

UNIVERSITATEA DIN BUCUREȘTI

Habilitation Thesis

Psychology

Professional Development in the Context of the
Organisational and the Civic Space

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Abstract

The habilitation thesis entitled 'Professional Development in the Context of the Organisational and the Civic Space' encompasses scientific contributions published in the last seven years in fields of organisational and environmental psychology. The thesis is organised in seven parts:

The first part is a synthesis of my professional and scientific development, which describes progress I have registered in my profession, from a didactic, academic and scientific point of view. I started my career as a mechanical engineer, working for the Aeronautical Construction Company in Braşov. The dramatic shifts which took place on the labour market in the 90's determined me to consider a professional reorientation in the field of socio-humanities, where I have valued my industrial experience by specialising in the field of organisational psychology. I have taken all the steps of the didactic career since the year 2000 when I have started working for the university as a university tutor. Since 2014 I have been a professor at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Science, Transilvania University of Brasov, where I teach disciplines in the field of organisational and environmental psychology.

I received my doctoral degree from the UB in 2007, at the University of Bucharest, as a result of my doctoral thesis entitled 'The Psycho-social Abilities of Public Service Employees'.

The results of the scientific activity materialise in the publication of articles in ISI journals, indexed in the database, as well as books, written either as a single author or as a co-author. I have worked as a member in the research teams of eleven national and international projects; I have coordinated two international projects for the Romanian partner. I am a part of the assessment board of some magazines and conferences, as well as part of the Committee of Administrative Science, of education and psychology of ARACIS. I coordinate the 'Psychology' collection of the printing house of Transilvania University of Braşov.

The second part consists of the synthesis of the main scientific accomplishments, elaborated as a member of the Centre of Personal, Professional and Institutional Development and Education for a Durable Community, which is found inside the university for which I work. The scientific contributions are grouped on three research axes, as follows

1. Contributions to the investigation of the appropriation of the work and study spaces in Romania

The interest for the appropriation (term used in the French literature) of, or the attachment (in the Anglo-Saxon literature) to the workplace (paid work or internship) is of recent date and comes as a result of the collaboration with Liliane Rioux, a professor of organisational and environmental psychology at the University Paris La Defense. Due to the scarcity of studies conducted on a Romanian population aimed at this dimension of the individual's relationship with his environment I have started a series of own or collaborative research, which has demonstrated the capacity of workplace attachment to consolidate organisational resilience; the attachment towards the university was proven to be connected both to the students' academic success and to their social network. The attachment towards the workplace and the commitment towards the organisation have proven to be valid factors of the civic organisational behaviour. In the future I intend to continue the investigations in this direction by connecting the attachment to the subjective age, namely the tendency of rejuvenation/aging.

2. Contributions to the investigation and elaboration of instruments destined to the development of professional competences and training via internships

The interest for the organisational competences has materialised in the doctoral thesis, whose nucleus was given by the psycho-social competences of public service employees. Later, in three projects in which I have participated, I have looked at the topic of defining and developing the professional competences, either alternatively, or inside a workshop, through methods meant to facilitate the explicitation of the tacit knowledge of the experts, in order to facilitate the development of the starters' competences.

In a TUNNING type project, the topic of the graduates' competences was again brought into discussion, concentrating this time on the practical competences, developed through internships inside companies. The objective of the research was to identify the differences between the importance given to the competences registered in the specialist's profile and the degree of accomplishment, the respondents pertaining to three categories of involved actors: the graduate, the teacher and the employer.

A research field which is still preserved is e-learning, a didactic approach to which I was attached for various years as the coordinator of the faculty's distance learning programme. In the course of two projects conducted by interdisciplinary research teams (engineering and psychology-pedagogy) which aimed the field of e-learning and blended-learning I investigated the various facets of competence

development for the future engineers in the IT field. I focused on expectancies, satisfaction and computer mediated communication. The research interest aimed both students and teachers, in order to come up with suggestions to improve the competence development methods.

3. Contributions to the study of pro-environmental behaviours in Romania

The imperative of durable development challenges the psychologists to contribute to the identification of the values which generate pro-environmental behaviours. The antecedents of the friendly attitudes and behaviours towards the environment were a minor subject in Romania due to the low social importance given to the topic. The results of the studies which I have conducted allowed the connection between the pro-environmental behaviours and psycho-socio-demographic variables such as locus of control, age, gender, empathy, the quality of a member of environmental associations. After a first use on different Romanian samples, the adaptation of a pro-environmental behaviour questionnaire and of an inventory of values to the Romanian population becomes interesting and useful for future research.

Objectives pertaining to the same psychological perspective on environmental durability are targeted in on-going or start-up phase projects. The practical use of the approaches to be undertaken consists in shifting the attitudes of the young population, high-school and university students, in order to stimulate environmental sensitivity and, consequently, to reduce environmental aggression.

The third part is dedicated to the brief presentation of the activity of coordinating research in two international projects.

The fourth part presents the involvement in coordinating the students in order to conduct research as a part of their B.A. and M.A. projects, as well as the involvement in the papers written by teacher candidates in order to obtain their teaching degree.

The fifth part describes, using an example, the organisational approaches of the didactic activity, through an innovative teaching proposal, coming up with the idea of partnership teaching and connection of the students to the research interests of French colleagues, as well as with the possibility to share the results of their own research.

The sixth part describes future career development directions over a time span of approximately 10-15 years in which, on short and medium term, I intend to direct my research on topics little discussed up to present in which I should be able to develop the already accomplished work. Two of the targeted topics are:

- The rejuvenation tendency in the professional context, as a means of preservation of one's professional identity.

- The age bias-is in relation to the pro-environmental behaviour.

Future plans include trans-cultural studies Romania-France, which are attractive because they allow the identification of the cultural border in organisational and environmental issues. The conclusion of an on-going project concerning pro-environmental education and the conclusion of a project proposal targeting the impact of values on the pro-environmental behaviour of the young are also part of future accomplishments.

- The seventh part consists of the references included in the present thesis.