

# Research Regarding the Implication of Resources and Performances of a Firm from the Perspective of Sustainable Development

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**Abstract** The paper presents the partial results of an exploratory research, realized based on a structured interview protocol on sustainable development, which has been implemented in 13 Romanian firms and aims the identification of acquiring and using the resources for sustainable development, as well as the analyses of the performances of the firms studied on the market, with respect to competition etc.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper synthesizes the partial results of an instrumental research, achieved on a sample of 13 firms, based on a structured interview scale, within an international research project, proposed by prof. Martine Spence from the Ottawa University, Canada, in collaboration with the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca and researchers from Tunis.

This part of the research aims to underline the operational means of the practical actions within the firms for sustainable development.

To the question: “How did you buy the necessary means to put in practice the present actions for sustainable development?”, the investigated entrepreneurs involved in such activities answered:

TABLE I

SOURCES FOR OBTAINING THE NECESSARY MEANS TO IMPLEMENT THE SD ACTIONS

Ways to buy the necessary means	1	2	3	4	5
Nr. of respondents	1	1	3	1	2
Relative frequency %	12,5	12,5	37,5	12,5	25

Legend:

- 1- Personal resources and bank loans
- 2- Personal; resources and budgetary funds
- 3- Personal resources
- 4- Bank loans
- 5- Donations

Thus, 12% use personal resources and bank loans, 12% use personal resources and budgetary funds, 38% only use personal resources, 12% use only bank loans and 25% have bought the necessary means as a result of donations.

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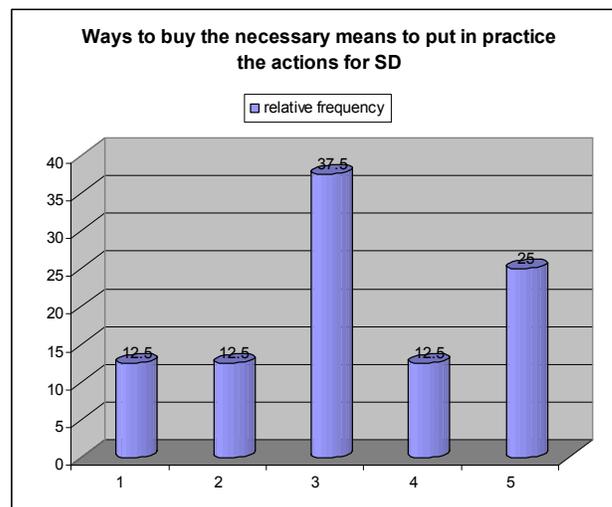


Fig. 1. Ways to buy the necessary means for SD actions

To the question regarding the sufficiency of these resources to allow the development of the future plans of the enterprise in the field of sustainable development, most of the respondents say that these resources are not sufficient.

TABLE II

THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE RESOURCES INVOLVED IN SD

Sufficient resources	1	2
Nr. of respondents	2	6
Relative frequency %	25	75

Legend:

- 1 – yes
- 2 – no

Only one fourth, 25% say that these funds are sufficient, while 75% say that they are not enough.

Given the fact that the majority of the investigated entrepreneurs believe that the resources allocated to SD are not enough, the following question refers to possible alternatives, help that will allow the firms to continue the involvement in the field of SD. All those investigated involved in SD activities either admit the sufficiency or mostly the insufficiency of the resources in this field, or they believe that non-refundable funds might help the firms a lot.

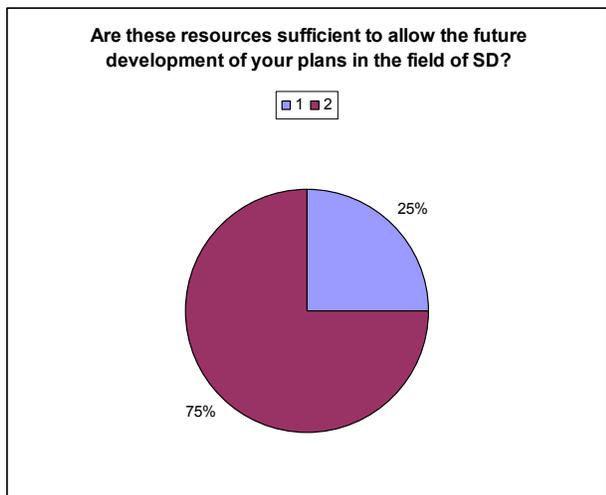


Fig. 2. The sufficiency of the resources

TABLE III  
SOLUTIONS FOR SD

Necessary resources	1
Nr. of respondents	8
Relative frequency %	100

Legend:

1 – non-refundable funds

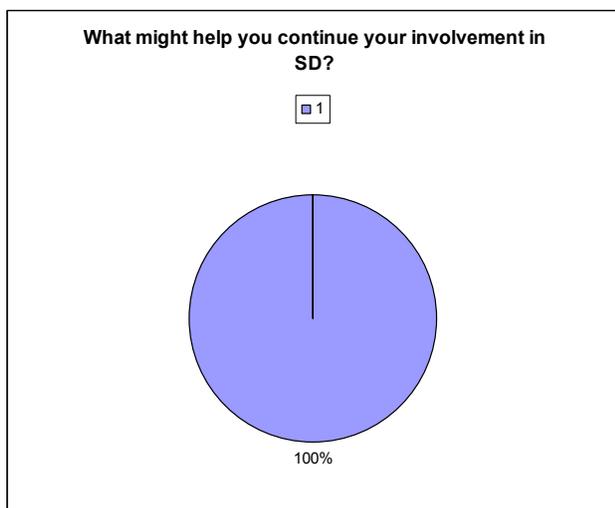


Fig. 3. Solutions for the involvement in SD

To the question “What might discourage you in this direction?”, the answers are as presented in the next table and figure:

TABLE IV  
FACTORS THAT MIGHT DISCOURAGE SD ACTIONS

Discouragements	1	2	3	4	5	6
Nr. of respondents	3	1	1	1	1	1
Relative frequency %	37,5	12,5	12,5	12,5	12,5	12,5

Legend:

1 –too difficult conditions to access funds

2 – bureaucracy

3 – legislation and bureaucracy

4 – nothing

5 – human resource

6 – difficult conditions to access funds and high interest rates for credits

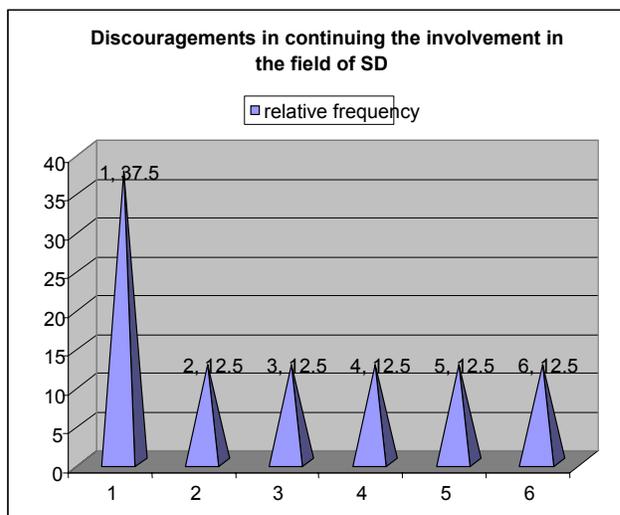


Fig. 4. Factors that might discourage the involvement in SD actions

We might say that the main causes that discourage the entrepreneurs are the following:

- 37,5% believe that it is too difficult conditions to access funds;
- 12,5% believe that bureaucracy is the cause;
- 12,5% believe that legislation and bureaucracy are the barriers;
- 12,5% of the respondents answered that there is nothing to discourage them;
- 12,5% see the human resource as insufficient motivated and aware of the need for SD;
- 12,5% believe that the difficult conditions to access funds and high interest rates for credits are the barriers.

The following question has required those investigated to compare with their competitors regarding their involvement in SD: “In comparison with your competitors, do you believe that your enterprise is more involved, less involved or similarly involved in sustainable development?”

TABLE V  
THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE FIRMS IN SD IN COMPARISON WITH THE COMPETITION

The firm’s situation	1	2	3
Nr. of respondents	4	2	2
Relative frequency %	50	25	25

Legend:

1- More involved

2- Similarly involved

3- Less involved

Thus, 50% of the respondents have answered that their firm is more involved than the one of the competitors, 25% that it is similarly involved and 25% that it is less involved.

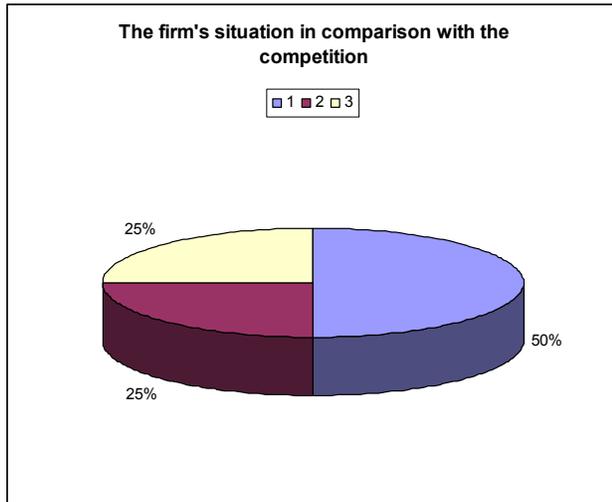


Fig. 5. The involvement of the firms in SD in comparison with the competition

Next question aims the firm's involvement in the life of the community in comparison with the competition: "By comparing with your competitors, where do you find yourselves as far as the involvement in the community is concerned?"

TABLE VI  
THE FIRM'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY IN COMPARISON WITH THE COMPETITION

The firm's situation	1	2	3
Nr. of respondents	4	2	2
Relative frequency	50	25	25

Legend:

- 1- More involved
- 2- Similarly involved
- 3- Less involved

50% of the respondents answered identically, maybe not noticing the difference between the questions that their firm is more involved than the competitors, 25% that it is involved the same and 25% that it is less involved.

Further on we have been interested by the firm's preoccupation for evaluating the performance level that has been achieved. Thus to the question: "How do you evaluate the level of performance of the enterprise, what kind of indicators do you use?", the answers were:

TABLE VII  
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS USED IN FIRMS

Level of performance	1	2	3	4
Nr. of respondents	2	2	3	1
Relative frequency %	25	25	37,5	12,5

Legend:

- 1- Other indicators
- 2- Financial and qualitative

- 3- Qualitative
- 4- Financial

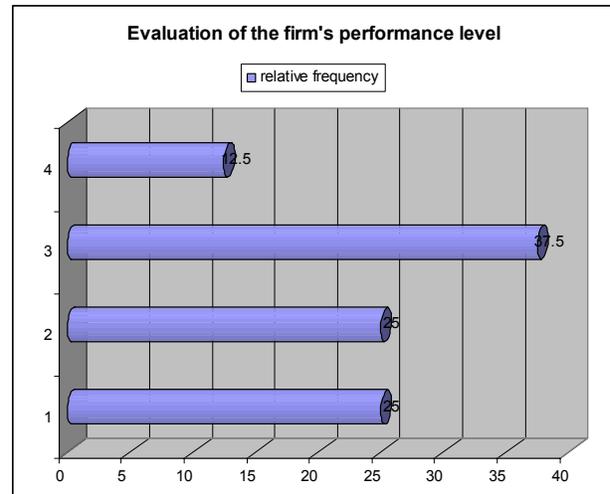


Fig. 6. Evaluating the firm's performance level

25% of the respondents from the investigated firms stated that they use other indicators than the financial or qualitative ones, 25% also use financial and qualitative indicators, 37,5% use only qualitative indicators and 12,5% only use financial indicators.

## II. CONCLUSION

Buying the necessary means to put in practice the actions for sustainable development has been different in the investigated firms, from personal resources to donations.

Still, the resources are not enough to allow the development of strategic plans in the field of sustainable development, the expected help being non-refundable funds.

As far as the non-participant firms to the programs and support funds in the field of sustainable development, the main barriers are the lack of financial resources and the difficult conditions for accessing the support funds.

The main stimulants needed by these enterprises are financial.

It should be emphasized the promotion of sustainable development's role and the finding of means so that the entrepreneurs would be able to orient their activity in the SD's spirit. Meanwhile, there should be more money for these programs and their promotion within the firms.

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