

## **INTERNATIONALISATION OF EXECUTIVE PROGRAMMES FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION. A TRANSATLANTIC COMPARATIVE STUDY**

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**Abstract:** *The development of the public sector has been influenced by specific characteristics as they pertain to the sector's crucial function of achieving efficient, effective, and equitable delivery of services at all levels of government both in the continental and regional spheres. Generally, the processes of globalization, Europeanization and/or integration impose best innovative practices, and experiences in designing and operationalizing efficient executive programmes in meeting the training needs of the public sector in every country regardless of its varying nature across international or regional boundaries. In this context, the paper aims to analyse and emphasize the general trends of an imminent internationalization process for the Executive Programmes in Public Administration. The research method is based on "Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA)", taking into consideration both the curricula and organization of the programme.*

**Keywords:** *internationalisation of executive programmes, public administration, comparative study*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The comparative studies on the Master programmes in public administration could be approached independently, as an intermediary level of the national higher education systems or in an integrated manner, in a broader context of comparative studies in the national systems of public administration. The second perspective confirms the important role of human resources training and education specific to public administration within the evolution of national public administrations.

In the context of deepening the process of European integration, strengthening and enlarging the European Administrative Space, the comparative general frameworks are shaped in view to valorise robust models of public administration, able to generalize or extend practices leading to better organization of public administration or enhancement of its efficiency. Thus, the finality of the Master programmes is changing and therefore the specific frameworks of comparative analysis will change.

## **2. BIBLIOGRAPHIC ISSUES CONCERNING THE COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Present in studies and field literature of over a century, the comparative studies have approached both the national organization of public administration, its scope, contents as well as specific normative fundamental elements. Half a century ago, Riggs (1962: 10) has tried to make a synthesis about the trends in comparative studies on public administration.

Emphasizing a series of difficulties of that process, the author states that “the first is a trend from normative toward more empirical approaches”. He also sustained “an emergent emphasis on ”nomothetic” contrast with predominantly ”ideographic” methods”. Referring to the first trend, the author highlights “the general field of public administration has its counterpart in comparative studies. Indeed, the analysis of alien and contrasting administrative systems has intensified our awareness of the relativity of our own cultural norms and hence the limited relevance of our most prized administrative values”.

The field literature comprises a lot of comparative studies, some of them being studied in the programmes of Bachelor or Master in public administration.

Geva-May (2002) represents such an example, providing a conceptual framework and analysing in a comparative manner a series of cases concerning policies and public administration, insisting on specific methodologies of analysis. Formulating a framework model of public management reform in the context of various types of political-administrative regimes, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000) accomplish broad comparative analyses, comprising states, national administrations and reforms on several continents, including Australia, North America and of course Europe. The thematic studies of Laegreid and Verhoest (2010) or Bouckaert et al (2010) open new directions in comparative analysis of public administration. The first direction uses comparative frameworks provided by the processes of proliferation, autonomy or performance while the second one reveals a comparative framework based on “coordination of public sector organizations”.

Using a comparative framework based on the structure and organization of public administration, the relational mechanisms and decision-making process, Matei (2009, vol I) achieves a relevant comparative study on public management in Japan and Romania. Heady (2001: 3-4) describing public administration as an area of comparative analysis, makes valid assertions for the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: “in the closing decades of the century, two significant proposals for reassessment have become prominent. They differ

in essential respects and tend to point in different directions. These proposals are most commonly labelled ‘postmodernism’ and ‘New Public Management’”.

In view of the current study, the direction of postmodernism is more relevant for our proposed methodology, as basis of the comparative analysis. Postmodernism is a designation with a variety of meanings. “The semantic problem begins with the fact that the term itself seems to challenge the common dictionary meaning of ‘modern’ and ‘modernism’” (Heady, 2001: 3).

In public administration, “the most noteworthy contributions to date are Fox and Miller (1994) and Farmer (1995). In view of comparative studies on Master programmes in public administration, a possible point of reference could be provided by Goedegebuure and Vught (1996), presenting an overview and evaluation of a high number of recent comparative studies in the field of political sciences and public administration. The authors insist on the methodological aspects of comparative approaches.

Randma and Connaughton (2005) draw attention on the complex identity of the academic field represented by public administration, triggering major difficulties or even the impossibility of defining an independent border related to other disciplines (see also Rodgers and Rodgers, 2000). Taking into consideration the deepening of the public administration Europeanization as profession, it could be relevant the convergence of the studies in this field. It is worthy to add the principles of public administration deriving from the concept of European Administrative Space, inducing ideas of study and contents in the educational programmes in public administration (Connaughton and Randma, 2002). However the reality shows that the studies in public administration remain, often, in various national contexts. Authors such as Raadschelders and Rutgers (1999) state that “the existence of a multitude of national studies of public administration due to the varying historical and cultural developments of individual countries and the historically rooted differences in the concept of the state” (Randma and Connaughton, 2005: 21).

Therefore, the above mentioned authors as well as other specialists sustain unanimously the fact that there is no European model of education in public administration. However, in our opinion, the developments in the last quarter of century, determined by the processes of Europeanization or European integration have led to a compatibility of the educational programmes in public administration, expressed in the length and name of the studies, the recognition of public administration as independent discipline and curriculum, comprising subjects or groups of subjects in comparable weights etc.

“The dilemma” between divergence and convergence of studies in public administration in the light of Europeanization seems to be a false problem, taking into consideration the lack of a definition for convergence and misunderstanding that it is in fact an evolutionary process which does not necessarily lead to identity of programmes or a European model, strictly designated.

The evolution of the educational programmes in public administration in Central-Eastern European countries reveals arguments in light to support such an opinion. The successive processes of administrative reform of the state and public administration in the

above mentioned states, determined by different stages of the European integration, have induced changes also in the educational programmes in public administration.

The evolution of education in public administration in the above states has been very fast. Relative recent assertions influencing the educational programmes in public administration on “a short experience of democratic governance”, “bad reputation of the state in the communist regime” (Randma and Connaughton, 2005) or “unattractiveness of the civil service career, the lack of loyalty of the citizens to the government or true respect of legal and administrative decisions” (Drechsler, 2000) are obsolete, as the respective programmes are organized and performed at European standards in many cases. In fact a series of publications (Matei and Matei, 2013), Nemec et al. (2010), (Matei and Matei, 2009a, Matei and Matei, 2009b) highlight the transformations of the contents and organization of the educational programmes in public administration in the last decade.

### **3. ACCREDITATION INSTITUTIONS AND THEIR ROLE IN COMPATIBILITY OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Obviously there are multiple institutions for accreditation of the programmes in public administration, both national agencies of evaluation and accreditation and international institutions such as the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA). For the European programmes, its contribution to creation and consolidation of European Higher Education Area is already recognized.

The central argument in supporting its role in compatibilisation of the programmes in public administration refers on one hand to membership of those institutions to the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and registration in the European Quality Assurance Register in Higher Education (EQAR).

Since May 2013, EAPAA is accepted by EQAR, as recognition of the procedures and evaluation expertise and also as Europe’s leading accreditation institution in public administration. EAPAA has also been reviewed and accepted by the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), a worldwide association for over 200 organizations active in the theory and practice of quality assurance in higher education. In view of the current study, we shall reveal the impact of EAPAA and NASPAA standards on the contents and forms of the master programmes in public administration.

At least, from the prospect of EAPAA founding documents, the notion “Public Administration” includes: Public Administration, Public Policy or Public Management programmes. At the same time, the same EAPAA founding documents reveal the compatibility of the accreditation criteria and standards. Even EAPAA website emphasizes: “The EAPAA criteria for accreditation are in line with the guidelines of ENQA and INQAAHE and were inspired by the accreditation criteria of NASPAA. In turn, the EAPAA criteria formed an important source for the Standards of Excellence in

Public Administration Education and Training, produced by IIASIA/UNDESA taskforce”.

The fact that both EAPAA criteria and NASPAA standards might represent an adequate framework for achieving comparative studies is supported by numerous papers/researches/analyses published by recognized authors concerning the programmes in public administration. Thus, even if the paper of Randma and Connaughton (2005) does not refer to NASPAA standards, their conclusions highlight: “there is evidence of significant influence of foreign partners (in particular from the US and to a much smaller degree from Western Europe) in the development of Public Administration Curricula in several CEE countries”.

At the same time, based on NASPAA standards, Ouder and Brower (2010), aiming the public administration from Turkey, analyse “the theory, research and education” in Turkish public administration in comparison with the US one. “In the US setting, the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration provides guidance on public administration education to converge theory and practice for knowledgeable action, theoretical understanding and mutual learning” (Ouder and Bower, 2010: 132).

At the same time, the above authors state that “public administration as a combination of different theories and practices is concerned with developing four kinds of theories: descriptive, normative, assumptive and instrumental” (Henry, 1995: 21-22).

Other papers – articles or chapters in books- approach in a comparative manner the European and American studies of public administration. Thus, we remark studies by Stillman (1997), Heady (2006), Kickert (2009), Matei and Matei (2013) etc. Studying the lists with the programmes in public administration accredited by EAPAA, respectively NASPAA we draw an interesting conclusion.

Although the series of data obtained do not refer to exactly the same period of time, the first conclusions derive very clear from Table 1.

**Table 1. Types of Master programmes accredited by EAPAA\* and NASPAA\*\***

Name Accredited	Master of Public Administration		Master of Public Management	
	No.	%	No.	%
EAPAA	17	53%	3	10%
NASPAA	145	84%	1	1%

Source: the authors

Master of Public Policies		Master of Public Affairs		Others	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2	6%	-	0%	10 <sup>1)</sup>	31%
9	5%	9	5%	9 <sup>2)</sup>	4%

Source: the authors

\* programmes accredited since EAPAA set up

\*\* programmes accredited in the last year

1) Master in: European Politics and Policies (1), Public Economy and Administration (2), European Studies (1), Public Administration in Governance (1), Strategic Urban Studies (1), City Administration (1), Police Leadership (1), Public Administration and Organization Science (1), Public Sector Management (1)

2) Master in: Science of Management (1); Executive Master Degree (1); Science in International Public Service (1); International Affairs (1); Science in Urban Policy (1); MBA for Business, Government and Non Profit Management (1); Science in Public Policies and Management (1); International Development (1); Public Service and Administration (1).

Table 1 presents a situation partially conclusive concerning the orientation of the Master programmes in public administration in Europe and US. We stated “partially conclusive” due to the different coverage of Master programmes by the accreditation processes (in US, NASPAA comprises 60% of universities) and low number of programmes accredited in Europe.

However, we remark similar preoccupations in creation and promotion of Master programmes, most of them being in Public Administration. The programmes inserted at “Other” reveal similar topics.

The trend of diversification of the Master programmes is higher in Europe (31%) in comparison with only 4% in US.

#### **4. SEMANTIC ANALYSIS FOR ANALYZING THE CONTENTS OF MASTER PROGRAMMES IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

The semantic analysis has recorded significant progress shifting from analysis of discourse and literary text to substantiating theories and ontological methodologies with applicability in most social sciences and of course public administration. The applications of so called semantic technologies are more diverse, either referring to learning methods or research methods, artificial intelligence or interoperability of social and political structures etc.

The current level of semantic analysis development emphasizes for each field a specific language, with own syntaxes and vocabularies in view to achieve analysis of contents, form or evolution.

Speaking about applicability of semantic analysis in public administration, we refer both to the public administration as system and contents of educational programmes in this field. Those two parts cannot be separated, having the same language, concepts and aggregated ideas. In fact, the educational programmes in public administration implement the most relevant theories and practices of contemporary evolution of public administration.

##### **4.1 Bibliographical issues and opportunity of using the semantic analysis**

Landauer (2007) paper is fundamental in this context, as it presents by using quantitative evaluations, how words describe and substantiate the contents and different instruments, research methods, programming etc. The author draws attention on the complexity of the problem, highlighting the various valences: linguistic, artificial intelligence, statistics etc. The method designed, presented and used by Landauer (2007) is entitled “Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA)”. “Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA)” is a theory and method for extracting and representing the contextual usage meaning of words by statistical computations applied to a large corpus of text. The underlying idea is that

the aggregate of all the word context in which a given word does and does not appear provides a set of mutual constraints that largely determines the similarity of meaning of words and sets of words to each other” (Landauer et al, 1998: 2).

In this context, several programmes, software, technologies and ontological methodologies holding various applicability purposes have been developed. For example, Jovanovic et al (2007) demonstrate how the use of Semantic Web Technologies may improve the state-of-the art in online learning environment and creation of a bridge between students and professors. Peristeras and Tabanis (2006) identify a dual deficit of integration in contemporary public administration. As response, the above mentioned authors implement and exploit new business models, using semantic technologies and creating models reusable for global e-Government. Those models – Governance Enterprise Architecture (GEA) - provide the connection for the e-Government domain ontology.

A review of the state-of-the art of e-Government models is provided by Peristeras and Loutas (2008). Grouped in three categories - object, process and holistic – the authors present briefly pros and cons arguments in view of redesigning public administration for becoming more flexible, efficient and effective. e-Government interoperability, by using common models and/or ontologies, has become lately a very active research field. Peristeras et al (2009) identify over 40 relevant issues classified according to owner, scope and modelling perspective of each project. Prolonging the above preoccupations, Goudos et al (2007) present top level public administration domain ontology based on a generic model of public service in the framework of GEA. It results also a specific aspect of semantics for the field of public administration.

We also find preoccupations concerning the use of semantics in the European Union. We emphasize the Semantic Interoperability Community (SEMIC) as initiative of the European Commission in view to improve the semantic interoperability of the e-Government systems. The basic objectives are as follows:

- Develop, promote and use core vocabularies at the European, national and local level to reach a minimum level of semantic interoperability;
- Promote best practices for inter-organizational metadata management and governance.

Those objectives transposed in the context of the actual research will allow us to support the necessity to use the research methods both for the public administration systems and their adjacent educational programmes.

#### **4.2 Issues of ontological methodology for the analysis of education programmes in public administration**

In the context of the semantic analysis, the significance of the concept of ontology is not derived from metaphysics. “Ontology defines a set of representational primitives with which to model a domain of knowledge or discourse, but intended for modelling knowledge about individual, individuals” (Gruber, 2008).

The methods for developing ontologies specific to various fields are various. We shall not insist on them in the context of the current analysis. However, such an analysis

comprises four distinct stages: identification, construction, evaluation and documentation (Uschold and King, 1995).

To each ontology, systems of measurement/ evaluation are associated in view to establish the connections between terms and concepts, level and degree of deduction, hierarchy etc. For the educational programmes, in our conception an ontological methodology of semantic analysis should comprise six main stages:

- Identifying the programmes to be analysed, creating a descriptive standard documentation (DDS) for each programme
- Creating a general descriptive document (DDG) through juxtaposition of the descriptive standard documents of each programme.
- Interrogating DDG and identifying the general terms/concepts of reference, valid for all the programmes analysed
- Refining the general terms of reference in light of a better adaptation to the specificity of the analysed programmes
- Interrogating each DDS and correlating the results with the results of stage 4.
- Evaluating and interpreting the results in view to reach the finality of our research.
- Obviously, other stages may be added so that the results describe accurately the specificity of the programmes analysed.

## **5. COMPARATIVE STUDY**

The comparative study aims to present the use of the method of semantic analysis and to emphasise characteristics of the master programmes in public administration from European and American universities.

We refer to University of Rome Tor Vergata, Texas Southern University from US and National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania. The programmes selected for analysis have been the following:

- Master in Innovation and Management of Public Administration (MIMAP), University of Rome Tor Vergata (SNA, 2016)
- Master of Public Administration (eMPA), Texas Southern University (MPA, 2016)
- Master of Public Sector Management (MMPS), National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (MSP, 2016)

The general terms of reference have been obtained through interrogation of DDG (obtained by juxtaposition of documents MIMAP, eMPA, MMPS) and keeping only the terms/concepts with a recurrence higher than 10. These terms and the level of recurrence are presented in 5.1.

### **5.1 General reference framework for the comparative analysis**

The general reference framework will comprise two important parts. The first part refers to organization of the programme and the second part refers to the contents of the programme.



## Organization of the programme

A1 Activities (W=3.2%) – types of activities included in programmes, their volume, length

A2 Certification (W=21%) – level of study and professional degree

A3 Colleges and universities (W=22.6%) – presenting the organizing university, presenting the membership of the teaching staff to various universities

A4 Courses (W=7.1%) – presenting the programme, its destination, the number of credits, hours of didactic activities compulsory weekly

A5 Levels of education (W=4.5%) – presenting the level of study, type of programme (executive) and perspectives for development of participants' career plan

A6 Role and relationships (W=3.2%) –relationships of collaboration with other programmes, partnerships

A7 Students (W=12.6%) – conditions of access, opportunities for students, skills and competences acquired

A8 Supervision and evaluation (W=9.7%) – modality to evaluate learning outcomes on subjects, finalization of the studies

A9 Teaching methods (W=12.2%) – teaching methods

A10 Training (W=3.9%) – possibilities to extend the specialization provided by university for tertiary parties

For each term of reference, a weight was calculated in view to evaluate the importance given by organizers to each field.

## B. Contents

B1. Administrative policies (W=24.5%) – revealing the specific topics of the programme concerning administration and innovation

B2 Accounting and budgeting (W=3.7%) – specific activities targeting the mentioned field

B3 Management (W=20.4%) – the content references indicate almost equally the topic specific to general management and Public sector management

B4 Health (W=14.2%) – the name of the term of reference is inadequate. The text references aim performance measurement, experiences and good practices.

B5 Legal terms (W=5.5%) – the fundamental legal concepts used in development of the activities in the programme

B6 Politics (W=12.5%) – referring to central agencies, policies and political structures approached and described in the content of the programme

B7 Research and technology (W=10.8%) – informational sources used, research models and case studies

B8 Society (W=8.4%) – institutions, organizations, social processes approached in programmes or taken into consideration as finalities of the programme.

## 5.2 A comparative situation based on the general framework (Table 2)

**Table 2 Comparison between the master programmes analyzed**

General Terms of Reference	W	MIMAP	
		W <sub>1</sub>	Specific terms
A1 Activities	3.2%	5.6%	Exercise, class activities, theory
A2 Certification	21%	12.2%	Master level, MBA, linked to degree courses and PhD's programme in public management
A3 Colleges and universities	22.6%	33.3%	University of Tor Vergata, Sannio, Lausanne, Lugano
A4 Courses	7.1%	3.1%	Course is based on teaching activities that involve traditional lessons, e-learning studies, seminars and stages
A5 Levels of education	4.5%	0%	Master programme

A6 Role and relationships	3.2%	3.6%	Cooperation, partnership Partnership in the IKPM Network of Bolzano, the Bayerischeakademie of Monaco, University of Salzburg
A7 Students	12.6%	4.8%	Possible outlets for students are Central administration, Agencies, Authorities, Regional and local governments
A8 Supervision and evaluation	9.7%	9.1%	Assessment test modules, self-assessment
A9 Teaching methods	12.2%	15.1%	e-learning, lecture, specialised seminars
A10 Training	3.9%	2.4%	Managerial training for directors and professionals of the PA and public agencies
B1 Administrative policies	24.5%	29.6%	Administration, public agencies, logic of public management, comparison at international level, European level, regional administration, innovation in PA
B2 Accounting and budgeting	3.7%	4.5%	Public accounting in the Italian context, accounting information, International accounting standards
B3 Management	20.4%	21.9%	General management, performance management, public sector management, strategic management, reporting
B4 Health	14.2%	10.2%	Individual performance assessment, civic audit in healthcare sector, leadership, significant European experiences (UK, Denmark)
B5 Legal terms	5.5%	6.9%	Labor law, the public manager law, administrative law, civil servants legislation
B6 Politics	12.5%	12.8%	Central agencies, intermediate, local agencies, policies, political structure
B7 Research and technology	10.8%	7.4%	Information sources, theoretical model of organization, model of HRM, documents and reports
B8 Society	8.4%	6.7%	Demography, Institutions, non-profit organizations, working group

Source: the authors

General Terms of Reference	W	eMPA	
		W <sub>2</sub>	Specific terms
A1 Activities	3.2%	3.9%	Seminars in organisational theory Dual degree eMPA/JD
A2 Certification	21%	29.3%	Master degree Juris Doctorate degree for dual eMPA/JD
A3 Colleges and universities	22.6%	5.9%	- The Barbara Jordan Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs -Texas Southern University
A4 Courses	7.1%	12.5%	- Curriculum Core Courses (24 hours) -Internship in public administration - Prerequisite courses
A5 Levels of education	4.5%	11.6%	Executive master of public administration
A6 Role and relationships	3.2%	3.2%	Dual degree eMPA/JD
A7 Students	12.6%	18.8%	The programme is intended for students who want to obtain mastery of the administrative and legal aspect of public administration in the public, private and non-profit sector
A8 Supervision and evaluation	9.7%	4.9%	Evaluation of analytical competences
A9 Teaching	12.2%	7.8%	Courses and seminars

methods			Blackboard Academic S and Course Compass e-learning
A10 Training	3.9%	2.1%	Software
B1 Administrative policies	24.5%	19.6%	National and international public service - Internship in public administration - Comparative public administration - Computer applications in public administration
B2 Accounting and budgeting	3.7%	5.4%	Government Budgeting and Financial management
B3 Management	20.4%	7.5%	Basic management processes, decision making, administrative management
B4 Health	14.2%	23.4%	- Emphasize knowledge of the working of governmental and non-governmental organization - Oral communication skills
B5 Legal terms	5.5%	0%	-
B6 Politics	12.5%	20.4%	- Public policies, policy making process, analytical methods, public policy government
B7 Research and technology	10.8%	16.2%	Information technology, quantitative methods of research, academic research
B8 Society	8.4%	7.5%	Mobility in professional careers, social policy, global institutions, minority groups

Source: the authors

General Terms of Reference	W	MMPS	
		W <sub>3</sub>	Specific terms
A1 Activities	3.2%	5.1%	- Research project - Courses and thematic seminars
A2 Certification	21%	17%	Master degree specialization "Public Sector Management"
A3 Colleges and universities	22.6%	13.8%	National University of Political Studies and Public Administration
A4 Courses	7.1%	10.8%	- Fundamental and specialised discipline - Complementary (core, elective) and supplementary discipline
A5 Levels of education	4.5%	7.7%	Master in public administration
A6 Role and relationships	3.2%	4.6%	Partnership at a local, national and international level for internship and practice
A7 Students	12.6%	15.4%	Students will have developed and improved skills in following fields: analysing and solving concrete management and executive problems of the public sector
A8 Supervision and evaluation	9.7%	13.8%	Final exam
A9 Teaching methods	12.2%	7.7%	Thematic seminars, e-learning method
A10 Training	3.9%	4.1%	- Managerial training for directors and professionals of the PA and public agencies
B1 Administrative policies	24.5%	14.4%	National and European administration, international level
B2 Accounting and budgeting	3.7%	6.1%	Financial management and Budgeting of public administration
B3 Management	20.4%	26.2%	General management, public finance management and public sector

			management
B4 Health	14.2%	14.4%	- Knowledge in the field of public administration for the students -Developing research and practice skills
B5 Legal terms	5.5%	5.5%	- Administrative law of goods - Civil servants and public employees
B6 Politics	12.5%	5.5%	- Public policy analysis for managers, public decision making, e-government
B7 Research and technology	10.8%	14.4%	Research project, comparative analysis, case studies
B8 Society	8.4%	13.5%	Non-profit organizations, public employees, authorities and public institutions

*Source: the authors*

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The semantic analysis provides a friendly instrument in view to compare the educational offers from the quasi totality of higher education fields. In order to obtain relevant comparative results, we need data processing, statistical analyses, as well as adaptation of primary data to the specificity of the programmes analysed. Thus, in Table 2, we introduced the indicator W, evaluating the share of various terms of reference from the general framework of comparative analysis.

Consequently, simple analyses of statistic correlation reveal general or specific conclusions, as follows:

- high general correlations, 0.874 respectively 0.733, significant at the 0.01 level with the general comparative reference framework of MIMAP and MMPS programmes and low correlations, 0.557, significant at the 0.05 level for eMPA;
- the inter-programmes correlations have a lower level, the most powerful ones are between MIMAP and MMPS (0.492, significant at the 0.05 level) while the weaker ones are with eMPA.

Concerning the contents of the programmes, the correlation analysis also highlights:

- powerful correlations, significant at the 0.01 level, between MIMAP (0.952) and the general reference framework and lower (0.541 respectively 0.670) between eMPA, MMPS and the general reference framework;
- average inter-programmes correlations on their contents (0.362, between MIMAP and eMPA, 0.537 between MIMAP and MMPS) and low correlations between MMPS and eMPA.

Concerning the organizational framework of the programmes, the correlations reveal more obvious differences. Thus:

- the two European programmes have a very powerful level of correlation with the general framework, significant at the 0.01 level, (0.813 for MIMAP and 0.809 for MMPS, while the American programme has a lower correlation of 0.548;
- the inter-programmes correlations indicate an average correlation, significant at the 0.05 level between eMPA and MMPS (0.542) and an inverse correlation (-0.011) or almost inexistent between MIMAP and eMPA.

Of course the comparative analysis could be more detailed. The conclusions presented confirm the relative difference of vision concerning the design and organization of Master programmes in the field of public administration between the European and American universities. The examples are relevant for the current analysis and conclusions, the programmes analysed being accredited by specialised institutions from Europe (EPAA) and US (NASPAA).

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