

Summary

Social sustainability gradually entered into scientific debates regarding sustainability and sustainability policies of the world and, in time, it gained recognition as a fundamental component of sustainable development. However, compared to the other dimensions of sustainability, the social component is less explored. The habilitation thesis entitled “Valences of social sustainability in education, labor market and tourism, analyzed through qualitative and quantitative marketing research” brings together a series of researches designed to contribute to reducing the disparities, by approaching the concept of social sustainability from the perspective of marketing in three research areas.

The first part of the habilitation thesis is dedicated to the presentation of scientific and professional achievements, with a focus on the results of research published in scientifically valuable articles, indexed in ISI Web of Science, which contributed to the criteria to participate in the competition for obtaining the certificate of habilitation.

In the first chapter, social sustainability is approached from an educational perspective. There are three researches oriented in two directions: • The first research started on the issue of disparities in education and through various qualitative research methods allowed issuing some conclusions about programs, projects, technologies that can contribute to improve the educational process for disadvantaged people. • The other two researches addressed specific aspects of the involvement of entrepreneurial universities in regional sustainable development, starting from the hypothesis that collaborations between entrepreneurial universities and regional companies can have a positive impact on the sustainable development of all entities involved. Opportunities for collaboration were identified between the Research-Development Institute (ICDT) of the Transilvania University of Braşov and the companies with production activity within the Center Development Region. An exploratory study was also conducted based on semi-structured interviews among students who intend to get involved in entrepreneurship in order to find out which businesses are considered stimulants of sustainable development and what are the changes in business culture in the context of the crisis generated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The research from the second chapter analyzes some aspects related to the preparation of students for the labor market and massive investments in labor during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Starting from the idea that universities must offer to students a greater variety of learning experiences in order to facilitate their access to the labor market, two case studies were

conducted. The first research examines a methodology for carrying out counseling and career guidance activities for students in order to facilitate the transition from school to working life, and the second assesses the most appropriate learning experiences that could be used to develop the skills needed in with a view to improving the employability of future graduates.

The second part of this chapter addresses the issue of massive labor investment during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research was conducted through a survey based on a sample of 1,896 subjects. Elements of overtime, workload, work commitment, work dependence and work performance were considered, for which several scales were tested extensively in studies on massive investment in the work. The research results reveal that the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on the components of massive labor investment (time and effort). For all the measured aspects, there was a decrease in investment in work during the pandemic, with negative effects on respondents' attitudes towards personal work performance.

The third chapter of the thesis highlighted some aspects of marketing-specific approaches to sustainable development of tourism. The research started from those reported in the literature and focused on news and issues less addressed by other researchers. The approached topics were multiple, and for each of them a distinct research methodology were used. The aims of the studies carried out referred to the following: ● Integrating families with children with disabilities in tourist destinations - a qualitative research conducted in order to identify several ways to eliminate or reduce physical and attitude barriers, for better integration of people with disabilities in places of destination; ● The way tourism sharing can contribute to sustainable urban development - a qualitative research among collaborative tourism stakeholders; ● The issue of locals and visitors security , addressed through a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods; ● The issue of social sustainability from the perspective of access to modern, safe and accessible tools for obtaining information about tourism and making reservations through web platforms, conducting in this regard a quantitative research among Internet users; ● Highlighting the hypostases and behaviors of the “actors” involved in the eco-value chain from the tourism field through the prism of the concepts of permaculture, slow tourism and downshifting, through a qualitative research.

The second part of the thesis presents the professional career development plan and future research directions, so as to lead to the fulfillment of the personal objectives correlated with the objectives of the faculty and those of the university to which they belong.