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for Regional Social Cohesion

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Higher Education for Regional Social Cohesion

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Two countries, one goal, joint success!

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Introduction

Theoretical Considerations about the Multidimensional Support of Higher Education for Regional Social Cohesion

Recent volume summarizes foundational theoretical considerations before the international survey gathered in peripheral higher educational region of EU. The investigated cross-border area is characterized by common history of economics, society and education. However, the overpowering logic of the political and economic path in the last decades resulted in not only a disadvantaged, peripheral status but such a degree of social inequality, cultural diversity, regional fragmentation and general distrust that prevented it from sizing opportunities and challenges. As member states of the EU, the area was given the possibility to solve this situation, although it is apparent that a dynamic engine is necessary for development. Since higher education was capable of providing such an inspiration in several European regions, we have been examining the role of higher education in a region's social and economic transformation and the degree to which expanded higher education is capable of answering those regional social demands that it is inspired to undertake. The current research project interprets the role of higher education in terms of its function in supporting social cohesion, its contribution to establish common social knowledge that is based on recognizing and harmonizing individual and collective interests and the ability for cooperation.

The concept of social cohesion is part of that social-theoretical tradition that states that the cooperation of members of a society, the conscious engagement of individuals, groups and organizations, the recognition of their mutual dependence and the acceptance of ignoring short term self-interests as norm are all able to decrease the effects of structural and cultural diversities present in ever complex societies. The public sphere has established a pressing need for re-defining the functions of higher education, thus the social-theoretical concept of social cohesion became an up-to-the-minute slogan used by international organizations and it turned into a firm belief that the dual and interacting aim of higher education is to increase individual and collective well-being. This teleology is interpreted through the effective and adequate answers given to the problems of local societies due to its local and regional embeddedness. Although economic welfare is a chief component of well-being, it is unable to develop it alone, thus achievement in higher education is definitely determined by non-economic factors as well. This raises numerous

important questions: the type of training goals fulfilled by the different levels of restructuring higher education; the degree to which the short term goal of training labor force satisfies holistic concepts of achievement that targets graduates' well-being; or whether institutional utilitarianism is capable of overcoming its momentary economy-driven self-interest in the region. To what degree does it ensure the admission of a wide range of social groups, that is, to what extent is it capable of reducing the effect of disadvantaged external conditions, how much does it restructure the region's society and transmit prosocial norms towards that society? During our research, we wish to examine the degree to which higher education fulfills this expectation with the help of various dimensions of achievement in an area at social and economic disadvantage.

The reader is provided with ten articles which can, at a rather superficial regard, be classified into three topics related to the domain of higher education and social cohesion: cross-country comparisons, develoment and social justice.

A cross-border comparative research, like the HERD project, sets the stage for interesting cvasi-experiments regarding the impact of national, cultural and institutional covariates of important dimensions of social life. Several articles in the volume are proposing interesting Romania-vs-Hungary comparisons on issues like gender equity and values. In their article on 'Gender Differences in Higher Education in the "Partium" Region', Gyöngyi Bujdosó, Ágnes Engler, Hajnalka Fényes and Zsuzsanna Tornyi from the University of Debrecen have built hypotheses concerning correlates of gender in higher education in the cross-border area relying on one of the previous regional comparative researches implemented by the Center for Higher Education Research and Development (CHERD). Thus, relying on the literature and on the TERD research project, the authors expect significant differences between men and women students with regard to: cultural capital, use of ICT in learning and professional and personal career plans. Veronika Bocsi is proposing, on her turn, a set of attitudinal dimensions (i.e. individualism vs collectivism), carefully extracted from the international comparative literature on values, to be measured and compared across countries and universities participating in the HERD research.

A second possible thread of articles in this collective volume is that of development which is a stake for Florica Ştefanescu, for instance, who highlights the fact that dramatic social and economic change should be seen not only as a challenge for the social integration of youth, including students in the Romanian–Hungarian cross-border area, but as opportunity given that proper assessment and policies are provided. An innovative approach to the issue of regional development is the one that is being introduced in the HERD

research by Tamás Kozma, Károly Teperics, Zoltán Tőzsér and Edina Kovács from the University of Debrecen via the concept of learning region. Issues of measuring the development potential on a regional basis at cross-border level, using educational indicators, are discussed in the study delivered by the four authors which rely on Canadian and German experiences aiming to finally put the levels of learning intensity on a regional map that will contribute to the elaboration of comparative analyses and development plans.

But the bulk of articles from this special issue of HERJ are devoted to justice in access to education. Differential access to higher education is one of the main topics of the HERD research projects as universities are usually regarded as elements in the mechanisms of stratification or restratification. Floare Chipea and Zsolt Botond Bottyan, both from the University of Oradea discuss at length the concepts of equality, inequality and social exclusion with relation to participation in tertiary education with a special focus on the Romanian context. The two authors underline the multidimensional nature of inequality in higher education – while not only probabilities of access are unequal, institutions themselves and units of universities within are stratified also on the one hand and put the attention of their future research activities on the Roma and the youth with disabilities as the most disadvantaged groups of potential students. Another dimension of inequality approached at a theoretical level in this volume is that of variation of educational achievements. In her article Sorana Săveanu is detailing the most important, classical or more recent, theoretical strands in the analysis of differences in achievement and status attainment like the Blau-Duncan model or the theories of maximally and effectively maintained inequality.

Minority status is another situation which can hinder equal opportunities for access in higher education. According to the article by Emese Belényi, Gábor Flóra and Éva Szolár, this has been the situation in the Partium region of Romania, an area of Transylvania, for the last centuries in which one can talk of education system: ethno-nationalist educational policies have massively influenced the access to education for Romanians in the Hungarian dominated Transylvania as well as the opportunities for education of Hungarians living in Romania from 1920 until 1990. The democratic transformations following 1990 have not necessary improved the situation, though important changes like massification, the Bologna process and the adhesion to European Union have occurred in last two decades.

The mathematics of social justice with regard to access to tertiary education depends not only on the figures of entrance but also on the distribution of persistence and success of those who already entered the universities. The issue of dropout has become a salient one along with the

massification of higher education enrollment numbers. In his article crafted for this special outlining issue of HERJ, Adrian Hatos, from the University of Oradea, is detailing the main theories explaining persistence in higher education and stresses some important directions for future research of dropout in higher education in the framework of HERD research project: focus on academic and social integration of students, increased attention for non-traditional students, specially distance learners and for the contextual effects on persistence and dropout. The academic and social integration of students in campus life, captured in the concept of social capital is at the center of concern for Gabriella Pusztai, Sergiu Bălţătescu, Klára Kovács and Szilvia Barta who have proposed a causal model of student well being that has at its heart the integration of students in networks in and besides campus, with achievement, health and moral awareness as moderating forces. The four authors have set the aim of their cross-border team to test this causal model using survey data produced by the HERD research.

Gabriella Pusztai & Adrian Hatos

FLORICA ŞTEFĂNESCU

Social and Economic Change –Windows of Opportunity for the Young Generation

Introduction. Change theories

The word "change" has many meanings, most of the time it refers to movement, alteration, evolution, revolution, development, discontinuance, shifting, transformation, reform. Classic definitions like: change is the movement of an entity from the state X in the T0 moment to the state Y in the T1 moment, although frequently used, do not convey all the complexity of the term since change also occurs with the appearance or disappearance of an entity. In his analysis of the theories of change, Boudon (1984) suggests that one also has to keep in mind also the linguistic changes, often one and the same reality being expressed using different words, like: organism-system, idealist-culturalist.

Debates regarding change have been going on since Antiquity, the disputes between Heraclitus and Parmenides being, one way or the other, present in all change theories. Considering the movement and implicitly, the change that accompanies it as being continuous, one can encounter serious difficulties in the scientific research under the aspect of investigating or measuring a phenomenon because the constant situation in moment T_0 is no longer valid in moment T_1 Boudon (1984) being more concessive, admits that there are processes whose state in T_1 can be determined knowing their state in T_0. But this characteristic is not a general one, in most cases, especially in the case of social changes, determinism "is not an essential assumption" ("n'est pas un postulat indispensable"). Stability periods, short as they may be, are nothing else but conventions, because every moment change does not stop, the object or the phenomenon investigated does not stop, change goes on. Therefore, in order to exit this dead end, we have to assume that, on a short term, changes are insignificant and we should use data collected at a specific moment as being also valid for the next moments, a fact that does not entirely suit the deontology of research. The same Boudon says that "the theories of social change cannot belong to the scientific genre (in a Popperian way) except for one condition: that the data from which the explanation is researched constitute a well-defined set. This implies the fact that such theories cannot be but local or partial" (own translation), ("Les théories du changement social ne peuvent appartenir au genre scientifique (au sens popperien) qu'à une condition: que les données dont on recherche l'explication constituent un

ensemble bien défini. Ce qui implique que de telles théories ne peuvent être que locales et partielles »). Unlike Nisbet (1969) who due to this reason considers such theories irrelevant, Boudon considers them necessary because they answer some problems regarding society. This is the reason why researchers have focused their attention and efforts especially on "the periods of social stability, trying analyses focused on a single aspect of the social life" which "are partial to depth and allow for controlling the studied case through controlling and isolating variables. But this fact, though it engendered a detailed and profound knowledge of society, cannot offer satisfying results in discussing the problem of change, which entails the mutability and the disorganization of the systems" (Our translation) (Tripon & Pop, 2000, p. 132).

As a consequence, change has become in itself an object of research. Defined as "the passing of a social system or a part of it from one state of being to another state from a qualitative and quantitative point of view" (our translation) (Zamfir & Vlasceanu, 1993, p. 521) and recognized as a dominant theme of sociology even from its beginnings in the 19th century, it was analyzed by Comte and Spencer, Durkheim, Marx, Weber. Currently there are a large number of sociologists, historians, economists, etc. who tackle this problem from different angles (Buchanan & Boddy, 1992; Collins, 1998; Huy, 2001; Leigh, 1988; Nisbet, 1969; Pettigrew, Woodman & Cameron, 2001; Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Despite having been approached from an evolutionary, functionalist, actionalist or conflictualist point of view, social change is characterized through a few fundamental traits: it is a collective phenomenon, noticeable and identifiable in time, long-lasting and which influences the development of a society (Roche, 1968). Likewise, it takes place following a relatively simple scheme: the context of the change – the agents of the change – the change itself – the effects of the change. However, each of these elements seems to be very complex, interacting both with themselves and with other elements.

Discussing social changes, generally speaking, one of the important aspects investigated by researchers is the one connected to the factors of social change. Durkheim, Malthus and others underline the importance of the demographic factor. Durkheim even formulated a "gravitation law of the social world" whose content was represented by the double causality relationship between the population density, the labor division and the moral density on the one hand and the civilization, economic, social and cultural progress on the other hand. The generalization of the demographic factor in explaining social changes is criticized by other analysts of change and invalidated by reality because it has been concluded that demographic evolutions have not only benefic results, but also less desirable effects (e.g. negative effects on the environment), and on the other hand some countries have developed through methods other than work division and technological progress – by conquering new territories, emigration, limiting the population growth, etc.

Another factor deemed responsible for social changes is technological progress, the "wave" mentioned by Toffler, which brings to the history's foreground new types of society like the agricultural, industrial, informational and genetic ones. Lewis Mumford has nonetheless used this factor as a criterion for classifying societies in history. Marx used the economic factor as being predominant over the social one, respectively the class struggle, capable of transforming society. Max Weber centers his explanation on faith, and Allain Tourraine underlines the role of ideologies in social change. One also has to mention that in the social domain, in a larger measure than in the physical, natural domain, the role of the hazard and of the subjectivity is more obvious (Boudon, 1984). This happens even more as the agents of change are then individuals, social groups, elites; communities are motivated by problems, values, ideologies, interests.

A synthesis of the explanatory factors of social changes has been made by Durand and Weil in "Sociologie contemporană" (1989, p. 279) where they have indicated four large groups of factors: demographic, technical, cultural and ideological ones. As for the types of change, there are numerous classification criteria and implicitly, numerous forms that change takes: quantitative/qualitative, sudden/slow, endogenous/exogenous, desirable/undesirable, major/minor, global/local, reversible/irreversible, planned/spontaneous and the list could go on with the type of changes according to the domain they take place in: social, economic, political, cultural, etc. Regardless of the criteria used and the ensuing classes, these classifications have rather a didactic importance because no change is exclusively exogenous or endogenous, minor or major, desirable or undesirable. There are always intertwining elements that together with the sum of the factors triggering change accentuate its complexity (Boudon illustrates this idea with the emergence and manifestation of racism).

Orlikovski (1996) has identified four models of change, among the first three being exogenous and episodic, and the last one endogenous and continuous: (1) the planned model in which the change is deliberately initiated and imposed from above; (2) the technological imperative model where technological forces trigger change; (3) the model of the punctual balance in which the change is discontinuous with long periods of stability interrupted by radical change; (4) the model of situational change in which the essence of change is connected to the daily and continuous practices of the members of an organization. Actually, the main difference between the classification methods regarding change throughout time is represented by the presence or the absence among criteria of the axiological element (value, culture).

Economic and social changes

Often technological and scientific discoveries triggered economic changes, starting with the steam engine (here we don't take into consideration previous discoveries, which were nonetheless important) which brought about the industrial revolution and founded the basis of mechanization with all the ensemble mutations within the economic, social, cultural, daily life and lifestyle areas and which continued with discoveries such as electricity, the aviation industry, the computer industry, etc. Although very important, the role of the scientific discoveries in triggering changes on the economic level cannot be generalized since there are numerous other factors which bring about change: the institutional factors (North, 1990), cultural, religious factors (Weber, 1930), educational, urban, political factors (Seymour & Lipset, 1959).

In the middle of the 20th century, Talcott Parsons (1951) in "The Social System" formulated a theory of interactions between the four subsystems of society: the cultural, economic, political, and social, underlining the fact that changes occurring on either level generate changes on the other levels, thus disturbing social order. According to the classic theory the basic needs of the individual and the society are covered through economic activity. Because such needs are continuously changing, mirroring the evolution of the society, the economy has to adapt too, both from the perspective of the means of production, of the material input, of the technologies used, but also especially from the perspective of human resources, meaning the skills, health and psychological state, the attitude towards work, personal and collective values and human relationships.

The main theories that cover economic changes are the economic growth theories and the theories of economic cycles. The first try to conceptualize realities but also ways of thinking specific to certain geographic areas and temporary segments. One can mention here economic growth, economic development, socio-economic development, economy, sustainable development. The theories of economic cycles explain economic evolutions by means of some repetitions that can be rendered graphically and allow for forecasts of these evolutions on a short, medium and long range. The existence of periods of longer sustained economic growth especially during the postwar period until the beginning of the 70's in industrialized countries have generated doubts among economists regarding the validity of the economic cycle concept (Krugman, 2009, p. 19). The doubts disappeared with the outbreak of the two energy crises in 1973 and 1979, followed by local crises in Mexico, South America and Japan in the 1990s and the current international crisis that has started in 2007/2008, making Krugman speak even about the "return of the decline economy" (own translation).

But when we speak about economic change one must also take into account not only changes within the economy but also within its components:

production, distribution, exchange, consumption, the importance of various economic areas, and the balance between them. For example, the ever more visible changes within the food industry illustrated by an increased demand for organic products creates among farmers a niche group of organic food producers sharing a common production manner according to pre-established norms and also sharing common interests regarding the marketing process, the cost/income ratio, specific information, the competition with the other food producers.

Such an economic change can be a gradual, continuous, partial, sudden, general, local or a global one regarding the market's demands but also regarding the inner dynamics of the economic system and can generate in its turn changes at the level of consumers' needs, meaning that it can introduce and promote new demands or reshape the previous ones or they can bring changes in the social structure. One can think of the question, Marxist as it may be: "Do needs determine the economic activity or is the latter to be found at the basis of needs?" Actually the two elements are intertwined, sometimes they are complimentary, and sometimes they are opposites due to an ever more insinuating element – interest. Habermas (1976) says that even acquaintances, especially those from the social domain are made with an interest in mind. This idea was also supported by Richard Swedberg who considered that reinterpreting the concept of interest from its perspective of choice, decision and action determinant allows for a better understanding of the social construction of economic institutions (Swedberg, 2005). Our opinion is that the major changes we face today are: (1) The globalization of the economy and the growth of the interdependence between national economies and economic areas, economic agents and the speed of changes' spread. For example in 1990 Bundesbank increased the interest rate in order to control the inflation caused by the reunification of the country. This measure caused perturbations in the whole of Western Europe and even caused conflicts of interest. (2) The increase of the share of the tertiary sector in the developing countries (both regarding the absorption of the work force as well as regarding the contribution to the GDP) and deindustrialization together with the migration of the industry to the emergent countries. In the Western countries the tertiary sector goes beyond 60–70% reaching 80% in some countries. Meanwhile, the industry moved towards the Asian area, especially China and India, which have extremely high economic growth rates since they have a numerous and cheap labor force. (3) The positioning of the banking system within the center of the economic system and the depletion of its possibilities of stimulating economic growth and the ethical problems that accompany this system. (4) The ageing of the population and the disruption of the normal evolution of the labor force replacement process. (5) An ever stronger intertwining between private and professional life, by that meaning the invasion of private life by the professional life (which is exactly the opposite of Weberian bureaucracy.)

The present faces these economic changes on the background of an ever more precarious social stability, possibly even accompanied by the installation of a new "economic order" characterized by the repositioning of the economy's components: the production system, the finance- banking system, the budgetary system, but also through the appropriation of a volatile character for the economic rules and of a perpetual change which leads to the necessity of adapting constantly the economic environment. At the same time with the changes from the economic area, one can notice changes in the social area, some of them determined by the economic causes, others which determine themselves the economic changes.

The social changes are usually underlined in the theories of social stratification, the theories of social mobility and in demographic theories, especially those of the "demographic transitions". Social stratification reflects the hierarchy resulting from the inequalities regarding the access to and the distribution of economic, professional or status resources among the members of the society. Both from a functionalist perspective (Davis & Moore, 1945) as well as from a conflictualist perspective (Tumin, 1953) the main cause of the stratification is represented by "the system of motivation offered to the individuals to occupy diverse positions and to carry on the associated tasks through differentiated material and prestige orientated rewards." (Vlăsceanu 2011, p. 301)

There are two great theory groups regarding stratification: those that divide the society into relatively homogenous social classes (Marx and the post-Marxists, Weber and the post-Weberians), respectively those that see social stratification in terms of multiple strata, with vague divisions (Pahl, 1989; Vlăsceanu 2011, p. 308). The Marxist dichotomy of the 19th century dividing the society into the bourgeoisie and the proletariat (defined through the relation with the property and the control over the production means both in a conflictual relationship), is nuanced by post Marxists and adapted to the new realities of the 20th century: not only does the working class get homogenized (as a follow-up of obtaining class consciousness), but it also gets diversified, paralleling the diversification of qualifications with the ever increasing labor division. The capitalists, in their turn, are divided into owners and managers and one can see the emergence of a new class within history, the middle class. Weber redefines social classes switching the focus from production to consumption. For him, social stratification is the result of the unequal distribution of not only economic resources, but also of the symbolic ones (status) and of power which includes differences of prestige and life styles. (Vlăsceanu, 2011, pp. 302–303; Weber, 1946). This stratification on social classes seems to be replaced today by an occupational stratification (Grusky & Sorensen, 1998; Pahl, 1989), by a division based on the consumption and life style models (Pakulski & Waters, 1996), or according to the postmodern

theories, on fragmentary identities and multiple affiliations of individuals to groups and areas of the economic-social life.

The theories of the social mobility are included in the ideas regarding the intergenerational mobility (occupational status variations occurring during an individual's lifetime) or intergenerational mobility (occupational status variations occurring during several generations of the same family: children, parents, grandparents, great-grandparents…), respectively of horizontal mobility (on the same stratum) and of vertical mobility (which implies changing the social status), the latter one being either ascending or descending (Zamfir & Vlăsceanu, 1998).

Last but not least, demographic theories can explain the quantitative and qualitative mutations occurring among the population, by using numerous indicators such as the birth rate, the death rate, the marriages' and the divorces' rate, the life expectancy, many of these having nuances precisely in order to also underline qualitative aspects: the life expectancy within the health system, or the death rate for children, etc.

A synthesis of these theories of economic-social changes was developed by Grusky in his introduction to a paper he coordinated called *Social Stratification: Class, Race and Gender in Social Perspective* (2001, p. 33). He identified two types of approaches: (1) structural approaches which encompass three important models: a) economic capital models, b) human or political capital models which have two forms: post-industrial models (the "optimistic" version, the "pessimistic" version: polarization and exclusionism) and new class models (the knowledge class, the managerial class, the parti-bureaucratic class), c) differentiation models (gradationalism, pluralism and multidimensionalism). (2) cultural approaches that include: the simple uncoupling, postmodernism (fragmentation, new social movements), cultural emanationism. Conclusion that can be drawn from this presentation is that the analysis of social changes can be done using different approaches, which would lead to different models and versions considering the factors, the change agents and their effects that were used in the study.

The graduates' adjustment to the new socio-economic realities

Numerous and intense debates around the theory of the human capital (Theodore Schultz, Jacob Mincer and Gary Becker, Mark Blaug, James Hackman, so on and so forth) converge towards the idea that the degree of education of the individuals influences decesively their professional success, determining at the same time the growth of the economic and labor productivity. On his turn, Thomas Davenport (1999) perceives the investment in education as a form of insurance against the unemployment and poverty, in the conditions wherein the number of the employment available supposing superior education is in perpetual growth.

Within the context of the ever faster changes, the graduates' opportunities rely on their ability to adapt to change, an ability which should be encouraged and practiced beginning with the college years not necessary taking into consideration the hidden curriculum, but more explicitly, under a formal manner, through exercise and simulation, even more so considering that in the new life context one can develop even a resistance to change. This fact is considered by some researchers as being inherent to the human being, an idea strongly contested by others (Bareil & Savoie, 2002) based on the fact that it does not represent the complexity and the richness of the possible reactions towards change, or based on the fact that one attributes to this concept an exclusively negative connotation when actually the resistance to change can be interpreted also as a concern of the individual towards adaptation, which means facing the challenge of the new context brought by change.

> "[…] the ideological power of casting opposition (the articulation of grounded, yet different proposals and objectives) with « resistance » (a rather futile and backsliding failure to confront new business realities). Thus, workers, who «resist» change tend to be cast as lacking the psychological make-up to deal with change, and so, are said to be weak and fearful of change, whereas, those who support or manage change are regarded as « go-ahead » chaps who have the « right stuff » for career success" (Collins, 1998, p. 92).

The current approach to resistance to change is ambiguous (Piderit, 2000) and this is accounted for by the individual's work and life context and is not considered as something inherent to the latter (Ford, Ford & Macnamara 2002).

When entering the labor market the fundamental problem for each graduate is the one connected to the work environment, meaning the economic environment (the situation of the labor market, the income level, the development potential) and the social environment (the social affiliation structures and the networks, the interpersonal relationships) to which one can add the organization's physical environment, respectively the cultural one. "Coleman study" has proved since 1966, that the school results have no connection with the resources thereby the education institution disposes of, be it material, human or curricular, on the contrary, they are connected to the quality of the student body" – as measured by the proportion of students with encyclopedias in their home and the proportion with high aspirations.This thing confirms the fact that the university graduates have more opportunities, including the aspect of professional integration.

The changes in the occupational structure of a society can sometimes influence the professional development of an individual and his/her inherited occupational status. There are also other factors that leave their mark upon this individual development: the personality, the human, social and cultural capital of the individual and his/her parents, the residential environment as well as a

series of motivational factors (income, needs, work environment, interpersonal relationships, etc.). The occupational structures are flexible since they modify both according to the work force demand, technological production and organizational changes, as well as according to the work force offer, respectively its educational level. Such changes, parallel to the increasing number of university graduates can lead to either a constraint for people to accept the existing job offers, sometimes below their qualification, or to adapt the occupational structures to the educational level of the work force.

The graduates, facing the realities of the labor market act according to the logic of formal economy, according to the rational choice theory which maximizes usefulness by searching for a workplace where they can value the qualifications they get through studies as well as improving their chances of professional development. Boudon (2000) establishes at the basis of this behavior several postulates: methodological individualism, understanding, instrumentalism, egocentrism, maximization or optimization. But he also admits that there are situations where this theory becomes invalid. There are within economy and sociology alternative theories (Bellah, Elster, Putnam,), which insist on the morality of economic agents, on the irrational behavior guided by affinities, judgments, feelings, values, beliefs more than by interests.

Social and economic changes bring alterations also at a behavioral level of the university graduates looking for a job. For Romania, as well as for the other former communist states this is visible in mentality and attitude change regarding the role of the state within the society, a change which demands time, education, and training. Konrad and Szeleny (1979) has underlined in his work *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power* an interesting difference between the communist economies and the capitalist ones: while within capitalism the market creates inequalities and the redistribution corrects them only partially, within communism the redistribution creates inequalities (especially regarding the intellectuals) that the market manages to correct only partially. This mentality of the dependence towards the state, although overcome to a certain degree, continues to persist, maybe even in traditionally intellectual families (such a hypothesis would be worth investigating) and is manifested among other things through still low entrepreneurship. The fact of enlisting the Romanian intellectual within the pattern of the Western ”New Class” (made up of individuals with higher education, a high professional status and a relatively big income who do not produce but manipulate ideas and words), (Bruce-Briggs, 1979) was delayed by the model of economic construction of the Romanian ”paternalistic” capitalism (King & Szeleny, 2004). Unlike liberal or hybrid capitalism, paternalistic capitalism allowed for the preservation of decision-making positions, of economic and political power by the former members of the communist leadership who didn’t only avoid promoting capitalism, but even tried to stop it, thus defending their privileges.

The solution to this blocking lies largely within the educational system coupled with individual effort. Offering students adequate knowledge within a dynamic curriculum according to the novelties from each field of study together with the construction of an entrepreneurial culture can be a means, both necessary and useful to transform the graduates' apprehensions connected to the economic and social change to opportunities for development. On the other hand, on the labor market, the market mechanisms act coupled with the social networks, personal acquaintances or connections, "embeddedness" (Granovetter, 1985) that young people must create so that they could use them later on.

Despite the diplomas' inflation, a phenomenon that also started to influence other former communist countries within the background of tertiary education's development, counter to the already proven errors of the human capital model (Mark Blaug, 1976), the realities provided by the labor market unlike the educational levels based structure of the unemployment, show an appreciation by the society of diplomas and of their holders, even if sometimes such indicators hide the phenomenon of over-education, of taking a job that demands a lower education than the individual might have. The virtuality, the communication in a globalized world and the offer of adaptation to the ageing population are three areas in which regardless of the educational specialization, one must identify specific activity domains that have a place on the labor market.

Conclusions

An analysis of social change must use the results of recent research within this domain, without neglecting the fundamental lines of thought of classical sociology. Approaching the problem of social change cannot be done scientifically but from an interdisciplinary perspective and through abandoning the idea of a determinative factor for change, of an absolute general model of causality.

The intentional, deliberate changes within the socio-economic domain can represent an obstacle when it comes to the absorption of the students by the labor market, but they can also represent an opportunity, knowing well that young people are adaptable, less flexible, and more receptive to the new than older people. The young graduate of a higher institution must know the world in which he/she has to integrate in the future, not only the labor market, but also the ensemble of the economic and social life, to be able to choose for himself/herself an individual trajectory, to be able to relate himself/herself appropriately to others and adapt quickly to changes, a fundamental aptitude for obtaining success.

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SORANA SĂVEANU

Education and Society. Theoretical Approaches of the Role of Educational Attainment

The sociology of education – an appealing approach

The constant preoccupation on behalf of researchers, theoreticians and other agents involved in the public discourse on the problems of social and educational inequalities prove the genuineness of these themes which can be found in the areas of sociology of education that deal with the construction mechanisms of social structure and the characteristics of social stratification and mobility. The scientific debates and explications focus on the way the educational system and participation in the educational process itself contribute to accessing the destination statuses, both occupational and social, consequently blocking the social reproduction processes.

A relevant sociological explanatory model regarding the structure of social inequalities needs to start from the identification of the ways in which education contributes not only to the development of human resources in terms of transmission of knowledge and training skills necessary to access occupational statuses, but also to provide opportunities for upward mobility for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. Thereby, central in this kind of approach are the investigations of the trend recorded by the Origin–Destination–Education relations. The quality and intensity of these relationships reflect the meritocratic nature, or the contrary, the processes of intergenerational inheritance characteristic to a social system. The paper addresses the general concern related to the identification and description of the main explanatory models for the educational attainment and educational trajectories. The constant preoccupation and emphasis of sociologists on this emerging field has led to several theories, each with specific explanatory power and each helping to clarify the challenges of social inequalities and the role of education in shaping the social status of individuals. The present paper is part of the "HERD: Higher Education for Social Cohesion Cooperative Research and Development in a Cross-border Area" (HURO/0901/253/2.2.2.) research project, supported by the European Union European Regional Development Fund.

Initial premises

Since the beginning of the 60's, researchers and theorists have intended to develop explanatory models regarding the position of education in the process of accessing the statuses of destination (Blau & Duncan, 1967; Haller & Portes, 1973; Sewell, Haller & Portes, 1969). The persistence of social inequalities manifested by the systematically identified impact of the socio-economic status of origin measures have generated various theoretical approaches about how the achieved attributes in the educational process are critical for later social trajectory. If the situation is so, then we can assume that for accessing higher social statuses, in other words, to record an upward social mobility, is sufficient to achieve upward educational mobility, the diploma representing the ticket that ensures the social success. Moreover, if a large part of the destination status is a mirror of the origin social status, then the educational attainment loses consistency. In this case, the diploma is not an indicator of the knowledge acquired in school, but only a credential for the social position of the family of origin (Boudon, 1974; Collins, 1971). The educational system permits in this way a transfer of power, not economic power, but rather a cultural and social one, that contributes to the promotion of inequality of educational opportunities (De Graaf, 1986; Di Maggio, 1982).

The challenge for contemporary sociology is to identify the levels and the distribution of social inequalities and to explain their persistence, regardless of a society's stage of development or the egalitarian principles according to which it is guided. For a long period of time, the existence of social stratification was seen as an inevitable reality of the organization of the social system. This reality has lead theorists from this domain to reflect on the sources of social inequalities and the way such a system works (Milner, 1987). If the society may be characterized through a set of positions whose importance lies in the possibility of accessing desirable assets, then the approach is to find answers about how individuals are distributed into these positions. Some of the assets that are considered desirable are available since birth, these are ascriptive attributes of an individual, and for other assets individuals have the responsibility or the privilege to acquire them. These are achieved attributes that permits the placement of individuals in higher social positions in the hierarchical structure. A critical role in this process is given to educational attainment, which is considered the main mechanism that contributes to the balance between the measures of social origin and the destination statuses.

Main approaches regarding social stratification

Two opposing positions have emerged regarding the social stratification theories. A classic paradigm is functionalism, based on the representative paper

of Davis and Moore (1945). According to this paradigm social stratification is the answer to a social need. The positions most valued in a society are those that have a key role in the efficient functioning of the system, and to fill these positions society needs individuals with specific skills, knowledge and abilities.

In this way inequality occurs at two levels. On one hand, inequality lies in the process by which values and rewards are assigned to different social positions, and on the other hand, inequality occurs through the process by which individuals are distributed in the social positions that are sorted according to the rewards that are assigned to them (Grusky, 2001). The essence of the process by which individuals are placed in social positions is the social reward system. For individuals to be motivated to invest time, effort and resources to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to occupy a certain social position, society assigns each position certain rewards, whether they are quantifiable in financial or material resources, or social nature, such as prestige, power, life style etc. The main criticism of the functionalism paradigm concerns the role of power, the individual has a passive role, so functionalism ignores the possibility of a social actor to use the power conferred by the importance of his social position in order to maintain this position or to enlarge his privileges. The second criticism refers to ignoring the dysfunctional aspects of a social stratification system, especially to the negative consequences of social cohesion.

The second theoretical block consists of conflict theories. These theorists view society as being composed of different social groups that have conflicting interests. The existence of the social stratification system is justified by the interests of groups that have acquired the power and prestige to maintain this position at the expense of less privileged groups (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Collins, 1979; De Graaf, 1986; Tumin, 1953). The reproduction of social inequalities occurs mainly at the school level, where students learn the ideology of the elites and develop a false consciousness based on the myth of meritocracy, according to which they all have equal chances. Those who fail to obtain an advantageous position consider that they are the ones who do not have the necessary skills, and so the reproduction of the power and wealth of the elites is legitimate. In other words, education is a mechanism to manipulate the masses, and equal opportunities are not possible in such a system (Bowels & Gintis, 1976). Regarding the educational system, according to this paradigm, school hides a relation of domination, through which the educational process ensures the transmission of the elite's status culture. The socialization process occurs in the way of accepting an unjust society.

From the perspective of ensuring equal opportunities, in a stratified system individuals should have equal chances to move from within the hierarchy of social positions. In terms of social equity, the level of social

mobility that characterizes a society justifies and legitimizes the existence of social inequalities through a system where individuals have to leave their disadvantageous positions throughout their lifetimes. Addressing social mobility issues assumes the investigation of the way to establish the socio-economic status of destination, determining its covariates and identifying the mobility patterns. Analyses are based on mobility tables that allow one to observe the individual's social route and to compare the degree of mobility between different social strata (Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1992; Goldthorpe & Mills, 2008).

Making sense for educational attainment

Undoubtedly the main mechanism to ensure social mobility in industrial societies is educational attainment. It has the responsibility of training individuals to occupy different social positions. The inequalities that are present in acquiring diplomas have an impact on the inequalities that are present in occupying different social positions, and hence the extent and levels of social inequality characteristic to a given society (Kerckhoff, 1995). As such, the logical response of governments is to develop strategies to reduce/eliminate the inequalities of opportunities of access to education (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 2002, see also Olivert, 2007), the categories that are covered by these programs being the disadvantaged ones (children with disabilities, children from minority groups, neglected, delinquent or at risk children etc.). However, as suggested by studies in this domain, the liberalization of access to education does not necessarily translate into the reduction of the inequalities of educational opportunities.

The functions of education are classified into: manifest functions (the obvious ones, those which are recognized in the official documents regarding the educational policies) and latent functions (those that refer to the side effects of education) (Hatos, 2006; Rotariu, 1996): (1) moral integration and social compliance; (2) cultural socialization for maintaining social cohesion; (3) explicit function of professional training; (4) allocation of statuses and training for adult roles; (5) continuous re-production of social structure? (6) ensure social mobility or social reproduction. According to functionalists, regarding education, school has a key role in the selection and allocation of individuals into social positions. The process is seen as a meritocratic one, meaning that each person receives the social position according to the effort that he or she invested in acquiring it, in the process the achieved characteristics (education) are invoked over the ascriptive characteristics (gender, ethnicity). To justify this social reality, education, or rather educational policies have the responsibility to ensure equality of opportunity (Boudon, 1974; Breen & Jonsson, 2005; Hallinan, 1988; Lynch & Baker, 2005; Shavit & Blossfeld, 1993; Yair, 2007). The inequality of condition, the inequality regarding the

social status of origin, is tolerated on the grounds of merit, with the condition that everyone has an equal chance at the start. In this way social stratification acquires a legitimate character. If the social competition rules are fair, the society has the right to reward the winners and punish the losers (Grusky, 2001). The struggle for social positions is tolerated and accepted, but the condition that is required is to have equality at the starting point. Three processes are essential for ensuring the functioning of a meritocratic system: (1) the relationship between social origin and educational attainment should be reflected only by skills and knowledge; (2) the relationship between educational attainment and the occupational status acquired has to be strong, educational qualifications should have the greatest importance on selection in the labor market; (3) this relationship should not be influenced by differences regarding social origin (Goldthorpe, 1997; Goldthorpe & Jackson, 2008).

Regarding the position of education in the well-functioning of a social system, we have to mention also the neoclassical model of human capital school (see Beker, 1993). The model sees education as a worthwhile investment. Society uses education in order to develop the human resources needed for the development of itself as a whole. This statement revels that more investment in education will lead to a more developed society. The beneficial effects of the investment in education are explained by the increase of the productivity and efficiency on the labor market.

Classic status attainment models

What should an individual do in order to obtain upward social mobility? What are the elements involved in determining an individual's social destination? Do social actors have equal opportunities in this process? Does this process marks major differences according to different periods of time and the societies that are analyzed? These are only some of the questions raised by sociologists in the 60s. Numerous studies generated a vast literature regarding the status attainment processes.

The classic path model of Blau and Duncan (1967) clearly established the role of education in shaping the occupational status of destination, educational attainment mediating the intergenerational mobility process. The study *The American Occupational Structure* (1967) highlights the greater importance attributed to education in determining socio-economic status, compared to the socio-economic status of origin (the father's status). According to this model, education is a factor that generates social mobility; school career cancels the effect of parental statuses. We refer in this sense to the meritocratic nature of social mobility, the achieved characteristics having a central role in the process of shaping the status of destination in detriment of the ascribed characteristics. The Blau-Duncan model divides the process of social mobility into three segments: educational attainment, the transition from

the educational system to the labor market and the intragenerational mobility that occurs during adult life (DiPrete, 2000).

Starting from similar research questions, the Wisconsin model (Sewell, Haller & Portes, 1969) was developed in the same period, and adds a psycho-social component to the mobility process. Psycho-social factors, such as aspirations and motivation mediate the mechanism by which family origin environment influences school achievement and the occupational status acquired. The major contribution of this model refers to both the theoretical and methodological development of the concept of "significant others". The role of the significant others, parents, teachers, friends, is to shape the child's levels of aspirations and motivations, these determining the educational attainment and achievement. The mechanism is indirect and indicates the modeling of higher educational aspirations through determinations of social origin status measures. In this sense we can draw a parallel between this explanatory framework and the model, which refers to the processes of intergenerational inheritance of status aspirations, expressed by the construction and reconstruction of habitus (see Bourdieu's theory).

Taking the position of educational attainment in the social trajectory of an individual, Boudon's analysis (1974, see Cherkaoui, 1997) identified the presence of two structures (see Figure 1 below), which in combination is present in all industrially developed societies.

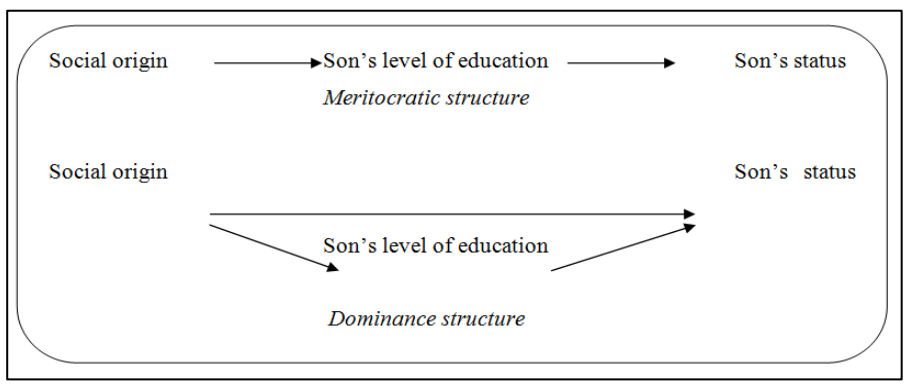

Figure 1: Meritocratic and dominance structure developed by Boudon

Source: Cherkaoui, 1997, p. 197–198.

While the first model recognizes the fully determination of the status of destination by educational attainment, the second model identifies a direct relationship between origin and status of destination, which is only partially mediated by education. In fact, the model expresses social reproduction (Hatos, 2006), because the meritocratic ideal refers to the total independence of status

of destination from social origin, and Boudon's model does not solve the problem of inequality of social opportunities.

As a result of the above mentioned aspects, the main subjects in the approaches regarding the relationship between education and the social position acquired are, in a briefly summary: the role of education in society, meritocracy, inequality of educational opportunities and reproduction of social inequalities. These topics generated a vast literature, justifying the importance and also the actuality of educational issues. The orientation and strength of the relations between the three units, Origin, Education and Destination, indicates the attributes that are found in a society in terms of social justice.

According to the intensity and the ascendant or descendent pattern that characterizes the relationships between these units, the main thesis were outlined in the sociology of education: a strong OE relationship indicates inequality of educational opportunities, a pattern of increasing intensity of the OD relationship indicates social reproduction, instead an increase in the ED relationship indicates a society governed by the meritocracy principles. In the early years of sociology of education, studies were developed to investigate the reduction of the OE relationship and an increase of the importance attributed to ED relationship. These hypotheses have led to numerous investigations, stimulated by skeptical attitudes toward the success of education in democratic societies.

New approaches determined by the low mediating role of educational attainment

The exaggerated optimistic attitudes toward democratization of society through democratization of education lost its intensity with the relatively low impact obtained after the implementation of specific reforms in the 60s. Studies conducted in this field (Boudon, 1974; Coleman et al., 1966; Featherman & Hauser, 1978; Jencks et al., 1972; Featherman, Jones & Hauser, 1975; Prandy & Bottero, 2000; Shavit & Blossfeld, 1993) have reduced the enthusiasm generated by the appreciation of the school as the only key to access successful statuses. The famous Coleman report (1966), for instance, clearly sustains that student's background and their socioeconomic status are the fundamental elements that explain educational achievements and so, contribute to the later social statuses.

The analysis of Breen and Goldthorpe (2000) on the relation between Origin – Education – Destination (OED scheme) which focused on the pattern of the educational impact on destination status, revealed a decrease in the role of education in enhancing social mobility. Their study represented a turning point in the view regarding the role of education, according to which industrial societies are on the way to meritocracy, concretely – education-based meritocracy (see also Goldthorpe & Jackson, 2008; Goldthorpe & Mills, 2004;

Jackson, Goldthorpe & Mills, 2005). In order to probe meritocracy, the relationship between education and socio-professional status must be strong. In other words: the stronger the impact of education, the lower the relation should be between origin and education. The answer given by this team of researchers is linked to the criteria used for selection on the labor market. In the selection of employees in the labor market, there are other characteristics of individuals that are relevant besides educational qualification. Consequently, the authors transpose the selection based on merit outside the educational system. This characteristic is specific to the new economies in which the attributed value of a diploma is less relevant than the actual existence of specific abilities and competences considered crucial for achieving performance. Such criteria are used mainly in the selection processes for higher positions such as managers and in sectors such as in the services, human resources, tourism, and public relations, and less in the selection of professional and auxiliary personnel (Jackson, Goldthorpe & Mills, 2005). In order to justify the presence of social inequalities and the advantages of children from higher social backgrounds in maintaining social positions, the authors refer to characteristics transmitted culturally, which are more important assets in the competition on the labor market (the so-called soft-skills). Namely these authors suggest that the qualities appreciated on the labor market are not acquired in school but rather are the result of the socialization process within families, groups and communities in which the young belong.

Educational trajectories approaches

The element that justifies the presence of inequalities in the educational system is its organizational structure. Each educational system is gradually organized (Rotariu, 1996) and the passage to a higher level presupposes a selection process. The criteria used in this selection may sustain meritocracy, or on the contrary, may promote inequality of opportunity. The mobility within the educational system, as well as social mobility, requires the finality of a selection process with several factors. The criteria used nowadays for transferring to higher educational levels should indicate an objective selection, meaning that access to a superior stage should be based on the results obtained at lower levels of education, and the knowledge and abilities acquired – as proved by the final exams.

Boudon (1974) estimates that an increase of inequalities at the level of the educational system is explained by the way individuals decide to pass to a higher stage. This decision is determined by previous school results, which are partly explained by social origin. The explanation can be found in the fact that decisions are rational and reflect the risk and cost analysis involved in accessing the next educational level (Hatos, 2006; Rotariu & Iluț, 1996). In this manner one can explain the differences determined by social origin, which are noticed in educational participation. It is a straightforward conclusion that for individuals from socio-economically higher statuses, the costs involved in access to higher

educational levels are not problematic. Consequently these individuals have an advantage from the point of view of educational, comparatively to those who lack the resources needed to educational participation.

The selection process that intervenes through the educational route is also the object of studies conducted by Mare (1981). Following the educational route is a sequential process: at each step for the superior level just a part of the children remain in the system, following the so-called general survival pattern (Muller & Karle, 1993). Mare's proposed model refers to the different stages along the educational career in which students and their families must decide if and how they will continue their routes in the educational system. The decision is influenced by the students and their familys' characteristics and thus the influence of the background will never disappear, independently of the fact that educational participation may increase. The inequalities of chances are manifested in the moments of transition to successive educational stages. The effects of social origin can be noticed mostly at lower level stages in education as they decrease when we look at higher level educational transitions.

A complex approach to the problems regarding the reduction of unequal educational and social opportunities, and the realism of a meritocratic society in which merit is reflected in the participation in education, can be found at John Goldthorpe (2000) (see also Breen, 2001; Breen & Goldthorpe, 1997; Breen & Yaish, 2006; Goldthorpe, 1997; Goldthorpe & Jackson, 2008). The theory refers to educational choices made by pupils at different stages in the school career. The differences of attained educational level by people from different social classes are explained by the decisions they make during their school careers. As such, the determination between origin and destination is not a direct relationship. Yet, the individual choices for educational mobility are reflected in the hierarchical structure.

The analysis of rational choices made by individuals starts from the idea that school aspirations are guided by what Breen and Goldthorpe name relative risk aversion (Breen & Goldthorpe, 1997). This approach justifies the reasons for the fact that educational inequalities remain constant. Risk aversion refers to the strategy of individuals in accessing educational levels, having as the main objective the achievement of a similar social position as that of origin. Consequently, the strategy is avoidance of downward mobility and less attainment of upward mobility (Breen, 2001; Goldthorpe, 1997; van de Werfhorst, 2002, 2004). The decision to continue ones' school career or to start professional activity is based upon: the probability of achieving success, the costs associated with failure, available resources and also the costs and benefits derived from each educational choice.

The sequential approach of school routes through which social and school inequalities are explained in accordance to the level at which the selection is made, determines the formulation of the premises of inequalities maintained at the maximum, and its alternative: the theory of inequalities maintained

efficiently (see Hout, 2006). Starting with the hypothesis of rational choices made by the agents involved in the process of accession of educational levels, the two theoretical models explain the persistence of educational inequalities as the effect of social origin on the ground of an opening of the educational system to those from the lower social classes.

In general, the maximally maintained inequality theory invokes the fact that dominant social groups are protecting the access to advantageous social positions until the moment when all its members attained a certain status (Raftery & Hout, 1993; see also Gamoran, 2001; Gerber & Hout, 2004; Hout, 2006). At the moment when the need for educational qualifications for such positions is saturated by members of the dominant group, the educational system is modified to provide access to disadvantaged groups to higher educational qualifications (lower taxes, permissive admission conditions). This increase of participation in education of groups with lower status hides the real perpetuation of inter-generational educational inequalities. The process can be explained by the reduction of social needs manifested at the educational level to which access was granted to the previously disadvantaged. For this reason, disadvantaged groups face an illusion which can be seen when the efforts for the finalization of the educational cycle and the benefits do not appear. This explicative model estimates a pessimistic evolution regarding the success of educational policies characteristic to the strategies developed in the post-communist countries. The development of educational systems has in this context a reverse effect by reproducing the educational inequalities.

As a supplement of the maximally maintained inequality theory one can find the effectively/essentially maintained inequality theory (Hout, 2006; Lucas, 2001). This underlines the fact that at the moment of saturation of an educational level (by controlling the access to this level in terms of social origin), the higher class does not necessarily turn to a higher level, it can maintain its request to the same level by a shift of orientation (diplomas obtained at the same level yet in other fields).

Conflictualist theories

The contribution of schools to the perpetuation of a system characterized by social inequalities and the deepening of social stratification due to the processes of social inheritance was the main topic addressed by the conflictualist theories. These were developed mostly as a reaction to the evolutions of inequalities manifested during the 70's. The explosion of school participation starting in the 60s, along with the economic development, technological progress and industrialization determined enthusiasm regarding the impact education may have on attaining destination statuses. Several studies conducted in this period regarding social and educational mobility

brought forward once again the problems of social success achieved through education.

Opposing the functionalist paradigm, which invokes the societies' "need" to explain the development of educational system, the conflictualist theories see education from the perspective of the role it plays in achieving the "needs" of capitalists. This need can be found in the allocation methods of individuals within the social realm depending on their different socialization, the protection of paths for transition of social privileges from one generation to the next and maintenance of the legitimacy of this process (Bowels & Gintis, 1976). The main thesis of conflictualists is that school organizations are institutions through which individuals are socialized in such a way as to accept their position in the social structure (Karabel & Halsey, 1977).

One of the theories developed under this paradigm is the one of accreditations (Collins, 1971, 1979). The author considers that the request for educational qualifications in the labor market is not determined by technological development. Through the attributed value of diplomas in the selection process on different occupational positions, the elites maintain their positions in the hierarchical structure. Thus, the increased requests for education hide a monopoly, as the diploma does not suggest in this case the level of knowledge, abilities and competences gained in school. Diplomas solely attest to the membership in the elite group, and this is the one that decides the conditions for occupying a certain position, controlling the access of inferior groups to privileged positions.

School is the element that masks the power structure from a society. Under the pretext of a promise for social mobility, through selection and reward mechanisms, school succeeds in strengthening the structure of the social hierarchy. Education is meant to transmit the social status from one generation to the next (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). The view on education as a mechanism for achieving an intelligent and cultivated society is a camouflage for a new type of domination, constraint and manipulation in which physical force is replaced by a different form of violence legitimized precisely by the pedagogical socialization and instruction processes.

Further approaches

Educational inequalities are reflected in the differences of school performances of students, as well as in the inequalities of access to higher educational levels. From the perspective of registration in educational systems, studies reflect not just the educational participation but also educational results, mostly measured by a student's school results. In a global society characterized by profound social transformations, the evaluation of educational participation is not sufficient – it must be enriched with the evaluation of the quality of this process. In this regard, school results of students represent an indicator of school success both at individual level as well as for the entire educational system.

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ADRIAN HATOS & ANDREA SUTA

Student Persistence in Higher Education. A Literature Review

Introduction

Expansion of higher education came along with a decline in selectivity but also a decrease of the chances of students to persist in colleges and universities until degree completion. The extent of student dropout problem, which raises to up to 50% of the initially enrolled students in some countries, in a context in which university funding depends directly or indirectly on student count and where analysts and critics are questioning the issue of participation and persistence in terms of social justice motivated in the last several decades a great number of theoretical approaches and empirical investigations into the correlates of student persistence in higher education.

Our article will endeavor a synthetic endeavor into this area of interdisciplinary scholarly research following a simple outline. After having discussed briefly the main concepts, the frequency of students withdrawal, the main research strategies and the unit of analysis we will proceed with a more detailed presentation of the two main broad theoretical traditions in this area: the integrationalist view, which is currently associated with the work of Tinto, on the one hand, and the models of student decisions based on rational choice theory, on the other. We will complete our theoretical synthesis with some short conclusive remarks concerning the investigation of student persistence within the HERD research project.

Main concepts: student retention, dropout, persistence, dropout syndrome and intention to leave

In a general manner, dropout from school signifies the abandonment of school before obtaining the corresponding certificate. Operationally, dropout is similar in understanding with non-completion. Decades ago Tinto had highlighted the narrow definitions of student dropout of the researches he has covered in a thorough literature review (Tinto, 1975). He warns, for example, that voluntary dropouts should be considered separately from those depart from school due to academic failure. At the same time, one should consider differentiating permanent from temporary dropouts.

An alternate concept to student dropout is student retention which is the inverse of the process of dropout seen from the perspective of the educational institution. The higher the dropout rate, the lower the retention rate, i.e. the proportion of students that have remained enrolled in an education cycle until a

moment. Obviously most universities are striving for increasing retention rates, especially if dropout comes with a financial consequence. From the point of view of academic standards, the idea of retention can be seen in a different way: conversely, a low retention rate may be regarded as a consequence of academic exigency while high retention rate may be regarded as a sign of low academic standards. Students that succeed in completing their degrees, that is those who do not drop out, are sometimes called persistent students. Dropping out is also called attrition and the dropout rate may be also called attrition rate.

Methodology and cost feasibility of research on student dropout sometimes makes it extremely difficult to choose dependent variables. As described below, standard research methodology in the area is longitudinal, in which probability of actual dropout is modeled. In this case the main methodological pain is in differentiating permanent withdrawal from temporary leave. Nevertheless, because of data and resource constraints, some research take as dependent variable predictors of dropout, like the so-called dropout syndrome – a combination of intent to leave, discussing leaving, and actual attrition (Bean, 1985) or the intention to leave (Bennett, 2003). In these cases both the authors and the readers should be aware that the object of analysis is not dropout and consequences brought based on such results might be misleading.

How frequent is student dropout?

Dropout probabilities are variable across nations. In the US, where most of the empirical inquiries in student persistence have been made, about half of all students who enter postsecondary education fail to acquire any certificate within 5 years (Stratton, O'Toole & Wetzel, 2008). More nuanced estimates show that dropout rates are around 10–20% for on-campus courses while for online courses they rise to 25–40% (Levy, 2007). Overall, in OECD countries the average non-completion rate is around 30%, with peaks in Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden or United States. However, the higher the participation in higher education, the higher the attrition rate, highlighting the below mentioned correlation between the proportion of non-traditional students and the rate of withdrawal (Hansson & Charbonnier, 2010).

Research strategies

A great majority of research on student retention or withdrawal is quantitative, aiming to test the various theoretical models available in the field (Bean & Metzner, 1985; Bennett, 2003; Boshier, 1973; Brunsden, Davies, Shevlin, & Bracken, 2000; Chen, 2008; Cleveland-Innes, 1994; Lassibille & Gómez, 2007; Mastekaasa & Smeby, 2008; Montmarquette, Mahseredjian & Houle, 2001;

Munro, 1981; Nora, 1987; Shin & Kim, 1999; Smith & Naylor, 2001; Stage, 1989; Starr, Betz & Menne, 1972; Sweet, 1986; Voelkle & Sander, 2008). Several published materials approach the issue of dropout applying an ethnographic strategy especially when the aim of the researcher is to investigate the motivations and experiences associated with decisions to leave school (Sittichai 2012; Walker, 1999; Xenos, Pierrakeas & Pintelas, 2002).

Most of the consulted empirical materials are based on the analysis of longitudinal data using either a survey or quasi-experimental design. In each case the probability of belonging to the dropouts group is modeled using varieties of logistic regression (Brunsden et al., 2000; Chen, 2008; 1991; Kember, 1989; Lassibille & Gómez, 2007; Montmarquette, Mahseredjian & Houle, 2001; Munro, 1981; Nora, 1987; Shin & Kim, 1999; Smith & Naylor, 2001; Stage, 1989; Starr, Betz & Menne, 1972; Sweet, 1986; Voelkle & Sander, 2008; Walker, 1999). However, there are articles built on the quantitative analysis of cross-sectional data (Bean, 1985; Bennett, 2003; Levy, 2007).

Investigated student populations

As some of the researches have noticed that the mechanisms of persistence and withdrawal are contingent on the type of learning and students, studies often focus on merely one type of students. Thus, many researches are devoted to the problem of persistence in the case of various forms of distance-learning (e-learning is such a form) (Kember, 1989; Levy, 2007; Montmarquette, Mahseredjian & Houle, 2001; Nistor & Neubauer, 2010; Shin & Kim, 1999; Sittichai, 2012; Sweet, 1986; Voelkle & Sander, 2008). This happens especially because the issue of withdrawal is more acute in the case of these students but I suspect that more research is being done on distance-learning because of more readily available data.

Others differentiate between traditional and non-traditional students, where traditional usually means middle class students who enroll in university right after graduating high school. While the social composition of student body has been heavily dominated by this category before the massification of higher education, the emergence of minority students, of late enrollers – who start college in their thirties or even forties, of employed a.s.o. complicated the reflection on student dropout (Nora, 1987; Walker, 1999). Tinto's model for example is well-known to be fit mainly for traditional students but with less predictive power in other cases.

Main theories

We have started our literary review by lecturing mainly research articles, reviews and theoretical standpoints published in the last two or three decades hoping to build a clear view of the state of explanation regarding student persistence in tertiary education. Our focus was on tests of solid far reaching theoretical models rather than on explanations that infer dropout from commonsensical predictors such as intention to withdraw or satisfaction with school (Starr, Betz & Menne, 1972), predictors without which dropping out could hardly seem the result of purposeful action any longer.

The authors of this review agree with other specialists in the field (Melguizo, 2011) on the apparent domination of Tonto's paradigm in the area of student retention and dropout. Besides the variations and development of models that stress the importance of students' academic and social integration in the college life, another important stream of theories put the accent on self-interested decisions of students and/or their parents.

Tinto's student integration model

Tinto had built his model upon analogies with exemplary works in social anthropology. One is Van Gennep's *Rite of passage*, which provides the model of integration into a new community. The other is Durkheim's paradigmatic explanation of egotistic suicide, taken as example for voluntarily exiting a system (Tinto, 1975). If withdrawal in case of suicide is explained by a lack of integration, then the causal mechanism should be the same in the case of dropout of students. Dropping out is a process that should be addressed longitudinally in which initial individual features in interaction with institutional ones determine two evolving dimensions of integration – academic integration and social integration (Tinto, 1993) which in their turn determine the student's goals and investments in the school and, finally, the decision to persist or leave the school. More or less student departure may serve as a measuring tool of the social and intellectual quality of college life as much as of the students' experiences at the college.

The model makes it clear that any empirical assessment of it should measure: (1) variables of the student's academic system (grade performance, intellectual development, peer-group interactions and faculty interactions); (2) variables of student's commitment, i.e. his goals and his commitment to school. This is a would-be institutional level model, in which both students and universities bear the responsibility of eventual withdrawal. Although the initial state of the students, regarding their social status, or gender or attitudes, are important, more important are the interactions with his/her peers and faculty members as well as his/her perceptions of these interactions that occur during

the university years. However as we will see, most of the research that have put the theory to test have been focusing on individual level predictors.

It is no doubt that Tinto's model (Figure 1) has been dominating the reflection in the area for the last three decades (Melguizo, 2011). This has been the case despite of the numerous evident weak points in the empirical support of the theory. In 1997 Braxton et al published an appraisal of Tinto's theory based on the evaluation of the empirical studies based on the theory as well as a discussion of theoretical and conceptual developments founded on the integrationalist model (Braxton, Sullivan & Johnson, 1997). The article finds weak empirical support for the model and, most troubling, no support for the supposed link between academic and social integration, on the one hand, and persistence on the other.

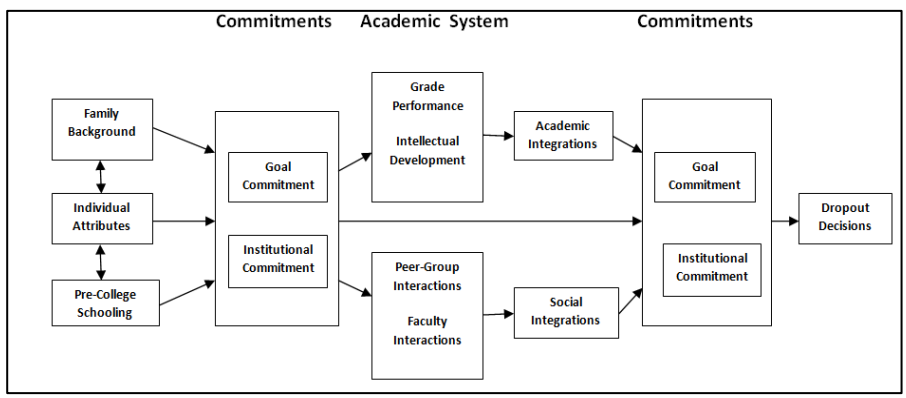

Figure 1: A conceptual Schema for Dropout from College (from Tinto, 1983)

Melguizo (2011) makes a list of the most important limitations that affect Tinto's theory of student persistence: (1) The models and the researches based on it tend to ignore the outside world and its' influence on students persistence. The dependent variable can be affected by evolutions in secondary education, in the policies to support financially higher education students to give just two examples. (2) The main concepts of the theory – academic and social integration are lacking reliable and valid measure instruments researches in the field using very diverse solutions to measure concepts like goal commitment or student engagement. The theory is limited in his applicability for every kind of students. Tinto himself admitted that it is not suited to explain persistence likelihood in the case of non-tradition students (non-residents, commuters). Other critics have highlighted that the withdrawal of minority students is not addressed properly by Tinto's theory. Bean and Metzner (1985) attempted to adapt the theory to the case of non- traditional students (older, commuters and part-time students). He argued that non-traditional students are more affected

by the external environment than by social integration variables that influence the persistence of traditional (young, on-campus, full-time) students.

Melguizo's review stresses also some questions for future uses of the model of student integration: (1) Student integration – academic and social – might be correlated to their initial characteristics which makes integration an effect of selection procedures; (2) The model leaves a huge burden of responsibility for student retention on faculty while ignoring the external factors and the impact of student characteristics on students' aspirations and commitments.

As already told, numerous empirical efforts had put Tinto's model to test (Breier, 2010; Cleveland-Innes, 1994; Kember, 1989; Stage, 1989) and some of them do not confirm all of the expectations derived from the assumptions of the theory (Brunsden et al., 2000). Some empirical investigations highlighted that Tinto's model is more appropriate for traditional (resident, young) students than for non-residents (Cleveland-Innes, 1994). Moreover, older students and students who delay entry into higher education are more likely to drop out before graduating (Lassibille & Gómez, 2007). Researches that rely on the integration theory have an emphasis on testing the impact of the two main dimensions in the theory – academic and social integration – on student persistence.

Academic integration, measured in various ways appears to be one of the most important categories of predictors of persistence and withdrawal. Abilities (Montmarquette, Mahseredjian & Houle, 2001), grades in university (Bean & Metzner, 1985; Bennett, 2003; Voelkle & Sander, 2008) academic preparedness (Lassibille & Gómez, 2007; Smith & Naylor, 2001) all have a positive influence on student's likelihood of grade completion.

However, if the concept of academic integration is developed beyond measures of abilities (previous grades, GPA) the impact of this integration dimension seem to dim. According to an early research published by Munro (1981) students' integration in the college's academic setting is more important than integration in the college's social setting (Munro, 1981). In case of Bean's research (1985) the findings were only minimally supportive of the hypothesized relationship between measures of academic integration and retention. Another important concept developed in association with that of institutional integration is that of institutional commitment. Even less convincing are the results relating the social fit of students and the probability of retention. Several empirical results indicate that the hypothesized relationship between measures of social integration could not be substantiated (Nora, 1987; Smith & Naylor, 2001). However, time and again, research shows that less successful students have habits that are less prone to academic accomplishments. In a qualitative research with subjects from Thailand (Sittichai, 2012) finds that dropping out is explained in terms related to the

degree of adjustment to student life: lifestyle, time management, interest in the field of study, break in personal relationships.

Relating lifestyle with integration in the academic and social domains of college life is very close to the well-known theory social reproduction model of Pierre Bourdieu. In *La Noblesse d'État*, the French sociologist (Bourdieu, 1989) argues that in the case of Great Schools at least the hidden curriculum is much more important that the official one and that the whole academic and social life of such a school is oriented towards the inculcation of habitus appropriate to the future roles of the schools graduates. In the case of schools preparing for leadership and management positions the offspring of French upper middle class the focus is on developing action oriented persons, capable of rapid and effective decisions, a state that is opposed to the requirements for critical and reflexive detachment from power of intellectual. Of course that only a very strong commitment can compensate for initial handicap in the necessary habitus, a commitment that is assured through a very competitive selection system that is the stage for a rite of passage as well. Since Bourdieu addresses the issue of school access and success we can extend his argument to the topic of withdrawal and retention: dropout is in this regard a consequence of an un-appropriate habitus combined with a lack of motivation.

Although institutional factors are often mentioned as culprits in the discourse on student retention the research that robustly underlines such variables is rather scarce. Both academic and social integration, from the Tinto model, can be subject of purposeful action on behalf of the university while structural contextual factors could have an impact on the social integration of the school, as already demonstrated in the case of secondary educational institutions (Rumberger & Palardy, 2005). The methodological difficulties of correctly assessing contextual factors are well-known so there is reasonable argument in favor of individualist approaches. However, some of the empirical evidence at hand shows that structural variables ought not to be ignored when explaining students` retention. (Montmarquette, Mahseredjian & Houle, 2001) show that dropout likelihood increases at the University of Montreal along with the size of student groups in the compulsory course in the first year of college. The composition of student body is suspected as being influential in the individual's decision to withdraw from college in a study by Voelkle and Sander (2008). Feelings of personal insecurity associate with the decision to dropout (Sittichai, 2012) and that could also be related to college policies.

Rational choice models

For their most part, econometric and sociological rational choice models of student persistence and dropout make the patterns of student attrition and retention an outcome of student calculated decisions rather than of structural barriers and constrains as implied by theories like that of social reproduction

(Bourdieu) or of structurally maintained inequalities (Lucas, 2001; Raftery & Hout, 1993). In this case the focus of the analyzes shifts to the mechanisms of decision making, including the class differentials in the formation of beliefs, expectations that determine the subjective assessment of costs and benefits of pursuing specific educational pathways, including that of withdrawal from university.

The econometric model of student persistence (Becker, Manski and Wise)

Human capital theory have stressed that the post-secondary schooling decisions depend on the perceived costs and benefits (Becker, 1975). As the standard human capital theory predicts, an individual will invest in schooling up to the point that the marginal cost of an additional year of schooling (indirect costs, mainly foregone earnings and direct costs, tuition and other expenses entailed by schooling) is equal to its marginal benefit (the discounted stream of earnings attributable to another year of school). Given the fact that university learning comes with cost (direct and indirect) there is no doubt that economic resources or incentives have an impact on the demand for higher education certificates as well as for students' persistence in college after enrollment. Because of the policy implications of this topic, mainly, the impact of economic factors on student persistence has been often investigated. Chen (2008) investigates the impact of types of financial aid on persistence decision, controlling for socio-economic and racial background. Both Bennett (2003) and Chen (2008) conclude that grants and subsidies significantly moderated the influence of academic performances and commitment to academic program on the decision the dropout. Breier (2010) on the other hand argues that the lower the students' ability to pay the more important is the economic factor in the decision to stay or leave in university. Such problems can become universal in case of enrollments in less developed countries.

According to the two main authors (Manski & Wise, 1983) persistence in college, after enrolling, is the result of a fourth level systems of decisions in which students had to choose learning over work and one university over the other while universities decide to admit or to reject certain candidates and to provide or not financial aid. Manski and Wise argue that persistence to graduation depends on attributes of the student and of the postsecondary institution attended. Manski and Wise were well aware that institutional factors partially determine application and, thus, the selection of students, and therefore individual and institutional factors influencing persistence could have been confounded in their research. These self-selection problems in institutions should be addressed when assessing the impact of individual and institutional factors on outcomes of academic pathways (Manski & Wise, 1983; Melguizo, 2011).

Using data from the US longitudinal surveys of the National Center for Educational Statistics the authors concluded that high-school rank (a measure of attended secondary school's reputation) and SAT (scholastic aptitude tests) are of equal weight in determining college attendance, college perceived quality and perceived college costs (all three variables instrumental for modeling college persistence). Controlling for individual and family background variables, though, the high school rank appears to be three times more important in predicting persistence than SAT. In general, using US data of the 70s, when college attendance has become already universal (55% of high school graduates at that time were enrolling into postsecondary education), Manski and Wise conclude that persistence functions on mechanisms that are pretty similar to the decision to enroll to college. Thus, the highest probability of dropout is in the case of students with the lowest probability to enroll in college.

A somewhat similar model, especially known in the attrition literature, is the College Choice Nexus Model which argues that there is a connection between student's college choice and his/her persistence in college. Once entered in college, depending on socio-economic factors, academic ability and the costs and benefits expected from enrolling in college, persistence is shaped by collegiate and academic experiences – like academic performances, provision of financial aid a.s.o.

Paulsen (2001) has argued that the theory of Manski and Wise is limited because it does not take into account that perceptions of costs and benefits vary as function of individual factors that are not monetary: socioeconomic status, academic ability, access to information about postsecondary education opportunities available, employment opportunities a.s.o. can affect the way a student valuates the costs and benefits of schooling.

Sociological rational choice has modeled grade completion within the paradigm of educational transitions (Mare, 1980; Mare, 1981). Dropouts in our case are among those who do not make the successful transition from high school to university degree. Generally, theories of this sort (Boudon, 1973) explain discontinuation decisions using rational choice assumptions which can also explain why teenagers from lower socio-economic backgrounds have smaller chances in pursuing long academic careers than those from well-off families. First of all, education career decisions are greatly dependent on perceived academic abilities, for whose assessment students rely heavily on grades and GPA's which, in turn, are significantly influenced by background factors. Secondly, perceptions and attitudes towards risks are differentiated according to social class. According to Breen and Goldthorpe (1997) the relative risk of downward social mobility is greater for students from lower social strata because young people and their families value less upward mobility than fear downward mobility and thus make conservative choices. Consequently, students from deprived social strata when faced with prospects

of failure – in school or in labor market – as a consequence of school persistence will more easily decide to withdraw than those from upper social strata.

Morgan's theory of commitments

According to Morgan (2005) the fundamental problem affecting the sociological inquiry into the socially unequal transition rates to higher education and university level education completion is the lack of theorizing on the ways in which high school graduates and their parents form beliefs about the costs and the benefits of attaining a post-secondary level education. Morgan relies at the beginning of his model building on the well-known Wisconsin model of status attainment according to which educational achievements depend on student motivation which in turn is contingent upon the internalization of achievement aspirations. Morgan's view highlights educational expectations as self-fulfilling prophecies "by regulating beliefs about future decisions on which students must condition their current behavior" (Morgan, 2005, p. 52), the core of the explanation of achievement being put thus on expectation formation which are modeled using a Bayesian learning approach.

Morgan's theory of behavior regulation through expectations socialized through Bayesian learning has been first published in 2002 (Morgan, 2002) and later detailed in a book (Morgan, 2005). Educational decisions depend on the strength of expectations concerning the future direction of actions. This feature of a person's belief is called by Morgan pre-figurative commitment and is internalized on the bases of three types of subsequent beliefs (named also pre-figurative commitments): purposeful (I will do a certain action if it is in my best interest to do so), normative (I will do what significant others perceive to be in my best interest) and imitative (I will do so if I perceive that those similar to me will do that as well). Pursuing one's pre-figurative commitment, which usually refers to long term future, implies everyday decisions needed to take actions that contribute to the fulfillment of the grand future, decisions which formally are taken following the same mechanism as selecting a grand future (preparatory commitment).

Morgan's inferences stress the importance of accurate and sufficient information for building strong pre-figurative commitments. Uncertainty lowers the strengths of commitments and the probability that the person will take the required course of action needed to fulfill this commitment.

Although Morgan's model was developed first to account for decision to enroll in university and to explain the differential effect of educational expectations on attainment between black and white students it can be easily adapted to construct a model of university continuation decision. Students with low commitment to graduation will be more likely to make steps (preparatory

commitments) leading to withdrawal from university. Commitment to graduation depends on the assessment of one's interest from school completion, as compared to alternative course of action, on the inputs from significant others (parents, teachers, role-models) and the inputs from persons considered to be in similar situation (most likely students in the same positions).

The importance of initial commitments for long-term persistence and success in college had been already recognized in the integrationalist model of Tinto and their developments. This explains why the impact of goal commitment has been investigated in most of the studies devoted to student persistence. The results of these studies supported the importance of goal commitments for the successful pursue of academic career (Munro, 1981). Equally important seem the consistent finding that preparatory commitments, the engagement of student towards the intermediary steps in fulfilling their academic career, are also very important. According to Walker (1999) students that have withdrawn were less motivated, less suited to academic work and had poorer attitudes. The most important finding was that successful students were highly motivated towards study whereas the drop-outs were not (Walker, 1999). On the other hand, there is evidence that dropout students show lower levels of interest for college of for the taught contents (Montmarquette, Mahseredjian & Houle, 2001; Sittichai, 2012). Moreover, if somebody thinks that academic burden is a demotivator in itself there is the compelling evidence from that the number of hours spent in school does not affect the likelihood of withdrawal.

A focus on distance learning students

Empirical focus on persistence on behalf of distance education students is motivated by several factors. First, it had been observed from the very beginning that non-traditional students, a category which includes distance learning students, are much less successful in finalizing tertiary studies than their colleagues enrolled in more traditional programs and conditions. Of course, part of the issue emerges from the simple fact that non-traditional students are more often with less privileged backgrounds but the specific educational technologies employed, in the case of distance education for example, play their part as well. Moreover one cannot ignore that persistence and withdrawal of distance students is more easily researchable using longitudinal designs due to the more accurate and informative record that are available as much of the relationship of students with the college occurs in written form and more recently through internet.

Some of the research that had distance education students as their population aimed to put Tinto's model of social and educational integration to test. This is the case of (Sweet, 1986) who concluded that direct telephone

contact between faculty and distance learning students significantly influenced student commitment and persistence. The impact of academic locus of control and school satisfaction on distance learning students' persistence was evaluated, on the other hand by (Levy, 2007).

Other researches have focused on variables which are specific to distance learning. (Xenos, Pierrakeas & Pintelas, 2002) have investigated the impact of students' IT competences on the probability of withdrawal, controlling for age, gender and time-management. The authors concluded that the ability to handle IT technology used in distance learning programs significantly influences the chances of academic success and the probability of withdrawal. Specific teaching devices and strategies were evaluated by Nistor and Neubauer (2010) as well as the impact of face to face activities in the case of distance learners, by Shin and Kim (1999).

Conclusions

Despite numerous criticisms and lack of overwhelming empirical support, the student integration model appears to dominate the field of student persistence research, often combined with arguments inspired by the rational actor paradigm. Therefore, at least for the case of traditional students, academic and social integration of students appear to be the most important dimensions explaining persistence or withdrawal from university. Economic calculations on behalf of the student or his/her parents, regarding the costs and benefits of college persistence or of alternate decisions, should also be considered along with the issues of content and strength of commitments.

Researchers in the area of student persistence should not neglect the important theoretical and methodological questions that they have to answer. Most robust results are obtained through longitudinal design, or at least ex-post-facto effect-cause quasi-experiments, in which actual withdrawal and persistence come to be modeled. The research in this field has to consider the differences between traditional and non-traditional students going even in more detail with differentiating the various types of non-traditional students. Finally, one has to observe that, in contrast with the research dealing with secondary school students, contextual factors are rarely considered in an appropriate way in studies of tertiary students' persistence despite the variability of institutional settings in which students are enrolled. In our opinion one of the greatest challenges for the research in this area will be to build data comparable sets from a large enough number of universities to allow the researchers to evaluate the interaction of institutional context (private vs. public, large vs. small, new vs. traditional, etc.) with individual features in determining the persistence of students in universities.

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GABRIELLA PUSZTAI, SERGIU BĂLŢĂTESCU, KLÁRA KOVÁCS & SZILVIA BARTA

Social Capital and Student Well-being in Higher Education. A Theoretical Framework

The concept of student well-being

The full and not only the cognitive, physical, emotional, moral and social development of children is a fundamental goal of compulsory education and also, of education in general. Serving as the outcome of this initiative, we educate and nurture youths that are to be well-informed, disciplined and responsible members of society. However, if this duty is present at compulsory, primary and secondary education, it is essential for higher education to declare and undertake the task of developing responsible, learned, committed adults with sound morals besides training highly qualified workforce. Shaping values, value-systems, and attitudes is crucial in addition to developing skills, abilities, knowledge, although the former one is more difficult to measure and assess. The model of student well-being offers a fine theoretical and implementation framework to measure the above mentioned "soft" outcome of higher education. According to Masters (2004), student well-being consists of five dimensions: the spiritual, emotional, physical, social and mental component. He presented "*these five aspects as separate dimensions, they are in reality closely related. The development of student wellbeing depends on growth in all these areas, as well as on their increasing integration into a balanced whole*" (Masters, 2004, p. 2). Consequently, these dimensions build up a balanced, complete system and individuals, who develop healthily, show continuous growth in each dimension. The author further adds that

> "these five areas are overlapping and inter-related, but together provide a useful framework for thinking about students' growth and development as healthy, well-rounded individuals. Although it is sometimes useful to identify a level below which students can be considered sick/unwell, the dimensions of wellbeing addressed at this conference are probably best thought of as continua along which ongoing growth and development are possible" (Masters, 2004, p. 5).

Masters' (2004) concept of well-being points towards completeness and although he researched students in compulsory education, learning did not

serve as a separate dimension, it forms the part of other major dimensions of well-being. We assume that in higher education, components related to studying and to the overall learning process, thus we aim to include this separate component in the concept of academic well-being. Based on the Masters' (2004) model, we also aim to incorporate the relation to peers, teachers and parents that is present in all dimensions. In primary and secondary education, teachers' direct, personal relation to parents and thus the possibility to influence and control it is present, although this factor is not or is indirectly present in higher education from the point of view of lecturers. Consequently, the relation to peers and lecturers are major determining elements in the (academic) well-being of students in higher education, and fortunately, lecturers have tools to develop both of these relations. This is supported by Masters' (2004) research results, namely, that student engagement, high student motivation are positively linked to high student achievement and fine learning outcomes. We assume that these statements can be adapted to the world of higher education as well.

In Masters' (2004) model, student well-being serves as an educational task and goal, while student well-being is rather a social outcome of education in Forster's (2004) model, where one goal of education is students' moral, ethical, social and emotional development, which are important elements of high social and emotional well-being. Social and emotional well-being was measured from two viewpoints simultaneously. On the one hand, it was considered as the behavioural social outcome of education (actions chosen in concrete situations). On the other hand, motivations behind actions, the acceptance of attitudes and values were also measured (reasoning, explanation of actions)[1]. In one of the research projects of Australian Catholic University (ACU), the major goal was to improve students' well-being through school work. Researchers identified factors that are universally present in the different concepts of well-being: *"positive affect (an emotional component), resilience (a coping component), satisfaction with relationships and other dimensions of one's life (a cognitive component), effective functioning and the maximizing of one's potential (a performance component)"* (ACU, 2008, p. 5). Based on these common elements, they developed their own definition of well-being: "*a sustainable state of positive mood and attitude, resilience, and satisfaction with self relationships and experiences at school*" (ibid.). Similarly to Forster's (2004) model, student well-being is considered as an educational outcome here as well, as the consequences of student well-being are embodied as effective learning, social and emotional and proper school behaviour. Student well-being

[1] Forster (2004) measured behaviour and understanding of values with questionnaires, and also conducted focus group discussions with students and teachers to investigate actions. However, he never examined true actions, only hypothetical ones, thus we assume that researching the understanding of norms, values and attitudes is satisfactory, as these serve as a phase for ethical decision making (Lowry, 2003).

includes seven and not five (Masters, 2004) in the ACU model: "*physical and emotional safety, pro-social values, a supportive and caring school community, social and emotional learning, a strengths-based approach, a sense of meaning and purpose and a healthy lifestyle*" (ACU, 2008, p. 6). High student well-being is associated with higher academic achievement (increasing motivation, engagement, participation, and attendance, decreasing problem behaviour), mental health, norm-conscious, responsible, lawful, pro-social lifestyle, whose natural consequence is increasing activity at the labour market, social inclusion (and cohesion) and social capital.

The ACU (2008a) model is more complex as compared to that of Masters (2004) as it emphasizes the internal world at schools, values education, and the learning process. Although both models targeted students in compulsory education, the ACU (2008a) concept can be adapted to higher education as well, as in higher education, young adults aim to organize and control their own learning processes autonomously, several events may evolve that cause difficulties and thus threaten with student attrition. In higher education, there are numerous courses without compulsory attendance, there are several, less-controlled ways of learning, and the role of engagement and involvement is more significant here. Nevertheless, higher education serves as the last level of institutionalised education, the final possibility to foster responsible, pro-social adults, individuals.

Based on the ACU research results with teachers, educators, researchers and experts, the previous, literature review-focused definition of student well-being was finalised as follows:

> "Student wellbeing is strongly linked to learning. A student's level of wellbeing at school is indicated by their satisfaction with life at school, their engagement with learning and their social-emotional behaviour.[…] Optimal student wellbeing is a sustainable state characterized by predominantly positive feelings and attitude, positive relationships at school, resilience, self-optimisation and a high level of satisfaction with learning experiences" (ACU, 2008b, p. 30).

In the final definition we can see that students may experience less positive situations and feelings, are able to assess their own skills, capabilities, possibilities and are willing to reach their maximum. Besides, the determining role of learning and learning experiences are also emphasized, which supports our idea on the adaptability of the model and definition to higher education[2].

[2] It is obvious, that well-being is a central element in the learning process and learning contributes to increasing well-being, thus a mutually reinforcing relation exists between the two. *CEOM* (2006) developed a model whole-school approach with three core elements: curriculum teaching and learning; school organization, ethos and environment; and community links and partnerships (parents, civil society). This model, originally developed for compulsory education institutions, may be easily applied to higher education, as the teaching-learning process is controlled, higher education institutions are organizations, what is more, each faculty or institute may serves as sub-organizations, while community links point towards peers, classmates, lecturers and other administrative personnel.

Fraillon's (2004) model is different from that of Masters' (2004) or ACU (2008a, 2008b). Although his model focuses on students in compulsory education similarly to the above mentioned models, Fraillon formed such concrete dimensions for measurement whose sub-components may be applied in higher education as well. In Fraillon's theory, student well-being is realized in the context of school communities. We assume that this statement may be easily adapted to higher education as well, where we work with learning communities. As *Fraillon* did not intend to develop a separate theory but aimed to measure student well-being, his definition is quite simple: "*student well-being is: the degree to which a student is functioning effectively in the school community*" (Fraillon, 2004, p. 24). The short and concise definition would allow a detailed specification of measurement dimensions, although Fraillon intended to work with two dimensions: intrapersonal and interpersonal.

> "The intrapersonal dimension of student well-being includes those aspects of well-being primarily manifest in a student's internalised sense of self and capacity to function in their school community. [...] The nine aspects of the intrapersonal dimension of student well-being in the school community are: autonomy, emotional regulation, resilience, self-efficacy, self esteem, spirituality, curiosity, engagement, and mastery orientation" (Fraillon, 2004, p. 30). "The interpersonal dimension of student well-being includes those aspects of well-being that are only evident through a person's interactions with, or responses to others [...] The four aspects of the interpersonal dimension of student well-being in the school community are communicative efficacy, empathy, acceptance, and connectedness" (Fraillon, 2004, p. 35).

Fraillon (2004) does not consider student well-being an implicit educational outcome, similarly to Sirgy, Grzeskowiak and Ratz (2007), who define their "quality of college life" by the perceived satisfaction with academic and social aspects of their lives. As such, both concepts are comprehensive enough, although they somehow remain at a single level, with all the dimensions and measures being equal in a system of indicators. We propose a hierarchical approach, with satisfaction with life as a whole of college students as a globalizing evaluation of student well-being, and satisfaction with college life as an intermediary variable.

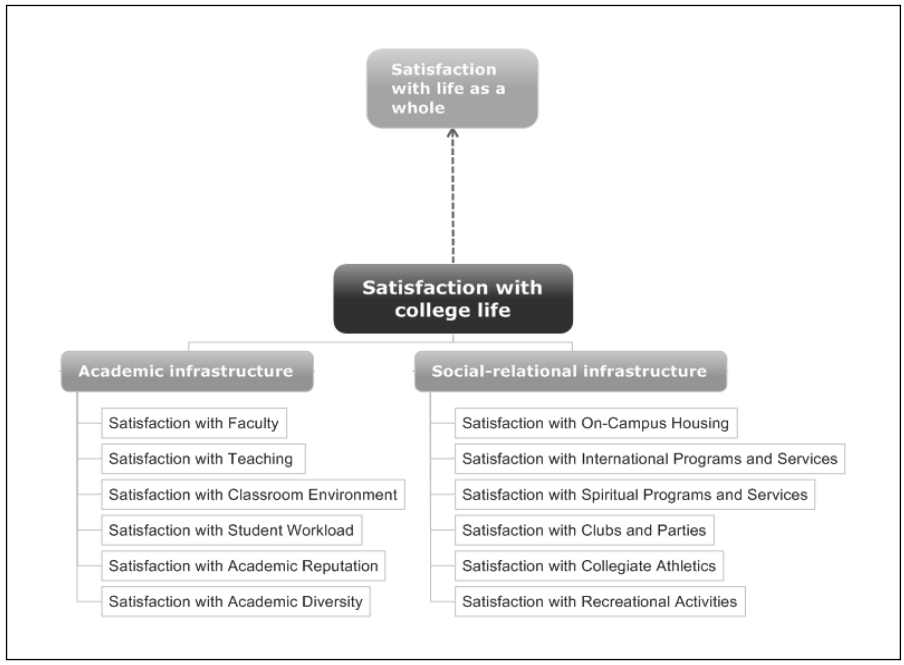

Figure 1. A model of satisfaction with college life and student satisfaction with life as a whole, based on Sirgy, Grzeskowiak and Rahtz (2007)

Social capital as a promotive factor in student well being

As a following question of our research we try to find the answer to what are the most important promotive factors, which contributes to students' well-being. We present some promotive factors, which contribute to student well-being, with special emphasis on the social capital components (social-supporting systems of individuals, social coherence etc.). Research projects are mainly directed on discovering factors of effective prevention, healthcare and health improvement but due to the complex phenomenon of health, the factors identified affect the full quality of life. Consequently, positive changes may not only detected at the individual level but at the level of communities and society (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Based on the term of protective factor which is used in psychological research, we apply the term of promotive factors in higher educational research. Instead of the critical approach of the social sciences, which primarily focuses on the risk factors, we need to investigate and identify positive, promotive factors that contribute to the well-being of students and student-communities.

The effects of social capital on well-being dimensions have been investigated rather recently (Gundelach & Kreiner, 2004; Helliwell, 2003),

most researchers in the field converging in the view that social trust has strong positive effects on individual and social welfare.

Among the components of social capital, interpersonal trust (measured by questions like "do you think you can trust most people?") seems to be the best correlated with happiness (Bjørnskov, 2006). Helliwell (2003), analysing data from the first three waves of World Value Surveys for 49 countries, found that interpersonal trust has an independent effect on subjective well-being. In a subsequent work, co-authored by Putnam, he analysed also the European Value Survey data from 1999–2000, confirming this trend. Bjørnskov (2003), analysing data on 32 countries of the world, found that happiness levels are influenced by levels of interpersonal trust, as well as those of social capital in general. The relationship is stronger in richer countries. "*This result opens for new policy options* – concludes the author. *While efforts directed at generating income may not contribute directly to happiness in affluent societies, investments in social capital does"* (Bjørnskov, 2003, p. 14).

Kopp and Martos (2011) also emphasize the role of social capital in terms of social well-being. The main point of their view is the trust and cooperation between individuals and communities as the elements of social capital are the main pillars of human well-being and happiness. Social capital is seen as a characteristic of a community, which the different communities have different rates with.

Other indicators of social capital (relationships with family, friends and neighbours, at work, civic engagement and trust) have been also found having positive influence on satisfaction of individuals with people's evaluation of their lives as a whole (Helliwell & Putnam, 2004). Moreover, Bartolini, Bilancini and Pugno (2007) demonstrate that the decline in U.S. of what they call *intrinsic relational social capital* (marriage and relationships) is longitudinally associated with the decline in happiness for the period 1975–2004. A smaller association was also found between decline of happiness and decline in trust in individuals and group membership (weak relational ties).

Starting with the idea of a lack of knowledge on the relationship between social capital and well-being, the authors of a report of the ACT for Youth Center of Excellence conclude that it is becoming increasingly clear that when youth feel connected to school, attached to adults and peers, engaged in positive school-based activities, and safe at school, they are far more likely to prosper than when any of these is missing (ACT for Youth Center of Excellence, 2003).

Most of the literature of social capital and well-being in students refer to general well-being of individual and the communities without being specific and very few try to define and systematize the idea of well-being. Likewise the term *social capital* is represented by their components and various indicators in analyses (trust, stable relationships, membership in voluntary groups).

Social capital effects on students' health

Interpersonal trust (a component of social capital) affects smoking behaviours (Minoru, 2011). The effects on health also depend on the context (Borges, Campos, Vargas, Ferreira & Kawachi, 2010). For example, social capital can increase the diffusion of harmful health behaviours, for example smoking among adolescents may spread by social networks (Valente, Gallaher & Mouttapa, 2004, as cited in Borges et al., 2010). In favourable health environments, social capital can also increase the diffusion of health-preserving practices, such as abstaining from smoking. Social and emotional support is another variable that intervenes here: the more a young person has stronger relationships, the more can benefit of social support. On the other hand, having a large network of close relationship can be a burden for the person that should offer them social support (Sapag, Aracena, Villarroel, Poblete, Berrocal, Hoyos & Kawachi, 2008). Besides the effects of youth networks, there are important effects of family and community on youth well-being are documented. For example, Duke, Skay, Pettingell and Borowsky (2009), in a longitudinal study in United States, found that higher family and community connections during adolescence promote healthy youth development. Also, social capital in communities has been found to be correlated with their collective efficacy, and by this they can act on prevention of health-damaging deviant behaviours such as drug abuse among minors (Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997, as cited in Borges et al., 2010). Hungarian researchers examined positive factors that beneficently influence youths' health behaviour, function as protective mechanisms against addiction and deviance, which are known to decrease individuals' quality of life and subjective well-being. Research projects on the relation of social competencies and drug use have proven that those with better communicative skills and higher social self-confidence are less likely to take drugs or drug-like substances (Pikó, 2010). Sound family background and close friendships are essential for coping with everyday problems. Well-functioning, social supporting systems of individuals (close family or friendship ties) have proven to present significant promotive effect. The presence or absence, quality and quantity of relationships determine individuals' physical and mental well-being, thus they function as firm protective factors. People with stable relationships are less responsive to depression, psychosomatic illnesses and health-destructing substances (Kovács & Pikó, 2010). Numerous research projects have proven the positive effect of membership in religious community on well-being (Astin, Astin & Lindholm, 2011; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Kopp, Skrabski & Székely, 2004; Kovács & Pikó, 2010; Petersen & Roy, 1985; Pikó, 2007; Pusztai, 2011b). The literature tries to interpret the mechanism of the impact that high level of involvement in the religious groups has on well-being in several ways. The question arises whether the association

is direct or indirect, that is religiosity leads to a kind of attitude which promotes well-being. The question is whether this attitude is a central, organic element of religiosity, or just a side effect of religious community membership (Iannaccone, 1998).

Several authors have proven that sport contributes to well-being in different ways. Taking part in a sport activity as a member of a sport community (for example a voluntary sport organization) involves social capital which is conducive to generalized trust and political commitment (Seippel, 2006). Fox (1999) emphasized mainly the positive effect of sports on mental well-being. Doing sports contributes to the treatment and prevention of mental illnesses and disorders; it increases the level of physical and mental well-being among both the mentally ill and the general population. Besides, it also decreases everyday stress and anxiety, increases self-confidence and has several social benefits, such as the improvement of social relationships (as an element of social capital). Harrison and Narayan (2003) found that students doing some kind of sports have more healthy body images, are less likely to suffer from emotional disorders and to physically or sexually hurt their mates. They proved that those doing sports regularly commit suicide less frequently. McAley et al. (2000), Morgan and Bath (1998) examined how sports and regular exercising affects physical and mental well-being among the elderly, being a high-risk group in terms of health. While the former authors emphasized the positive effect of sports on social well-being (social relations, feeling integrated into a community), the latter ones highlighted its beneficial effect on psychological well-being (decreases symptoms of depression). Numerous studies have proven that youths' health behaviour and lifestyle are related to their health status in adulthood, thus regular exercising as a form of health behaviour affects their health status and well-being in adulthood. Among sporting youths, we can find fewer smokers and more persons on a healthy diet. However, decreasing physical activity is associated with drug use and unsafe sexual behaviour. Sporting youths are more self-confident, have less psychosomatic symptoms and can be better motivated in healthcare programmes (Keresztes, 2007; Mikulán, Keresztes & Pikó, 2010). Sporting youths establish friendships more easily, are more satisfied with their bodies, are more future-oriented and disciplined, and are less likely to suffer from depression. Those doing regular physical activities have a better feeling of well-being, higher emotional stability and intellectual performance. A survey on a representative sample of 1000 high school Romanian adolescents indicate that, controlling for age, physical activity is moderately associated with life satisfaction and happiness. The relationship is mediated by self-esteem for boys and leisure satisfaction for both sexes (Bălţătescu, 2003).

Social capital effects on academic delinquency

Lack of parental support (family social capital) and interpersonal trust are associated with delinquency in different countries (Dornbusch, Erickson, Laird & Wong, 2001; Salmi & Kivivuori, 2006; Wright & Fitzpatrick, 2006). Their influence is generally found independent. School social capital may intervene positively, however, in the relationship between low family social capital and youth delinquency, by substituting poor parental attachment and lack of parental involvement in children's schooling (Hoffmann & Dufur, 2008).

The most important factors that have been identified as serving correlates of cheating include student characteristics, attitudes toward cheating, personality variables, and situational factors that have an impact on the prevalence of cheating and the number of students that decide to engage in cheating. Among these factors, we can detect numerous points that are determined by the learning process or teachers and higher educational institutions themselves, for example, academic aptitude, pressure to achieve good grades, academic success, the quality of study conditions or the range of extracurricular activities (Whitley, 1998).

Whitley (1998) did not emphasize the impact of peers, however, McCabe and Trevino (1997) identified peers as the utmost significant factor among the contextual variables that influence cheating. Peers were examined with the help of numerous dimensions, for example, fraternity/sorority membership was positively correlated with cheating behaviour. Besides, based on Bandura's social learning theory, peer behaviour was also found as an influencing factor of cheating. This means that if students see their peers successful cheating attempts, they might engage in similar ways to a higher extent. In addition, "peer disapproval was the most important determinant of changes in cheating behaviour between high school and college", which is also supported by the negative correlation of peer reporting and cheating (McCabe & Trevino, 1997, p. 384).

According to McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield (1999), honour codes can serve as a transmitting context for communicating expectations, definitions on the behavoir of faculty members and students. In their interpretation, honour codes are embedded in the culture of academic integrity "via tradition, communication, training, penalties, via peer, faculty and community expectations, trust and support" (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 1999, p. 217). In this way, peer pressure, the lack of peer support result in cheaters looked down and untolerated and unaccepted. However, they also admit that "strong subcultures exist that encourage cheating" (McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield, 1999, p. 221).

In a more recent study (2001), the same authors identified another important contextual dimension as well, namely, peer reporting. Although

"peer reporting is generally discouraged within groups, because groups tend to create norms that support in-group loyalty" (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2001, pp. 30–31). The authors found lower levels of cheating where student reporting was more frequent, although this relationship decreases if we add honor code environments to the examination. "In short, the higher rates of reporting on code campuses may have little impact on the lower levels of cheating generally found in code environments. The same factors that lead to the lower levels of cheating in the first place-especially the high level of trust placed in students-may also explain the higher reporting levels" (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2001, p. 43). This means that academic integrity may be interpreted as a source of social capital in higher education institution, which decreases the level academic misbehaviour.

Social capital effects on academic achievement

It is no doubt that the links between student achievement in higher education and diversity factors (such as social status, ethnicity, gender or disability) are well documented as risk factors, but the possible promotive effects of societal context and integration into social networks in campus-societies on minimising impacts of social status differences are less documented. In order to summarize this dimension of campus-effect, we elaborated the concept of institutional social capital (Pusztai, 2011a). The theoretical background of our research is based firstly on the Colemanian social capital hypothesis, according to which social capital from relational resources can compensate for the reproductive impact of social status on school career. On the other hand, educational researchers have highlighted that schools may have some institutional characteristics in compulsory education (stable relationships in school community, mutual trust of actors and expanded faculty role models) that can serve as resources of social capital. Recent changes in higher education and increasing diversity in student population turned scientific interest towards students and communities in institutional contexts. Astin (1993), Tinto (1993), Pascarella and Terezini (1991; 2005) advocated the statement that students' institutional integration and institutional social context attributes have strong effect on student achievement (for example, their attendance and persistence) in higher education as well. Finally, the thesis of institutional habitus further modifies the picture. This feature of an individual campus seems to affect the career paths of non-traditional students more definitely than others. Our question is whether integration into higher education institutional and external communities and associations such as professional and research groups during university years can contribute to the improvement of higher education outcomes in our multiethnic and multiconfessional region as well, where the rate of graduated population is lower than the EU average and the majority of students' parents had no experience with higher education (Pusztai, 2011a).

Having analysed the large amount of literature on the subject, one is led to the unambiguous conclusion that institutions of higher education do not contribute to the development of their students' equal academic gain through structural or infrastructural factors but by providing them with an interactional force field (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Moreover, within the interactional force field, there has been a shift of emphasis towards informal and intragenerational forces. Simultaneously, there has been an increase in the proportion of non-traditional students, who do not only lack any inherited higher educational experience, but are also attracted outside of the academic milieu by their social status and microenvironments (e.g. students with lower educated parents and from villages, students who have a job).

Among the theories that lend themselves as interpretational frameworks, the most influential research findings available on the subject are Austin's theory of student involvement, Tinto's theory of student integration, Bourdieu's theory of reproduction and its improved version, the theory of institutional habitus (Tierney, 2000), as well as Coleman's concept of social capital (1990). The most popular of these, Tinto's integrational paradigm worked well especially as an explanation of lower-status students' integration into higher education, based on the observations made when the first wave of non-traditional students streamed into higher education in the 1980s. According to the theory both individual success and the efficiency of the institution crucially depend on the stability of the institution's societal community, the condition of which is a significant shift between ties outside and inside the institution. This model, drawing from the theory of rites of passage, puts a strong emphasis on that dividing line and its successful crossing, since the function of rites of passage is exactly to indicate clearly one's successful separation from one's earlier community and, simultaneously, its values and norms (Tinto, 1993). The theory stresses incorporation into the new system of relationships in campus through phases of transition and acceptance and identification with its values and norms. In Tinto's model the divide between relationship networks and communities within and outside a HE institution is very clear-cut and membership is mutually exclusive because lack of commitment and embeddedness reduce students' persistence and chances of obtaining a degree. The theory relies on a concept of socialisation with a more traditional, passive and static student image and a somewhat simplified picture of organisational society. The revisions of the theory lead one to the conclusion that it does not apply equally to all student groups; e.g. it works better with residential students than commuting ones and it works differently with the two sexes and in mixed ethnic and religious contexts (Hurtado, 2007).

Since then, during recent waves of expansion, higher education has also been attracting such students that do not only differ from traditional students in their hard indicators of social status, but also in other respects. They are the

ones who have already entered institutions with strongly heterogeneous faculty and student societies. Perhaps now it is time to seek a more precise explanation for the achievement of various student groups in higher education by using a more sensitive, multidimensional approach to social status, taking into consideration subcultural lifestyles and value and identity categories that influence personal relationship networks and thereby detecting subtler social categories. Within the interpretational framework, we are interested in paying special attention to the dimension of relationships as, beyond their help in more sensitive status assessment, we assume that network resources as well as traditional forms of capital prove to be very useful in academic advancement. Accordingly, we have reviewed theories and research that count on the power of relationships among students.

Tinto analysed students' integration into the society of the institution as an explanation of success (Tinto, 1993). In his comprehensive model he reflected on students' connectedness to formal and informal social systems and concluded that integration into them influences achievement in such a way that it cuts the ties that attract students out of the world of higher education and, through frequent interactions, they conform to forces attracting inside. They get integrated to such an extent as they are able to share fellow students' norms and values and meet long-term formal and informal requirements of the community of the institution or a closer student community. While integration strengthens or remains strong, students' commitment to both their personal goals and the institution increases, which has a beneficial effect on achievement. The lack of integration, on the other hand, leads to getting distanced, marginalised and attired. For a long time, the theory of academic and social integration counted as the only dominant explanation of the issue, and although several of its details were debated, it was generally considered applicable. We also think that there are limitations to the applicability of the theory because one cannot assume the existence of a tangible common culture in the institutions, and neither is the student community such an entity that incorporates newcomers smoothly (Pusztai, 2011a). When compared, the theory of student integration and Astin's (1993) theory of student involvement have a number of contact points. Astin developed his influential theory of student involvement, which attributes students' advancement to their involvement in the HE institution's academic and social life. A distinctive feature of the theory is that involvement and identification with the student role refer to students' actual activities rather than their motivation. As the author put it, it is not what students think or how they feel that is important but what they do. Whereas Astin does not give a coherent explanation as to what determines the differences in the extent of student input, differences in the success of student integration, as formulated by Tinto, gives some guidance. Bean (2005), Astin (1993) and Tinto (2003) all come to the same conclusion that the state of commitment necessary for success is a result of integration.

The other influential theoretical model that has contributed to the research of the connection between relationships in higher education and success is Bourdieu (1999) and his followers' interpretation, which claims the individual's relationships and achievement are related to the interplay between student habitus and institutional habitus, and impact students' self-perceptions about fitting in a campus context. This theory fails to give a satisfactory explanation for the success differences within non-traditional student groups. Habitus is closely linked to hard indicators of social status, thus it cannot be helpful in the interpretation of achievement differences within a class or class fraction. Whether they speak of the individualisation of young people or disciplinary socialisation, the authors do not go beyond the paradigm of the structural determinism of students.

The majority of literature focuses attention on insufficient student resources when it comes to finding explanations for success or the lack of it. Less attention is paid to an important dimension of student socialisation, namely how and in cooperation with whom dispositions and goals are shaped and reinterpreted. What our model, based on international theories and research findings, considers relevant is students' personal relationship networks, which have a powerful influence on students living on heterogeneous campuses.

Also according to Coleman's theory students' achievement is supported by pupils (and parents) being integrated with the school community. Belonging to common outside networks with shared values foster, ensure and increase a permanent exchange of supporting norms and informations to reach higher academic achievement (Coleman, 1990). An empirical analysis proved that his theory is suitable for the examination of higher education students' resources as it gives high priority to individual decisions and considers class of origin important but not crucial to one's career, which makes it possible for us to explain the achievement differences among non-traditional students (Pusztai, 2011a). In Coleman's theory (1990), differences are accounted for by the existence, composition and strength of personal relationship networks. It does not presuppose a unified or domineering and enforcing organisational community and norm system, but takes the relationship network approach, which is more sensitive to the diversity of subcultures. Therefore, it is better applicable in the heterogeneous culture of higher education institutions. It is also sensitive to the fact that in a microenvironment formed by personal networks, students' resources do not flow into one direction but they are exchanged. Not only does this dynamic and mutual exchange of resources keep networks alive but it also explains how they are shaped by entering members. Meanwhile, it is not only individual resources that receive emphasis but also the structural characteristics and the content of student relationship networks, which modify the achievement one would expect on the basis of individual resources. Completing the analysis of former student survey conducted in interregional border region it was revealed, that values and norms shared in

these micro-communities really influences student achievement (Pusztai, 2011a).

This list of factors that contribute to well-being is not fully exhaustive. On the other hand, it should be adapted for the college students' experiences. Finally we wish to theoretically investigate whether the institutional social capital how can have an effect on student well-being. Based on these factors that are supposed to contribute to student well-being, we constructed a model in which student overall well-being is measured as their satisfaction with their life as a whole (Figure 2).

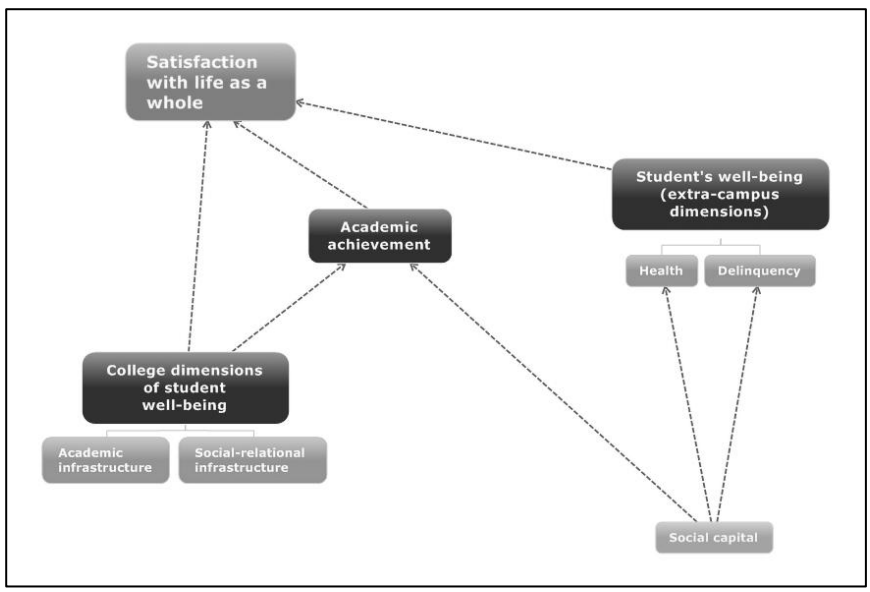

Figure 2: A causal model for the relationship between social capital, student well-being and satisfaction with life as a whole

Source: personal elaboration

In this model, the satisfaction with life as a whole is influenced by the college dimensions on student well-being (academic infrastructure and social-relational infrastructure) both directly and indirectly (through academic achievement). The extra-campus dimension of student well-being (academic achievement, health and delinquency) also influences life satisfaction of the students. Social capital influences student's subjective academic achievement and student well-being extra-campus dimension.

Conclusions

In this paper we set out from two main premises: we are convinced, that the main task of HE institutions is to contribute to the students growth, as well as we consider student growth as a holistic, multidimensional phenomenon, which also embrace student well being. Since the term well-being has several various interpretation with regard to students and youth in special literature, we review former theoretical and empirical results to conceptualize and model the suitable concept of student well-being. Despite the large interest in the social capital of youth, this particular relationship was not investigated thoroughly in connection with well being. Whilst we summarized and critically analyzed theories on impact of student integration in campus society and students' relationships, we argued that social capital, based on students' networks inside and outside of their campus is a very important element that predicts student's well-being. According to our general causal model students' achievement, health and moral awareness can built a strong link between students' social capital and student well-being. In near future we plan to work on empirical testing of proposed model.

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VERONIKA BOCSI

Conceptualizing and Operationalizing Possibilities of Values in Connection with a Romanian-Hungarian Comparative Study

Introduction

The aim of this study is to establish the theoretical grounds of the comparative examination included in HERD (Higher Education for Social Cohesion Cooperative Research and Development in a Cross-border area) research, mapping values. The examination studies the value forming and transmitting function of higher education and the system of student value preferences – with special regard to the individual and collective dimension and the influence of institutional existence – in the Partium region, which has always been a blended region both ethnically and religiously. The sample of our analysis is taken from the students of the two large state universities of the region, University of Debrecen in Hungary and University of Oradea in Romania. In our introduction we will try to give reason for the main junctions of our value study's theoretical background (objectivity and comparativity of values, the influence of institutional existence on value systems, the interpretation of modernization and civilization theories according to comparative value studies, the question of individualization and the postmodern). In our view examining the student population has great significance also because their way of thinking, as the future intellectuals' way of thinking enormously influences the near future standpoints and attitudes of the region's population.

We hope that the results of the research will be just as interdisciplinary as the factual knowledge of value studies' theoretical background, as in the research of values the approach and methodology of different social sciences meet – offering a joint project for sociologists. The approaches and raising the main issues, however, move along different lines of bearing (e.g. the complicated relation system of values and behaviour is studied by social psychology and psychology at the level of the individual and micro-groups, the change of value systems is is able to be grasped by social history, and especially the history of mentality within it, the methodology and results of comparative research is provided by sociology and cultural research, and philosophy has taken on the task of defining values). If, however, in the course of our analysis we insist on only one point of view both concerning the theoretical framework and in the case of methodology we will not be able to

grasp the world of values thoroughly enough – so in our study we have voted in favour of the interdisciplinary approach.

Also, several reasons can be given to explain the summarizing and theoretical nature of our work. On the one hand, several authors refer to the fact that there is a marked discrepancy between the theoretical and empirical research of the world of values. The two levels seem to be moving independently from each other, moving away from each other – so the philosophical dominance of the theories is distinguishable, while the empirical research can be found at a relatively huge distance from this curve (Kapitány & Kapitány, 1983), and in certain cases no attempt is even made to look fo connecting points between the two spheres. Other authors presume that theoretical research "lags behind" the results of empirical studies (Váriné, 1987). The phenomenon that the value studies, because they are among the problematic fields of study, are so fragmented that they can only produce mosaic-like results and do not really have cumulative, autonomous factual knowledge (Váriné, 1987) can be mentioned as another important factor that accounts for the theoretical nature of our work.

The main line of thought of HERD research studies the role of higher education in Partium region. Its analysis from the point of view of values might on the one hand focus our attention on the study of values within an institutional framework. This is interesting for us, as the organizational existence also changes the world of values with the formation of group norms and it involves conflicts and clashes of values – which may appear at the level of the individual or the micro communities of students. Individualizational and other processes currently taking place in Eastern European societies that (also) change value systems (e.g. dominance of consumer behaviour, secularization) are being formed – in our opinion – contrary to the universities' traditional worlds of values. Moreover, the student population – due to their age – go through the last increasing period of the formation of the individual value structure in the stage of life when they search for juvenile identity.

The region of Partium is worth studying from the point of view of value systems, too, because on the one hand it is the eastern borderline of European culture, on the other hand, however, it is the most western part of Orthodox culture. It is a place where the process of modernization has different characteristics from its Western Europen forms, and where the survival of traditional forms still traceably exists at the level of society. The influence of religion and values on each other will also be involved in our study – with special regard to the value problem of Protestant ethics and Orthodox religion. So several social, cultural and economic characteristics link the two subsamples of our study (e. g. late modernization, the survival of traditional forms), while others rather emphasize the essential divergences (e.g. the influence of religion on value systems, civilization theories). While the international comparative studies (World Value System Study, European Value

System Study) work with national samples, in our case the two subsamples are, from the point of view of geography, devided by a border and a distance that can be covered in an hour by car. We presume that it is due to the region's "border-like nature" that we will not find such marked differences as the influence of the different civilization theories and the Orthodox-Protestant religion that values might account for. According to Váriné the comparative value research provides great help in no other regions than the ones where the underlying content or more profound cognizance of the conflicts between the different social groups has not been revealed properly by the different examinations (Váriné, 2003).

About the nature, comparability and measurability of values

There are two fundamental ways to approach the world of values in philosophy, the subjective and the objective approach. While the previous denies the existence of objective values and their playing a role in the "construction" of the world, the second interpretation, which was developed from the heritage of rationalist philosophers, presumes that values can be conceptualized as facts and they form an organic part in the constitution of the world (Orthmayr, 2008) From the point of view of sociology, social psychology and anthropology the emphasis is placed, if not in every case on the objective interpretation, but it is somewhere in a transitional field. Certain streams of value sociology for instance argue that values exist and can be interpreted only at the level of the community, so their research at the level of the individual will not be successful (e.g. in Parsons' school of thought) (Füstös & Szakolczai, 1999). As if we conceptualize the world of values as a field which may mark the framework of human behaviour (even if it is not unambiguous) including certain levels of objectivity will become necessary. The images of man provided by social sciences, whose starting point in every case is the man embedded more or less in communities, presume that there are some kind of common principles the behaviour of individuals is based on. If we take this train of thought as our starting point the comparative examinations are possible and necessary, while the strictly subjective interpretation restricts its realization.

Most definitions agree that values have normative effects, and that the origin of normative attitudes is based on the community's conditions of biology, survival and living together (e.g. Hankiss, 1977; Schwartz, 1992). In Schwartz's model the five essential formal features of values (conceptual feature, exceeding specific situations, relation to desirable final stages of existence or desirable behaviour, the ability to direct the selection, assessment and crystallization in a certain order of importance of behaviour and events) have been formed from the survival needs of the communities (e.g. social interactions, biological needs, the survival of the group), while in the model

quoted by Hankiss the higher level of indicator systems stands for the degree of social consciousness where the cognitive evaluation of contexts and relevant phenomena that are important from the community's point of view takes place (Hankiss, 1977). And even if the effect between behaviour and values has not been or cannot be precisely revealed, the frame-like character of value systems influencing deeds definitely points out an operating constellation. Keller for instance poses the question of whether the circumstances influence values or vice versa (Keller, 2008), Hankiss analyses the problem that human deeds and values connected to a certain situation do not cover each other (Hankiss, 1977), and Bugán tells us about the intrapsychic level of the concept of values, whose selecting mechanism is also able to construct reality (Bugán, 1994). At the same time, if values are formed (also) as a reaction to certain situations of life, they can be interpreted as community–specific phenomena so their characteristics will be typical of that particular society. According to Hofstede we can meet four fundamental problematic areas, which the different cultures may give different answers to: relation to social inequality, relation between the individual and the group, the concept of masculinity–feminity and the way men cope with insecurity (Varga, 2003). Therefore the fact that comparative examinations have great relevance in the field of social sciences seems to be obvious.

The other common feature of the definition of values (apart from being embedded in the circumstances) is adapting to the society and emphasizing the adjustment to it, which drive both the community and the individual towards a final stage considered to be desirable. It is based on common experience and can be interpreted as a kind of consensus. The statement must therefore be logical that the experience and deriving consensus of societies operating in different historical and economic situations must be different, while similar situations may create similar normative contents. At the same time, Hankiss writes about the dysfunctions of social assessment system – about distorting effects and wrong assessment process (which is a natural concomitant of subjective systems) (Hankiss, 1977). Major issues of comparative value research, however, lie much deeper than how the certain societies consider for instance the importance of family or work. The comparative examinations, and especially the research of cultural anthropology have pointed out that in spite of the roots coming from the same needs the interpretation of certain values can be completely different. The different social and historical situations may completely discolour certain items included in value studies – for instance religion in the medieval Europe as an independent value in a modern sense cannot really be interpreted. That is why the logic of comparative value research must be started from much farther away. According to Schwartz the research of universals included in the content of values must consist of the following steps: first we must identify the substantive content of human values, and then we must make sure that we have done it extensively enough. Later we

must analyse with minor examinations whether the definitions of the different values are equivalent or not and then make an attempt to model the value structure and examine how universal this phenomenon can be considered (Schwartz, 1992). According to Bilsky not the single values, but values connected to certain motivational contents may be universal (e.g. sense of security) (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). Among the difficulties of international comparative research we can also find the fact that it is really difficult to empirically examine the contextual features related to the values and the problem that an interdisciplinary approach would be needed, coming from the abstract feature of values (the points of view of psychology, cultural history, philosophy and history may all be relevant). It can also be an interesting problem that model personality, the character type that can be identified by the average choice of values of the different groups, can be considered as only one ideal type (Váriné, 1987). Nevertheless, the comparative studies can be rather productive with circumspection and by recognizing their limits – but we have not mentioned one of the most serious difficulties yet, which is connected to the operationalization of values.

We do not have unified, universally accepted instruments in the methodology of the intercultural research of values. The problems of definition, the different interpretations and schools mentioned before have resulted in the parallel application of different value tests, whose basic conception was often not the same, either. Now we also know the weak points of the certain operationalization attempts – Morris's (1956) paths of life categories, for instance, do not work properly in samples of lower qualifications (Váriné, 1987).

The history of empirical intercultural comparative value research goes back to the 1920's and 1930's, when anthropological studies took place, like Mead's analyses comparing different cultures, which affected for instance gender roles and child rearing principles, or the examination that can be connected to Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck. In this latter research, different ethnic groups – minorities were compared on the basis of dimensions like relation to nature, relation to time, characteristics of human relationships. Spanish Americans, Zunyi Indians and Mormons were among the groups included in the examination (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). Allport, Vernon and Lindzey's value survey was based on social psychology and surveyed the different dimensions of values (e.g. economic instrumental, religious, political, etc.) with the help of 45 items (Allport, Vernon, & Lindzey, 1951). The realization of values in dichotomy first appeared in Parsons and Shils's intercultural examination (e.g. self-oriented/community-oriented) – in this examination North American, Confucianism-based Chinese and Spanish American samples were compared (Parsons & Shils, 1951).

The paths of life model, which can be connected to Morris (1956), contains 13 elements that map the system of values imagined, therefore to be

preferred, and not the system of values practically forming our deeds. Its categories include paths of life close to hedonism (e. g. Dionysian), or paths of life guided by "high solemnity" (e. g. Apollonian, Christian). The seventh, so-called Maitreyan path of life has a special role in his system, which provides the largest differences when comparing "Eastern" and "Western" cultures. This path of life was named after Maitreya, a future Buddha, who is to appear on Earth every 5000 years and make peace between people (Varga, 2003). The aim of this category is to harmonize deed, pleasure and meditation. It is one of the most preferred paths of life in western societies, while in eastern cultures many people reject it. We can experience substantial difference in the acceptance of the different worlds of values, if we use this test – while in "Eastern" cultures people are not inclined to match the different worlds of values, "in the west" the effort to do this is accepted and characteristic – at the same time this process may generate serious conflicts.

The best-known methodological process in international comparisons may be the value survey associated with the name of Rokeach. The method works with a finite number of values that affect the individuals organized into systems. The polarity of values is especially important, the survey co-ordinates a negative pair to each value – but probably its most important characteristic is making a distinction between terminal and instrumental values. Rokeach's concept of values presumes the universal nature of values, and in the course of the comparative examinations he presumes that individuals can express their identity by identifying with some central values (Rokeach, 1973). As a result of values' organizing into systems an open and a closed mind can be distinguished, which forms an important dimension of comparative research. Although Rokeach's system is widely used all over the world, it has been criticized by many. One of the neuralgic points is none other than the issue of comparativity, as it fundamentally presumes similar contents behind certain values in certain cultures. From the side of social psychology, they criticized this concept of values for being too static, and they also criticized the narrow field it provides the individuals to create their own value systems (Váriné, 2003). Apart from this, Rokeach's value survey is often used in comparative examinations – for instance between 1977–78 and 1998, six surveys were conducted in Hungary and their results were compared to the value preferences of, for instance, the United States (Füstös & Szakolczai, 1999).

The following wave of value research was launched by Schwartz in the 1980's, who worked out his method based on a value concept different from the previous ones, which was intended to reveal the universal content and structure of values. The grounds were different, as Schwartz did not at all treat the common contents by cultures as fundamentals. He traced eight motivational value types (pro-social, restrictive conformity, hedonism, achievement, maturity, self-direction, security and power – based on the following surveys, this range of values later increased to ten) back to three already mentioned,

universal requirements of human existence (biological needs, social interaction and survival of the community), hereby determining four higher order values (openness, conservation, self-transcendence, self-enhancement). On the one hand the edification of international comparative examinations was that certain motivational types were regularly placed next to each other (e.g. motivational types emphasizing their own interests, for example achievement oriented, self-supporting – self guidance), on the other hand counterpoles (along individual - collective interests, along recipient – preserving contrast pairs) (Schwartz, 1992) hiding in between the value types and considered to be universal could also be grasped. The second wave of European System Study also used Schwartz's set of questions – Romania, however, did not take part in this comparative examination, not being an EU member, yet.

Hofstede approached the international comparative examinations from the point of view of organizations. He presumed that the "depths" of culture could be grasped in the course of comparative examinations with the help of its kernel and the system of practices (rituals-heroes–symbols) (this is the so called "onion diagram"). The research conducted by him affected 64 countries – and as Hofstede was the leading psychologist of IBM, the chosen countries coincided with the company's territorial coverage. On the basis of the examination, along values and culture the following groups could be grasped: Anglo-Saxon, German, French-Latin and Asian types (Varga, 2003).

Surveying the main methodological paths of comparative value research we can declare that they are all able to produce tangible results, while the judgement of the data obtained cannot be irrespective of the framework of the definition and interpretation of values, either – which can discolour the results or influence their interpretation. Ranging comparative methodologies we can also realize that almost all of them have been formed on the grounds of Western scientific thinking – so it is right to raise the issue of whether interpretations having fundamentally rational-individual roots are capable of understanding other cultures. In connection with the different types of cultures included in the analyses, we can emphasize that in several cases Orthodox culture is a hiatus in the comparative research. The classical field of analysis is opposing the east and the west, where the east squarely denotes Asian countries (or Asian groups who live in the United States). Meanwhile several value studies draw attention to the fact that the so-called "eastern" countries cannot be described with the same attitudes. In connection with the methodological technics used we can also emphasize the fact that it is expedient to complete the "traditional" questionnaire technique with other methodological processes (e.g. content analysis, comparative historical analysis) as the research of value systems is expected to be diverse because of coceptual complexity. In connection with the statistical methods of comparative value studies it is worth emphasizing that factor analysis is mostly used and recommended when drafting the relation of values to each other.

The formation of value systems and institutional existence

The research of the formation of value systems belongs mostly to topics examined by social psychology and psychology – but this issue was only included in the surveys in the past few decades even in these fields of science. In this development Zavalloni's surveys, which urged and aimed the process-oriented approach of values instead of the previous static theories, played an important role (Váriné, 1987). At the same time the reason for this phenomenon can also be the fact that a significant part of the value transmitting process is latent and a formal stage, channel or their own system of institutions is not available for the individuals. The system of value information itself is much more incomprehensible – according to Hankiss human language is primarily made for transmitting factual information. Value information often remains hidden even from certain individuals and the process of the communication of values is rather ponderous both at the level of the individual and the society. Therefore, it is not surprising that while the task of handling information is taken on by distinct sciences, in the case of values not one science can cope with this task (Hankiss, 1977).

Hankiss draws a parallel between the formation of the assessment process of common awareness-common interest and the formation of individual assessment systems. The formation of the value system of a particular community, which should not be considered as completely unified, however, is able to be formed by common experience, fundamentals, situations and aims. The social awareness formed in this way is a flexible system, which senses the reality and is able to give an adequate answer. The certain reactions and value judgements are created as a result of the clashes and different interests of several systems (e. g. system of economic regulations, regulation system of everyday living together), and then they are internalized in different ways (e. g. sanctions, interiorization) at the level of individual awareness (Hankiss, 1977).

The formation of values is not a passive process at the level of the individual, either, yet a certain segment of value research focuses merely on the phenomenon of transmitting values as if the certain individuals were only passive endurers of this process. It is a fact that an essential component of education within the stages of socialization is transmitting senses, but like "modal personalities", already mentioned in the case of national characters, are not existing categories, the completely traceable and impressionable transmission of values is not nonexistent, either. At the same time the socializing effect is unquestionable, even if it is not precisely describable and not fully calculable. A considerable section of the values transmitted and the thinking patterns is formed on the grounds of labelling in the children's central relationships (Bugán, 1994), and they bear the marks and thinking patterns of

that particular society. In the first few years of a child's life interiorization is based mostly on imitation (Váriné, 1987), its motivational force is biological (Bugán 1994). Later in life, in the period when independent identity is developed, the transmitting process becomes less calculable, as the formation of self-identity will also require having certain differences and peculiar traits. In this way the dynamic nature of the formation of value structure will strengthen, so reflexive reactions will become noticeable. In the years of adolescence the emphasis is placed more and more from imitation to the level of formal operations. There is no agreement between the different theorists and schools on which section of life would be the most active period concerning the formation of value systems. There are theorists who vote in favour of its becoming rooted early (e. g. Freudists), and consider the formation of structures essentially completed around the age of three, others presume a longer formation process. Hankiss argued for the longer formation process and reckons that life situations radically changing a person's chances for life may open new horizons – even also in the field of values (Hankiss, 1977). Connecting this train of thought to our research, we can state that an institution of higher education, which includes the possibility of changing the chances of a student having had a different system of instruments and aims can play a role in the formation process of values, moreover it can also be the starting point of the phenomenon of transmitting values.

Self-identity demands affiliation to and separation from the community at the same time – from it we can deduce that identity is formed along two parallel, seemingly opposing dimensions: they are the processes of identification and individualization. The outcome can be considered satisfactory if the final stage is an individual whose formation of both social and personal identity has been completed (Reykowksi & Smolenska, 2003) and the two patterns are able to constitute a harmonious whole. Of course the degree of individuals' leeway and whether the balance will tilt in favour of social or personal identity in a particular community, are considerably influenced by the characteristics of that community. These two orientations are perpendicular to each other and can be modelled in an orthogonal structure, so they cannot be interpreted as dimensions excluding each other. At the level of the individuals they appear at the same time forming next to each other (Reykowski & Smolenska, 2003). That is the reason why we cannot speak about clearly individual and clearly social identity – the two appear mixed in every case. Leeway is embedded in the process of individualization, in the process of inter-generation transmission of knowledge and in economic processes. According to Brewster's model in the case of traditional societies the parents' expectations and value system melt into a macrocosmic value order, which gives unambiguous answers to the judgement of certain life situations. The human type of modernization can still be traced back to macrocosmic features through the internalization of Freud's superordinate self

and the values, however these features do not "embrace" the individuals around any more. The value order of individuals living in post-industrial societies is vulnerable, its macrocosmic support is no more characteristic (Brewster, 2003). If we continue thinking the model over the process described acts in the direction of the diversification of value systems, which may result in the emphasis and variety of individual value orders.

An important characteristic feature of this process is that we can experience differences between the value systems of the individual and the different agents. The formation of a peculiar identity that is typical of a particular person includes uncertainty of values, which is the primary condition of the formation of individual patterns. For the formation of new variations, interaction between the internal and external environment is needed (Bugán, 1994), the kernel of the interaction is provided by the existing differences. Conflicts between the two structures and their solutions will make way for personal identities. If we continue thinking it all over we can state that the differentiation of societies will increase the probability of these conflicts and through the creation of new patterns it may launch a spiral, self-induced process, which may lead to a bigger playing field of personal identities and to their becoming more and more colourful.

In the process of the formation of values communities and institutions, apart from family, play an essential role. Their role is especially important from the point of view that in most cases these formal or informal groups constitute effects beyond the close environment in clashing the values. Arming with the set of values acquired at home, children get into a not fully equivalent or even completely different thinking structure. For those arriving from lower regions of the society this problematic section is first the kindergarten and the school – adapting to educational institutions may run into difficulties also along this dimension. As not only the middle class's language, elements of knowledge and characteristics of lifestyle are accepted by the school, but also the basic features of its value system – so the distance from it can make success at the different levels of educational institutions difficult, but it may also open new perspectives if the different value systems are received positively by the individuals. So the question to be raised is on the one hand how big the distance is between the two worlds from the point of view of values, and on the other hand how members of the organizations-institutions react to this difference. The degree of adaptation can be influenced by rather a lot of factors: characteristics of the pedagogical work in educational institutions, personality traits of the students, characteristics of the organizational culture, but of course it is also essential how much and at which points it differs from the value order of the institution.

Group development models place an emphasis on the formation of value systems of newly formed organizations-communities (it is enough for example if we consider the section of norm formation, when the common values and

norms are formed in the life of a community). The last stations of these models describe the institutions with a settled system of customs, which are accompanied by interiorization at the level of the individuals. In the case of formal institutions, however, interiorization is not always realized – in such cases breaking the norms directly or crossing the borders can also be a completely natural reaction (just like seemingly conforming to the norms without interiorizing them). If individuals get into an already operating organization, the value systems are already settled, but of course the new members-groups can also trigger changes in the field. Its degree, however, depends on many factors: e.g. flexibility and traditions of the organization. For the society old-established institutions, and it is especially true of educational systems, are considered to be an important medium of preserving and conveying values.

Certain political systems, especially if they are strongly committed to an ideology and a human image (and from the point of view of our examination it can be considered highly relevant due to "the socialist type of human being"), would also like to control the process of value transmission – the question to be raised is how much they can control this considerably latent area. A massive system suppresses spontaneous value formation, which is an essential key of optimal existence in organizations (Hankiss, 1983). The outcome of the controlled value transmitting process can be made problematic if organizational norms are situated too far from the norms of everyday life, or the values to be transmitted also become uncertain. Collecting the value systems of the 1980's Hungarian society Kapitány Ágnes and Kapitány Gábor distinguished the so-called bureaucratic value system, which was the value order of the organization and apparatus of the state in every historical age. Among others, the main characteristics of this system are focus on assignment and work, mechanicalism, passivity and alienation from social relations (Kapitány & Kapitány, 1983). Connected to the last decade of the socialist era, Hankiss writes about the phenomenon when value transmitting institutions propagated official values with much less enthusiasm, while they were not able to share substituting elements (Hankiss, 1983). With the increase of the plurality of values, institutions have hardly anything to hang on to – this statement is especially valid considering the field of education.

The world of higher education forms a special section even within the stage of education. On the one hand the process of value transmission should have a different channel due to the age of the students. If we agree with those psychologists and social psychologists who extend the formation of identity until young adulthood, thinking patterns and norms can still be formed remarkably in the late teens, early twenties. Though, as we have already written about it, the method of formation at this age happens with different instruments (which is indicated by the abstract level of learning values), on the other hand, it is accompanied by the extension of individual perspectives. The

appearance of distant professional goals as options may cause a shift not only in lifestyle, but also in the world of values.

In the course of our research the question may also arise as to what patterns are traced by institutional values connected to higher education. Do the universities of the region have a traditional-guild attitude of mind and a theoretical-high cultural orientation? And if they do, how compatible are they with the current trends of the value structure of young people (individualization, more increased appearance of postmodern values, certain signs of hedonism)? Due to mass higher education, however, we have to reckon with the fact that the classical university world of life erodes and it will expand only to certain segments of the student-lecturer sphere. The relation between student, lecturer and institutional value systems is also a suitable research area here: differences in the system of preferences, their relation to other value systems and its judgement. The mechanisms of value transmission may work, but the result will shift the students in a different direction.

Ziller's (1965) model, which compares two ideal types of groups, works with open and closed division. Characteristics of open groups are short time perspective, instability, application of changing norms and lower degree involvement of members in group existence. Closed groups work like the opposite of open groups, they can be characterized with more stable membership and norms, more hierarchic organizational structure and longer time perspective (Triandis, 1990). The question to be raised is which pole the present framework of higher education is closer to. From the universities' point of view, following this model we can conclude that mass higher education, the Bologna system and the plurality of values will shift higher education towards open groups.

Concerning the institutions, we have not yet mentioned the fact that it is not at all certain that the changes experienced in value systems during the years spent in higher education will shift the students towards the expected directions. Váriné gives an account of a Kohlberg – Kramer survey, which compared university students of different countries, who had just gained admission and were in the middle of their training. The results obtained can be characterized with the phenomenon of so-called moral regression, as in the case of 20 per cent of students negative trends could be grasped concerning the degree of moral development and judgement. The most typical place of study for the phenomenon of moral regression is provided by prison research studies. At the same time this decline is only transitional and can be connected to the experience of young age's non-conforming nature (Váriné, 1987). The phenomenon on the one hand points out that higher education as a world of living cannot be corresponded to states decades ago.

The main dimensions of comparative research studies

The collective-individual axis

When comparing different societies, one of the most important axes is the dimension of collectivism-individualism, which provides probably the most important point of view of the differences between social behaviour according to Triandis. In individualist cultures most people's social behaviour is determined by personal goals, and if there is a conflict between the interests of the individual and the community, the individual interests usually gain the upper hand. At the same time the fundamental explanatory principles of communal or collectivist cultures are to be found in collective values, norms and interests (Triandis, 1990). The already mentioned opposition of the East and the West on the collective-individual axis seems to be evident, where the dominance of collective features is characteristic of eastern cultures, while the direction of Western development is different from it. Theorists do not fully agree on how far its roots go back in time, but medieval societies between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries in Europe must have had certain features that pointed to the direction of individualist societies (cf. MacFarlane, 1978). In the analyses of "the long nineteenth century", comparing societies there are already descriptions where the collective-individualist categories are clearly traceable – e. g. in Tönnies' Gemeinschaft–Gesellschaft distinction or in Tocqueville's description of the United States. This axis can also be an important dimension of anthropological studies. The descriptions also mention the fact that the different cultures can be described with different characteristics: while collective societies are described with less deviance and creativity, individualism is accompanied by higher creative ability and ability to tolerate uncertainty, but increased aggressivity. Schwartz's comparative analyses also strengthen the argument that this axis is one of the most important dimension of the arrangement of values – opposing the motivational types serving collective and individual interests (e. g. opposing pro-social – security – restrictive conformity and hedonism – achievemnet – self direction) can be described as a kind of "universal value conflict" (Schwartz, 1992).

Nevertheless, experts of this theme in most cases bring to attention that we can find neither clearly individualist nor clearly collectivist societies – the two dimensions are always traceable at a certain level in the given community. Besides, different subtypes are often distinguished within the two basic types: the expression of American type individualism, especially emphatic elements of it are the categories of competing and independence/self- reliance (Triandis, 1990). The definitions of extreme collectivism or extreme individualism are well-known categories for instance, but we can distinguish idiocentric and allocentric variation of both types, so a form centred upon oneself and a form centred upon others. Examinations within certain circles of culture also reveal

peculiar variations – e. g. Southern European collective links seem to be stronger even in the sphere of individualism (Triandis, 1990), and significant differences can also be found in the pattern of social relationships within the Asian countries (for example between China and Taiwan) (Schwartz, 1990). Differences, however, lie not only between particular cultures, but also between the layers of society – as individualism in every case is more typical of groups situated higher up in the (social) hierarchy (Triandis, 1990).

The dimension of individualism-collectivism is naturally approachable from the viewpoint of social history, while the reasons for shifting towards individualism are rather complicated. This process is built on the process of the culture's becoming more complex, the economic changes and modernization, and the system of social relations (Triandis, 1990). Life-guiding principles formed in this way are often linked to the categories of hedonism and consumer culture (Hankiss, 1999). The situation of Eastern Europe and Partium within it is said to be special also from this point of view – some of these special features can be traced back to different modernizational scenarios and different social conditions (e. g. relative lack of civil existence, collective societies disintegrating too fast), while other features are the consequences of socialist regime (Hankiss, 1999). Although the socialist type of human being is basically a collective person, he does not exist by adapting to traditional communities, moreover he is integrated into a new type of relations system by destroying such communities. And although it is still questionable how strong the effect of official propaganda was in the given societies, the system of propoganda must have played a key role in the destruction of traditional communities. Moreover, the new world of values formed after 1989 (the end of Communism in Hungary) is in sharp contrast with the socialist human image – the self-confident, independent person who takes responsibility and whose rights must be considered by the state (Reykowski & Smolenska, 2003). The phenomenon that can be described with the category of value crisis can be made more extensive in the region by them.

While examining collectivism-individualism theorists dealing with this topic, however, call our attention to circumstances that make the opposition of the two fields much more subtle. Reykowksi and Smolenska draw our attention to the fact that the tendency of individualization is not an exclusively one-way process, and differences of identity between people cannot be exclusively described along only one dimension, either (Reykowski & Smolenska, 2003). The authors demonstrate through the example of Poland that fluctuation between the two poles is a traceable and existing phenomenon.

The process of modernization

Value systems being embedded in economic conditions is indisputable, so at the level of theories and empirical research the formation of value systems is

inevitably connected to the process of modernization. This interlocking appeared already in early sociological thinking, it is enough to consider Max Weber's work *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Weber, 2001). Its being embedded in economic conditions is also connected to Inglehart's scarcity hypothesis, which starts from the logic that until the basic needs connected to subsistence are available people consider the desires to reach and obtain them their primary goals and values, and then along with the increase of living standard circumstances connected to self-expression gains central importance (Inglehart, 1997). It is the basis for the distinction between materialist-postmaterialist value systems. The process of modernization and the changes in the quality of life, attached to it also have an effect on the previously analysed collective-individual axis – in wealthier societies the advantages of living in a group fade away and the advantages of individual deeds increase (Triandis, 1990).

According to Keller, modernization can be defined mostly as a phenomenon in consequencies of which traditional society falls apart. This process inevitably involves the increase of the importance of rational, performance-oriented values and is also accompanied by spreading certain elements of hedonism. Keller examined the effect of the modernizational process on values using the data of World Values Survey. In the course of the survey between the modernization index and the economic index used (GDP PPP) he grasped four clusters, having used the data of more than sixty countries. The results show that the process of modernization cannot be modelled as a certain kind of linear relation, as it has both advantages and disadvantages. The quality of life and the rate of those who consider themselves happier is on the one hand higher in countries where modernization has not yet started or having reached a certain point of increased the values of subjective prosperity in a way that they can make up for the loss caused by traditional values. On the basis of the analysis using data from the turn of the millenium, Romania was ranked among the countries of lower GDP in the third cluster, while Hungary was ranked among the countries of higher GDP in the fourth cluster. The modernization index, which takes on higher values along with the advancement of modernization, was 49.54 in Romania and 47.85 in Hungary, the indexes of the acceptance of traditional values were 38.94 and 26.22, while values of subjective wealth were 60.156 and 69.49. (Keller, 2008).

Analyses examining the link between modernization and the change of value systems demonstrate on the one hand that modernization is not in the least a process that can be modelled unambiguously, therefore its effect on value systems is also a hard issue to research, on the other hand they demonstrate that the relationship between the two spheres does not at all linearly correspond to each other. Theorists call our attention to the fact that analyses do not always work with precise definitions and the process of

modernization, itself is not unambiguous, either – it is enough to think of the different modernization scenarios related to the comparison of Western and Eastern Europe (cf. Gerschenkron, 1952). In Romania we may also encounter the expression pseudo-modernization to define the process and emphasize its differences. Several theorists agree, however, that modernization and the category of postmodern can have an effect opposite the direction of the stability of value systems – Hankiss for instance writes about modernization causing "value crisis" (Hankiss, 1977), while the world of postmodern, which offers less value to hang on to, also poses serious challenges for the individual (Váriné, 1987).

Examining the dimension of culture and religion

Value orders being embedded in culture is considered to be a unambiguous phenomonon, but of course we have to examine the effect of this sphere together with other factors (e. g. modernization, individual and situational contexts, the specific historical situation, etc.). Cultural principles establish the norms and values that suit the communities living together and their survival, while their exact content framework also depends on other conditions. The results of adapting to different conditions, however, can be remarkably discoloured by the world of traditions, religion and culture. One of Mead's analyses includes the ethnography of 13 societies and based on it we can declare that value systems can be interpreted as special functions of dimensions, for example whether or not certain ethnical group specialized in cultivating the land, hunting or trade (Triandis, 1990).

One section of value research is the field of child rearing principles – Szabados points out that this system is influenced by three factors: traditions, attitudes and the system of aspirations (Szabados, 1995). On reflection we have to admit that all of these systems are deeply embedded in the dimension of culture – as even the world of aspirations, the sphere that seems to be farthest from it is also constructed in the leeway assigned by the cultural codes. In the examinations mapping child rearing principles, rules of community behaviour considered to be ideal can be grasped (e. g. politeness, respecting other people), just like factors connected to subsistence (hard work) and principles related to the path of life assigned for the children and their achievement (management skills, determination) (Füstös, 1986).

The different circles of culture can form the basic units of comparative value research (e. g. in Morris and Hofstede's surveys, in Huntington's civilization theory), just like certain countries (e. g. in the database of World Value Survey) and also the specific groups within the countries. In this latter case comparisons based on, for example qualification, social hierarchy and age are frequent. With the increase of qualification, values of creativity and fantasy will also become increasingly important, and in higher regions of social

hierarchy we have to reckon with the appearance of the achievement principle. Szabados's examination points out that in the value order of younger people, world redeeming values are more dominant, whereas in the value order system of the older generations, the world preserving values are more dominant (Szabados, 1995). However, we should not handle the larger units as solid blocks – "Eastern" societies, as we have already demonstrated, can have rather different traits, but when Keller studies the characteristics of European value order, in another survey he has to face the different value system of Eastern Europe. Keller examined the arrangement of values with the help of the European Values Study. The results point out that in new member states of the EU (at the time of writing the study Hungary was, but Romania was not yet an EU member state) traditional (universalism, adaptation, security, traditions) and value-motivated (charity, interesting life, hedonism, universalism) are the typical elements. It is interesting that of the new member states the value order of Slovenia and the Baltic states was more closely connected to Western Europe (Keller, 2009).

The role of religion is essentially important from the viewpoint of the value systems of different cultures, countries and layers of society. The hypothesis in one of Földvári's surveys is that religion and values can be interpreted as phenomena overlapping each other, therefore the author presumes that the different religious and value order patterns are attached to each other (Földvári, 2009). Örkény and Szabó revealed the influence of religiousness in Hungarian youth sample in the field of social value orientations and political attitudes (Örkény & Szabó, 2002). In the background of the different results of intercultural comparative examinations, there might be the value forming role of religion in many cases – it is no accident for example that western individualism was formed on the grounds of Weber's Protestant Ethic, while Zhi Gang explains the special features of the Chinese pattern also with the collective effect of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism in the international comparative examination by Schwartz (Zhi Gang, 1980). This connection can be regarded as true even considering the process of secularization, as the interiorization of religious values may happen even independently of it (most of these values are also culturally rooted). And although the transformation affecting the social structure and economic change also formed religious beliefs, interpretations and practices and increasingly presume an individual level of religious construction in the world of values, the content of religious values can still be described as stable and slowly changing content (Földvári, 2009). The region of Partium can be described with religious diversity. The rational, work and achievement oriented system of theProtestant ethic and the more secular nature of Hungarian society will certainly leave their mark on the data of Hungarian students' subsample, while in the Romanian subsample the influence of Eastern (Orthodox) Christianity will be traceable. In the case of Nagyvárad we cannot forget about the cultural

influence of the Jews, either. Rogobete considers Huntington's civilizational theory to be justified when he analyses human rights, the importance of the individual and the relation to collective interest in the countries of the region (Western and Eastern Christian countries) (Rogobete, 2003), Buss in his writing entitled *Sociology of the Eastern Ortodox Tradition* places the emphasis on the different individual-collective relation ("integral personality"), the religious determination of individuals, but he also writes about a holistic cultural identity, where state, church and national levels are closely merged (Buss, 2010). According to Buss, Eastern Christianity does not and cannot form the cultural grounds for Western individualism. So when including religion as a dimension in the examination we have to consider the fact that Romania is one of the more religious countries of the continent (Voicu & Voicu, 2009).

Summary

In our theoretical study we made an attempt to outline the major theoretical junctions of a comparative study of Romanian and Hungarian students. Nevertheless, the size limits of our writing did not make it possible for us to expound on these issues profoundly, moreover certain fields were only indicated or might even have been omitted. Also due to the limited size of our analysis, we could not introduce the empirical value studies of the two countries in detail – but we are going to fill this gap when interpreting and analysing the data obtained in the course of our research. The framework outlined calls our attention to the fact that the "roots" of an examination like this take us to several specific subfields of some sciences and demands a complex, interdisciplinary approach. Although we do not yet know which of these phenomena and dimensions suitable for comparison will be relevant for us, we hope that in the phase of analysis when revealing the cause and effect relationships, the framework outlined here will provide us with straps to hang on to in later sections of our research.

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FLOARE CHIPEA & ZSOLT BOTOND BOTTYAN

Theoretical Aspects of Integration of Disadvantaged Students in Higher Education

Introduction

The integration of disadvantaged groups in higher education is an aspect of social life too little studied in Romanian sociological literature. Most studies in this area focus on the integration of students at the elementary or secondary level, because of the association, both practical and ideological, between lower educational level and the universal right to education. There are numerous studies, national and local, targeting school integration problems, school dropout, social conditions of educational performance at elementary or secondary level (Chipea, 2010; Iovu, 2010; Marginean, 2009), that retain some resemblances in terms of theoretical and research objectives with the issue of the integration of disadvantaged students in higher education. Because of this lack of studies in Romania regarding the problem of integration of disadvantaged students in higher education we considered important to start our research with the adaptation of basic concepts and theories (hypotheses) used in the international literature to the Romanian realities of higher education.

Social inequality in higher education

Although the study of social inequality has an important theoretical body, there is no universally accepted definition of social inequality. Sen shows that theories of inequality are diverse and in conflict with each other (1995), as he mentions that, for example, John Rawls considers equality as the equal right to liberty and distribution of primary goods, to Ronald Dworkin equality means equal treatment and equal access to resources, and Thomas Nagel talks about economic equality etc. (Sen, 1995). The views expressed by Nagel and Dworkin represent the dominant perspective about inequality, which is concerned with the economic stages of distribution and redistribution of the social product, realized through latent mechanisms such as the market, or through the active actions of social groups with an ideological character. The economic interpretation reduces the problem of inequality to the quantity of resources available to individuals or social groups, associated with the social

position occupied by those individuals or groups which determine the amount of resources received through the distribution or redistribution of the social product. The principle of economic rationality assumes that the ultimate goals of individuals or groups are of materialistic nature and all the other purposes have an instrumental, intermediary role. According to this view, most studies concerning inequality in economics or sociology are concerned with the mechanisms of distribution and redistribution of wealth, distribution of the positions of socioeconomic status in society, using concepts such as economic and social capital, or reproduction of social status for explanatory purposes.

The theoretical approach of inequality is based on two postulates which are apparently opposed. The first postulate considers inequality as a "natural" condition, according to the principle of proportional equality first formulated by Aristotle (Temkin, 1996), which, in economic interpretation, translates into access to resources in proportion to the social value created. This view is consistent with theories that present social inequality as an adjustment of society made by the free market, an idea embedded in the individualistic interpretation of the meritocratic model, supported by thinkers such as Locke and the utilitarian thinkers in the Anglo-Saxon tradition. This approach values the individual responsibility combined with a diminished role of the state in correcting social inequality. Passing to the argument about education, this ideology encourages private funding for schooling. Education is conditioned by the material resources possessed by the student (family funding, scholarships), the closest model based on this view being the American higher educational system. In this model, higher education is limited by economic means or the exceptional skills of the individual in the absence of economic resources, vision that is consonant with the individualism and meritocracy characteristic to the American society (Altbach, 1994).

The second postulate considers inequality as a purely social product, explicitly theorized by Rousseau (Hoffding, 1930) and supported by the socialist spectrum of political thought. Developed in the context of the debate on the natural state and natural right, this theory proposes the concept of universal right as a fundamental principle of humanism. In this context, the right to education becomes of a universal character, recognized as such by the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" in 1948, which stipulates in Article 26, inter alia, that education is a universal right, free, at least at the elementary level where it is instituted as mandatory, and higher education must be accessible to all on merit (Spring, 2000).

We can observe from the previously stated assertions that the issue of inequality in education differs according to the framework of the analysis: basic education, providing individual literacy without which social integration would not be possible in a modern society, and higher education, which is seen as a key lever distribution of social positions with high social prestige. Free and compulsory elementary and secondary education has become a quasi-

universal practice and is limited only by the extreme economic conditions, characteristic of the poorest Third World countries, characterized by a high level of illiteracy (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). There is a strong correlation between literacy levels of society and its economic development, industrialization evolved along with literacy in the last two centuries. If the relationship between labor productivity and literacy is strong, the relationship between economic development and the number of graduates of higher education is not as obvious, especially if we consider some specializations (De Meulemeester & Rochat, 1995; Hanusek & Wellch, 2006). If the social role of elementary education determines its egalitarian character, the elitism and professionalization characteristic to universities proposes the higher education system as a source generating social inequality in society which is within the meaning of the principle of proportionality mentioned above. The concept of equality of opportunity captures this aspect which does not deny the inegalitarian structure of society and sets out the right of everyone to get into elite society in terms of their capacities. This position with an objectivist allure, is essentially an ideological one facing other interests in society such as the trend of preservation of the elite addressed, among others, by Pareto in his theory on the circulation of elites (Pareto, 1966).

At the beginning of the twentieth century the opportunities to attend higher education were very limited, a privilege for the upper classes. An unprecedented expansion of universities was registered in the postwar period which determined the so called "massification" of higher education. The expansion of higher education determined the diversification and stratification of universities causing, among other things, the devaluation of the university degree. In advanced countries this process has been there for about 50 years, but in Romania the process has just started as represented by the differentiation of universities in elite institutions such as the research centered universities and tier two or three institutions that are much less selective (Shavit, & Arum, 2007). Academic inequality analysis should take account of this new reality being configured in Romania, a situation similar to which can be found in Poland (Kwiek, 2003). The main factor bearing on selectivity was the important presence of private or small public universities in Romania (Nicolescu, 2003) with an institutional predilection towards learning goals.

From what has been stated above, inequality in higher education has at least two basic dimensions. First, we can discern inequality between universities expressed by learning conditions, prestige and social opportunities associated with them. One of the center issues in the analysis of this type of inequality in higher education is the access and persistence of students in prestigious institutions and the social factors that may be involved. This type of inequality is less a focus for our research because of the small sample of institutions. From Romania we have two institutions in our sample: the University of Oradea which is middle sized public university and the smaller

Partium Christian University (if we taking in account student and available faculty or specialization numbers) which is privately financed. Both institutions are typical for a larger category of universities formed after the fall of the communism in Romania. UO is typical for the public universities created as local initiatives after the revolution in smaller cities in Romania. These institutions are considered, mostly by the mass-media, as medium or low prestige institutions with relatively low student selectivity (in 2011 from 5426 student places available just 3899 were occupied in UO). An important difference between the two afore mentioned institutions are the language used for learning, that is Romanian for the UO and Hungarian for the PCU. To have a better understanding of the status of these universities in the Romanian academic system, we mention that, in 2011, in Romania was realized an official ranking of universities. The UO obtained a respectable score, positioning the institution in the tier two which includes universities "centered on education and research", and the PCU was classified in the tier three as a "university centered on education" as is the case for the majority of private universities. In Romania are functioning many private universities (35 authorized institutions www.edu.ro) which is one of the main differences between the Romanian and the Hungarian educational systems. The difference between public and private universities in Romania is blurred by the fact that large proportions (depending on demand) of the students from public universities are paying study fees (in 2011, from 5426 student places available at UO 1645 were publicly funded and 3781 were with study fees). The third academic institution from our sample is the University of Debrecen which can be described as a relatively large public university with a long tradition in Hungary. We can argue that these institutions are in some way typical for their countries and some comparative results can be obtained but the size of the sample is too small and doesn't permit a good analysis of inequality between institutions and the issues related to disadvantaged groups.

The second dimension of inequality in higher education can be found intra-institutionally which will be the main focus in our research. The main concern of the HERD project is social cohesion in higher education and is logical that intra-institutional inequality should become a center issue. Intra-institutional inequality is regarding a quasi-permanent group of students during their academic career, in the context of the relationships with their colleagues or teachers (social capital in campus) which can result in disadvantageous situations for some category of students. Inequality can arose from the way the institution functions determined in a big part by the organizational or institutional culture (Diamond, 1993). Every academic institution has a distinct identity, "a way of doing things" through policies or latent mechanisms. The organizational culture is a complex web of regulations, mores, ideologies, symbolic systems (Manning, 2000) that can share some traits with other academic institutions (for example elitism) and in the same time be very

specific (preserving national identity as in the case of PCU). The organizational culture can augment inequality or inhibit it, in a sense in which elitist culture determines the grouping of students in select groups based on achievements or/and socio-economic status (SES); see for example the fraternities or sororities in the elite American universities (Syrett, 2008). Intra-institutional inequality can be manifested in various forms such as: (1) differences made between students by teachers manifested through preferential communication with some category of students at seminars or by selecting preferentially students for projects etc. (Manke, 1997). Ability grouping is often a practice in schools (Slavin, 1989) made by the teachers but often can be based on a perceived difference in abilities based on prejudices and stereotypes (Roma students are especially vulnerable considering their specific habitus that differs considerably from the habitus of academic elites); (2) student groupings are common feature of every classroom (Porter, 2007). Regarding inequality we mention the grouping of students with comparable level of SES associated with a segregation in communication that lowers cohesion and cooperation generating social exclusion from some disadvantaged groups (for example Roma students or students with low SES); (3) the level of participation in academic or research activities (4); access to the learning and recreational facilities of the university; (5) subjective indicators of social status in university.

Social exclusion in academia

Beginning with the 1970's the issue of inequality is addressed by the concept of social exclusion that captures both aspects of inequality situations: the social characteristics of groups involved in the situation of inequality and social action that contribute to inequality. The concept was developed in the context of French social analysis but will be adopted in the discourse on inequality in British or American sociology, with several changes of meaning pertaining to specific cultural and social characteristics (Sen, 2000).

Social exclusion focuses on public policy or structural deficiencies that limit access to resources of social groups. These limitations may arise as difficulties of access to education and the labor market, lack of institutional support by the state or social networks, generally accompanied by an attitude of rejection by the majority. All these issues mentioned before highlight the multidimensional character of social exclusion (Pierson, 2001). Various forms of deprivation usually occur together, such as membership of a minority, poverty and dropout, the interest of analytical studies of social exclusion is heading towards setting prevalent forms of deprivation and understanding the social mechanisms that generate them (De Haan, 2000).

There are many social theories supported by empirical research that explain the mechanisms of social exclusion. Social reproduction theory,

proposed by Bourdieu, means that social groups characterized by a specific cultural identity and social interaction, develop ways of social representations and manifestations (habitus) that require stability of certain socio-cultural characteristics, transmitted from one generation to another (Webb & Schirato, 2002). In Bourdieu's view, the habitus has an important influence on the social positioning of the individual and of the social group, something that denotes a conditioning determined on the one hand, by the characteristics (cultural) of the group and on the other hand, the "hetero" identification made by other groups that are in social competition. Negative attitude towards the disadvantaged group is supported by a series of prejudices, stereotypes that are also transmitted inter-generationally. Bourdieu believed that higher education contributes to the maintenance of social differences, encouraging a specific socio-cultural climate (elitist habitus) determining the reproduction of social inequality effect (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Webb & Schirato, 2002; Hatos, 2006). Empirical data show that while access to higher education in Romania improved considerably after the revolution until 2006 and declining somewhat afterwards (see Table 1), it is not clear if the functioning of the system benefits all social classes. The dilemma in relation to the widening access to higher education is the clarification regarding its contribution to reducing social inequality or, conversely, leading to deepening of social inequality because the benefits from this widening access to universities are enjoyed mostly by the privileged classes (Archer, Hutchings & Ross. A., 2003). From this perspective we will focus our research on Roma students and students that are coming from rural areas. The latest numbers from the census In Romania (2011) show that approximately 46% of the population is living in rural areas with a notoriously poor educational infrastructure. This category is underrepresented in higher education (for example an analysis from Babeş–Bolyai University reveals that only 20% of the students are coming from rural areas[1]), determining the government to create special policies aimed to help them to access and persist in universities (www.edu.ro).

Table 1: Gross enrollment in higher education in Romania and BihorCounty

	1990-1991	*2000-2001*	*2005-2006*	*2007-2008*	*2008-2009*	*2009-2010*
Romania	9,91	32,26	60,82	53,59	51,69	45
Bihor County	-	39,49	52,68	48,67	-	-

Source: National Statistical Institute, Tempo–Online Database

There are interpretations of social exclusion that do not support the culpability of the majority or the state in relation to socially excluded groups. In line with liberal and neo-liberal ideologies, it is considered that the individual or groups suffering from social exclusion are responsible for the situation in which they are (Byrne, 2005; Pierson, 2001). In their view, inequality is the result of the

[1] http://centre.ubbcluj.ro/cdu/files/studiu_6_ro.pdf

attitude of these individuals or social groups in society and they receive proportionally to what they contribute. Concepts such as social parasitism, subclass, "culture of poverty" are characteristic to moral systems related to individualistic societies where welfare and education are generally at very high levels (Pierson, 2001). It is considered by the promoters of this ideology that in modern capitalist societies, characterized by the lack of explicit social exclusion policies, by the existence of a free labor market, by the general access to university education based on merit, we cannot talk about social exclusion but of self-exclusion. This interpretation of social exclusion is difficult to use in the scientific analysis of the causes of social exclusion, being rather an ideological alternative important in understanding the stereotypes and prejudices of the academic establishment. Generally, the problem of social exclusion is highly charged ideologically, stirring great passions in society and even in academic discourses, rendering scientific analysis rather difficult.

The French interpretation of the term social exclusion underscores the rupture or failure of social relations, focusing on social solidarity, on the process by which individuals or groups are partially or totally restricted in participating in social life (De Haan, 2000). This is addressed in the literature by the concept of social capital, which along with economic capital, cultural and biological capital represents the integrative resources of the individual in society. The scarcity of these resources is limiting the social participation of individuals and social groups, resulting in a high risk of social exclusion (Byrne, 2005; Mason, 2001; Pierson, 2001).

In addressing social exclusion we can follow the concept of "citizenship" (Parsons, 1999) which combines political, legal and social rights of persons or groups, exclusion representing the situation when these rights are not realized. Viewed from this perspective, the right to education is a fundamental right protected by the Constitution of Romania, which in Article 32 entitled "The right to education" provides, inter alia: (1) The right to education is provided through primary compulsory education and upper secondary and vocational schools, by higher education, as well as other forms of instruction and training; (2) The right of persons belonging to national minorities to learn their own language and the right to be educated in this language are guaranteed; (3) Public education is free, by law. The State shall grant social scholarships to children and young people from disadvantaged families and those institutionalized in conformity with the law.

The Romanian legal system is governed by the right to education in line with the "General Declaration of Human Rights" as outlined above, ideologically being influenced by the legacy of the collectivist regime of centralized education and, more recently, by the European discourse on education, such as the continuous learning doctrine. The communist education structures were reorganized by the Education Act, adopted in 1995, replaced by a new education law, which proposes major changes aimed at changing the

financing and restructuring the educational system including universities, whose implementation started in 2011 and whose effects can only be estimated. Social exclusion plays an important role in the treatment of social problems by the Romanian legal system aspect which is influenced by the EU commitment to the fight against social exclusion, largely replacing the concept of poverty when addressing social policies (De Haan, 2000). The Romanian legislator made, over time, a series of legal measures aimed at reducing social exclusion in education by supporting disadvantaged groups such as students coming from poor families, from rural areas, from institutions or implementing anti-discriminatory policies against students with Roma ethnicity. The measures include material support in forms of scholarships based on merit or social condition, securing places on university campus for disadvantaged students, extending stay in institutions for institutionalized students or providing special care for Roma students. These measures are supplemented by a series of administrative actions by the Ministry of Education or by the universities, regarding programs to prevent and limit social exclusion in universities financed by government or European funds. For example, at the University of Oradea students from institutions or orphans are exempted from paying study fees. The students considered in serious social or economic difficulty are exempted from half of the study fees.

The legalistic approach of social exclusion is criticized by arguing that the legal superstructure of society represents the interests of the ruling elite and does not necessarily represent the interests of disadvantaged groups. Even if there is a legal solution to the situation of social exclusion, the reality of the functioning of the bureaucratic systems implies a review of the implementation of legal measures, a process that is dependent on the beliefs and attitudes of administrative management and academic communities, which together are forming the so called organizational culture, or are influenced by pressures exerted by civil society. If we are looking beyond the implementation of legal measures, we can face the needs of disadvantaged people not taken into account and which are limiting the access to disadvantaged students in higher education. A problem in this regard is the physical access of persons with disabilities in academic institutions.

The issue of social exclusion transcends the legal regulation in that it is done through informal mechanisms such as daily interactions between disadvantaged students and "normal" students, between academics and disadvantaged students or, if we consider the establishment and strengthening of prejudices, the interaction between staff and "normal" students. In the analysis of social exclusion it is essential to understand the mechanisms of interaction between different academic groups. Social exclusion always involves two parties: the privileged, who passively or actively exclude the disadvantaged groups and the disadvantaged. We used alternatively the expression privileged group or the category of "normal" students that do not

suffer from discrimination and can achieve their educational aspirations. The "active" nature of social exclusion involves actions that are explicit institutional policies (formal or informal) to limit certain social groups in education, while the passive exclusion is determined by some form of the structuration of the educational system, which discourages certain social groups to achieve or formulate their educational aspirations.

In the analysis of social exclusion the characterization of organizational culture is necessary, especially in the situation of disadvantaged groups in academia. In this sense we can distinguish a meritocratic culture, based on an elitist vision of the university that incorporates the responsibility of forming professionals and which is less concerned for the social background of students. At the opposite end stands a culture sensitive to social issues or at least willing to compromise intellectual standards for the integration of disadvantaged groups. We assume, based on our institutional experience, a tendency of "grouping" of disadvantaged students intra-institutionally (depending on specialization) and at university level. Students with high SES are more likely to attend colleges and universities offering higher post-graduation potential, a phenomenon that causes a high selectivity and a "meritocratic culture" that is opposed to the idea of equalizing opportunities on social criteria. We propose in this regard, an analysis of student attitudes towards the distribution of university places that are financed on social criteria, toward policies of positive discrimination against Roma or children from care institutions and towards the idea of social scholarship etc. We believe that there is a possibility of association between promoted organizational culture and the prestige of college or university, or an association between institution funding pressures and a more permissive culture due to lower student selectivity. Empirical studies show that students with low social status that follow a more prestigious college or university have a higher rate of persistence and completion of university studies than those how follow less prestigious academic institutions (Titus, 2006).

Disadvantaged groups

The concept of social inequality involves a social differentiator that represents any feature that allows grouping people in classes. We mention in this sense: socio-economic status, ethnicity, religion, race, physical or mental disability, sex, etc. In itself, the difference does not produce inequality, which is generated in the context of competitive situations in relation to the resources of society. Exclusion by grouping people in classes is the most effective method of limiting access to resources of disadvantaged groups.

The exclusion of different social categories represents a historical reality embodied in many examples. The segregationist educational policy against black students in the U.S. is well known in this respect (Raffel, 1998). If in the

case of exclusion of black students in U.S. we speak of an official policy, a formal exclusion, it should be noted that today we no longer meet such limitations on access to education, at least not in our analysis localized to Romania and Hungary, countries that are members of the European Union. Social exclusion takes instead subtle ways, manifested in the form of latent processes, which can be found in the attitudinal space, which comprises prejudices, stereotypes about disadvantaged groups and group formulations of interest that reproduce privileged social positions. Has been stated above that limitations in social participation are caused by the scarcity of resources in the form of capitals, which determine the main forms of exclusion and their corresponding groups.

Economic capital is concerned with the economic resources available for founding educational participation. The scarcity of the economic resources is expressed by the concept of poverty. We propose for the empirical study the establishment of economic resources available to students through an indicator of welfare such as income per family member. A methodological issue is raised by establishing a poverty line given the general economic conditions of the countries in which we'll carry out the study. The criterion determining the poverty line should take into account the ability of the students to finance the specific study program. The costs of university participation are represented by study fees, living expenses and logistical expenses such as acquisition of courses, books, notebooks, computer, etc. The lack of economic resources determines the phenomenon of permanent employment during college, especially for disadvantaged youth (www.bologna.ro).

Social capital is represented by extra and intra-institutional relations of the students which are able to influence the student's educational career. The quantity and quality of these relationships will determine issues such as performance or participation in research programs etc. This category may also include variables that capture the belonging to wider communities, such as ethnicity and religion, which can influence the students' social acceptance. We have to consider in our research the disadvantaged students participation in several academic activities such as governing bodies, research programs or student exchange programs.

Cultural capital represents the educational level accumulated by students before getting into the university and we can include here the concept of habitus advanced by Bourdieu which has a wider, cultural significance. The cultural level of the student may be substantially different from the university culture that seeks to integrate the student, generating a communicational conflict between student and institution, resulting in difficulties of integration. We assume that performance obtained by students in secondary school is a strong predictor of academic performance with the hypotheses that disadvantaged students are entering the university system with weaker results that directly affect their persistence in the system (this aspect is limited by

informal policies adopted by universities, due to the funding structure of the system that inhibits selectivity). Also we consider that the association between the educational level of parents and the student's school integration must be tested in the Romanian higher education.

Biological capital refers to health status (students with disabilities or affected by chronic diseases), physical appearance but also includes issues of sex (sexual orientation). One major issue with physical disabilities is the prejudice that these disabilities are associated with less mental prowess. Access to institutions for disabled students is another major issue that partially has to be included in the analysis regarding institutional culture. Sexual orientation is an issue at universities which reflects the general standpoint towards sexuality in the Romanian society.

We considered two main categories of disadvantaged students that will be the focus in our empirical research: Roma students and students from rural areas, mainly because these groups are forming large proportions of the Romanian society and they are underrepresented in the universities. The Roma students, generally cumulates a lot of issues: racism, ethnic stereotypes, poverty, habitus differences. The students from rural areas are disadvantaged by a poor educational infrastructure and poverty. There are other categories of disadvantaged students such as students with disabilities or other ethnic minorities, mainly students of Hungarian ethnicity that can face integration problems regarding access to facilities, stereotypes and difficulties regarding language differences. The gender issue will be treated separately by our colleagues in the project.

From a theoretical point of view, we assume that economic, social or cultural capital of the family of the student correlates with persistence in college and other indicators of university integration. The chance to complete a faculty or to score better parameters regarding integration are directly influenced by variables such as ethnicity, area of origin (urban–rural) and economic resources of the student’s family.

Methodological conclusions

From a methodological standpoint, some disadvantaged groups (for example ethnic minorities, disabled students) have a low share in the general population of universities, a situation which could be approached by the focus group method. We will do a qualitative research in this sense that involves focus group analysis combined with individual interviews with the Roma students in UO. The same method could also give valuable information on the role of management as implementers and creators of integration policies. Other disadvantaged groups, such as poor students or those that are coming from

rural areas, are more numerous and their integration in academia will be analyzed within a quantitative research done in our sample of universities.

The issue of integration will be analyzed in our research according to the key elements driving the process: the disadvantaged student, the institutional policies and culture, the structural conditions regarding general practices that characterize the educational system and the general level of civic culture and political action. The educational "career" of disadvantaged students is the synthetic expression of specific processes of integration, which are expressed by indicators such as participation in courses, continuing education, retention within the university, dropout, performance evaluations, subjective indicators of student etc. The institution is analyzed in an objective way as we analyze the policies aimed to establish equal opportunities accompanied by a subjective evaluation of the positioning of teachers and students regarding disadvantaged groups or towards policies of positive discrimination.

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EMESE BELÉNYI, GÁBOR FLÓRA & ÉVA SZOLÁR

Minority Higher Education in Romania: a Contextual Analysis

Introduction

Throughout the two decades of post-communist transition, higher education in the languages of national minorities – and especially the argument for a Hungarian language state university – have been among the most controversial issues of the Romanian political agenda. This particular importance assigned to the legal and institutional provisions regulating minority higher education in Romania can be explained by the specific interplay of national minority issues in a historically multicultural Cental–East European region. The region shows characteristics of the post-communist transformation of Romanian higher education system, including its internationalization and Europeanization.

The impact of the 1989 Romanian revolution and the specific conditions, which accompanied the change of political regime contributed to a particularly high legitimacy for ethnic and religious identity and national ideologies. While the communist system and its official ideology collapsed, the strong position of ethnic, national and religious values ensured a certain degree of stability at deeper cultural levels, leading, however, at the same time, to quick polarisation of society along ethno-national lines. In this context, the idea of a "Hungarian University" became a highly charged concept both ideologically and politically, gaining an immense symbolic value and mobilisation power for members and opinion leaders of the Hungarian minority inhabiting Transylvania and Partium, a community, which has a strongly developed and fully integrated sense of national identity connected to these regions. Ethnic Hungarians regarded the state recognition of a fully-fledged mother-tongue education system – including "their own" higher education institution – as an essential way in which their identity, perceived as having been endangered by the national communist homogenisation policies of the Ceausescu regime, can be secured. By contrast, to many members of the Romanian majority and political elite, the demand for establishing (or rather, re-establishing) a separate "Hungarian University" provoked an acute perception of insecurity and strong negative reactions.

Taking into account the above mentioned dimensions and influencing factors viewed in a diachronic perspective and from the perspective of their mutual interaction, this paper aims to offer a comprehensive historical, political and sociological outlook on the evolution of minority higher education in Romania, in the light of the changing legislative framework, statements and

positions of the main stakeholders, as well as the available statistical data. The issues pertaining to minority higher education are discussed on the basis of research information drawn from statistical analysis, secondary analysis and content analysis of relevant legal documents and policy statements.

Education and ethno-cultural pluralism in historical perspective

Any effective approach to the study of inter-ethnic relations in Central-Eastern Europe should consider ethnic and national communities in their mutual interaction, rather than seeing them as isolated and self-sufficient entities. Due to the specificity of nation building and state formation in this part of Europe, various national self-images have been developed to a large extent as a reaction to policies and images promoted by the "other side". In this regard, the term "parallel cultures" proves its effectiveness as a key concept when interpreted from a sociological, rather than a purely "geometrical" perspective, so as to include the relationship between cultures as an essential component of social relations. According to this vision, interaction is in itself a driving force: both a cause and an effect. It constantly creates and recreates the interethnic context, but at the same time it is significantly affected and influenced by it, thus acting both as a factor of stability, and as a motive for change. The case of Transylvania, a multicultural region in central Romania, is particularly relevant in this regard.

Historically, Transylvania has been equally regarded as a homeland by its Romanian, Hungarian and German (Saxon) inhabitants. The area has had a distinct path of development, which produced its own specific cultural environment and identity. During the Middle Ages, "Transylvania was an integral part of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary, but owing to its remote situation, enjoyed a certain autonomy" (Seton-Watson, 1943, pp. 2–3). After the collapse of independent Hungary in 1541 Transylvania became a separate principality under Turkish Ottoman rule, and maintained this status for more than 150 years, until the beginning of 18th century, when it was integrated into the Habsburg Empire as a self-governing unit. From 1867 the province belonged to Hungary within the framework of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy, and became part of Romania after the dissolution of the Dual State at the end of the First World War.

The region occupies a central position in the collective memory and myths of both Romanians and Hungarians, as a powerful symbol of ethno-genesis and historical continuity. Several centuries of co-existence created in this region a space of cultural diversity and ethnic and religious tolerance, including a very specific institutional system, aimed at preserving the very delicate balance of power, which recognised and reflected the plurality of cultures within the territory. It should be recalled in this connection that the

political structure of medieval Transylvania was based on the shared dominance of the three recognised "political nations": the Hungarian nobility (which included the feudal leaders of the Romanians), the Szeklers and the Saxons. At the same time, Transylvania was the first country in Europe to codify religious pluralism by the so-called Edict of Toleration of 1571, which institutionalised the full equality of the four recognised churches (*recepta religio*): that is, the Catholic Church, Calvinist, Lutheran and Unitarian denominations, while the Orthodox, mostly ethnic Romanians, although not included in this power sharing arrangement, nevertheless enjoyed full religious freedom and institutional autonomy (Chis, 2009).

The existence of a multi-cultural political-institutional system in Transylvania, together with ethnic and religious belonging overlapping to a large extent, contributed to the creation of a historical link between ethnicity and religion. In fact, ethnic and religious identity became parts of the same value-structure, being perceived by significant social segments as a unique and organic reality. In the field of education, the institutionalisation of cultural plurality included the right of various ethnic and confessional communities to establish and maintain their own autonomous educational institutions and separate institutional systems. In this way, churches assumed an important role in the perpetuation of ethno-linguistic and ethno-cultural identity through the administration of their own educational institutions. It is worth mentioning in this regard, that the first Romanian school in history was set up in Transylvania, on the grounds of the 16th century Orthodox church of St. Nicholas. The church itself is located in the historic district of Şchei, nearby Kronstadt-Brassó-Braşov, the main city of a territorial-administrative unit which belonged to the autonomous territorial-political jurisdiction of the Saxon community (Demirgian, 2011).

As a core component of regional cultural tradition, educational matters have been regarded problems of high importance within the Transylvanian Principality. In 1577 the Transylvanian Parliament decided to set up colleges linked to monasteries in Kolozsvár–Klausenburg–Cluj, Nagyvárad–Groswardein–Oradea and Marosvásárhely–Neumarkt–Târgu Mureş. Both the Unitarian College of Cluj and the Reformed College in Targu Mures trace their origins to that year, 1557. The institution established in Nagyvárad, known as Schola Illustris, flourished until 1660 and according to contemporary accounts, was not far from becoming a fully fledged university level institution. (Pálfi, 2009, pp. 62–73) In 1560 there was even an attempt by Ruling Prince János Zsigmond to establish an university in Gyulafehárvár–Alba Iulia. The early death of the Transylvanian ruler prevented him fromputting this ambitious plan into practice (Gaal, 2002, p. 19–20). In spite of all favourable preconditions for the development of a culturally pluralistic and tolerant society, Transylvania did not become an "Eastern Switzerland". It entered the age of nation-building, facing the consequences of competition between two parallel discourses of

legitimacy, Hungarian and Romanian, both of which claimed state-building rights for their own nation. While Romanians insisted that Transylvania was "an ancient Romanian land", for Hungarians the Magyar national character of the region was almost axiomatic. The long-term results have been the sacralisation of "national territory" as an essential element of cultural identity and a predominant, mutually exclusive perception of national interests, which has led to the polarisation of society along ethno-national lines.

The traditionally free, and socially and ethnically homogenous communities (such as the Szeklers, but also free Romanian villages) gradually started to lose their privileges due to an internal differentiation process, which led to the creation of a unitary ruling stratum, joined only by wealthy members of the previous ruling *nationes.* The nobility was not excluded from the nation (as it happened during the French revolution), and had a leading role in the process of nation-building. In fact, the past and present dominant position of the Hungarian aristocratic elite aspiring to nationalist legitimacy had become the most effective argument in the struggle for Hungarian national supremacy in the territories of the former medieval Hungarian Kingdom. As a result, the main factor in shaping the separate modern national consciousness of Hungarians, Romanians and Germans in Transylvania seems to be related to the unequal power positions of their respective leading political strata.

According to this criterion, the Hungarian elite was evidently in the most favoured position. After all, two of the three ruling "political nations" of Transylvania, the county-based nobles and the Szeklers, were Hungarian by culture, mentality and language. As Transylvania had belonged to the medieval Kingdom of Hungary, a traditional link also existed between Transylvanian and the Hungarian nobility. Thus, the appeal to the tradition of the medieval state provided them with a shared ground of legitimacy. In addition, Hungarians – both those inside and outside Transylvania – could argue that the Transylvanian Principality was in a sense the continuation of historical Hungary. Consequently, the core principle of the Hungarian national movement (which had been embraced by Transylvania's Hungarians too) became the idea of establishing or in their vision, of re-establishing a Hungarian nation-state within the historical borders of the Hungarian Kingdom.

This desideratum was partially fulfilled with the establishment of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1867. From that point, within the "recreated" Hungary, the rhetorical appeal to the historical tradition of the medieval kingdom, while so popular among ethnic Hungarians, did not provide however sufficiently strong legitimacy against the increasing threats coming from the various and numerically strong nations living in the territory of the "revived" statehood. The most important such nations had been the Romanians in Transylvania, the Slovaks of "Upper-Hungary", the Croats, the Slovenes, the Serbs of Voivodina and the Ruthenes. In 1868 these nations repeated their

previous claims for autonomy and collective rights, and proposed that Hungary should become a multinational state, with six official languages; proportional representation in the central institutions, cultural autonomy; self-governing rights at regional level and administrative units established according to the ethnic criteria.

The Hungarian political elite rejected these demands (with the only exception of Croatian self-government), and tried to consolidate the one-nation dominated character of the state. Nevertheless, Hungarian political leaders had to acknowledge in one way or another the ethnic diversity within the society, including the right of various nations to exist at least as ethno–cultural entities. The 1868 Law of Nationalities fulfilled this task. The law granted, in a liberal spirit, the possibility for all non-Hungarians to use their own mother tongue in contacts with authorities, and also their right of association "for the development of language, arts, sciences, industry and trade". At the same time the law stated that "all citizens of the country, in the political sense, are members of one nation, the unitary and indivisible Hungarian nation, which includes with equal rights all citizens of the fatherland, to whatever nationality they belong" (Péter, 1992, p. 34). The idea of a "Hungarian political nation", supposed to include all citizens regardless of their ethnic belonging, can be seen as an unsuccessful attempt of Hungarian leading circles to reconcile the need to assert an ethno–nationalist rhetoric of legitimacy with the practical political necessity to recognise ethnic diversity within the state. This necessity was the more pressing, as ethnic Hungarians amounted to less than half of the total population.

In the case of the Romanians, the most important influencing factors in the process of nation- building had been the lack of past political participation, their exclusion from the status of a recognised *natio*, and the almost complete absorption of their privileged members into the Hungarian nobility. As a consequence, the leading role in the creation of a Romanian national identity had to be assumed by the intelligentsia, and especially by the clergy of the Uniate (Greek Catholic) Church. There were no traditions of independent statehood to be invoked in support of national claims, and, in their absence, arguments of historical ancestry and continuity as well as ethno-demographic and ethno–linguistic arguments had been put forward. Not surprisingly, the reaction of Romanian representatives to the idea of their being included into the "Hungarian political nation" was sharply negative, as they saw it as a step towards ethnic homogenisation, and an attempt to separate and alienate the national elites from their own communities. The fact that the proposed unitary political community was designated "the Hungarian political nation" rather than "the political nation of Hungary", was regarded by Transylvanian Romanian leaders as a proof in itself of the real intentions of successive Hungarian governments. The Romanian elite perceived the proposed replacement of an ethnic principle of political representation with a modern

"civil" one as an attempt of the Hungarian elite to conceal and/or legitimise the real dominance of the Hungarian element and its envisaged plans for the ethnic assimilation of non-Hungarians. The fact that Hungarian language became a compulsory subject in the mainly Church owned Romanian schools and kindergartens, and that the state owned education institutions were almost exclusively of Hungarian language, came only to underline such suspicions. The Ferencz József University set up in Cluj in 1872, chronologically the second "national" university of Hungary after the University of Budapest, being named after the Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, having Hungarian as a teaching language, symbolically reinforced this dominant cultural–political trend.

The language issue was indeed an extremely delicate problem. The Hungarian national movement itself started mainly as a struggle for linguistic rights, for the recognition of Hungarian as an official language within the Austrian Empire. This "birth certificate" had long-term consequences. The appeal to language – and to folk culture – as essential symbolic bonds linking all Magyars regardless of socio-economic status, fulfilled an important role in this legitimising strategy. Proclaiming Hungarian as the only official language, beyond the instrumental advantage provided to Hungarian speakers, also offered them an additional sense of privilege and dignity compared to the rest of the population, thus enhancing their legitimacy still further. This had an exclusionary effect on non-Hungarian speakers and prompted their elites to follow the same model in order to gain popular acceptance, that is, by emphasising the nationbuilding virtues of their respective languages.

Minority educational policies in interwarRomania

On the 4th of June 1920, the peace treaty signed between the victorious allied and associated powers on one side and Hungary on the other, along with the other treaties signed at the conclusion of the First World War, put the seal of international recognition on the new territorial division of East-Central Europe. As part of the territorial transfers 37.5% of the territory belonging to the former semi-independent Hungary within the framework of the Austria-Hungarian Monarchy, an area of 103,093 km, which included historical Transylvania, Partium and a segment of the Banat of Timisoara, with a population of 5,565,000 (of which 1,651,000 were Hungarians and 565,000 Germans), was incorporated into the Romanian state.

Perceived by Hungarians as a deep national trauma, welcomed and celebrated by Romanians as the apotheosis of their nation-state building, the new territorial status of Transylvania and Partium created in effect as many national problems as it solved. The new minority population approximated in number that of the existing population before the territorial shift. According to

the 1930 census, the proportion of ethnic Romanians in the total population was 71.9%, but within Transylvania their share was only 57.8 % (Institutul National de Statistică, 1995). The new borders were not established in a way to leave either side with as few minority inhabitants as possible. Due to the inextricably mixed ethnic map of the area, it was in fact simply impossible to draw a state border line even remotely resembling the national boundaries. Thus a major problem emerged: whether, and if so, to what extent the state should now change its structures, so as to provide a model of integration for its numerous ethnically non-Romanian citizens.

In addition to the problems resulting from a high degree of ethnic intermingling and the existence of competing national claims, the new situation now produced a different type of minority drawn from the previously dominant population. Hungarians who came under Romanian rule were understandably likely to have accentuated feelings of disappointment and frustration, resulting from the sudden, unexpected and radical change of their status. This was especially true for members of the Hungarian economic and administrative middle class, who in the years of Dual Monarchy managed to benefit to a much larger extent from modern industrial and urban development. They now feared the new authorities might conduct preferential employment policies to encourage the Romanian ethnic element and might adopt selective socio-economic measures in order to improve the situation of ethnic Romanians. As it turned out later, such concerns were not at all groundless.

The new power holders looked upon Hungarians of Transylvania with suspicion and the faithfulness of Hungarian minority members to a state where they found themselves against their own will was considered at best as being questionable. Therefore, it was only to be expected that the Romanian government would try to exert pressures in order to weaken them demographically, economically and culturally. It was hoped that in this way it will be possible to reduce the potential threat to the territorial integrity ethnic Hungarians were perceived to represent. In the view of Romanian inter-war power elite, granting more rights to Hungarians would only have contributed to an increase of territorial revisionist threat, rather than ease the tension.

The difficulties integrating Transylvania given to the Romanian government after 1918 were in a certain respect harder than those encountered by Hungary a few decades earlier. The contradiction between the state-building models of Transylvania and Old Romania was also much more striking. Throughout several centuries of political distinctness, Transylvania produced institutionalised forms of cultural diversity, religious tolerance and ethno-regional self-government, which were unknown in territories located to south and east to the Carpathians. The problems encountered by the ruling elites of "Greater Romania" constituted not only the need to accommodate a multi-cultural society under the roof of one state but also to reconcile through this process two rather different political cultures.

During the first few months, shortly before and after the extension of Romanian sovereignty over Transylvania, it seemed that Greater Romania might be built to some extent on the foundation of shared power between the Romanians and the other numerically and politically important nationalities. The Resolution of Alba Iulia, which expressed the initial view of Transylvanian Romanians, embodied the following principles on the nationality question, which were favourably received by minorities:

> "*Art. 3* The National Assembly declares as fundamental principles of the Romanian State, the following:(1) Complete national liberty for all the peoples inhabiting Romania. Each people to educate, administer and judge itself through the medium of persons from its own midst. Each people to have the right to administrative legislation and of taking part in the administration of the country in proportion to the number of individuals of which it is composed.(2) Equality and complete autonomous religious liberty for every denomination of the state" (România și minoritățile, 1997, p. 9).

It was on the basis of this programme that Saxons had voted in favour of unification. In the decades of the inter-war period, the political organisations both of the Hungarian and German populations had insistently demanded a solution to the nationality problem on the basis of the principles put forward at Alba Iulia. In the event, however, ethnocentrism, rather than a consensual vision prevailed. This became evident when the Constitution of 1923 was adopted in a form which embodied exclusively the conceptions of the ethnic majority. Romania was defined as a "national, unitary and indivisible state" (România și minoritățile 1997, p. 10). No provisions had been included for the protection of the identities of national minorities, except for the principle of citizenship equality. A unitary administrative-territorial system was established without special status being offered to those areas mainly inhabited by minorities. No institutions of political or cultural self-government were established for the needs of national minority populations. The Romanian language was declared the language of the state, and the use of languages other than Romanian in political life and state administration was declared illegal. Citizens were allowed to communicate with administrative authorities, including those at the local level, regardless of the ethnic composition of local populations, exclusively in the official language.

In such circumstances, the Hungarian Ferencz József University was replaced by a new university named after King Ferdinand I of Romania where teaching activities were organized exclusively in Romanian language. For a brief period, in the academic year 1920–1921, the Hungarian historical churches of Transylvania attempted to establish a Hungarian teacher training college in Cluj–Kolozsár, which had to be closed down, however, after being refused recognition by the Romanian State. Instead, Romanian government authorities advised potential Hungarian students to enroll at the Romanian University. The name and the institutional continuity of the Hungarian

language University was maintained during the interwar period in Szeged (Hungary), where most of the Hungarian faculty members had moved from Cluj. In 1940, when North-Transylvania became again part of Hungary, the institution returned to its original home (Gaal, 2002, p. 88–105).

As a result of these measures, the cultural space available to minority education had been restricted essentially to secondary and primary education. The theological faculties of historical church communities remained the only tolerated Hungarian institutions of higher education. Churches could maintain their traditional confessional schools without receiving state financial support. Thus, under strict control and accreditation by government bodies, these institutions were allowed to continue. As part of the requirement, teachers and pupils had to pass a Romanian language exam.

In 1924, in order to promote Romanianisation, now regarded as a "national mission", the so-called "cultural zones" came into being in the nine Transylvanian counties with the largest Hungarian populations. As part of the special provisions implemented in this area, ethnic Romanian teachers, who did not know the language of their pupils, were sent to overwhelmingly Hungarian localities. These teachers were offered special economic incentives such as higher salaries, faster advancement, and 10ha of land in the case of permanent resettlement. This policy was intended to create, in the first stage, small but spiritually and politically active "islands", with the task of preparing the ground for a subsequent, larger-scale colonisation (Kovács, 1994).

In the field of education, measures were taken to ensure the tight ideological control of minority administered schools, in order to subordinate them to the "national idea". Non-Romanians were largely prevented from learning about their own past, except from official textbooks, which often adopted an exclusively ethnocentrist tone and a confrontational attitude toward their own nations. Various methods and forms of interference in the life of minority language educational institutions were implemented. These included the discretionary closure of schools, the control of curricula, the right to appoint and dismiss teaching personnel and the obligation to teach such subjects as history, geography and civic education exclusively in Romanian.

"Socialist homogenisation" and minority higher education

In spite of all the obvious differences originating in the different nature of the political system, one can identify a series of important similarities between the attitudes of inter-war and communist governments, as far as the minority question and ethnic policies were concerned. Both types of regime emphasized "ancient Romanian rights" and the assertion of Romanian national supremacy within the state was regarded essential, ethno-cultural homogeneity remained a

cherished ideal, and minorities were basically excluded from the dominant national rhetoric.

From a certain perspective, the possibility of minorities defending their interests became even more precarious compared to the inter-war period. During the inter-war era citizenship rights frequently entered into conflict with the national principle, but were nevertheless legally affirmed and could be openly claimed and defended by the representatives of the individuals or groups concerned. Under communism the leading role of the party nullified any practical significance for minority rights. The extent and limitations of these "rights" depended exclusively on the arbitrary will of the political leadership. Provisions could be offered as well as withdrawn according to tactical moves and calculations by those holding power (Schöpflin & Poulton, 1990, p. 10). Paradoxically, even the existence of facilities created in certain periods specially for minorities, such as a state-controlled minority language education system, newspapers, broadcasting programmes, etc., could also serve as a façade to hide the absence of real rights. The situation of national minorities was made even more difficult by the fact that, like all other social groups, they did not have any real possibilities for independent representation of their interests (Glatz, 1992, p. 47).

Apart from the mentioned peculiarities, two additional motives played an important role in the intensification of ethno-nationalist homogenisation policies during communist times. First, this was the period when the society of Romania entered the phase of economic *en masse* mobilisation and large scale rural-to-urban migration – a process which was planned and implemented from above by the communist leadership, and under strict government control, which included the smallest details. Ethno-nationalist rhetoric played the leading ideological role throughout this period, an attempt to offer a surrogate sense of identity to the uprooted population, in order to integrate them into the new environment as fast a possible. While temporarily "efficient" in that regard, the "socialist patriotic education" implied at the same time the inculcation of a false sense of superiority by ethnic Romanians, with disastrous consequences to the climate of inter-ethnic relations.

The second important motivational force in the Romanian version of co-habitation between communism and nationalism, particularly under Ceausescu, was the regime's desperate search for a traditional type of legitimisation in order to enlarge the power basis and consolidate the stability of communist rule. The cultivating of the widespread nationalistic sentiments of the population by communist party propaganda attracted part of the intelligentsia and helped the government to gain popular support, or at least a silent acceptance of repressive totalitarian measures, by obsessively invoking the argument of a "threat to the territorial integrity" of the country. Romanian communist minority policies did occasionally include short periods of relaxation (as in 1945–47 and again in 1968–70), during times when the regime

needed to make some concessions in order to consolidate power. The general trend, however, was an ever more intensive use of ethno-nationalism as a political tool of mass mobilisation. Such tactics included a tougher limitation of the cultural space available for minorities, and the use of more complex and effective strategies and methods in order to achieve higher degrees of ethnic homogeneity.

In the first phase of the communist take-over, due to a complexity of causes and influencing factors (such as the political necessity to oppose "proletar internationalism" to the "burgeois nationalism" of the former dominant classes) the Hungarian community of Romania was offered and to some extent even benefitted from certain favorable legal provisions. The government decree 86/1945 permitted the use of native languages in local administration and courts of justice in localities where the percentage of minority population was higher than 30%. In 1952, in the regions inhabited by homogenous Hungarian population the regime agreed to establish a so called Hungarian Autonomus Region (from 1961 called Mures-Hungarian Autonomous Region, functioned until 1968), which – in spite of its mostly decorative character – nevertheless offered a somewhat larger official space for Romanian-Hungarian bilingualism within its territorial jurisdiction (Frunda and Ştefoi 1997, p. 11). In the same period, a network of Hungarian language primary and secondary schools had been set up as well.

In this relatively favorable context, two simultaneous decrees (no. 406 and 407/1945) have been enacted, which established two separate universities in Cluj-Kolozsvár: Babeş University, with Romanian teaching language and the Hungarian language Bolyai University (Vincze, 1999, p. 233). These two institutions only coexisted for a few years, until 1959. In that year they were forcibly united as part of the communist regime's new wave of nationalist drive in the years of political repression following the subpression of 1956 revolution in Hungary and Romanian leaders' adoption of a more independent political platform in an attempt to distance themselves from the reformist policies initiated in the Soviet Union. This unification was not only a formal act, as it meant a severe restriction of the fields where Hungarian language university education remained available. At the end of the fifties, the opportunity to receive higher education in the native language was completely denied to future mechanical engineers, agricultural specialists, economists and legal experts, among other categories of professionals. The same kind of "unification" measures occurred at the level of primary and secondary education, thus leading to the cancelation of most autonomous Hungarian language education institutions in the country (Vincze, 1999, p. 260).

In the decades following the forced unification, the number of Hungarian students at Babeş–Bolyai University continually diminished. This was particularly true in fields of study where teaching was not available any more in Hungarian language. In 1977, for example, the proportion of ethnic

Hungarians amounted to only 1.2% of the total number of Law students and decreased even further – to almost zero – in the 1980s. In 1977–78 Hungarian students made up only 4.15% of the total student body of the university, while the Hungarians' share in the total population of Transylvania reached 22.0%. A reduction in the number of students was also imposed in minority theological higher education institutions. Since the beginning of eighties state authorities have imposed a drastic limitation of the number of students at the Hungarian theological faculties (Vincze, 1999, p. 219).

A similar phenomenon occured at the level of primary and secondary education, where, by the second half of the eighties, the use of Hungarian and German languages as the teaching language had shrunk drastically. While in 1976 only 37% of Hungarian pupils were required to attend Romanian schools, in 1986 the proportion of those forced to do so rose to 77% (Schöpflin & Poulton, 1990, p. 17). In contrast with the the inter-war governments, which could rely only on limited means, mainly of an administrative nature, which consequently could not bring about a major change in the ethno-territorial distribution, the communist state had at its disposal a wide range of economic, demographic, political and cultural resources and instruments. These were often used in combination so as to further the regime's nationalist aims. Steps taken by the party leadership in the educational field included the merging of Romanian and minority schools, with the aim of subsequently reducing the share of classes and subjects using a non-Romanian teaching language. The regime also established a system of compulsory assignment to working places for university and high school graduates, with the aim of preventing specialists belonging to minorities from returning to their home regions.

To reinforce the effect of such measures, a system of "closed cities" was institutionalised. This included several heavily Hungarian- and German-populated localities, with the undeclared objective of barring the settlement of minority inhabitants, while at the same time offering financial, housing and other incentives for ethnic Romanians to come to those cities, often from remote areas. As a defensive reaction, particularly in the last years of the regime, a sharply increasing number of Hungarian students chose to emigrate. To give just one example, according to the data from 1985–1990 more than 80% of the Hungarian graduates from the University of Medicine in Targu Mures emigrated (Frunda and Ștefoi 1997, p. 19).

Interethnic relations and minority education during post-communist transition

The events of December 1989 raised hope that the barriers of nationalism could be overcome. In the wake of the revolution, the basic values of all ethnic and religious communities appeared to be the same: democracy, freedom, and respect for human rights, including minority rights. However, first impressions

were short lived, as it soon became clear that reality was far more complicated. Soon after the sudden collapse of communism, nationalism – alongside the promotion of ethno-confessional identity – very quickly and effectively filled the vacuum of legitimacy. Members of the political elite left over from the old system acutely perceived an urgent need of sudden "conversion" and, given the preconditions, they could hardly find a more convenient and suitable solution than becoming fervent promoters and defenders of the "national cause." At the same time, the appeal to nationalism probably also addressed a psychological need, offering a certain reassurance to people who felt insecure that not everything had changed, because much of the nationalist sentiment remained the same. On the other hand, such concepts as "democracy" or "freedom", which were to play a key role in the post-communist period, had been emptied of their real content under communism to such an extent that an urgent political necessity emerged to overemphasise "national values". These were perceived as the only ones which seemed to preserve a clear and unaltered meaning to the population.

The negative memory of past homogenisation policies, shared by all the national minorities, concerning especially the last years of Ceausescu's dictatorship, when they indeed had to face a not very remote prospect of complete annihilation as separate ethno-cultural entities, led to a rapid political mobilisation of minority communities. This was particularly the case of the ethnic Hungarian organisation, the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania (UDMR–RMDSZ), which was already functioning at the end of 1989. At almost the same time intense ethnic Romanian nationalist political activism manifested itself, with a virulent and occasionally aggressive anti-minority discourse, claiming to defend the rights of Romanians in their own country against revisionist threats, and particularly against Hungarian irredentism.

In January 1990, the organisation *Vatra Românească* ("Romanian Cradle") was founded. They firmly rejected Hungarian demands for the restoration of past cultural and educational rights, and accused UDMR of attempting to force the "enclavisation" of ethnic Hungarians, in order to create a state within the state with the ultimate aim of secession and eventual reunification with Hungary. Under the effect of conflicting positions concerning the ethnic issue, particularly on the emotionally charged problem of separating Romanian and Hungarian schools, demonstrations and counter-demonstrations followed. The situation degenerated into ethnic clashes in March 1990 in the city of Târgu Mures-Marosvásárhely, with a population almost equally divided between the two ethnic communities. Although in subsequent months and years a certain degree of stability had been achieved, and further violent events have been avoided, the polarisation of society and political life along ethnic lines has remained, being only slightly attenuated until the second half of the nineties.

This became clear when the articles concerning minorities of the 1991 Constitution were adopted in a form which basically reflected a consensus of political forces representing the "state building" majority population, instead of a solution based on a general inter-ethnic political consensus. The Constitution approved in November 1991[1] defined Romania as a "national state, sovereign, unitary and indivisible" (art.1), where "the official language is the Romanian language". (art.13). According to the provisions of Article 6 "the State recognizes and guarantees the right of persons belonging to national minorities to the preservation, development and expression of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity." This strictly individualistic definition meant by implication a denial of any collective rights to minority communities, including their right to establish educational institutions of their own.

At the same time, the Constitution stated that "the protection measures taken by the Romanian state for the preservation, development and expression of identity of persons belonging to national minorities shall conform to the principles of equality and non-discrimination in relation to other Romanian citizens" (Art. 6, par.2), as "citizens are equal before the law and public authorities, without any privilege or discrimination." (Art. 16). In light of this formulation, minority claims for educational, cultural or other categories of rights could and indeed were often interpreted as demands for "special privileges on ethnic grounds." It is worth mentioning here that the desideratum for re-establishing of Bolyai University, which was formulated by the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania already at the beginning of 1990, was refused by political leaders representing the Romanian national majority on the basis of the above mentioned constitutional provision.

Beyond the non-recognition of national minority collective rights, the constitutional text presented a certain ambiguity and included contradictory provisions in the field of individual linguistic educational rights as well. For instance, Art. 32 in its first paragraph stated that "education of all grades shall be in Romanian. Education may also be conducted in a foreign language of international use, under the terms laid down by law." while the second paragraph mentioned – in apparent contradiction with the first one – that "the right of persons belonging to national minorities to learn their mother tongue, and their right to be educated in this language are guaranteed; the ways to exercise these rights shall be regulated by law."

In compliance with the above provision, the task of offering a more precise and comprehensive regulation of the conditions in which the right of persons belonging to national minorities to be educated in their native language can be exercised, had to fulfilled by the subsequent Law of Education, which was duly approved in 1995 and continues to be in force (with several

[1] Constitution of Romania of 1991 http://www.cdep.ro/pls/dic/site.page?den=act1_2 (accessed: 09.09.2011)

subsequent modifications) as of the end of 2010. The 1995 Law, however, still preserved a certain degree of the ambiguity already present in the constitutional text, and some of its formulations have been regarded by the representatives of the Hungarian minority as a step backward in ensuring linguistic educational rights. As opposed to the similar kind regulation enshrined in the Constitution, the law only "provides" but not "guarantees" the right of persons belonging to minorities to be educated in all forms and all levels in their native language. Another disadvantage of the law was that the ways and modalities of its implementation had been assigned to the jurisdiction of local authorities, and thus were in fact made dependent on local political contexts and power constellations.

As far as higher education is concerned, the 1995 Law did not allow a separate Hungarian language state university, permitting only the organizing of "study groups and sections" in the languages of minorities (Art. 123). In addition, the Law restricted state education in the languages of minorities to teacher training and the cultural/artistic fields. However, as stated in a monitoring report by the OSCE High Commissioner in 1995, possibilities remained open for the organization of additional *private* university education in other fields as well, according to the provisions of Law No. 88 of 1993. (Statement by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities on evaluation mission to Romania. The Hague, 1 September 1995.

Having the intention to join the EU, the Romanian government could not afford to not take into consideration the outcome of evaluations by relevant European institutions. The European monitoring of minority education system can be regarded as one of the early signs that Romanian educational policies began to gain an international dimension and significance. Perhaps as a solution of compromise, while firmly rejecting the claim for a separate Hungarian state university, the government nevertheless decided to grant a legal possibility for autonomous minority higher education in the private sphere. The only additional formal provision put forward by authorities required minority private universities to have at least one study programme organized in Romanian language.

This opportunity, to organize minority language educational programs in private institutions, should be viewed in the context of the large-scale post-communist expansion of higher education in Central-Eastern Europe. Its first wave occured in the years immediately following the revolutionary changes of 1989/90, when the number of students enrolled in higher education became five times higher in only ten years. This meant a huge increase not only in the number of students, but also in the number of higher education institutions and faculties.

Table 1: Number of institutions and faculties in the state and private sector in Romania (1989–2004)

Univ. Year	*Total number*		*State*		*Private*	
	Instit.	Faculties	Instit.	Faculties	Instit.	Faculties
1989/90	44	101	44	101	0	0
1990/91	48	186	48	186	not recorded[2]	not recorded
1991/92	56	257	56	257	not recorded	not recorded
1992/93	62	261	62	261	not recorded	not recorded
1993/94	63	262	63	262	not recorded	not recorded
1994/95	63	262	63	262	not recorded	not recorded
1995/96	95	437	59	318	36	119
1996/97	102	485	58	324	44	161
1997/98	106	516	57	342	49	174
1998/99	111	556	57	361	54	195
1999/00	121	632	58	411	63	220
2000/01	126	696	59	438	67	258
2001/02	126	729	57	465	69	264
2002/03	125	742	55	489	70	253
2003/04	122	754	55	513	67	241

Source: Institutul National de Statistică, 2004

The above data illustrate an important peculiarity of the analysed phenomenon, namely the important contribution of the *private* sector to the expansion of university education. Mainly due to the extremely limited number of available university places during the communist period (particularly in the humanistic and social fields of study), after 1989 there was a huge popular demand for "getting into university at all costs", as – based on the realities experienced during communist times – a diploma from a higher education institution was overwhelmingly regarded by population as the only guarantee of upward professional mobility and personal success. In the first years, a quick response to this social demand came both from the newly emerging private university sector and from the expanding state sector. As can be seen from the above Table 1, in 1995/96, the year from which the first official record of Romanian private universities is available, already 63 private higher education institutions were functioning, a much higher number than that of state universities existing in 1989. Menwhile, a huge increase also occured in the state sector, which more than doubled its size, as far as the number of institutions is concerned.

Ethnic Hungarians, however, have been to a less extent able to take advantage of this expansion, comparatively to the general population. As in the overwhelming majority of the newly set up private universities the teaching language was exclusively Romanian, these institutions were less attractive to potential Hungarian applicants. Their main attention continued to remain focused throughout the nineties on the developments taking place at Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj, aiming to reestablish the exclusively Hungarian

language Bolyai University, or at least, to improve the status of Hungarian as a teaching language within the mixed Hungarian–Romanian university structure.

As a reaction to the Hungarian demand for separating the linguistically mixed university into a Romanian and a Hungarian one, in 1995 Babeş–Bolyai University was defined by its own academic leadership as a "multicultural institution" with three teaching languages: Romanian (currently having 99 fields of study), Hungarian (51), and German (13). The undeclared aim was presumably to obtain a sort of international legitimacy for the refusal of separating the University on ethno-linguistic ground, by invoking the "European idea" of multiculturalism.[3]

The power positions and status of the three languages (and language communities) at the University were, however, far from being balanced, as Romanian language preserved a clearly dominant position. In spite of the fact that beginning from the 1993–1994 academic year Hungarian political leaders indeed obtained a partial satisfaction in securing a certain number of guaranteed places for students wishing to study in Hungarian language at Babeş-Bolyai University, the share of Hungarian students in the general student population constantly remained lower than the percentage of ethnic Hungarians in the population of the country, throughout the first decade of post-communist transition. The number of students currently enrolled in study programs conducted in Hungarian language at Babeş-Bolyai University is around seven thousands, out of a total student population of aproximately 53 thousands[4].

[3] http://www.ubbcluj.ro/ro/despre/misiune/caracter_multicultural.html (accessed 10.09. 2011)

[4] http://www.ubbcluj.ro/hu/despre/misiune/linia_maghiara.html; http://www.ubbcluj.ro/ro/studenti/ (accessed 10.09. 2011)

Table 2: Hungarian minority students in Romania (1989–2000)

University year	*Total number of students*	*Number of Hungarian students*	*Share of Hungarian students (%)*
1989/90	164 507	7100	4.31
1990/91	203 864	8300	4.07
1991/92	250 027	8777	3.51
1992/93	322 080	12 842	3.98
1993/94	360 967	8814	2.44
1994/95	369 662	n.a.	n.a.
1995/96	336 011	12 248	3.64
1996/97	354 493	13 240	3.73
1997/98	360 590	13 944	3.86
1998/99	407 720	16 122	3.95
1999/00	452 621	21 724	4.82

Source: Bárdi, 2001, p. 48–49; Recensământ, 2002.

Table 3: Ethno-demographic data according to the 2002 census results

Total population of Romania	*Hungarian population*	*Share of Hungarians (%)*
21,698,181	1,434,377	6.60

Source: Bárdi, 2001, p. 48–49; Recensământ 2002.

While Hungarian minority members aspiring to enter higher education institutions were to a lesser extent able to take advantage of the large increase of the number of available places in the public and in the market oriented private sector compared to their Romanian counterparts, a somewhat larger space for new opportunities seemed to open up in the field of the confessional and/or church constituted private educational sector. As a consequence of the traditional link between ethnic and religious identity, after 1989 the dominant social expectation was that both the majority Orthodox Church and the minority churches should maintain their traditional *legitimising* function, in close connection with the protection and affirmation of the national identities to which they were primarily linked.

In spite of this favorable precondition, the task of religious leaders linked to Hungarian ethnic community to establish schools and higher educational institutions for the linguistic, educational and spiritual needs of their fellow church-members was not easy either. Differences of *perception* between the majority Orthodox Church and the historical minority churches also originated from differences of *tradition.* While religious education has been perceived as a concern by all recognized churches, denominational schools belong to a cultural tradition primarily linked to minority religious and ethnic communities, being much less frequent and less characteristic within the Orthodox population.That is why for the governments of a country with a predominant Orthodox population – which hardly has any tradition of church

based education apart from the training of its own church personnel – the recognition of lay denominational institutions of education has not been a political urgency.

In contrast, religious minorities firmly contested what they perceived to be a privileged position of the Romanian Orthodox Church within the state, and had an important role in asserting ethnic and confessional pluralism in post-communist Romania. They have also been instrumental in building minority institutions in the fields of education, culture, and social services. After it became obvious that the political conditions would not allow for the recognition of a Hungarian language state university in the foreseeable future, in 2000 the Hungarian historical denominations decided to provide the legal and institutional umbrella to the new private universities and faculties with Hungarian teaching language, which was set up with the financial and political support of the Government of Hungary.

The chronologically first initiative of this kind dates back to 1990, when the Reformed Church District of Királyhágómellék decided to set up the Sulyok István Reformed College in Oradea–Nagyvárad, with the official task of training lay collaborators for the church. As far as its legal status was concerned, the institution was recognized by authorities and functioned as a faculty of the Protestant Theological University Institute of Cluj–Kolozsvar, taking advantage of the vacuum of regulations in the field of university accreditation, which characterised the first post-revolutionary years. Beyond its officially assumed mission, however, the aim of the founders was to go beyond the Reformed denomination's own educational needs in order to establish a fully fledged university under Christian ecumenic leadership, in the service of the entire Hungarian community.

This intention was transformed into reality in the period 2000–2008, when Partium Christian University was first founded as a private educational institution, then recognized by the government to function provisionally, and finally – after a four year waiting period in paliamentary commissions – established by law as a private university of public interest, part of the higher education system of Romania (2008). In this way, the university became the first accredited Hungarian minority higher education institution in Romania since 1959, the year when Bolyai University was forcibly merged with Babeş–University by the communist authorities. Currently there are around one thousand students enrolled, in 14 fields of study, and approximetely 150 academics involved in teaching activities.

In Transylvania, the Sapientia University was established in 2001, having faculties in several cities of Transylvania Tirgu Mures–Marosvásárhely, Miercurea Ciuc–Csíkszereda and Cluj–Kolozsvár). Its current leadership invokes three facts which contributed to its foundation. 1. That the percentage of Hungarian students in Romanian university life is smaller than the percentage of the Hungarian population in Romania. 2. That university

education in Hungarian does not cover the range of necessary specializations. 3. That only a third of Hungarian students conduct their studies in their mother tongue. The social need to which these facts are pointing seems to be confirmed by the continuous increase of the number of study programmes as well as the number of students: in the academic year of 2010/2011, a total number of 1,940 students were enrolled in 29 BSc programmes within 4 faculties, under the guidance of 270 teachers[5]. As recognition of its quality and viability, in 2010 the official Romanian university accreditation body (ARACIS) proposed the accreditation of Sapientia University, a proposal which was approved by the government and approved by the parliament in March 2012.

The religious denominations closely linked to the Hungarian minority constantly advocated minority rights and have been very effective in the mobilization of ethnic Hungarians in favour of legislative and institutional changes beneficial to the national minorities. Minority churches, which prior to communism had a large number of educational institutions, repeatedly expressed dissatisfaction with the government's failure to allow by law the proper establishment of confessional schools and universities. This demand was finally satisfied with the new Law of Education, in force from February 2011, which recognizes three categories of higher education institutions: state, private and confessional. At that time, however, the Hungarian higher educational institutions set up under the confessional umbrella were already established as private universities. Due to the peculiarities of Romanian legal provisions concerning university recognition and accreditation, any possible change in their legal status would be a difficult and time consuming process, also involving certain risks.

Recent tendencies

Although the road of the two Hungarian autonomous higher education institutions towards recognition and accreditation was far from being a smooth one (and in case of Sapientia University it is not, as yet, finalized), to sum up, it can be said that – although not without hesitations – members of the Romanian national majority political elite ultimately found it acceptable to agree to the establishment of private minority universities in contrast to their attitude of categorical refusal manifested towards the idea of a Hungarian state university. This differentiated attitude of Romanian politicians perhaps can be explained by the fact that – due to the particular context in which the issue of the Hungarian state university was debated in the period immediately following 1989 – they tended to attach to it a much higher political significance.

[5] http://www.sapientia.ro/eng/history.html accessed 10. 10.2011

To the members of the Hungarian community, students and academics, the functioning of the new autonomous higher education institutions does have, beyond its obvious instrumental value, an important symbolic significance, providing them with an additional sense of dignity and self-respect, together with the opportunity to take autonomous decisions at the level of academic management and assume responsibility for them. To potential students, it also means an increased possibility to choose among various forms and types of university education: state or private, minority language or multi-lingual, having a church conducted or lay institutional background.

The accreditation of the two autonomous Hungarian higher education institutions provided them with the long awaited right to become full members of the European Educational Area, including the opportunity to participate in European student and teacher mobility programmes and to apply for EU research funding. While during their founding period and in the first years of their institutional existence the external relations of Partium Christian University and Sapientia Universitiy have been predominantly oriented towards partner institutions located in Hungary, which offered and still continue to offer them important academic support, in recent years they also established partnership links with higher education institutions in several other European countries, such as Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, The Netherlands and Slovenia.

Another important phenomenon, with potential, but still uncertain effects on the status of minority higher education and the opportunities offered to future minority students, is the establishment of the two cycle degrees structure under the auspices of the "Bologna Process". This has been introduced in Romania as a typical "reform from above" by a government ordinance which had to be applied by all institutions of higher education in the period 2005–2008. According to Romanian legislation, only fully accredited universities have the right to propose study programs at the master's level. At Partium Christian University, the start of the first M.A. programs became legally possible only in the academic year 2009–2010, subsequently to the full accreditation of the institution in October 2008. The Sapientia University, which only recently passed the final phase of accreditation, still could not organise admissions for master's level studies. This fact might also have a negative effect on the number of potential applicants at the B.A. level, as future students regard obtaining a second degree as a "natural" continuation of their studies, and they would probably expect this continuation to be provided by a university of their choice.

Rather surprisingly, taking into account the rich multicultural and pluralistic tradition of European education, the reference to the minority cultural and educational needs is almost completely absent from the dominant "Bologna" discourse at the European level, and the implicit globalizing and homogenizing message transmitted in this way has its corresponding effects at

the national level as well. As a consequence, the specific requirements of minority higher education tend to be regarded as marginal and often neglected by national governments and policy making agencies conducting the implementation of educational reform. The process of transformation – at least in the form in which it is interpreted and applied by higher educational decision-makers in Romania – tends to favor the establishment of large institutions, having an important research component, with standard procedures and evaluation criteria, which pay insuficient attention to the instititutional and cultural specificity of small size minority institutions having an ethno-national and/or confessional-religious mission.

A more recent development with a negative effect both on the legitimacy level and the practical chances for the implementation of the political claims connected to minority higher education concerns the shift gradually occurring in the perceptions of Hungarian minority members themselves. As the process of post-communist economic and social transformation occurs, being accompanied by a rapid expansion of the higher education system along with the gradual opening up of the country to students from abroad and the increasing level of educational internationalisation, the symbolic value of receiving native language education seems to diminish in certain social segments belonging to the Hungarian community. In view of recent research data on high school graduates options concerning university studies (Flóra 2010, pp. 159–164), an increasing level of discrepancy can be observed between the ways in which the opportunity to receive education in the native language is perceived by the political and cultural representatives of the Hungarian minority and Hungarian elite on the one side and the individual members of the Hungarian minority on the other side.

While for the political and cultural representative organisations of the Hungarian minority and for the members of the Hungarian intellectual elite the idea of "Hungarian University" and of higher education in Hungarian language continues to preserve both an important symbolic and pragmatical value for the preservation of national identity and the perpetuation of cultural community, this perception is shared to its full extent only by a part of the Hungarian population. The actual options for ethnic Hungarians are almost equally divided between Hungarian and Romanian as the language of studies. A research conducted in 2009–2010 (KAB, 2010) found that around 50% of high school graduates who choose to continue their studies at university level are doing so in Hungarian language universities and/or specialisations, while the other half are studying in Romanian language. There is also an increasing number of students who decide to continue their studies at the university level at universities in Hungary.

A significant proportion of the Hungarian population believes that their children might have better opportunities for upward social mobility or for preserving the social status inherited in the family, if they study in Romanian

and attain a good mastering of Romanian language. This argument is at work in influencing parents to send their children to Romanian schools already at the primary and secondary level. Such options are more characteristic to geographical areas with a balanced Hungarian–Romanian ethnic component and to those with a scattered Hungarian population, rather than to regions inhabited by a compact Hungarian minority population.

It goes without saying that to the Hungarian minority graduates of Romanian language secondary schools, the continuation of their studies at a higher level in Romanian is a likely occurence. To a certain extent, the option of Romanian as the language of study can also be explained by other factors, such as the necessity to select a field of study available in the geographical proximity of the students for economic and social reasons and the lack of minority language educational offerings in the chosen specialisation or in the student's home region. The perceived reputation of higher education institutions (traditional state universities tend to be valued higher than new private ones) and the perceptions concerning the value and usefulness in the labour market of the diplomas issued by one university or another might also play a significant role. All these assumptions, however, although already based on some empirical evidence, require further research.

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GYÖNGYI BUJDOSÓ, ÁGNES ENGLER, HAJNALKA FÉNYES & ZSUZSA ZSÓFIA TORNYI

Gender Differences in Higher Education in the "Partium" Region

Introduction

One of the goals of the HERD (Higher Education for Social Cohesion – Cooperative Research and Development in a Cross Border Area, HURO/0901/253/2.2.2.) project (B2 group) is to examine gender issues in higher education. There are several fields, where we can examine gender differences in higher education, but within the limits of the paper we will present only the theoretical background of four topics to be mentioned below and some empirical findings based on previous data-collections. Our research questions are: (1) Gender differences in acquired cultural capital of students (high-culture activities, use of ICT, cultural consumption, reading habits, objective cultural capital of the students). (2) Gender differences in e-learning and e-teaching. (3) Differences in personal and professional career plans of higher education students by gender (the impact of academic achievement, incentives to study and students' "habitus" (attitude) on these plans)[1]. (4) And finally the position of female instructors in higher education, the supporting and moderating factors in their career.

To examine these research questions, we relied on the special literature, and furthermore we used previous quantitative data. Concerning gender differences in students' acquired capital and in students' personal and professional plans, we made use of the databases of the TERD project ("The Impact of Tertiary Education on Regional Development", supported by OTKA T-69160). In the first sample, there were 1361 third–year, full-time students from Bachelor's training (BA, BSc) (approximately one third of the full population), and in the second one, 602 first-year full-time students from Master's training (MA, MSc) (approximately two third of the full population). The samples are regional, as data were collected in the so-called "Partium" region. This is a historically cross-border region of Hungary, Romania and the Ukraine[2]. The data collection took place in the Hungarian-speaking tertiary-

[1] This part of the paper was supported by the János Bolyai Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Science.

[2] In present-day Hungarian usage, "Partium" refers only to Romanian part of the historical region, but we defined it differently, by concerning the historical "Partium" usage.

level institutions of the three countries, in 2008 in Bachelor's training and in 2010 in Master's training. The samples are representative concerning the faculties of the examined universities and colleges (in the Master's training database, cases are weighted to ensure representativity)[3]. In the last section of our paper, concerning female instructors we used quantitative data, as well. The survey was carried out among women lecturers of the University of Debrecen between February and June of 2009. We tried to ask the whole population, so 479 questionnaires were handed out, and we got back 134. Finally concerning gender differences in e-learning and e-teaching we relied on the literature and the quantitative analysis will be carried out later, in the frame of the HERD project.

The differences in cultural capital owned by the students by gender

It is important to explore a students' acquired cultural capital, because DiMaggio (1982), and DiMaggio and Mohr (1985) showed that students' cultural capital demonstrate a huge effect on the school efficiency and on the education achievement, and the effect of students' cultural capital was even larger than the effect of fathers' qualification. Blaskó (1998) also showed that the effect of the cultural resources of the students was greater compared to the cultural resources of parents on the later social status of the students based on Hungarian data. Beside this, based on South-Korean data Byun (2006) showed that the reading habits have a positive effect on schools performance of boys and girls, while the cultural consumption (for example theatre, museum or concert attendance) has a negative effect on the performance of boys, and there is no effect in the case of girls. Dumais (2002) also establishes that students' cultural capital has a positive traceable effect on the grades of girls, while this effect is weaker in the case of boys.

Concerning gender differences DiMaggio (1982) showed that cultural capital (he measured it by participation in "high-culture" activities) of girls studying in American secondary schools was much higher than that of boys. The author draws our attention to the fact that cultural interest and practice are culturally expected from girls. However, this is less characteristic of boys, moreover, it may result in negative sanctions from their peers. Further reason for the greater cultural activity of girls could be that "women who wish to be recognized as eligible partners for men from high status background may need

[3] The institutions involved in the research: University of Debrecen (Hungary), Reformed Teacher Training College (Kölcsey), (Debrecen, Hungary), Nyíregyháza College (teacher training, health care) (Nyíregyháza, Hungary), II Rákóczi Ferenc Hungarian Teacher Training College of Transcarpathia (Beregszász, Ukraine). Partium Christian University (Oradea, Romania), University of Oradea (Oradea, Romania), Branch of Babeş–Bolyai University in Satu Mare (Satu Mare, Romania).

cultural capital to a greater extent than men who wish to achieve in the world of work" (DiMaggio, 1982, p. 198).

Hungarian girls in 2003 and in 2005 also display greater cultural interest than boys do; girls tend to have greater cultural consumption (attending theatres, museums, art movies and concerts) and read more (especially more fiction). However, our former results showed that boys use internet more frequently, so it can be said that the boys' cultural activity differs from that of girls, and it is not necessarily inferior (Fényes, 2010a). DiMaggio's results (1982) support that at secondary school, the cultural activities, preferred by girls, improved their school performance. On the other hand, cultural activities, preferred by boys, may improve their better chances on the labour market.

Our hypothesis concerning students' acquired cultural capital is that girls will be in the lead in most types of traditional cultural activities, while in using ICT, boys will be dominant. Our second hypothesis is that at higher level of training, cultural capital (for example cultural consumption or objective cultural capital) of boys and girls will be more similar, due to the fact, that when they are a bit older, they will have a companion (a partner for life), they spend more time together, and girls can motivate boys to do high culture activities, or to buy more objective cultural capital (for example encyclopaedias, dictionaries, books in foreign languages, books on art, classical music records or paintings)[4].

Empirical findings

First, students' reading habits are examined by gender (we suppose that girls read more regularly) but we have data in Master's training on reading habits on the internet as well, where the advantage of boys can be expected.

Table 1: Regularity of students' non-compulsory reading by gender in Bachelor's training (averages 1: never 2: rarely 3: occasionally 4: often)

	Average regularity	*N*
Boys	3.11	386
Girls	**3.34**	903
Anova	***	

As we can see in Table 1, girls read significantly more frequently in Bachelor's training, in accordance with our hypothesis, and with DiMaggio's results (1982). In Master's training, we have data not only on paper-based reading habits but on internet usage and reading e-books as well.

[4] Of course boys larger cultural consumption in older ages could be due to other facts, as well.

Table 2: Regularity of students' reading paper-based or e-books in Master's training in Hungarian and in foreign language by gender (averages of 1: never 2: annually 3: monthly 4: weekly 5: daily)

	In Hungarian				*In foreign language*			
	Paper based	N	E-books	N	Paper based	N	E-books	N
Boys	3.61	155	**3.45**	157	2.13	151	**2.28**	148
Girls	3.75	425	3.01	413	2.24	418	1.95	401
Anova	NS		**		NS		**	

Source: TERD

As we can see in Table 2, the advantage of girls in paper-based reading is no more detectable (both in Hungarian and in foreign language) in Master's training. The reason for this could be that – as we formulated in our third hypothesis – girls have boyfriends more frequently in older ages, and they can motivate boys to read more. In reading e-books, boys are in the lead, in accordance with our hypothesis but the difference in frequency of using the internet at home was not significant by gender (the data are not presented due to the lack of significance), so the advantage of boys in ICT might not be so dominant. We have further data on reading on internet in Master's training, on different subjects of reading by gender, which could imply further advantages of boys.

Table 3: Regularity of students' reading on the internet in Master's training by gender (averages 1: never 2: annually 3: monthly 4: weekly 5: daily)

	Papers, articles	*News*	*Blogs*	*Forums*	*Special literature*	*Popular literature*
Boys	**4.22**	**4.56**	**2.92**	**3.71**	**3.71**	**3.07**
N	157	157	157	157	157	154
Girls	3.65	4.27	2.25	3.05	3.44	2.68
N	431	432	429	431	432	430
Anova	**	**	***	***	**	**

Source: TERD

Boys – in accordance with our hypothesis – are in the lead in reading papers, articles, news, blogs, forums, special literature and popular literature (see data in Table 3) but there was no significant difference by gender in reading tabloid papers, poems, and community pages on the internet (these data are not presented due to the lack of significance). This means that boys generally read more on the internet but in the case of some subjects of reading, girls catch up with them. The results are in accordance with the gender stereotypes and with girls' good relationship-building characteristics.

We examined students' cultural consumption by gender as well (attending theatres, museums, art movies and concerts, the data are not presented here) but there was a significant difference only in theatre attendance by gender, and only in Bachelor's training (there was a small advantage of girls, despite their worse material background). Our further result is that the average regularity of theatre and art movie attendance has a decreasing

tendency in young generation as compared to 2003 (see data in Fényes, 2010a), and the cultural consumption in 2010 in Master's training – which represents a higher level of training – was only similar to the 2003 data, where first-year university students were asked. The reason for this could be that nowadays, students might work more beside their studies, they might spend more time on the internet, and that is why the frequency of these traditional types of cultural consumption is lower.

Our next result is that gender differences mostly disappeared as compared to 2003, and this is contrary to our hypothesis. Girls go only to the theatre more frequently and only in Bachelor's training, and girls do not go to art movies, classical music concerts and museums more frequently than boys. This could be due to the fact that they do not have as much free time as in 2003 (boys' cultural consumption was low even in 2003, and it did not change in 2008 or 2010). Comparing the two stages of the training, cultural consumption became even more similar by gender in Master's training in all types of traditional cultural consumption in accordance with our hypothesis, which might be due to the fact that in a bit older ages, when girls have boyfriends more frequently, girls can motivate boys to perform cultural activities, and they go to theatre together. In our further analysis, students' objective cultural capital is compared by gender. First, the differences in the number of books students' have are examined.

Table 4: The number of books students have, by gender in Bachelor's training, percentages

	Boys	*Girls*
0-20	**35.5**	22.9
21-100	44.9	**52.5**
101-300	14.4	**18.6**
Above 300	5.2	**6**
N	383	894
Chi-square	***	

Source: TERD

In accordance with our previous results, girls who read more frequently in Bachelor's training have more books as well (see Table 4). However, in Master's training, there was no difference in reading paper-based books by gender, and in accordance with this, the difference in the number of books students possess was not significant by gender either (data are not presented due to the lack of significance).

The other measurements of objective cultural capital are the possession of encyclopaedias, dictionaries, books in foreign languages, books on art, classical music records and paintings per students.

Table 5: Possession of encyclopaedias, dictionaries, books in foreign languages, books on art, classical music records, paintings per students by gender in Bachelor's and Master's training

	Bachelor's training	*Master's training*
Encyclopaedias	NS	NS
Dictionaries	Girls have more (**)	Girls have more (**)
Books in foreign languages	Girls have more (*)	Girls have more (**)
Books on art	NS	Girls have more (**)
Classical music records	NS	Girls have more (*)
Paintings	NS	NS

Source: TERD

The table is based on the cross tabulation runs of the SPSS program (0: none 1: only one 2: two ore more). NS marks non-significant relations by gender according to the Chi-square test (the tests were significant, if p<0.05).

As we can see in Table 5, girls are in the lead at both stages of the training but contrary to our hypothesis, the difference is even more pronounced in Master's training by gender in these types of objective cultural capital. The reason for this could be that girls in Master's training might be interested more in art, in classical music, and thus they may have more books on art, classical music records, while in the case of boys, there is no such effect. Another explanation could be that in Master's training – contrary to our hypothesis – girls did not motivate boys to buy more objective cultural capital. Here again the traditional gender role models could play a part but now in the young generation as well. Thus it is the task of girls to buy encyclopaedias, dictionaries, books in foreign languages, books on art, classical music records and paintings, and this effect does not change in Master's training, where girls have a partner more frequently.

As it can be seen, girls have more books in foreign languages, so we can suppose that they have more language exam certificates as well (this can be a measurement of students' institutionalized cultural capital). However, data show, both in Bachelor's and Master's training, that there is no significant difference in language exam certificates by gender (data are not presented due to the lack of significance), which is an interesting result compared to our previous results concerning secondary schools where girls were in the lead in language exam certificates (see Fényes, 2010b). The reason for this could be that at universities, language exam certificate is required to obtain the degree, thus both boys and girls are equally motivated to acquire it.

Gender differences in e-learning and e-teaching in higher education

As we have seen the cultural capitals of girls and boys provide an important basis of education at tertiary level. Their constantly changing working styles, interests and behaviors have a strong influence on learning. Our results showed

that there were significant differences in acquired cultural capital by gender. Concerning traditional high-culture activities the girls were in the lead, but boys were in the lead in reading on the internet, especially in reading e-books, papers, articles, news, blogs, forums and popular literature. There was an advantage of boys in reading special literature on the internet as well. This calls our attention on gender differences in e-learning, and the necessity of different teaching materials by gender in higher education.

The new ICT generations in general have new needs in teaching methods. These needs have to be examined and determined for adjusting the teaching methods and tools to our students and for getting better prognosis on our future society. The emotional and the intellectual maturity are postponed in these new generations (see e. g. Kulcsár, 2004), so the differences concerning the behaviors and working styles of girls and boys of the puberty appear in the higher education. As many surveys show (see later) that the width of the gap decreasing with the aging, but because of the fact mentioned above the gap is getting wider at tertiary education concerning these new generations. The examination of the changes has a more important role in designing teaching methods; we have to pay attention to this change at every level of higher education.

In our present research (based on the literature) we examine the fields of these changes and their effects on the cultural capitals of the learners. We examine how and where the gap is getting wider and we try to find some directions in improvement of teaching quality which can handle the gap between boys and girls.

Generations Y and Z in education

One of the aspects of our research that the generation Y (born between cc. 1992 and 2000) is already in the higher education, the generation Z (born after 2000) is coming soon (Tari, 2010). The members of these generations are those who had computer since their early childhood in this region. These young people are “digital natives” whose learning habits and their behavior in many other fields differ from that of the previous generations. Differences can be shown in almost all the areas of the learning process – information gathering, information proceeding, social communication, and many other social attitudes (see McCrindle, 2002). The traditional chalk-and-talk teaching is not efficient, new methods have to be found for the effective communication (see McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2010).

The same considerations can be found in the field of knowledge; they respect other competencies, knowledge, information than the previous generations. We can say, in general, that have different relationship to several information (see Horváth & Könczöl, 2005). Concerning these two

generations, the difference between the information gathering techniques of boys and girls is more significant (see e. g. Eurydice, 2009).

Digital natives vs. immigrants

In another aspect, higher education uses more and more information and communication techniques (ICT). The digital curricula are made not by the generations Y or Z but mainly by the generations of "digital immigrants". Most of these digital learning materials are made by the members of generation X or the post-World War II "baby boom". These teachers met computers when they were adults. The digital gap between students and teachers is quite wide today, but it will be much wider when generation Z will enter higher education. Generation Z is that generation which had not just computer but internet access in their childhood. This fact affects the relations between students and teacher, but even between girls and boys. Teachers have to try to find how they can get closer to the new generation, how they can fulfill the students need concerning teaching methods and materials. First we have to examine the needs of the new generations; we have to determine the differences in boys and girls in using ICT, the ways of getting information.

Teachers have to think about how they have to adopt the teaching materials and the teaching methods to the needs of the new generations, and how they can adapt their approaches and teaching techniques to the new requirements.

Gap between the achievements of boys and girls

Nowadays the gap between the achievements of boys and girls in primary and secondary schools is widening (Buchmann, DiPrete & McDaniel, 2008). The results of a number of surveys that examine the outcomes of boys and girls in primary and secondary educations show that among the early school leavers there are more boys than girls. XX state by the survey performed in the USA, that women are surpassing men in terms of attaining higher education degrees (see O'Halloran, 2008). Girls have advantages in reading in diverse age groups, and we can speak about the advantage of boys in mathematics and logical thinking that emerges with the years, and it is considerable respecting students (see Bae, Choy, Geddes, Sable & Snyder, 2000; Bereczkei, 2003; Delfos, 2004; Freeman; 2004, Gurian & Stevens, 2004).

Girls obtain usually higher grades in school leaving exams and have better possibility to enter into the higher education (Eurydice 2009). The underperformance and under-participation of boys in education take negative effects on the boy's achievement in face-to-face education stated by Jha and Kelleher (2006) based on their cross-country analysis in Commonwealth and

the research of Legewie and DiPrete (2011) on the effect of schools on class and race inequality. We can mention a survey performed at the University of Debrecen (Bujdosó, 2011). The aim of this survey was getting information how students get and use knowledge on a not focused field of computer science, on the word processing in this preliminary research. The results show that the knowledge on this field of boys and girls are almost on the same (quite low) level. Boys have less information both in technical and typographical issues, but the difference is not significant on such a low level. Although, girls deem their knowledge much deeper than it is. They assume that it is on a "satisfactory" level. Boys suppose a weaker knowledge, but they want to learn more about this topic significantly.

From the point of view of designing curricula of e-learning, on-line learning, distance learning communication plays a highly important role. A high-scale survey in the UK was performed for examining how young people think about communications skills, and how important do they think these skills e.g. in their schools. Clark's report (2011) shows the gender concerns. One of the most interesting outcomes of this survey that more girls than boys thought that being good at communication means being good at talking and listening. Conversely, more boys than girls thought that being good at communication means being good at information and communication technology.

One of the most important conclusions of the surveys shows above, that boys are in a disadvantageous situation, so many teachers try to adjust explanations and teaching methods to boys' needs. However, there are only few countries where special programs are offered for improving boys' literacy skills and girls in mathematics (see Eurydice, 2009).

Digital Materials and E-learning

Concerning the digital learning materials there are many purposes, methods and tools. Here we can speak about for example computer supported teaching (CST), computer based learning (CBT) which are performed in most cases in face-to-face courses, but we can speak about distance learning (DL) where tutors are presented, and lifelong learning (LLL) or life-wide learning (LWL) which have no teacher assistance during the learning period. Digital learning can be on-line or off-line. We can speak about simple digital materials or we can find e-learning materials, as well. Having a wide range of these purposes and "tools", the required students' and teachers' competencies also differ (see Coldwell, Goold, Craig & Mustard, 2007; Koper & Tattersall, 2005; Scanlon, 2010).

Moreover, boys and girls learn in gender specific ways (see Legewie & DiPrete, 2011), they need different climate for learning efficiently (Bujdosó,

2008). Digital materials, especially e-learning materials have to accept the differences and adjust the teaching and technical methods to various learning methods and abilities. The ways of learning and using e-learning materials vary among other various factors as well, such as races, religions, boundaries, religions etc. (see Zaharias, 2008; Schaller, Borun, Allison-Bunnell, & Chambers, 2007). For the alignment of learning materials, teachers have to get information about the gender specific differences (see Qi & Boyle, 2010; Wolf, 2005).

In the field of e-learning the scenario-based learning (CBL) could be a usable solution for decreasing the differences between the achievements of boys and girls. The difference between the scenario-based learning gives gender specific ways for getting through the curricula: it focuses on performance. The scenario leads the students through the digital material using problems and a sequence of its solutions, situation descriptions from the learner's point of view where choices are presented. For an e-learning material several scenarios have to be presented.

Personal and professional plans of higher education students by gender

In order to discover further differences between men and women who study in higher education we will use conceptions related to the personal sphere. We will take a look at the students' plans regarding getting married and having children, as well as the intended chronological position of these events in the career plan. We will search for characteristics among personal and professional future plans according to gender, to discover connections between future plans and academic efficiency as well as the "habitus" (attitude) of the students. The view on career in the case of men and women differs from each other. For men career means money and power, for women it is fitting their primary role. This could be due to the socialization of the genders through which boys are taught to be competitive and focused on interest, whereas girls are raised to be adaptive (Buda, 1985). All this fits into personal characteristic features of the genders: men are more competitive and rational; women are obedient to a higher extent but less self-confident (Sas, 1984). However, female students during their university studies most probably count with the economic (being hired later) and personal (having children later) consequences due to extended period of studying keeping in mind the importance of adjusting the profession to private life and vice versa. The traditional mindset of the Hungarian society regarding being family centered is well known from a number of studies (Blaskó, 2006; Pongrácz & Spéder, 2002), and can be discovered in the next intellectual generation as well. In Table 6 students' future plans regarding marriage and having children are marked according to gender, taking conditions and timing into consideration.

Table 6: Future plans of the students according to gender, percentage (N=1339)

Having a family	*Condition and timing*	*Male*	*Female*
Marriage	do not want to get married at all	3.7	4.4
	right after the state exam	10.5	10.3
	after few years of work	41.2	41.8
	after having a career built*	20.5	15
	reaching a certain age	6.8	5.3
	Finding the suitable partner	25.1	29.7
Having children	getting married	35.4	38
	Finding the suitable partner	43.6	44.1
	solid income	62.7	67.8
	Having a place to live**	29.2	37.3
	professional career	8.2	10.9
	Reaching a certain age	4	10.2
N		399	940

Degrees of significance: * 0.02 **0.007 ***0.000
Source: TERD

The typical traditional Hungarian way of thinking is represented by those who do not plan to get married at all (around 4%). Taking into consideration the differences between the genders it can be stated that both men and women – almost to the same extent – are willing to get married right after the state exam (one tenth of those being polled) and it also seems possible for the 40% of them that they get married after few years of work. The attributes of *after few years of work* and *after having a career built* differ from each other in a sense that the aim of the former is to provide a solid background and a few years of experience in the work field whereas the latter puts career in the focus by concentrating on a disrupted work and advancement. For women, because of child bearing, this becomes only possible through sacrifice (e.g. conscious childlessness, having less children than desired, returning to work earlier). It seems like the female students count with this fact, because only 15% of them choose career. In the case of the male students this figure is surprisingly low (21%) despite the fact that career and private life for them are easier to match.

We find it important to mention that comparing to former figures of research (Regionális egyetem, 2005, N=1100) done in the region there has been a change in this question: at the time of the research five years ago twice as many young men thought of putting career to first place and three times more young ladies were planning to get married soon (Engler & Bocsi, 2005). We can conclude that the viewpoints of the genders are moving towards each other as far as the private and professional future plans are concerned.

Having children at a certain age proves to be an aspect of more importance in the case of women. It is not by accident: the biological

conditions play key role when it comes to matching the career and private plans. Compared to men at the same time, the difference is significant: only one tenth of the female students count with the limitations cased by age. This does not necessarily come from thoughtlessness: 90% of the asked do not postpone the time of having children to the utmost, but try to plan it in the optimal time frame. For women it is crucial to have their own place before having children which serves as a safe background for a family.

It is worth mentioning the attitude of the students abroad, because in their case the traditional viewpoint is even more significant. Many of them are ready to get married right after having their diploma: one fifth of the women marked this option. Getting married after having a career built sounds good for one tenth of them and almost half of the men plan to tie the knot after a few years of work. The ratio of those who would get married before having children is less then forty percent, whereas sixty percent of the youth abroad marked it as an important condition. The difference between the genders regarding building up an existential background is not significant, however, women prefer to have their own place to a higher extent.

In order to compare the future plans and the efficiency of the students, we have created three groups of students by cluster analysis. The reason for creating these groups was the lack of significant difference between the genders in comparison-based research. From now on the consistence of the future plans will be our focus and, as we will see, the characteristics of the genders will appear as well. The clusters were created based on variables of the personal future plans (see Table 6). From the three groups created through cluster analysis two – the *family-centered* and the *present-centered* – appear to almost the same extent, the smallest part is represented by the *career-centered.*

The family-centered group consists of the forty percent that are mostly characterized by traditional thinking as far as their future plans are concerned. Students belonging to this group aim to get married shortly after having their diploma, either after a few years in the employment market or right after their studies. Finding the suitable partner and getting married are both preconditions of having children, as well as having a sure income and an own place before the first child arrives. Students in the group with the focus on present prove to care less about their personal future plans: they are either unsure or do not talk about their plans for the future. Finding the suitable partner is important for them, but they do not take any other aspects into consideration yet. Thirty-nine percent of the polled belong to this group. Students in the career-focused group are significantly preoccupied with building a professional career: one fifth is characterized by this. Building a career is precondition of both getting married as well as having children. A suitable partner and a solid existential background they marked vital in order to have children.

The clusters we developed correlate to the gender, the department of the attended university/college, the qualification and the economic activity of the

parents, and the religiousness. There have also been significant correlations between these factors. The gender-based dynamic as well as significant differences roughly match the stereotypes about the genders and the conventional conception of the walk of life (sign.: 0.000) that matches the male and female roles. Half of the men belong to the present-centered group; the two other clusters are shared between men and women pro rata. Almost half of the women (46%) are focused on family at the same time, one third of them (33%) belong to the group with focus on the present and one fifth of them can be described as focused on career.

The future plans of the students are strongly influenced by their institution and department (sign.: 0.000). The students abroad are mostly focused on family; this traditional mindset is reflected by their intention of getting married and having children as soon as possible. The ratio of the family-focused students at the State University of Oradea is 83%, at the Szatmárnémeti Faculty of the BBTE and the Hungarian College of II. Rákóczi Ferenc in Ukraine this is 60%.

The qualification of the parents is similar in the case of the fathers and mothers: majority of the parents (44–42%) with elementary or secondary qualification are family-centered, whereas children of those with a college degree up (38–39%) belong to the group focused on the present (sign.: 0.006). It can be stated as well that the higher the qualification of the parents is the more career-centered and less family-centered are the students. The economic activity of the parents in our model is high: two third of both the fathers and mothers are employed, but the majority of them belong to the family-centered group (40%). Significant difference is manifested in the group of the career-centered: both parents are active employees to 80%. It seems like the higher qualification of the parents and the solid presence on the job market changes the plans of the youth in a sense that they rather place professional career to the foreground.

An interesting picture is drawn by contrasting clusters with types of settlement. The first two clusters appear to be as expected: majority of the students (40–43%) who come from small settlements and towns are family-centered, those who come from cities (seats of counties and the capital) are typically present-centered (42%). We expected the most career-centered students to come from cities, however, their fraction in this group is small (26%). 36% of them come from towns, 37% from villages. Consequently, students from small settlements are those who prefer the social mobility achieved through their studies. Compared to the above mentioned figures of research there have been significant changes: according to data collected in 2005 students living in small settlements were strongly family-centered, those living in cities proved to be career-centered.

The significant correspondence based on religiousness proves to be as expected: students who admitted their religiosity put family life into the centre

the most (sign.: 0.000). 55% of the people who weekly attend church belong to this group, one third of them is present-centered and 12% think that career is first. The situation regarding prayer habits is the same: for those who have a prayer life having a family is most important, those who do not, favor present life (60%) and career (55%).

We will take a look at the school efficiency of the students based on their achievements and will also take into consideration the factors that have significant value in connection with learning attitudes. An index of such kind is the reason for starting studies, which tells us a lot about the motivational resources at the starting point of the professional career.

Figure 1 shows us that the outside motifs coming from the field of work dominated the students' decisions regarding their studies after the high-school graduation. The career-centered students' strong hope of converting their diploma on the job market – the family-centered students were not motivated by it – is represented by a significant connection. Those with the focus on family considered acquiring "the paper" as a necessary means of fitting into the employment market. The reasons of the students of the two clusters get separated at the very beginning of their college/university studies already: the career-centered group predestinated the existential and economic advantages of the acquired knowledge, whereas the possibility of social mobility, perhaps social expectation was sensed by the family-centered.

It is an interesting figure that most of the students with focus on the career marked the delay in taking a paid job as the reason for starting their studies. If we assume that this thinking does not equal with "avoiding work", laziness or aimlessness, than we can suspect a conscious approach to career: these students believe that a well paid job is insured by acquiring the suitable knowledge. This supposition is underpinned by the fact that the students belonging to this group proved to be the most active during the years of their secondary education: they joined scientific groups, took part in school related competitions and had private lessons in order to prepare for the entrance examination to a significantly greater degree.

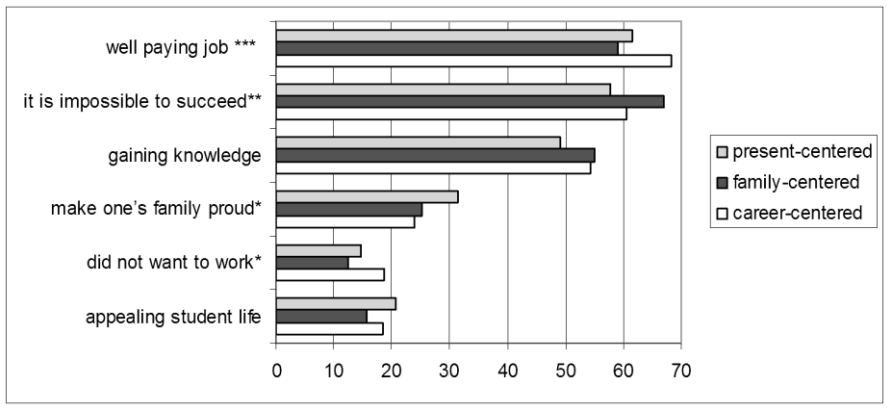

Figure 1: Reasons for studying in a collage/university, percentage (N=1355)
Degrees of significance: * 0.02–0.04 **0.007 ***0.000
Source: TERD

Of all groups the motivation of the present-centered for further studies shows the strongest link to the family background. The reason behind this is most probably the intention to keep or even advance the social status of the family, which clearly shows us the characteristic of the cluster, namely the dominance of the people and opinions that take part in the decision making. (This is also proved by the fact that the sustainability of the student status is as important for them as postponing to start working).

The only offered inside motif – increasing knowledge – was marked by almost the half of the students: we have not experienced any significant difference between the clusters in this (54% of the family-centered, 55% of the career-centered and 49% of the present-centered). The score card at the end of each semester is an indication of the students' increased knowledge. Based on the collected data it can be stated that there is no significant difference between the clusters: of those studying in Hungarian institutions 3.7 was the average of the present-centered, 3.9 of the family-centered and 3.8 of the career-centered. The order in the case of the students studying abroad is as follows: 7.4 – 7.3 – 7.8 with the efficiency of the family-centered exceeding more than in the case of those studying inside the country.

One way of studying "voluntary" is by having a membership in a special college for tutorial studies, which characterizes those with the focus on career the most (17% compared to the two other groups' 12%). The members of the afore mentioned cluster accomplish outstanding work in other scientific fields as well: their participation in conferences in-country and abroad is significantly higher than that of their colleagues (30% compared to the family-centered with 20% and present-centered falling under these figures). This is true not only of accomplished but of planned activities also, as those who are career-centered but have not carried out scientific activities would like to do so (one third of

them would like to participate in international conferences whereas in the case of the other two groups this ratio only reaches 4–5%). The career-centered excel in student competition activities, getting scientific scholarships and they are active in publishing and in teaching (having lectures in higher education). The other two groups fall behind while they carry out these tasks not related to study conditions, in similar ratio.

It seems like the career builders' scientific activity covers defined goals as most of them would like to continue their studies after getting their diploma. 56% of the students belonging to this cluster aspire to get a second diploma or continue to study in other forms. Only one tenth of them are sure of getting employed after graduation. The most uncertain about further studies seems to be the present-centered group, 40% of them do not know what they will do once having the diploma. The ratio of those who will certainly continue their studies is much higher than that of those who hurry to get employed (47%–12.8%). The same is true for the family-centered with the difference in the ratio of those who will look for a job after graduation (15%); this of course correlates with the plans of the ones belonging to this cluster to have a family at an early stage.

The motivation to continue studying after getting the diploma in the case of all three groups is primarily a better salary, a significantly high ratio being among the career-centered group; almost 80% chose this reason (**Figure 2**). In their case the above mentioned appear in the further motives as well, because besides the financial aspect of getting a job at a later stage, social prestige are important to them, whereas the inside motives (knowledge, talent) are less important. The primary motives are essential for the family-centered, however, having a diploma at all costs is of primary importance.

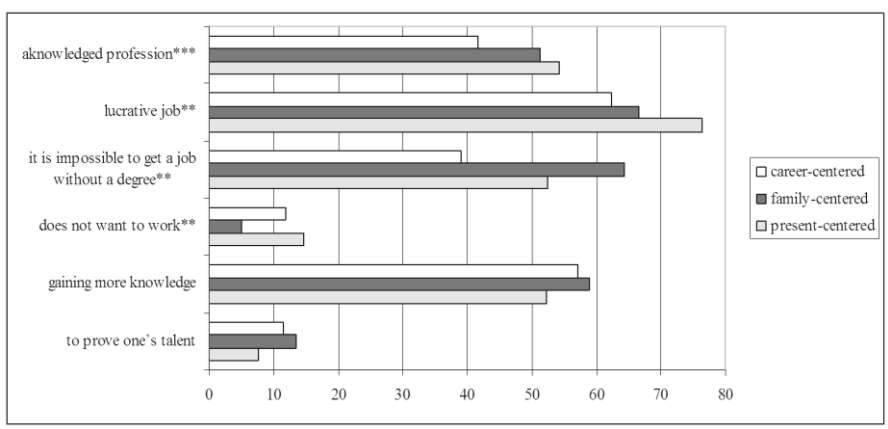

Figure 2: Reasons for further studies after getting a diploma, based on future plans; percentage

Degrees of significance: * 0.01–0.05 **0.001–0.01 ***0.000
0

The motivation of the present-centered is more difficult to define. Compared to the other groups the proportion of those driven by inside motivation is relatively high but avoiding immediate employment is also a reason. We find out more about their future plans if we consider what factors they regard as important in their future jobs. Surprisingly most desirable is to have a work place with a cheerful tone which has a significantly high value compared to the other two groups. Second most important factor is a steady job. It seems like for the present-centered, it is the conditions at the given moment that are important when looking for a job.

The ideal job of the carrier-centered is well-paid and reliable with carrier opportunities and diverse operations. This is sought after abroad as well, as almost 30% of them plan to work abroad for a longer time, 15% of them for a shorter period of time. Safety is an important factor for the family-centered as well, although not because of material reasons, but because of factors like helping others, being socially useful and successful. Those with the focus on family remain in Hungary to a significantly greater degree (sign.=0.001), thirty per cent of them plan on gaining experience abroad.

The situation of female instructors in higher education

Researching gender differences in higher education would not be complete if we did not study the other significant acting-group beside students: the instructors. As the higher we look at the hierarchy of education and science we find fewer women; their number and ratio in leading positions is pretty low. With the intention of finding causes we examined the characteristics of their entering in the work field, their motivation, special features of their walks of life, and the background elements of careers of women; supporting and moderating factors. Our main inquiry was to see what those women who got into higher positions did differently than those (women) with the same conditions; how they can manage requirements set by their gender, society and also themselves.

The first and most important step for a woman to be able to get into positions of instructor researcher was to enable their university studies. That is how it happened in Hungary, too: first women managed to achieve the freedom to study then to be able to go for the freedom to teach as well and conquer the pulpit. "Enabling women to have higher education played a part in women's emancipation, in fact, it was a very important step towards it. No wonder that it was included as one of the main claims in women's societies in the second half of the 19th century. It was not only a question of principle to equalize men and women in this area but also had a great practical, economical and social significance" – says Müller (2006, p. 223) in her study. Because opening the

universities for women made it possible for women to step into intellectual work fields that require higher education alongside men (Müller, 2006). Women's position in higher education in Hungary has got into the centre of attention in the past hundred years, in spite of the fact that women's education looks back to a couple thousand years of history in the same way as men's (Pukánszky, 2006). However, women's entering into higher education was the first main step for women with talent and commitment to academic work to the academic field (Kissné, 2002, 2005).

Careers of Women in Higher Education

Although more and more women attained higher education degrees, women who were still drawn to academic work fields had to cope with set stereotypes and legal obstacles, let alone their own personal doubts. Socialism opened the gates of higher education wider than in its previous cultural politics and this could be felt by the change in the number of students. The majority of women of course took the opportunity and the decreased number of students meant more and more women with talent and commitment to academic work (Kissné, 2002, 2005; Tornyi, 2009). However, we need to differentiate between the college and university majors. Gender segregation according to the branch of studies can be spotted: there is a high attendance in kindergarten teacher, junior and high school teacher majors and also in arts faculty – in humanities and social studies – and in medical colleges. There is a similar attendance of women and men in the PhD, economic, legal and polity studies, and the ration of women can be said low in the fields of engineering, technology and some majors of natural science (Hrubos, 2001).

Hungary is training many talented men and women but women seem to "disappear" or "run out" from the field as the years go by: while the ratio of women getting diploma is over 50%, in the area of research and leaders of higher education their rate is around 12% (Csépe, 2008). Nonetheless, as the money and energy put into the training of these human resources are not utilized properly, it means a huge loss for the branch and the whole economy, and also for the whole society (Papp, 2006; Papp & Groó, 2005), since not only the principles of the society and women's chances are damaged but it can mean a loss for the whole society (Engler, 2011).

The University of Debrecen through Women's Eyes

We carried out our survey among the instructors of the University of Debrecen between February and June of 2009. We had a complete survey with 479 questionnaires handed out. 134 got back to us, meaning that the ratio in the case of questionnaires sent by post was relevant in our present research, as well. Ratio of women instructors in suited the results published in this subject-

matter; the higher ratio can be seen at faculties which opened first for women (General Practitioner faculty, Arts faculty), and at faculties which trained women for traditionally women's fields (Faculty of Child and Adult Education).

We have got questionnaires back from all the points of hierarchy of the university. Motivation for their entrance to academic fields let us consider three main directions: in the first category – 54.3% – chose the academic field because of their love for their profession. In the second group we can find those who got their first academic degree due to requirements in their workplaces (50.9%), in the third one we can include people who chose teaching-research for the prestige of the PhD degree (44.0%).

32.2% of the respondents have university doctor degree, 61.2% have PhD degree, 8.8% have the degree of C.Sc., 15.8 % have habilitation and 5.3% have honored professor rank.

Obstacles

In our questionnaire, we asked the female instructors of the University of Debrecen to choose the three main factors that meant the greatest obstacles in their professional career. The obstacles ranked by the women are the following: (1) having children (32.5 %), (2) lack of confidence (28.1%), (3) lack of support on the part of the boss (26.3%), (4) family responsibilities (23.7%) and the lack of a supporter or mentor (21.9%). Both internal and external obstacles appeared in the lives of our female instructors which can be explained – the (1); (4) with the conflict between the traditional and personal requirements, (2); (3) and (5) with characteristics learned at gender socialization, acquisition of gender roles and personal insecurity. According to Nagy (1999) women start off with a great disadvantage since they are taught the very opposite qualities through gender socialization and acquisition of gender roles from the ones that are needed for a successful manager or leader.

"The >Research work can be compatible with having children< challenge can be met where the individual pledge and help from the family are combined" – says Csépe (2008, p. 1399). Because of their age, women have children in the period of their doctorate studies or dissertation and not everyone can manage both tasks. Neither the current scholarships nor the expected funded research assistant's or graduate teaching assistant' salary can enable families to get professional help. Research work demands a lot of personal effort even if there is help from the family. Most families cannot afford to have the mother work in a part-time job. Many research centers, university, academic or other kind do not take it with pleasure if there is a part-time attendance and research time put into time limits (Csépe, 2008; Engler, 2011). This is supported by the counter-question of our previous one, namely, asking for the three main supporting factors in women's professional career. To our

surprise, the main support does not come from the husband – though they are the second with 44.4% – but it comes from the motivation and hard-working with 50%. There is a supporting role of the bosses, 34.1% of the ladies said that their boss was one of the main supporting force in their work, then comes the help of the parents (29.4%) and that of mentors (28.6%), which is also worth mentioning.

Academic Life

The quality indicators of researching are publications. Our instructor ladies have published mainly in Hungarian journals in the last 5 years (4.7 studies on average) and in foreign periodicals 2.7 studies on average. Furthermore, they have published in Hungarian study collections (2.8) and have written 5.99 abstracts of conferences. In the past five years they have had about 22 people writing theses. One person went for OTDK (National Academic Student Circle) and had one doctorandus. We cannot forget that the role of a mentor-tutor in the graduate and post graduate training has great significance and working with thesis writers and doctorandus is time and energy consuming, which makes it harder to obtain the tasks of research and publication. It is worth mentioning that the support of the direct environment, tasks of mentoring and tutoring – as we can see it in the study of Szántó, Susánszky and Palasik (2008) are explicitly mentioned as solutions to the problem of inequality between men and women. Women consider it a more positive affect of publicity of the delegation of tasks at the workplace and the relationship with the immediate supervisor which varies according to gender and age (Szántó, Susánszky, & Palasik, 2008).

Besides numerical questions aimed at professional career, there were some questions which wanted to gain opinion about the academic career. 44.3% of the respondents are satisfied with their careers, 53.4% are partly satisfied and only 2.3% answered that they are not satisfied with their careers. The question: "If you could start over, would you choose the same profession?" got positive answer from 66.2 %. 12.3% would not choose the teacher-researcher field and 21.5 could not tell.

Success

It is crucial in the point of our research to get to know what the most important supporters and characteristics of academic success are. Our respondents could rank 12 features on a 4 scale rank deciding on how much they think it is important. Academic success is defined by external and internal factors. It makes us think to see that the most important internal factor was hard-working and perseverance (3.82) and talent only got a 4th place (3.45). The more significant factors are independent from the individual: supporting professional

workshop (3.69) first place, help and support from the mentor-tutor (3.52) the second and having a good relationship with the influential researchers of the given professional field (3.44).

There is hardly any study which does not consider the dilemma of role that comes from the double charges of work and family. This often means a demand for decision and sets the basis for the progress of women. In the field of research the chances getting degrees and consequently becoming a leader are decreased by the conflict of work and having children (Csépe, 2008.). Regarding chance of mobility and career, researchers with children have fewer opportunities than their male colleagues, which is backed up by the fact that the respondents see the cause of inequality of career chances in women's child reproduction tasks (Nagy, 1997). In oppose to this, 40% of mothers would like to run a career and make progress in their work, but they can only imagine this if their families do not suffer damage as a result – men's (husbands') opinion are positive in connection with their spouse's employment only if that is the case . This is emphasized by the fact that although there is an increasing number of those supporting work and career as equally important by the higher level of their education and there is a decrease in the number of those emphasizing personal life – still two thirds of the respondent women prioritize personal life over their profession (Pongrácz, 2001, p. 38).

Judgment of career – and mainly academic career – is not an obvious question. We are speaking about professional careers marked with academic ranks, titles and commissions for leadership in connection with female instructors. Many professional areas are devoted to the employment and career opportunities, although those studies which give numerical data about how the role and chances of researcher women change in the beginning of the 21st century are most interesting (Csépe, 2008). Most of the thorough studies search for the answer – and we also join this mission – to find what we could do to have more women with talent and high performance in high positions as there are now.

Summary

Our previous research (see Fényes, 2008; 2010a, 2010b; 2010c) showed that boys are in a disadvantageous situation in education concerning several aspects. According to our results boys who study in higher education read less, their cultural consumption is lower, and they are in a disadvantage in most aspects of informal learning as well. Moreover, boys' school efficiency is worse concerning some aspects at secondary grammar schools and higher education, despite their superior social background. We also pointed out that one of the most significant disadvantages of boys in education is that their social mobility is lower compared to girls, which are in accordance with that they are in minority in the training. They study at secondary grammar schools

and in higher education only with much better cultural and material background as compared to girls, which was supported by American studies as well (Buchmann & DiPrete, 2006).

Concerning the acquired cultural capital in our present research – where we differentiated between Bachelor's and Master's trainings – we have seen that girls were in the lead in paper-based reading and in cultural consumption (but only in theatre attendance) in Bachelor's training, and they have more objective cultural capital as well. However, boys were in the lead in ICT usage. Comparing the two stages of the training, the advantage of girls in acquired cultural capital is decreasing in Master's training in accordance with our hypothesis, and we have data at this stage on the use of ICT, where boys are in the lead. In Master's training, reading habits and cultural consumption have become more similar, which might be due to the fact that boys and girls have partners more frequently, and they perform cultural activities together (as explained in our hypothesis). Our further result was that traditional cultural consumption has decreased in general, due to the fact that students have much less free time, and new types of activities are emerging.

Concerning objective cultural capital (the possession of encyclopaedias, dictionaries, books in foreign languages, books on art, classical music records, paintings per students), our results showed the advantage of girls, while contrary to our hypothesis, their advantage is even larger in Master's training than in Bachelor's training. Explaining this phenomenon, we state that traditional gender roles play a part in the case of the young generation as well in the examined region in a sense that it is still the task of girls to buy these things despite that they already might have a partner in Master's training more frequently. The effect of the traditional gender role model still exists concerning the differences in objective cultural capital, despite the fact that in the young generation, modern gender roles are more popular (but rather in words than in deeds).

In the second part of our paper we examined gender differences in e-learning and e-teaching based on the literature. As we have already mentioned, the boys prefer reading e-books, papers, articles, news, blogs, forums and popular literature on the internet more than girls, but there are specific differences in e-learning (e. g. reading special literature on the internet) as well by gender. Our research question in HERD project concerning e-learning and e-teaching by gender will be how to adjust the digital learning materials and teaching methods to the needs of the next generations of the students in a gender specific way in this specific ("Partium") region. For meeting the new requirements first we have to determine the existing competencies, the factors that can help or impede students' learning.

Four hypotheses have been formulated based on the theoretical background, and these hypotheses will be controlled later on in the frame of the HERD project. Our hypotheses concerning e-learning and e-teaching by

gender are the following: (1) On the BSc/BA level, women prefer the combination of the digital materials of the curricula provided by their teachers and the information that is derived from their social network; (2) On the BSc/BA level, men prefer the web based self-directed exploratory learning, those activities that they decide and do by themselves; (3) In higher education, the colorless layout, the bad web design of the used cyber space reduces women's motivation and the effectiveness of digital learning; (4) In higher education, women need more positive personal feedback from their teachers/tutors concerning their knowledge level and progress.

In the third part of our paper the personal and professional career plans of students were compared by gender. The study comparing the plans for the private life and professional career was conducted by creating and analyzing three clusters, as the comparison of genders did not display significant differences. The clusters showed strong connection to the demographic background variables, thus becoming easily definable. We found essential results regarding study attitudes and performance. An important milestone for the career-centered – predominantly men – who postpone personal plans is the time spent in higher education, because they had been consistently preparing for this throughout their secondary education. We anticipated that the career centered would start their professional development soon in order to have as much time as possible for gaining experience. However, it seems the career building for them does not mean so much getting experience in the work field, but rather acquiring diverse competences through continuous studying.

The family-centered group consisting typically of women showed average interest in further studies, which could be explained by their personal plans: having a family comparatively earlier than the other groups is dependent on the participation in the labor market (ensuring a steady income and a more secure withdrawal from the labor market), thus showing less interest for the deepening of their knowledge, or as we have seen, for further studies. They do not prolong their study time with gaining experience abroad either. In their case we have often seen that they wish to get a diploma based on others' expectations of them.

In this regard the present-centered do have a similar mindset, to which the immediate environment and the given circumstances are highly important. With further studies they would like to make their family proud of them. During their studies the significance of the student life itself and colleagues is great, even when considering future employment; they consider a friendly atmosphere at the workplace important. They are extremely unsure, perhaps indifferent about decisions of greater significance, as in having a family, studying further and working abroad. Based on the above mentioned we can conclude that future plans regarding private life and professional career are strongly connected with each other as well as with the gender role in the society.

In the last section of our paper we dealt with the female instructors in higher education. The advantage of women in education can not be detected at the highest level of tertiary training. At the level of instructors and higher education researchers the women are in minority. Based on quantitative data we tried to explore the supporting and moderating factors in the career of female instructors in higher education. The main external barrier which they faced with was family-responsibilities, but there were some internal barriers as well, such as the lack of self confidence and personal insecurity or the lack of a mentor. On the other hand, the support from the husband and parents, and a good boss or a good mentor helped them in their career, and the motivation and hard-working characteristics of women instructors affected their career positively as well.

All in all, to examine gender differences in education is still important, even nowadays girls catch up with boys in education concerning several aspects. We showed that girls are in the lead in traditional cultural consumption, but boys are in the lead in using ICT. We also showed that there are several differences in e-learning methods by gender (we have to take into account these differences in planning digital materials in higher education). Our results concerning gender differences in personal and professional career plans of higher education students were in accordance with the fact that men are still in advantage on the labor market (there is a status-inconsistency between girls educational and labor market position). Concerning female instructors in higher education, we can state, that they are still in minority, and getting higher and higher in the academic hierarchy the rate of female instructors is decreasing. Thus there are also several fields where still the advantage of males can be detected, even in the education.

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TAMÁS KOZMA, KÁROLY TEPERICS, ZOLTÁN TŐZSÉR & EDINA KOVÁCS

Lifelong Learning in a Cross-Border Setting: the Case of Hungary and Romania. A Quest of Concepts, Data and Research

Introduction

The aim of this paper is (a) to re-define the concept of "Learning Region" (LR) according to the necessities of an East-Central European CBR (cross-border region), and (b) to study the ways and means by which the concept might be statistically measured and cartographically presented. The present paper is a follow-up of the former theoretical considerations about LR. The authors make an attempt to operationalise their former views in order to study it empirically and to measure it statistically. First, we summarise the possible definitions of LR. Second, we look for alternative approaches for the empirical research of LRs. And third, we introduce our first results of an empirical study of a spatial unit of the Bihar–Bihor Euroregion (a CB region between Hungary and Romania).

A quest for conceptualisation

In the following section we group the various concepts and approaches of LR. It is not a systematic analysis of the existing literature. Rather, it is an attempt to typify them.

Geographical, political and educational understandings

We have studied the concept and its applicabilities in some of our former papers. In one of their papers (Kozma, 2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2011) differentiated between three approaches to the concept. They are: LR as a concept coming from the *developement of economic geography* (Abicht, 1994; Florida, 1995, Hudson, 1999; Illeris & Jakobsen, 1990; Lernende Regions, 1994; Morgan, 1997; OECD, 1993; Ohmae, 1993; Regional Advantage, 1994); LR *as an LLL (lifelong learning) concept* (Baumfeld, 2005; Learning Regions by EU Countries) and LR *as a political concept* (Boekema, Morgan, Bakkers

& Rutten, 2000; CERI, 2000; Hassink, 2004; Lukesch & Payer, 2009; OECD, 2001).

According to the literature reviewed, LR as a concept of *economic geography* (called otherwise *social or human geography*) stresses a new way of analyzing regional developement. That is: the importance of education and training in the revitalisation of a given region. The problem of the restructuring of a stagnating region arose back in the 1970s and 1980s. However, the chance of their developement by new and innovative ways came as late as the 1990s. Many of the regional statistical analyses proved that regional developement and knowledge production go hand in hand, and the growing networks of knowledge production, industrial (or agricultural) innovation create cores of regional developements (Abich, 1994; Florida, 1995; Hudson, 1999; Illeris & Jakobsen, 1990; Lernende Regions, 1994; Morgan, 1997; OECD, 1993; Ohmae, 1993; Regional Advantage, 1994).

LR as an *LLL concept* connects to this new understanding. From an LLL point of view, "knowledge production" and the emerging cooperation between industrial enterprises and R+D institutions (universities and/or non-formal places of education and training) are ideal places and an optimal situations for LLL. All the more, regional frameworks – rather than larger territorial units – seem to be the appropriate organisational frames for organising and developing LLL activities. From this point on, some of the theorists of LLL felt, that LR is nothing but the geographical conceptualisation of the idea of LLL (Baumfeld, 2005; Learning Regions by EU Countries).

LR as a political concept, however, stresses the social drift and political motivation behind regional developement. According to this approach, LR (as the cooperation between actors of economy, research and education) depends on the political engagements and dedications of the human factor, that is, the political forces behind the developement. It is not the sizes of the networks or the degree of economic production which counts; rather the political forces that are initiating and directing the developement of a given region. LLL is, according to this view, a form of the political will; and the regional economic development – at large or small scale – is the product of that will (Boekema, Morgan, Bakkers & Rutten, 2000; CERI, 2000; Hassink, 2004; Lukesch & Payer, 2009; OECD, 2001).

Large scale vs. small scale approaches

In their latest paper (Erdei et al., 2011), follow the same line. They differentiate between two definitions of LR. The economical approach is appropriate to the study of those regions where massive industrial developements are associated with research, innovation and education; thus, creating a core in the developement of a country or a region. This approach is quite different from the other, which concentrates on smaller units (be them even a cluster of quite

few communities) and studies them from the point of view of political forces. It is not the level of economic developement that counts, but the level of political will and social forces. In this approach, LR is a political rather than economic concept.

Going further, Kozma (2011) interprets LR as a political rather than economic concept. According to his view, LR may be a special way out of regional stagnation. According to his concept, globalised universities may serve the global economy; however, they fail to meet the local needs of the regional/local societies. Continuing on this global–local distinction, the author stresses the new possible function in the local LLL systems and institutions. That is, to offer an alternative way of regional developement in which it initiates local knowledge production and education (both formal and non-formal) for economic developement. This is quite a contrary vision when compared to other known concepts of economic developement.

Measuring LR: Some Experiences

There are some experiments that characterise spatial units by the LLL activities of their inhabitants. The following section will introduce some of them and give brief analyses.

Connections between LR and LLL. First, we give a theoretical consideration about the connection between LLL and LR. As mentioned above, we understand the LR concept as an LLL rather than an economic (or human geography) concept. The main feature of LR – according to this understanding is the LLL activities of the members of given communities. LLL activities make a local unit of LR; moreover, it is a guarantee (and a promise) for the political dynamism of that community. This reinterpretation of the original LR concept may be debated – but at least it is embedded in the various ways of interpreting the concept in the literature. In other words, the following section will connect the concept of LR with the concept of LLL, on the basis of which, we may try to "measure" the activities of a given LR.

The following indices try to measure several human activities and not just the activities of organisations or institutions in a given territorial unit. Behind this statistical experiment is an idea about LLL as a common "behaviour" of the members of a community. LLL from this point of view is a collective behaviour, which can actually be measured by statistical means. Two aspects of such behaviour can be approached for statistical analysis: (a) the activities of the community members; and (b) the outcomes of those activities. Formal schooling and its researchers regularly use indices of outcomes to characterise the schooling. The researches of LLL may not use outcome indices so regularly, mainly because LLL has no standards against which the actual performance could be judged. This comes from the informal and non-formal character of the activities called LLL. Yet, we all know that LLL *has*

outcomes; moreover, the LLL outcomes are essential for the existence of the given community. The outcomes of LLL – which may not be measured by formal schooling means and tools – are partly the well-being and partly the political dynamics of the community. When measuring LLL – both in its activities and its ("non-existing") outcomes – we may measure the well-being *and* political dynamics of the community. Let us characterise a territorial community by its well-being and political dynamics – and we may arrive to the concept of LR as introduced in the first section as an alternative interpretation to economic geography.

Now we turn to the practicalities – in the sense of statistical measurements and the possibilities of using them to characterise LR. Two major concepts became known in the LLL literature during the last decade: (a) the Canadian Learning Index, and (b) its European counterpart called the European Lifelong Learning Index.

CLI: the Canadian LLL index. The Canadian LLL index (Composite Learning Index, CLI) history goes back five years. The indices are collected and analysed regularly by the Statistical Office of Canada. They are based partly on community statistics and partly on census data. Both its collection and its analysis has been routinised; the findings of the statistical analysis are interpreted to characterise the state of the arts in Canadian society and the actual situation of lifelong learning in Canada. (In other words, it is *not* applied to characterise any kind of LR; though it *is* used to characterise territorial units of the country in order to find differences among them and create developement policies on that basis.) Figure 1 presents the structure of the Canadian CLI. Known from the relevant literature, it consists of four "pillars"- in other words, four dimensions by which their indicators can be organised and analysed.

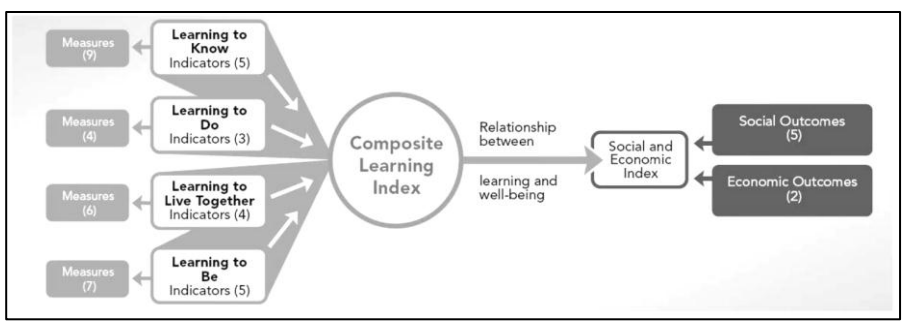

Figure 1: The Canadian CLI

Source: The 2010 Canadian Learning Index

Learning to know is a dimension consisting of statistics relating to the formal (sometimes even non-formal) schooling. It is the dimension of the traditional

understanding of schooling, the "knowledge" dimension. Indicators characteristic of that dimension (or: collected and grouped under this umbrella) cover access to, participation in and leaving from the formal school system. "Access" means, however, "access" other than the statistics known from school and educational statistics. "Access" in the CLI context is characterised by geographical distances (the distances between the home and the institution someone has to cover). In the same way, "participation" is also re-interpreted. It is not characterised by the usual statistics, but by statistics (proportion of cohorts) of taking part in programmes and activities of formal institutions. An unusual set of data is gathered under the name of "youth literacy"; though literacy is understood in the broad sense of the word (scores of reading, math, science and "problem solving"). All in all; the "learning to know" dimension represents institutional as well as personal data; both grouped and interpreted to characterise human activities (and products) rather than organisational aims and accomplishments.

*The **learning to do dimension*** covers the "competency" side of knowing something ("to know how to do or how to make something"). Here, the usual "training" statistics become re-interpreted. Workplace, job-related and vocational training are three various types of training (which we think and talk of like alternatives). It is a deeper look into the sophisticated field of Education and Vocational Training (VAT). Statistics collected under this cluster are different from the data we usually think of. Statistics of age cohorts, of enterprises and VAT institutions are gathered here to characterise the communities' access to competences.

The third dimension is referred to as ***learning to be***. It is an innovative name for the usual labels "leisure time activities" and statistical data characterising them. It is, however, not only a shift of names; rather a shift of view and approach. It is not "leisure-time" that is indicated, but the non-formal and informal learning activities during "leisure-time" (learning by sports, learning by culture etc.). It cannot be measured (because of the lack of statistical data), but the spending of households can be. All those indicators are measured, therefore, by the data of household spending; including media and the Internet interpret a question still remains as to whether "learning" could be characterised by spending. Questions like this would, however, guide us into further philosophy, which is explained in the handbook of CLI).

The most vulnerable – though most interesting dimension is called ***learning to live together.*** It is the social dimension of CLI, covering indicators mainly of volunteering. Volunteering is the community side of leisure-time activities; it could otherwise be named as the political dimension of CLI ("political" not in the meaning of party politics, but rather in the meaning of collective actions). The "political" dimension of the CLI covers a whole range of activities from library attendance (how far the libraries are from someone's home) to spending time and organising activities together with foreigners

(called people from other cultures, not only other countries). It is a range of activities worth further consideration and, of course, statistical analysis as well. (Even if we would feel the indicators and data may not characterise the social dimension of CLI in its full deepness).

ELLI: the European LLL index. The European Lifelong Learning Index has been developed on the basis of the Canadian CLI and can be viewed as a matured version of the latter. The structure of the European CLI is equivalent with the Canadian one, though the names have been simplified, and thus, they are easier to follow. So both the Canadian and the European CLI have four dimensions ("pillars"). They are easy to catch in the European CLI: Learning to know is the common label for indicators of the formal schooling and education system (in the meaning of general rather than professional education, which is a European understanding of schooling and education). Learning to do – contrary to the latter – covers indicators of vocational and job-related learning activities (a European interpretation again of what "learning the competencies" would practically mean). Learning to be is translated as indicators of personal growth; while learning to live together is the common name of indicators for "social cohesion" (the wording clearly comes from the European understanding of the concept).

Dimensions 1 and 2 (learning to know and to do) is easier to feature by indicators, since both the formal and the non-formal (vocational and on-the-job) education may have statistics in Europe. The indicators of ELLI come from the traditional educational statistics; except for data coming from the PISA exercise. (The loss of higher education, or to call it "post secondary" as well as the suggested age group for characterising social participation may be discussed).

More complicated are *dimensions 3 and 4* (learning to be and to live together). Their indicators may come from theory / philosophy; while the statistical data are missing or pending. The major dilemma here – as everywhere else – is, that dimensions 3 and 4 would reflect personal or community actions, which may not be recognised statistically (statistics being mostly national in Europe, but those activities are "free" or "volunteer"). Less data exists about the more sensitive and interesting aspects of human activities. "Visiting museums" or "visiting concerts" may be indicated by institutional statistics (that is, the data offered by the museums or concert halls etc). "Work-life balance" (a suggested indicator for dimension 3) however, may hardly be characterized by the "accordance of working hours with family commitments"; since there are no data for that (being itself a theoretical construct).

To feature *dimension 4* (learning to live together) is more complicated than dimension 3. The very concept of "living together" is slightly farther away from the European mind; so it is interpreted as the dimension of social cohesion. Although "social cohesion" seems clearer, it is complicated to characterize statistically, since "social cohesion" is, again, a theoretical

construct and does not come from a bunch of existing statistical data. "Tolerance", "trust" or "inclusion" (among others) may be indicators hard to reflect by using existing data. One would really need opinion poll results or interview analyses to collect any data concerning them. (Further, we would not list the "party memberships" to civic actions; however, it is easy to understand that "civic" activities are not rooted as deeply in the cultures of Europe as they are in heritage of the Canadian culture.

One thing is completely missing from the European CLI. That is the territorial (spatial) dimension. The Canadian CLI is rich in territorial statistics (e.g. characterizing "access" of systems and services by the geographic distance between the institutions and homes). The European counterpart has no mention of it. Here, a theoretical (philosophical) approach dominates the statistical-demographic view of the human and his/her society. "Systems" of education or training seem to be more important than "networks"; "participation" is more characteristic than the "access". The outcome of such a construct is, as mentioned above: a stronger structure with a much weaker statistical representation. Comparing the two CLIs it becomes clear that the Canadian one has been raised from statistical practices; while its European counterpart is mostly a theoretical construct. As a theoretical frame, the European CLI is much more coherent. As a guide for statistical analysis, the Canadian one gives stronger support. Those who want to build a theoretical construct of how LLL can be understand and analysed may turn to the European construct. Those who are interested in measuring the capacities of the LRs would, however, apply the Canadian CLI.

The German Map of Learning: a change of the concept. The *German Map of Learning* (*Deutscher Lernatlas, DLA*) is the recent follow-up of ELLI (Schoof, Blinn, Schleiter, Ribbe & Wiek, 2011). It is, however, not only a follow-up, but rather a change in the concept of ELLI. As mentioned above, ELLI was the first break-through of continental LR and LLL measuring; though it was theoretical enough to be underpinned by the existing data-sets. Theoretically (philosophically) robust, statistical data of the Continent (Europe) were missing needed to be tested, or just to be illustrated. The founding fathers of the initial project have to change their original concept. It would have been interesting – moreover, important – for developing a European view on LLL as part of the European well-being. It would have contributed to the idea that Europe is able to show an alternative way (at least statistically) to the American way of life. Important as it would have been, practicalities made it impossible to develop an ELLI. Since Europe (the European Union) is still a confederation of nation states, national statistics may offer a more secured basis for a statistical analysis. It is the outcome of the change in concept from ELLI to DLA.

The DLA and its authors and project members (by the strong and constant support of the Bertelsmann Foundation) learnt a lot from the Canadian

CLI after which they created the German version of it. The weaknesses of ELLI were omitted during the construction of the German CLI. DLA is based on existing (or mostly existing) official German statistical data. The structure of the data collection and presentation is a simplified version of ELLI (more simple and more visible than the Canadian counterpart). The indicators are well connected to the measures; the dimensions, their "clusters" are easy to follow. The latest publication (Schoof et al., 2011) is rich in data – though a step back and a long way from theory to empirical findings.

The DLA2011 is an important piece to learn and to follow. It proves the importance of a balance between data and theory; both being important and both being necessary for a thorough analysis. It also represents the very differences between the continental (European) and the Atlantic (Canadian) try-outs, both in the existing data and the theoretical frame. As far as data are concerned, DLA2011 shows the sophistication of a European data collection, which is comparable to the Canadian experience and techniques. As far as theory is concerned, the Canadain audience (including politicians and politics) seemed to be more interested in politics than the European audience. The Canadian CLI is a public venture; DLA2011, though, remained (at least by now) a private provision.

For our Romanian-Hungarian experiment, DLA2011 would be more fruitful, since it is Continental (European). However, it has no traditions at present. The Canadian CLI, on the other hand *has* a tradition with its relatively long history (five years). It is the main reason that we started to apply the Canadian CLI to our Romanian-Hungarian LRs.

Measuring the "adult learning potential". (Kozma, Híves, Pusztai, Radácsi & Rébay, 2004) contributed to the dispute of evaluating the LLL by an experiment of measuring the "adult learning potential" (ALP). ALP was interpreted as the ability and preparedness of a territorial community to participate in adult learning activities. Though ALP was not equivalent with LLL (the former is rather formal, the latter being formal, non-formal and informal), the concept and the experiment has some significance in two ways. (a) Kozma et al. (ibid) proved that learning in its broad sense can be characterized by demographic sources (based on the census data). Traditional studies used almost all school-based statistics (the number of students and teachers, hours of teaching and learning or the distances from the schools etc.). (b) Measuring ALP territorial differences could be featured; since ALP by its nature showed the learning abilities of territorial communities.

The indicators of ALP in the study were: (a) birth and migration rates of the communities; (b) the level of education and training of their inhabitants; and (c) employment/unemployment. The Hungarian census data of 2001 were used for statistical analysis. The philosophy behind the indicators goes on saying that (a) the demographic data of the Hungarian territorial communities is decreasing, however the level of education and training is increasing

constantly. Territorial and social groups with higher levels of education and training are preferred on the labour market. These processes may go hand in hand in some territories, which may result in a growing interest in adult learning. The ALP of Hungary is presented in Figure 2. It shows that (1) The number of inhabitants in the territorial units of the country is decreasing dramatically (though there are significant differences). The most dramatic changes occur in territories, which had demographic surpluses in the former (1990) census; (2) The level of education is increasing. There seems to be a "qualitative expansion" in education since it is not the number of students but rather the demands for further and higher education that are increasing; (3) The unemployment rate among the inhabitants with a low education level is high, but it is low in territories where the education level is higher. It seems to be especially characteristic in territories with larger capital investments; (4) Territories with decreasing demography and an increasing employment rate may be characterized by higher ALP. It is expected that the inhabitants of those territories may demand more adult learning possibilities in the future to cope with the employment demand of the labour market.

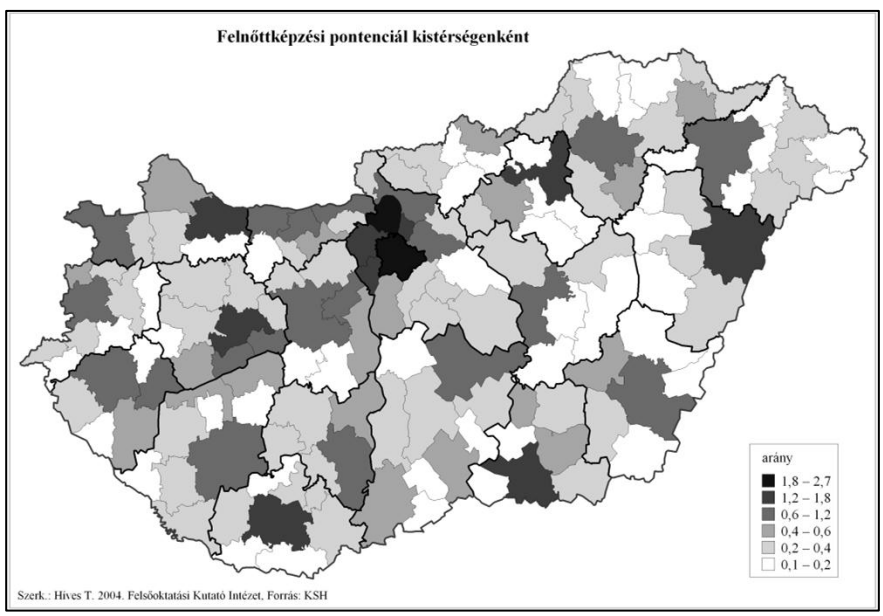

Figure 2: The distribution of ALP in Hungary (census data of territorial units, 2001)
Source: Kozma T et al. (2004). p. 103.

Can LR be measured by LLL indicators? The initial question was to measure – if possible – the LRs by LLL indicators. The study of Kozma et al. (ibid) has no direct relevance for this; though some results might contribute to theoretical

considerations. There are more reasons for applying the Canadian CLI for the empirical studies of LRs. One reason is the structure of the statistical data they use. Those data are mostly accessible; they have already been collected by the various statistical agencies. The Canadian data set is more structured and has probably collected data from a wider sphere of social and human life than the Hungarian or the Romanian data. Yet, some of the data – most of them in dimensions 1 and 2 – are available. It provides a possible means of analysis for comparative studies too.

Another reason for applying the Canadian model to the LR study is its sensitivity to spatial data. Spatial data – a view that the human and social life is organised in spatial units and territorial frames – is collected in all of the four dimensions. Characteristic to that are the spatial data of measure indicators like access to the institutions (be them educational, cultural or training institutions). Since LRs are defined as territorial units, it is easy to characterize them by using geographic data. The question, however, still remains as to whether those data could be collected in the Hungarian or Romanian context.

These are the pros for the Canadian CLI if applied to an empirical LR study. There are, however, cons, too. The most important is the question of measuring the political dynamics of the territorial units. The Canadian CLI has a dimension, which may help in this sense. By studying this dimension, though, we may realise that the "learning to live together" dimension is as descriptive as the remaining three. It is understandable. Dynamics – setting aside "political" dynamic – are, not easy to characterize with data; and if they are, they can only be characterized by time series. And even time series contain a series of spotlights rather then moving pictures and need historical interpretation. The various activities characterized and measured by the Canadian data might be interpreted as political dynamics, though they are not necessarily that. Political dynamics may be "measured" – better to say, characterized – by case studies from the field. This leads us to the more complicated question (a question of the philosophy of the empirical social research) whether social change can ever be represented by quantitative research.

Studying LR: A Hungarian-Romanian Case

The new understanding of LR–LR as characterised by the political activity of the local society rather than the developmental level of knowledge industry and innovation networks–can be applied to a cross-border region of Hungary and Romania. The question still remains if it can be proved statistically. In the following section, we are looking for some possible answers to this question

Statistical models. How can the Canadian and the European LIs be applied to our LR analysis? A short comparison between their statistical models may help in answering this question (Figure 3).

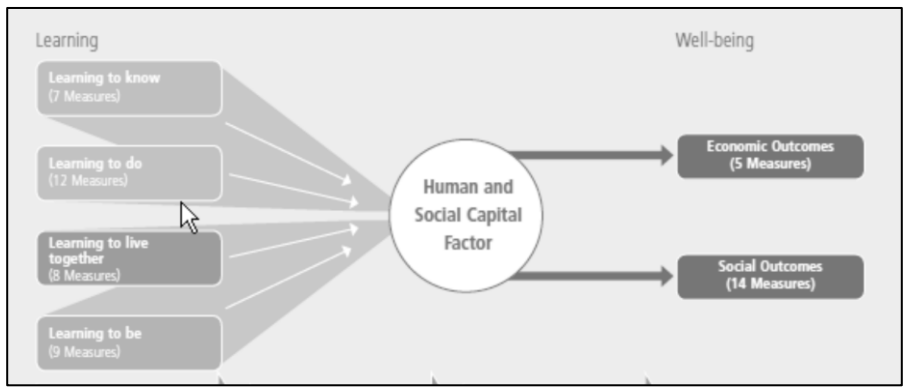

Figure 3: Model of ELLI

Source: http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/CLI/ELLI_EU_20102608_EN.pdf

The aim of the Canadian pursuit is to develop a learning index, which would enhance various statistical data from the four dimensions mentioned. Each of the dimensions is indicated by groups of 3–5 types of data which, in turn, are measured by 4–7 types of data data. As presented in Figure 3, those data – as a learning index – represent the relationship between learning and well-being. The question of well-being – to which (social) learning (in its various forms) contributes – is a part of the social and economic index of Canada, which is absorbing the economic and social outcomes of Canadian society. The CLI pursuit is part of a broader question of the social statistics, which would reflect the well-being of the Canadians from an alternative point of view; that is, from the point of view of social *and* economic approaches. The Canadian CLI contributes to a broader view of the society; and as such, to the broader view of the local and regional societies in the country. The main message of this exercise is a broader picture of a given community – be it a regional unit or the country as a whole. One specific aspect of the Canadian CLI is its strong connections to local and regional data, on which the basis of a national picture (the Canadian CLI) are developed.

Compared to the Canadian CLI, the European LLI has been developed in a somewhat different direction. The aim of the European LLI is to represent the connection between learning and well-being, which is a slight shift in the statistical work. The learning indicators could be interpreted as the "social/human capital" factor which, in turn, is influencing the well-being indicators (the values of 19 measures). Opposite to the Canadian CLI, the European LLI understands the learning measures (in the four dimensions

mentioned) as contributions to the developement of the social capital that result in the socioeconomic well-being. The European model suggests what we know from the former theoretical literature. Human (social) capital influences the socioeconomic well-being of a given society (or even a continent). It is an illustration of a theoretical frame rather then a construction for statistical data gathering and grouping. The European LLI is easier to use for understanding the nature and the state of the human/social capital of a country. The Canadian CLI is, however, easier to use for data gathering and grouping. Both are models of statistics. The (European) LLL is more theory-oriented and could be applied for various understandings and alternatives to the human/social capital concepts. The other (Canadian) is weaker in its philosophy and more neutral for theoretical understandings. It is, therefore, more applicable when local and regional societies – their developemental levels and civic (political) activities – would be measured.

Considerations on Methods. Doing so we face a series of methodical questions. Here are but a few. (1) *The problem of decision-making power*. Different statistics use different units for data collection. This is clear when comparing the two. The argument of CLI goes on to say that it is necessary – though sometimes complicated – to go down to the community level; while the CCL (Statistics Canada) stresses only the importance of the "best estimate possible". DLA2011 also stresses the importance of the level of communities ("Ort", "Kommune"); though those two concepts differ in their political meanings. The question one has to answer is: which level has the political decision-making power (at least from the LR/LLL point). (2) *The problem of the territorial unit*: A question – similar to the above mentioned (the question of units) – is the unit of the existing data. As seen in the CLI, sometimes only estimates would be relevant. Various statistical traditions and practices may make it complicated to gather comparative data. (It proved to be the fate – at least the burden – of an ELLI.) A Romanian-Hungarian comparison has to solve the problem of the different units for official data gathering. (3) *The problem of the source of data*: Both CLI and DLA face a dual problem. The statistical data they use come partly from individuals and partly from institutions (demographic vs. organisational statistics). They reflect partly the situations of the individuals and partly the characteristics of the organisations. How can they match? (Visiting a museum can be an individual decision and thus, may characterize the individual and his / her community. It can also be the characteristics of an organisation, reflecting the success of an exhibition etc.) (4) *The problem of data gathering*: Statistical data could be collected only from fields where they (the data) exist. Otherwise, we need questionnaires or even personal interviews. Which should be the leading method? How deep can we go into the level of individual interviews for securing the best possible value of the statistics for learning and well-being?

For the sake of the Romanian–Hungarian comparison, we decided to use the settlement (habitat with legal existence) for the level of our data gathering. Though "settlement" means different geographical communities in both countries, it seems to be the only acceptable level for further interpretations. We have to collect data both from individuals and the existing organisations at the given settlement, in order to answer questions concerning individual and collective behaviours. As in every European state (and countries elsewhere in the world), formal and non-formal education and training is better represented by statistics than informal learning activities. For that reason, data for pillars 1 and 2 might be more easily collected; though the question of "access" to organisations and services might be complicated. Data for pillars 3 and 4 – dimensions of personal and collective life – may not be available in the Romanian–Hungarian case. Data for those pillars might therefore be substituted for different statistics.

A crossborder region. Crossborder regions came into existence between Hungary and her neighbours after the political transition turn of 1989/90. Their real existence went back to the pre-war history of the countries in the Carpathian basin. After the transition, however, the hidden existence of those regions became visible. Their inhabitants – families and relatives, separated for decades by politics – received the opportunity to recreate their traditional family and community lives. Though using different services (education, health care, social care, mass communication) mostly owned by their official states, their individual and family lives remain the same, sharing similar cultures and using similar languages (Romanian and Hungarian at the Romanian–Hungarian state border). All these created a basis for a new cross-border cooperation between communities on both sides of the Romanian–Hungarian border.

Some of the cross-border regions (CBR) received legal recognition for their existence by a new blueprint called "Euroregion". Euroregions represented the acceptance on behalf of the existing European Community and as such gave a certain official protection for common activities at the state borders. A territory that received such a legal existence was the Bihar–Bihor Euroregion (2002). (The historical "Bihar" or "Bihor" was a county established back in the 11th century under the Hungarian crown, with a majority of Romanian inhabitants in the present time; see Figure 4).

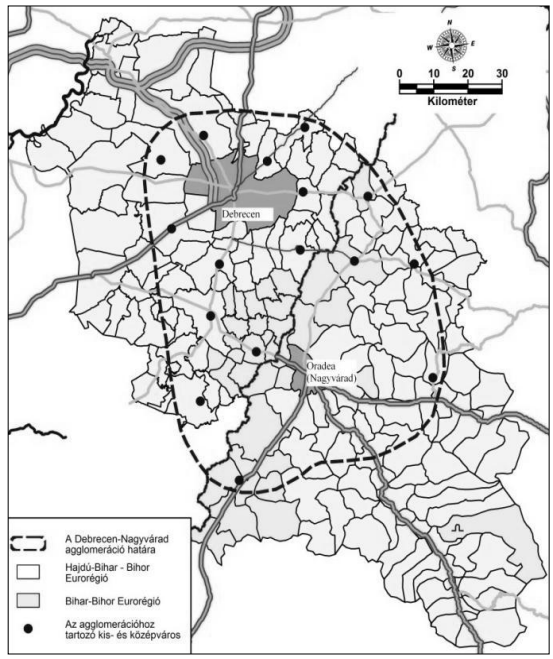

Figure 4: The Bihar-Bihor Euroregion

Source: Süli-Zakar 2011, p. 21

Figure 4 shows that the Bihar–Bihor Euroregion has been organised as a metropolitan area; Oradea on the Romanian side and Debrecen on the Hungarian side. Divided by the state border, these two metropolitan areas are geographically close to each other and would need connections for their transport. Oradea is the largest city in the Western part of Romania, while Debrecen is the second largest city of Hungary. Their permanent connections should therefore be "upgraded" from the private to the public domain. It is one of the political priorities for the regional politics today. The territory within the blue line was the first area of cooperation and acceptance; the larger part is the two sides of the historical Bihor-Bihar, which is created by two counties at the two sides of the border.

A comparative study is being conducted by a team of researchers from the University of Debrecen and the University of Oradea. The study aims to describe the LRs – their statuses and their levels – in the Bihor-Bihar Euroregion. At the same time, as part of the study, the researchers would try out the views and the approaches of CLI – DLA. If they succeed, the further study of both Romania and/or Hungary could be initiated with the aim to bring out the political forces behind the LRs on the one hand and to create a Romanian–Hungarian Map of Learning on the other.

Summary

The concept of the "learning region" (LR) became known in the early 1990s. The movement behind the concept – an alternative way of regional development – was dominant in the early 2000s. The present study examines three different existing approaches to the concept and ends up in the authors' understanding of LR. According to them, the conceptof LR can not only be applied to the highly developed regions characterised by a net of higher education, innovation and production (dimensions of "knowing" and "doing". Rather, the concept of LR can also be applied to smaller spatial units characterised by their social networks and political movements (dimensions of "personal enrichment" and "civil society"). Until now, LR has been known and used by educational politicians and experts as an idea and a slogan. It has only recently been tested statistically. The Canadian Composite Learning Index as well as its European counterpart (European Lifelong Learning Index) shed lights to the pros and cons of such a testing. The German map of Learning – as an alternative for the official educational statistics – suggests a similar approach in Hungary and Romania.

The new understanding of LR – a shift from the most developed regions to the politically active local societies – is applied to a cross-border region of Hungary and Romania (Bihar–Bihor Euroregion). Practical rather than theoretical questions have to be solved before a comparative analysis and/or a map of LRs in a region. The researchers of the two Universities (Oreadea, Romania and Debrecen, Hungary) joined to collect the necessary data for such an analysis. The field of their case study is the cross-border region mentioned above. The objective of the study is to develop indicators for pillars 1–4 for the learning indices, however the main aim is more than that. The map of LRs of the respective countries would be an important contribution to the further understanding of the suggested concept of LR.

Notes

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