

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE ANALYSIS OF EUROPEAN FUNDS MANAGEMENT TIMIS COUNTY – RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF SME`S

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## **Abstract**

Our presentation is based on sociological research on the management structures of European funds and development prospects of SME`s in Timis County. Methodological, conceptual apparatus operationalize concepts such as institutional and organizational capacity management, bureaucratic organization, building organizational and institutional continuity/discontinuity, profession assumption, assuming institutional identity, institutional bovarysm and model of good practice. The applicative contribution of this diagnosis is reflected in the analysis of employee perceptions of management capacity in organizational and institutional terms on management and implementation authorities in Timis County, in order to absorb European funds. Advanced hypothesis that guides the entire procedure correlate variables: exploring awareness of specific dimensions of European integration on field as dynamic phenomenon, respectively professional and institutional level identification with variable capacity management in terms of organizational and institutional management authorities and implementation. Main results capture the degree of construction vs. institutional and organizational continuity, the degree of manifestation of institutional bovarysm (Buzărnescu 1998), assuming the profession and degree of institutional identity and identify the best practices at the institutional and organizational authorities of the management and implementation of EU funds in the county Timis.

**Keywords:** organizational sociology, SME`s Timis County, institutional and organizational management capacity, institutional bovarysm, organizational and institutional building

## **Résumé**

Notre présentation est basée sur la recherche sociologique sur les structures de gestion des fonds européens et les perspectives de développement de PME dans le département de Timis. L`appareil conceptuel méthodologique opérationnalise des concepts tels que la gestion institutionnelle et la capacité organisationnelle, organisation bureaucratique, la construction organisationnelle et institutionnelle continuité / discontinuité, hypothèse de la profession, en supposant identité institutionnelle, bovarysme institutionnel et modèle de bonne pratique. La contribution applicative de ce diagnostic est reflété dans l`analyse des perceptions de la capacité de gestion en termes organisationnels et institutionnels sur les autorités de gestion et de mise en œuvre dans le département de Timis, employés pour absorber les fonds européens. L`hypothèse avancée qui guide toute la procédure vise à établir une corrélation entre deux variables: explorer la sensibilisation des dimensions

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spécifiques de l'intégration européenne sur le champ comme un phénomène dynamique, respectivement professionnel et institutionnel identification au niveau de la gestion de capacité variable en termes de pouvoirs de gestion organisationnelles et institutionnelles et la mise en œuvre. Principaux résultats reflètent pas le degré de construction vs continuité institutionnelle et organisationnelle, le degré de manifestation de bovarisme institutionnelle (Buzărnescu 1998), en supposant que la profession et le degré de l'identité institutionnelle et identifier les meilleures pratiques auprès des autorités institutionnelles et organisationnelles de la gestion et de mise en œuvre des fonds de l'UE dans le département de Timiș.

**Mots-clés:** la sociologie des organisations, des PME County, gestion institutionnelle et la capacité organisationnelle, le renforcement institutionnel, organisationnel et institutionnel bovarisme

### **Rezumat**

Prezentarea noastră se fundamentează pe o cercetare sociologică privind structurile de gestionare ale fondurilor europene și perspectivele de dezvoltare ale IMM-urilor din județului Timiș. Metodologic, aparatul conceptual operaționalizează concepte precum capacitate de gestionare instituțională și organizațională, organizare birocratică, construcție organizațională și instituțională, continuitate/discontinuitate organizațională și instituțională, asumare profesie, asumare identitate instituțională, bovarism instituțional, model de bună practică. Aportul aplicativ al acestei diagnoze se reflectă în analiza percepției angajaților asupra capacității de gestionare din punct de vedere organizațional și instituțional a autorităților de management și implementare din județul Timiș, în vederea absorbției fondurilor europene. Ipoteza avansată care ghidează întreg demersul explorator corelează variabilele grad de cunoaștere a dimensiunilor specifice integrării europene pe domeniu de activitate ca fenomen dinamic, respectiv nivel de identificare profesională și instituțională, cu variabila capacitate de gestionare din punct de vedere organizațional și instituțional a autorităților de management și implementare. Principalele rezultate surprind gradul de construcție vs. continuitate la nivel instituțional și organizațional, gradul de manifestare a bovarismului instituțional (Buzărnescu 1998), gradul de asumare a profesiei și identității instituționale și sunt identificate modelele de bună practică la nivel instituțional și organizațional din cadrul autorităților de management și implementare a fondurilor europene în județul Timiș.

**Cuvinte cheie:** sociologie organizațională, IMM-uri Timiș, capacitate de gestionare instituțională și organizațională, bovarism instituțional, construcție organizațională și instituțională

## **1. Introduction**

The dimension of the effective and optimal organization from an organizational point of view (Buzărnescu 2008) (Rowley and Roevens 2007) and an institutional one (Scott 2004) is a premise that was supposed to be fulfilled (obligatory) at the conclusion of the accession process, which is a prerequisite with the onset of the integration process.

Managing Authorities (Mintzberg 1989) (Nohria and Berkley 1992), both at central and local levels (regional, areal), in our case the regional county, had to

develop an integrated approach to attracting and especially implementing EU funds for proper absorption, to focus not only on a arithmetic success in the exercise of absorption, but especially on the the impact of using these resources on the development of Romanian society, in each sector (Vasiluță-Ștefănescu, M. 2012, p. 24). We refer to both agricultural funds (in a first phase SAPARD subsequently FEADR - accession funds by the European Fund for Agriculture and Rural Development and the European Fisheries Fund FEP) and the infrastructure and the environment (ISPA continued at Structural Funds by FC - Cohesion Fund), the PHARE - intervention in economic, social excluding agriculture and rural development, to PHARE (National Phare CBC-border cooperation and economic and social cohesion CES) is continued post-accession segment- FEDR -European Regional Development Fund and FSE - European Social Fund. We can also mention the programs monitored in research, government support for SMEs (PNM-IMM) and the 7th Framework Programme (FP7) which aims to European cooperation in the field of new technologies, research and development.

Cooperation mechanisms developed within the European Union Member States in particular funds provided shall support candidate countries and the EU's role as a factor of social development (Stanescu 2007, pp. 601-604). Promoting SMEs as economic actors contributing to economic recovery enrolling in the major directions of action to combat poverty in Romania (Zamfir 2001, pp. 47-48; Stanescu 2012, pp. 8-9). Protecting and promoting the capacity of SME`s to secure jobs is a convergent direction with European trends towards with the long-term impact on local development and social inclusion of vulnerable groups (Stanescu, Asiminei, Virjan 2013; Stanescu 2013). Also entrepreneurs in Romania compared to those of the 26 Member States and the United States face a hostile national environment when they want to open a business (Vasile 2013).

## 2. Research Methodology

### *General Purpose*

Analysis of employee perceptions of *managing capacity* in terms of organizational and institutional management and implementation authorities in Timis county, *in viewing to the absorption of European funds*.

### *Specific objectives*

1. Identification of the *awareness degree on the issue and the context of European integration* on the business of the organization, both as external activity and internal, the one of the employees.
2. The *degree of assumption of professional and institutional identity* of the staff from the management authority and implementing of European funds in Timis County.
3. Identification of *good practice exemples* at the institutional and organizational levels from the authorities of the management and implementation of EU funds in Timis County

### ***The general hypothesis***

The more specific dimensions awareness of the field of European integration as a dynamic phenomenon and identification of professional and institutional levels are, the more developed is the ability to manage in terms of organizational and institutional management and implementation authorities.

### ***Specific Hypotheses***

1. There is a low level of awareness of the issue and the context of European integration organizations on specific fields.
2. If there is a high degree of professional accountability and institutional identity, then the perception of personal initiative opportunity to increase business performance has a high intensity.
3. There is a significant number of successful projects in the work of agencies to form the nucleus of good practice on specific areas of their business.

### ***Universe of population***

Universe of population are the employees (a total of 524) of organizations with responsibilities in the management of EU funds in Timis County (10 organizations).

In this respect, these organizations were the sampling units where respondents were selected to be interviewed from:

1. West Regional Development Agency (ADR West)<sup>1</sup>
2. County Agency for Employment Timis (A.J.O.F.M. Timiș)<sup>2</sup>
3. Payments and Intervention Agency for Agriculture (APIA)<sup>3</sup>
4. County Environmental Protection Agency (APM Timiș)<sup>4</sup>
5. Regional Environmental Protection Agency Timișoara (ARPM)<sup>5</sup>
6. Regional Training Centre for Public Administration Timisoara (CRFCAPL)<sup>6</sup>
7. Regional Center for Rural Development and Fisheries 5 West Timisoara (CRPDRP Timis County, former SAPARD Timis) The regional structure of APDRP
8. Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Timis (DADRTM)<sup>7</sup>
9. County Office for Rural Development and Fisheries (OJPDRP) Structure of APDRP county (see section 6)
10. Regional Office for Small and Medium Timisoara and Cooperation from Timisoara (OTIMMC)<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.adrvest.ro/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.timis.anofm.ro/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.apia.org.ro/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.apmtm.ro/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.arpmv5.ro/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ina5vest.ro/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.dadrtm.ro/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://otimmctm.softclass.net>

### **Sample**

Sampling variant chosen is systematic probabilistic and multiphased, applicable because the elements of the universe of population naturally succeed in social space and time, we have a preliminary listing of the population and made the decision of a sample size of 266 subjects from 10 organizational units (*sampling units*).

We chose the systematic probabilistic and multiphased size of sampling, because the size of the sample is small and the elements of the population are social units such *institutions, groups or organizations*. (Zamfir and Vlăsceanu 1993). We paid special attention to satisfy the requirement of maximizing the variance characteristics studied, thus avoiding the effects of linearity or periodicity induced by natural arrangement of the elements. In conclusion, at each sampling units level questionnaires were randomly applied, ensuring equal probability of members of each unit entering in the sample.

The number of questionnaires is distributed on each conducted sampling unit as follows:

*Table 1. Organization where the interview was conducted*

<i>Name of the organization</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
ADR VEST	32	12%
AJOFM	30	11,3%
APIA	36	13,5%
APM TIMIS	20	7,5%
ARPM	10	3,8%
CRFCAP	23	8,6%
CRPDRP	11	4,1%
DADR	50	18,8%
OJPDRP	42	15,8%
OTIMM	12	4,5%

### **Method**

We chose the sociological survey method (Pășcuță 2001) (Rotariu and Iluț 1997) because it allows the collection of large amounts of information in a relatively short time and allows their rapid processing, with a large area of application from a population-representative statistically.

### **Technics**

Interviewing technique was face to face, because it collects information about the investigated subjects and provide answers to all questions.

### **Tools, types of questions**

Questionnaire (Chelcea, Marginean and Cauc 1998), open and closed questions. Questionnaires were administered by interviewers. A system of closed questions on

the same issue. Open questions regarding motivation opinions. Closed questions for measuring the intensity of opinions. Note that the proportion of open questions is the largest because we did not want to limit the possibilities of expression responses nor the possible options for response. Standardizing the choice was a later stage, intervening when data coding and entering it into the database.

### **3. Data analysis and interpretation**

In terms of institutional projection on the changes that will be determined in the work of employees (North 1990) by the the accession process of Romania's integration into EU structures (Ciocarlie, Vasiluță-Ștefănescu, Țiru 2013, pp. 24-36), subjects declare in a percentage of 18,4% that they will be affected by the increased workload, information on funding opportunities, and internal and external reporting and procedures.

Also at institutional skills level, in the context of “market release” of post-accession funds, structural respondents indicated briefing on accessing European funds as a percentage of 23.3%.

The main dimensions of institutional assuming and identity are the knowledge of professional responsibilities and the performance exercise of the normative status-role, especially in terms of personal initiative to optimize their own activity as well as of the institutional one.

From this perspective, we can say that the identification of daily tasks by employees of the agencies is high and relevant at both the specific activity, and joint level in the management of European funds (Vasiluță-Ștefănescu, Vasiluță-Ștefănescu 2012, pp. 82-99). Positioning in the organizational space is well represented, the employees assuming their positions of status-role (Vlăsceanu 1993) within agencies, identifying a significant percentage of functional relations of subordination, super ordination and collaboration, related to their own post. A similar situation is encountered also at an institutional level indicating the main directions of activities and objectives.

Depending on the long service in organization we distinguish four main seniority groups - under 2 years with a share of 21.4%, between 2 years and 5 years 37.2% - the highest age group between 5-10 years with 22.9% , and 18.4 % for over 10 years, the lowest age group in the organization. These seniority reports are explained by the fact that most agencies have an organizational “age” not exceeding 10 years, except DADRMT on the agriculture, which continues the former county direction before 1989 and OTIMMC for SME sector which came to the attention of the Government before declaring the intention of our country to join the European structures.

Table 2. The association between age and the belief in optimizing activities

		Do you think your institution's activities can be carried out with better results?		Total
		yes	no	
How long have you been employed (?) In the institution? ..... Years.	1 year	25,4%	8,1%	33,5%
	2-5 years	19,8%	12,9%	32,7%
	6-10 years	16,9%	4,0%	21,0%
	more than 10 years	9,7%	3,2%	12,9%
<b>Total</b>		71,8%	28,2%	100,0%

Cross-tabulation of the 2 variables (*How long have you been employed in the institution* and *Do you think your institution's activities can be carried out better*) revealed that the more recent employees in the institution strongly believe that activity of the organization can be greatly improved (25.4%). Overall, 71.8% believe that institution may work better.

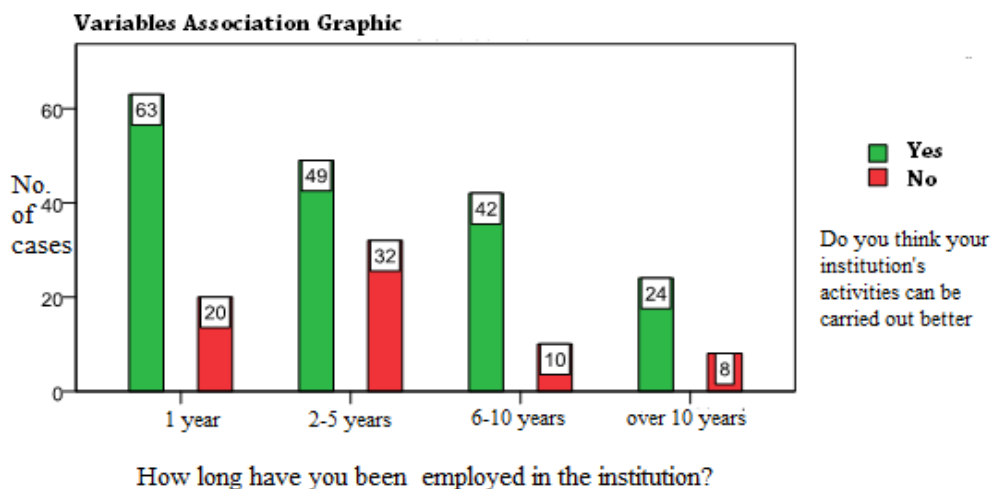


Figure 1. The association between age and the belief in optimizing activities

Application of the  $\chi^2$  test between the variable long service in institution and the belief that activities can be carried out with better results revealed a value of 8.027 for a significant threshold. Thus, long service in the institution is associated with personal opinion regarding the possibility of institutional optimizing.

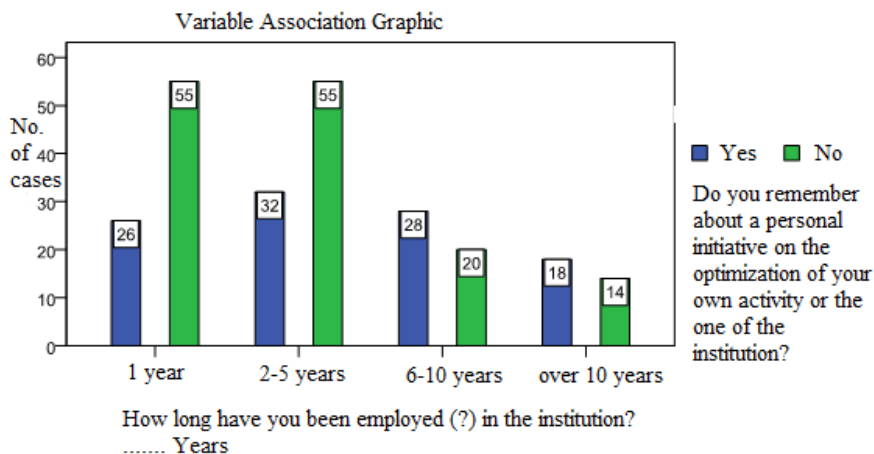
In a large proportion, 41.4% of the employees of agencies state that they have had personal initiatives to optimize their work and organization, given that in terms

of seniority in the organization, the strongest growth in the initiative is on the segment 2-5 years, and the lowest level of initiative are the employees with over 10 years old. Among subjects who took personal initiatives to optimize the personal activity, as well as the one of the organization, at a common core level of activities of the agencies we mention the information initiatives on accessing European funds, the organizational optimization measures / institutional optimization in departments, the efficient organization of work by introducing measures computerization of work, the staffing.

Resumption of operation in terms of taking a personal initiative to optimize the relevant business revealed the trend of newcomers to positioning themselves in a constructive way in the organizational framework.

*Table 3. The association between age and personal initiative to optimize activities*

		Do you remember about a personal initiative on the optimization of your own activity or the one of the institution?		Total
		yes	no	
How long have you been employed (?) in the institution? ..... Years.	1 year	10,5%	22,2%	32,7%
	2-5 years	12,9%	22,2%	35,1%
	6-10 years	11,3%	8,1%	19,4%
	more than 10 years	7,3%	5,6%	12,9%
<b>Total</b>		71,8%	41,9%	58,1%



*Figure 2. The association between long service and personal initiative to optimize activities*



The application of the  $\chi^2$  test between the variable work length in institution and organizational attitude revealed a value of 12,161 for a significant threshold. Thus, the long service is associated to the decision of engagement in institutional optimization. Subsequently the two variables were cross-tabulated (opinion regarding the change and behavior change oriented) (Newstrom and Davis 1993), showing that 36.4% of those who believe that the work in institution can be optimized have already taken an initiative in this regard. Also, while 34.7% although consider that activity of institution could be optimized had not taken an initiative in this effect.

Table 4. The association between belief in optimizing activities and personal initiative to optimize activities

		Do you remember about a personal initiative on the optimization of your own activity or the one of the institution?		Total
		yes	no	
Do you believe activities of your institution can be managed with better results?	yes	36,4%	34,7%	71,1%
	no	5,8%	23,1%	28,9%
Total		42,1%	57,9%	100,0%

The application of the  $\chi^2$  test between two variables revealed a value of 19,815 for a significant threshold. Thus, the existence / absence of belief that the activities of the institution can be carried out with better results is significantly associated to the decision / lack of involvement in institutional optimization.

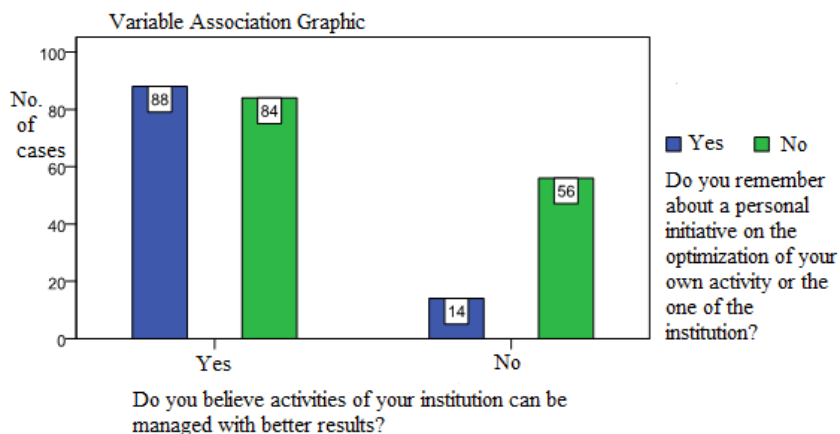


Figure 3. The association between the belief of optimizing activities and personal initiative to optimize activities

In order to better understand the organizational mechanism we resumed cross-tabulation operation on each subsample corresponding to the level of education, percentage distribution being shown below.

*Table 5. The association between level of education and personal initiative to optimize activities*

<b>Education</b>			<b>Do you remember about a personal initiative on the optimization of your own activity or the one of the institution?</b>		<b>Total</b>
			<b>yes</b>	<b>no</b>	
College	Do you believe activities of your institution can be managed with better results?	Yes	48,0%	20,0%	68,0%
		No		32,0%	32,0%
	<b>Total</b>			48,0%	52,0%
Graduate	Do you believe activities of your institution can be managed with better results?	Yes	34,2%	37,7%	71,9%
		No	7,0%	21,1%	28,1%
	<b>Total</b>			41,2%	58,8%
Postgraduate	Do you believe activities of your institution can be managed with better results?	Yes	44,4%	22,2%	66,7%
		No		33,3%	33,3%
	<b>Total</b>			44,4%	55,6%

As well the  $\chi^2$  test was applied in the same manner. Given the preceding distribution and rules for this test to be considered we note that there is a significant association between the two variables only to the level of employees with a university degree. The existence / absence of belief that the institution's activities can be carried out with better results are significantly associated with the decision / lack of involvement in institutional optimization in the case of the subsample destined to employees with higher education (Goian and Vasiluță-Ștefănescu 2013, pp.175-187).

The phrase 13.9% European money comes to strengthen the idea of supporting the integration of Romania into the European Community with the opportunity to access its financial support and put us before a “dilemma” approach to integration: money for projects or projects for money? We want to take advantage of a favorable context or we follow to what extent these funds provide a qualitative contribution and a competitive difference in the development of Romanian society as a whole.

*Table 6. The association between level of education and personal initiative to optimize activities*

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>						
<b>Education</b>		<b>Value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</b>	<b>Exact Sig. (2-sided)</b>	<b>Exact Sig. (1-sided)</b>
College	Pearson Chi-Square	10,860 <sup>a</sup>	1	,001		
	Continuity Correction	8,216	1	,004		
	Likelihood Ratio	14,020	1	,000		
	Fisher's Exact Test				,002	,001
	Linear-by-Linear Association	10,425	1	,001		
	N of Valid Cases	25				
Graduate	Pearson Chi-Square	8,448 <sup>c</sup>	1	,004		
	Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	7,543	1	,006		
	Likelihood Ratio	8,806	1	,003		
	Fisher's Exact Test				,004	,003
	Linear-by-Linear Association	8,406	1	,004		
	N of Valid Cases	199				
Post-graduate	Pearson Chi-Square	7,200 <sup>d</sup>	1	,007		
	Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	4,753	1	,029		
	Likelihood Ratio	9,454	1	,002		
	Fisher's Exact Test				,013	,011
	Linear-by-Linear Association	6,800	1	,009		
	N of Valid Cases	18				

With an 11.9% reduction of regional disparities are indicated, a priority in the economic and social development strategy (Baba, Duță and Imbrescu 2003) of Romania, but which can be also interpreted locally or regionally. For example, in the West area, there is a significant disparity on development between the surrounding counties like Arad, Timis, Caras-Severin and Hunedoara and locally, between Timisoara and Timis County. In a proportion of 5.6% structural funds are indicated as discriminatory factor in favor of holding financing capital, since the rule for granting such funds will be addressing the expenses to the beneficiary in advance and their discount, as the project is developed by the contracting authority.

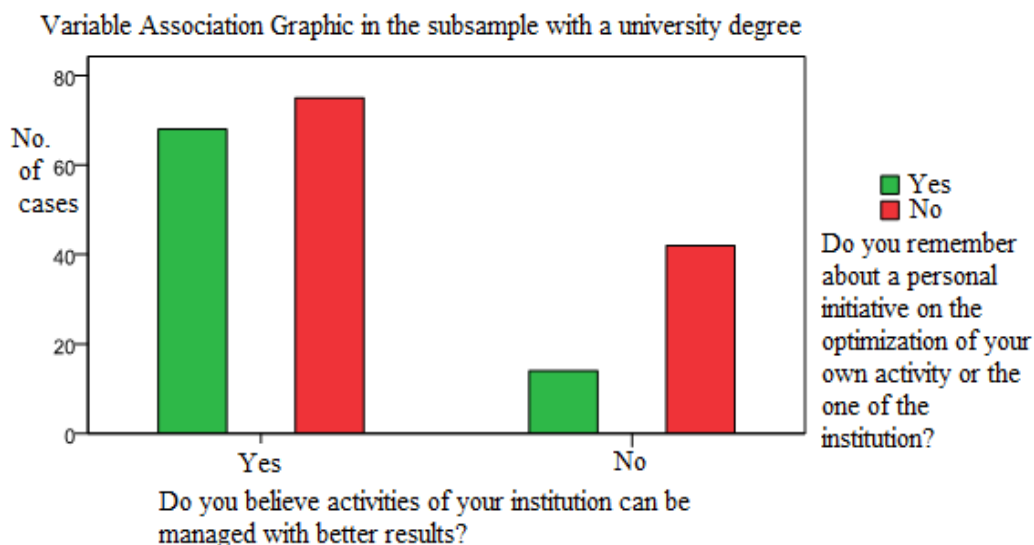


Figure 4. *The association between the level of academic tuition and personal initiative to optimize activities*

We identified a number of successful projects in the work of agencies, among which the strategic concept of economic and social development of Timis county, development and updating of regional development plan, organization of an international event on regional investments, over 700 SAPARD projects implemented, the caravan called *the farmer*, projects in partnership with German partners NRW, biodiversity projects, water treatment plant from Costei, collaboration with similar institutions in the country and abroad, organizing events for Team Europe 2006, strategy development and implementation of regional innovation, employment caravan. These accomplishments are amplified by the vote of confidence of 68.4% of the employees of agencies who believe that the possibility of improving the performance and productivity of labor exists, and significant percentage of 41.4% stating that they had personal contributions in this regards.

Project Profile / successful applicant on European funds in terms of local government staff on management and implementation belong to the following profile: 30, 5% project compliance, consisting in compliance with redaction rules beginning with the submission stage, monitoring and reporting. A good project must comply with the aforementioned acceptance and subsequent phases of the project to completion. Secondly, of 14.3%, the applicant must be available for co-financing, a business plan and feasibility study of the project to be successfully implemented. Thirdly, of 11.7%, the team project quality is significant, its choice, whether belonging to the applicant, or subcontracting the project management, of a 7.9% well-informed status and experience in European projects.

The category which seems most appropriate, at least to the image and promotion levels of the funds, is “a good and impacting idea, contained in a perfect project”, with a share of 6%.

At the project level specific areas, that were considered successful, we mention: guesthouses, projects greenhouses, mushroom farms, animals, agricultural storage, vineyards.

#### 4. Conclusions of the research

Research manages to capture awareness on the issue and context of European integration on the business area of the organization, levels of bureaucratic organization and design (Schein 1993), degrees of construction vs. institutional and organizational continuity, of manifestation of institutional bovarism (Buzărnescu 1998), of assuming the institutional and identity profession and the best practices at the institutional and organizational authorities of the management and implementation of EU funds in the Timis county. We consider confirmation of specific hypotheses as sufficient premises to confirm the general hypothesis that “the higher the degree of knowledge of the specific dimensions of the field of European integration as a dynamic phenomenon and identification of professional and institutional levels are, the more developed is the ability of management in organizational terms and institutional management and implementation authorities”. Also, the overall objective residing in “Analysis of employee perceptions of management capacity in terms of organizational and institutional management and implementation authorities in Timis county, the absorption of European funds” is fulfilled.

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