly all around the globe, the literature highlighting a delimitation between the Western ideology and the one of the emerging markets, such as the former countries of the communist bloc.

The de-synchronization between the two ideologies doesn't only come from the geographical separation but more important from the cultural differences. This study showed how the concept of IM is implemented in the MNEs with activity in Romania, focusing on three main themes which were challenging for the implementation in the CEE countries and whose source couldn't be identified; the job satisfaction, the internal communications and the employee empowerment. If in the case of job satisfaction the situation was clear, along with it the research brought to the surface different flaws which are prohibiting the right implementation; in the area of the middle level management to senior management communication and the one of lack of interest in the decision making of the employee but zest of getting involved in the organizational change of the employee. Explanations have been found for both of the situations; the lack of Internal Communications Managers or Internal Marketing Coordinators in the first case and the cultural traits specific to the collectivist societies in the second case. Moreover, the study enriches the literature and extends the theory of expatriating managers by acknowledging a circulation of expatriate managers, foreigners to Romania but with origins in the neighbor countries.

6.1 Implications of this study

The academic implications of this study are represented by the enrichment of the literature related to the practices of MNEs with foreign capital, in Romania, findings caused by the theory generated issues of poor internal communication and lack of employee empowerment. Moreover, as aforementioned, the research discovers new practices in expatriating managers who share similar cultural values but who also have external knowledge which could work in the help of the whole organization.

The managerial implications of this research are given by the isolation and the understanding of the issues related to the implementation of the IM, and consequently, the possible recommendations meant to help the managers in the flawless application of the IM plan.

6.2 Limitations

From the theoretical perspective of understanding the concept of IM, efforts have been done in collecting as much literature-related data as possible. In the advantage of this need came the very well developed existing literature, related to the Western/ideal practices of IM in the MNEs but also in the public sector organizations. However, when it came to the IM implementation in the CEE, the literature was very scarce. The studies conducted in the former communist countries were inadequate for the topic as they were only related to only one component of the IM concept, or they were conducted on certain industries or certain types of organizations.

Secondly, regarding the primary data collection, the interviewees showed fear in sharing information related to the IM practices of their companies. Offering them anonymity in the research, only three leaders decided to take action and to go further with the study. Corroborated to this, the cross-case study translates into the focus divided on three companies, abolishing the going in depth of only one company, specific to the singular case study. Related to the low number of cases studied, according to Saunders et al., (2009), the results cannot be generalized as the sample is way too small to generate statistically proven findings.

Lastly, the techniques used in the research might result in the inaccurate perception of the researcher; the qualitative study might lead to a subjective understanding of the information collected (Kuada, 2010), both in the case of the interviews and on the matching patterns technique.

6.3 Further research

The scope of this study has been very specific. However, in this section proposals for future studies will be given.

First of all, due to the small sample and the qualitative nature of the study, the findings could not be generalized. Still, a quantitative study, having a large sample of cases would certify the development of the phenomenon.

Secondly, the study proved differences between Romania and the neighbor countries, related to the adoption of the IM. A suggestion can be the future study of the IM implementation in these countries.

IM relates to organizational change, thus innovation. It can be said that the industry of implementation might matter as some industries lay more than others on innovation. A feature study in this direction might prove a relationship between the aforementioned.

Lastly, Lewis, Davis, Ahmed and Rafiq (1999, 2001, and 2008) suggest that the IM implementation starts right from the top-management of the organization. A study focusing on the individuals meant to implement the IM would probably come up with missing links of the issues discussed and would undergo the research right at the source of IM.

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Apendix – the three interviews conducted

Interview with company A.

The interview has been conducted in a meeting with the company A's employee, outside of his workplace and work schedule, on the 6th of December 2017. The discussion consisted in a friendly questioning, led by the guidelines of the interview and lasted about 15 minutes.

1. How old are you and what is your position in the organization?

   R: I am 28 and I am working as Support Engineer Team Leader, in a team of other engineers.

2. What values do you attribute with your company?

   R: Well, I am working as a support provider for people in need of a technological solution and maybe the first thing that I learned here is that the team-work is based on mutual support.

3. Do you feel satisfied with your work? Please argue how.

   R: I am satisfied as long as my work is paid. Money are the main call for me in this job. I am also seeking to be praised for what I am doing.

4. Do you feel like your company makes efforts for your higher satisfaction? Please explain

   R: Yes I do, actually it passed one year since I work here and the company came up with pretty big salary bonuses. Moreover, I just got his higher position, the one of manager of my actual team.

5. What is the most important for you, in order to feel motivated at work?

   R: I guess it is the fact that I am working with a team because the stress at work can be overcome by the team-work and communication. Just as important as team-work is the remuneration, but also the flexibility of my workplace and the fact that I feel secure. My contract is on undetermined period.

6. How does the communication in your organization go? What kind of technological means do you use in communication?

   R: The project I am working in currently is pretty small, involving a few people. This way we can easily communicate by just talking to each other as we share the same office. When it comes to platforms we're also using Outlook and Skype for Business.

7. How does your communication go with your senior managers?

   R: I believe we have a good communication and I guess we are transparent to everything undergoing in the company.

8. How does your communication go with your subordinates?

   R: Momently, I just became the leader of my team. Now I am the man in charge and I want to keep a very good relationship with my colleagues even though some might feel intimidated since I will get a higher position. There are also people that I have serious communication problems with, usually from other departments. It is not because they are difficult people, but because I feel like there should be someone to coordinate the departments, someone able to bring us closer.

9. Do you get any feedback from your managers and subordinates?

   R: Many times! When I get a one on feedback session I have the tendency to ask for the negative feedback so I can understand where I should focus for a better performance. However, I only got positive feedback which makes me feel pretty good.

10. Does the higher management listen to your suggestions? Do they implement them in the organization?

    R: Surprisingly they do! They are always aware of our thoughts and they always take action after listening to us. There are moments when we don't get to a common ground but at the end of the day everyone leaves the workplace happy about his contributions.

11. Are those opinions related to your personal needs or to the whole organizational needs?

R: Usually, they are related to both the personal and team's needs. However, the impact is not that big and sometimes you could be seen as a dreamer by the other colleagues.

12. Do you get involved in the decision-making of the company? Would you like to have a higher involvement in the decision-making?

R: The only times when I was involved in the decision-making it was somehow outside of my workplace but related to the job. We've been in several work-places where all the employees from all the levels were forming teams. That's the moment when all of us were even in power and could come up with suggestions that were further taken and developed in the real workplace.

13. Do you have higher level managers with a different nationality/culture in the organization? If so, are there any inconsistencies in the communication with them?

R: Well, the Senior Director comes from the Czech Republic. Moreover, last summer a French Director came from France to teach my team into being proficient in some specific software. However, there were no communication problems as we're all English speakers.

14. What is different working in a foreign corporation?

R: In such a company you get the possibility to develop yourself faster. Moreover, also important for me is that the senior director is not Romanian. That means that you are respected, the approach is friendlier and at the end of the month the paycheck is better than any other Romanian led company.

15. What did you learn from working under an occidental way of doing things?

R: I believe that we, as Romanians should be bolder and should have stronger voice in our workplace as the foreign countries are looking for people open to affirm themselves. We are a valuable asset but somehow we are afraid of expressing it.

Interview with Company B.

The interview with the employee of Company B has been conducted in the same day as Company A's interview (the 6th of December 2017) and the discussion lasted 12 minutes.

1. How old are you and what is your position in the organization?
   R: 26 years old, manager of cash registers.

2. What values do you attribute with your company?
   R: At my work it is very important to work as a cell in an organism. If everyone does a good job, we are all benefiting. If my team doesn't have any problems, I don't have problems.

3. Do you feel satisfied with your work? Please argue how.
   R: Yes I do, especially because I am working with a team. When everyone does a great job, I feel very satisfied and appreciated by both my subordinates and superiors.

4. Do you feel like your company makes efforts for your higher satisfaction? Please explain
   R: It actually does, for example for a good performance we can be elected as the employee of the month or year, awards such as diplomas or presents. Outside of this we are also friends and we spend time together.

5. What is the most important for you, in order to feel motivated at work?
   R: First of all, the salary. I guess that we're all targeting that when applying for a job. Secondly, the atmosphere at work; to feel useful, thus appreciated; to feel like fitting in.

6. How does the communication in your organization go? What kind of technological means do you use in communication?
   R: We are collaborating hierarchically. It is very rare when I have talked to the top management. Is always between the closest hierarchically levels and we always speak

directly or by phone. Sometimes we have training events where we learn about each other and this helps us in the future communication at work.

7. How does your communication go with your senior managers?

   R: *Yes, our Director has always been involved in the whole thing at work but he rarely speaks to us. He speaks to my manager and then he contacts me for a certain issue.*

8. How does your communication go with your subordinates?

   R: *It is difficult to say subordinates as we are all working as a total, as a team. Yes, I am coordinating them but I don't really like the idea of being their superior. However, since we are close to each other we are always changing ideas and everything goes well.*

9. Do you get any feedback from your managers and subordinates?

   R: *Since we are so many involved at my workplace we are always getting feedback from the superiors but also in our team as we need to know where the things have to be improved.*

10. Does the higher management listen to your suggestions? Do they implement them in the organization?

    R: *The problem is that everything is done "the right way". The superiors are very strict and they do not accept any kind of changes. For example at the cash register my company wants a specific order by color for the bags that have to be sold. I believe and the same does my team that they might look better if we would be allowed to set them up but we are not allowed as they want to do it like in France, where the company comes from.*

11. Are those opinions related to your personal needs or to the whole organizational needs?

    R: *I believe that there is a balance but maybe the 1% extra would go to the individual need because we are all somehow firstly thinking about our own comfort and then the common goal.*

12. Do you get involved in the decision-making of the company? Would you like to have a higher involvement in the decision-making?

R: Even though I would like to, the decisions I take are pretty common and take part of a routine. I always have to follow the rules and it is impossible to come up with something new. As I told you before, there are some issues that could be fixed by us, the people who are actually doing the small detailed things.

13. Do you have higher level managers with a different nationality/culture in the organization? If so, are there any inconsistencies in the communication with them?

R: No, all my superiors have been Romanian.

14. What is different working in a foreign corporation?

R: I feel like everything is still done Romanian way. All my senior managers have been Romanian since I am here and the job is just like any other job. I used to work in the Secretary office of a Romanian law house and it was the same way.

15. What did you learn from working under an occidental way of doing things?

R: There are not necessarily differences in working for a foreign company and a Romanian one. Maybe the thing that they brought here their way of doing things which might not fit with the way we see the things. As I told you about the simple arrangements at the cash registers of my team. We just follow the rules and cannot come up with different points of view.

Interview with Company C.

The interview with Company C has been conducted at the company's headquarter in Bucharest, in a meeting room offered by the company and lasted about 15 minutes, on the 10th of December 2017.

1. How old are you and what is your position in the organization?
   R: I am working as a Sales Director and I am 28 years old.

2. What values do you attribute with your company?
   R: Friendship, spirit and passion. I know them by heart and I use them in my relationship with my team.

3. Do you feel satisfied with your work? Please argue how.
   R: Of course I do; I am developing friendships and sometimes I can even change people life into better. That warms my heart a lot and makes me go to work with a smile on my face every day.

4. Do you feel like your company makes efforts for your higher satisfaction? Please explain
   R: They know that behind our success stays a good satisfaction. They really do efforts in satisfying me. We attend to many conferences which are ending up with parties. Think about it that the General Director of my company stays at my table and speaks to me like just like we are family.

5. What is the most important for you, in order to feel motivated at work?
   R: I feel very motivated at work; I got this job for the high salary first of all, then the teamwork of the people that I have discovered here and the events, the international conferences where the company sends me every year.

6. How does the communication in your organization go? What kind of technological means do you use in communication?

R: The communication is not that good. My Area Sales Manager doesn't communicate that good with me. I am a performer in Bucharest and I believe there should be a better communication between us as I am her main asset.

7. How does your communication go with your senior managers?

R: In order to get to the Management Director I firstly need to talk to my closest superior, the Areas Sales Manager. Since she is slow in answering my call, the communication is very slow. Moreover, I don't get the needed feedback. Sometimes I need to know in time what I have to fix so I can enhance the performance of my team for the next selling campaign.

8. How does your communication go with your subordinates?

R: I guess we have a very good communication as I am leading a team. We feel like a family thus we can easily talk to each other.

9. Do you get any feedback from your managers and subordinates?

R: I do get feedback from the people I am managing but the senior managers are not that involved which makes me feel like they are not having the same interest in earning money as I do.

10. Does the higher management listen to your suggestions? Do they implement them in the organization?

R: My superiors listen to the suggestions and only validate them if they are valid.

11. Are those opinions related to your personal needs or to the whole organizational needs?

R: My opinions are related to the team that I am coordinating. I want my business to be OK.

12. Do you get involved in the decision-making of the company? Would you like to have a higher involvement in the decision-making?

R: Absolutely, we are all attending to meetings and we are asked for our opinions. I also get surveys from our headquarters from Brussels which are designed for the Central Europe Sales Directors. I would like maximal implication if possible.

13. Do you have higher level managers with a different nationality/culture in the organization? If so, are there any inconsistencies in the communication with them?

R: The Managing Director of our Romanian branch is from Montenegro. She doesn't speak Romanian but she understands everything and makes efforts in communicating to us in our language.

14. What is different working in a foreign corporation?

R: The main thing is that my company values the people and not the materials.

15. What did you learn from working under an occidental way of doing things?

R: My company trained me in becoming a successful leader through the personal development trainings but also through my daily activity at work. I believe that now I am prepared for my work place but also for life. I do not believe that in any other Romanian company I could have get so many opportunities. Think about the fact that sometimes I have to take the plane to work and that every year I have at least 4 trips abroad.