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SUMMARY DOCTORAL THESIS

**CONTROLLING IN HETEROGENEOUS
ECONOMIC SPACES**

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Keywords

Controlling, controller, control, planning, budgeting, reporting, internal accounting, decision-making process

Synthetic presentation of the doctoral thesis chapters

Next, a brief presentation of the content of the chapters of the doctoral thesis will be made, highlighting the main theoretical concepts and notions presented, as well as the results obtained from the empirical research carried out, also pointing out the conclusions drawn.

CHAPTER 1 – CONTROLLING AS A LINK FUNCTION BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTING IN THE ORGANIZATION: A RETROSPECTIVE OF LITERATURE

In the first chapter of the thesis the author presents the basic notions and concepts of controlling, starting from a series of definitions that are found in the literature. The controlling function is a controversial one in the literature and in the practice of enterprises, having the task of designing and monitoring the management process in defining objectives in the planning and controlling processes with responsibility for achieving the objectives fixed (Becker & Ulrich, 2016). Anthony (1965) defines controlling as the process by which managers ensure that resources are efficiently obtained and used to achieve the organization's goals (Anthony, 1965). Other relevant definitions are formulated by Hauschildt (1972), Reichmann (1985, 1996), Horvath (1992) or more recently Diehm (2014).

It is important to note how the concept of controlling evolved and developed over time, appearing for the first time in the fifteenth century in England. The importance of controlling has grown steadily since the 1920s, with the foundation of managerial accounting in the 1960s, while the idea of cost management emerged in the 1980s.

Next the paper outlines the main functions of controlling: investigation and documentation, planning, prognosis and consulting, regulatory and management, control (Jung, 2007), as well as the tools with which it works: costing, budgeting and performance indicators.

The chapter ends with emphasizing the role of the controller in an enterprise that is concerned with the existence of a scientific tool that through systematic planning and associated control helps to achieve the established goals of the enterprise (Jung, 2007). In order to support management in decision-making, the controller must be able to assess the economic consequences of decisions on the operating conditions of the enterprise.

In conclusion, the author considers the distinction between controlling as a stand-alone function and control as a function of management important. Controlling can be done through accounting as follows: controlling investments and projects, controlling losses and profits, controlling through the financial indicators system. From the point of view of management, control can be achieved by analyzing objectives and tasks, analyzing operations and analyzing strategies, becoming operational or strategic. Furthermore, from the author's point of view, controlling is a support function for designing and assisting the management process by setting the organization's objectives, planning and coordinating the organization, and being responsible for the way the mission was accomplished and goals.

CHAPTER 2 – PLANNING AND CONTROL ACTIVITIES IN VALUATION OF INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY CONTROLLING

In any scientific research, a thorough study of the specialized literature is necessary for the widening and understanding of the field, so that the author did not just confine himself to the general presentation of the concepts of controlling, but tried to identify as widely as possible the aspects that occur in this area of knowledge. For this purpose, the content of the second chapter presents the main activities in the sphere of controlling - planning and control.

Planning is rather a blurred notion, frequently used in economic discussions. In the literature, the following common features of planning are encountered:

- It is a conscious process, oriented towards achieving the goals;
- It refers to actions that will take place at a later stage;
- It is a process of information processing (Weber & Schäffer, 2011).

Like the notion of planning, the definition of control is not generally accepted in the literature. Differences between possible perspectives on the notion of control become visible when the difference between the idea of supervision and control as a learning process is taken into account.

Following, the different aspects and features of planning and control are explained. We should mention the three levels of planning in a hierarchical relation and the implementation of which involves different instances: operative, tactical and strategic. Along with these, there are two important features of planning in entrepreneurial practice that decisively influence the way in which the planning sizes are determined: the drawing up of the plan and the degree of centralization of the planning process.

Taking into account that managerial activities are human related and affects other people, planning and control must also be seen from the perspective of human relationships, so the author presents the consequences for controllers. The controller should not be directly concerned by the individual, but must acquire information about those aspects of behavior that are really important for the performance of his or her tasks. The next part shows the control planning and control tasks, insisting on the practical elements.

The second chapter ends with a review of the technical tools to assist with the controlling process, which can significantly help to ease and improve the accuracy of the controller's work in an organization.

CHAPTER 3 – CONTROLLING AS PART OF THE ACCOUNTING SYSTEM IN THE ECONOMIC ENTITIES

In this chapter the essential aspects regarding the position of controlling in an enterprise are presented, which will be found later in the empirical research carried out. It starts from the notion of financial accounting seen as a basis for controlling reporting, then focusing on reporting systems. The justification for this approach comes from the leading position of the reporting activity in controlling activities. Providing information is one of the most important control activities, and the quality of management decisions depends essentially on the quality of the information provided.

The purpose of reporting is the starting point for all reporting considerations (Koch, 1994). In principle, there are three purposes of the reports, known from the discussion of costing purposes: documentation, planning and control.

Another structural dimension of the reporting system is the type of report. The report type is determined by the triggering event. The type of report differs depending on whether it has reached a certain point in time, whether or not a certain threshold value is exceeded, and the manager's initiative to ask for it (Küpper, 2008).

Particular attention is given by the author to the content of the reports that are characterized in terms of structure, object, type and information, but also their form. For effective reporting to achieve the declared purpose, some drafting and reporting rules can be formulated.

In order not to overlook the aim of controlling, namely supporting managerial decisions, the last part of the chapter is dedicated to the relationship between the accounting information system and the decision-making system.

A final idea that comes out of this chapter is related to the perspective of the particular importance of reporting and providing information for business leadership, referring to the need to adapt the reporting activity for value-oriented management. The quality of decisions will depend on the accuracy of the information elements interpretation, the level of decision making of the decision makers and the use of modern methods of processing.

CHAPTER 4 – EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE CONTROLLING PRACTICE IN ECONOMIC ENTITIES PRESENT ON THE STOCK EXCHANGE - CASE OF ROMANIA AND AUSTRIA, HETEROGENEOUS ECONOMIC SPACES

Within the empirical research, the author of the present paper proposed to conduct a comparative study on large-scale organizations in two heterogeneous economic spaces, namely Romania and Austria. The main purpose of this research is to analyze how organizations in the two heterogeneous spaces use the controlling function, highlighting the similarities and differences in approaching strategic controlling.

The first general objective of this empirical research is to develop the theoretical and practical concept of controlling so that research brings a new approach to controlling in the literature.

The second general objective of this empirical research is to present the concept of controlling from a comparative perspective into two heterogeneous economical spaces, in this respect being chosen Romania and Austria, and to emphasize the existence of significant resemblances and differences in the practice of controlling in economic entities present on the stock exchange. Next, the author has formulated a series of specific objectives and four hypotheses to clarify the issues that this research has set as general and specific objectives.

The comparative study was based on a questionnaire developed in accordance with the purpose and objectives of the research, and on the theoretical information on controlling presented in the previous chapters. It comprises 35 questions that were addressed to a sample of 68 listed companies in Romania and Austria.

The results of the quantitative data analysis resulting from the empirical study are presented in a structured way and analyzed sequentially, both in writing and graphically.

The last part of the chapter focuses on how the four hypotheses formulated were totally or partially validated and presents the limitations of the quantitative research carried out, specifying some author's own considerations.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS, PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

In conclusion, the author enunciated a series of assumptions regarding the importance and necessity of controlling in an enterprise, current contradictions and proposals for improving the practice and theoretical researches in the field.

This study highlights the need for a nationally or regionally applicable controlling system, eliminating the heterogeneity of the economic areas in which it is applied, in order to highlight and encourage good economic practices. Controlling should be considered as a management support system, but a clear boundary should be defined whereby management is not completely subordinated to controlling.

After studying the literature, it was also noticed the need to systematize the studies in the field, allowing specialists and especially practitioners an easier understanding of the theoretical aspects and the inherent changes that occur. It is desirable for a global homogeneous approach to

controlling and its practices, at least at the theoretical level, because in practice the entities have to adapt to the particularities of the fields of activity, the local markets and the human factor.

The author of this paper appreciates as a future research perspective the integration of technological innovations as support tools in the managerial and decision-making processes, based on knowledge. In addition, the human factor is decisive in an entity, regardless of its domain, so controlling methods must predict the uncertainties of the human element.

So, this area has numerous opportunities for development and research both theoretically and practically.