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The features and dynamics of the axiological universe of the university professor at the end of the XXth century and the beginning of the XXIst century. Case study

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Abstract

Academics are not only (top) knowledge providers in a certain field and passionate researchers but also a holder of values, beliefs and life principles. The current study aims to unveil and compare the values, beliefs and principles of two categories of academics (from PGU Ploiesti): those with over 20 years seniority and those with less than 15 years seniority in higher education.

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1. Introduction

Along with the erudition and insatiable appetite for knowledge, the values, principles and beliefs of academics are also important, as is the more or less explicit/ implicit way they transfer those to their students. Thus, to a larger or smaller extent they influence the options, preferences, hopes, social perceptions, motivations and relationships of future intellectuals and their conception about their role in society, in life and history. As man is an economic, social, communicative, sensitive, playful, intentional being so he is an axiological being. We cannot overlook this fundamental dimension. For Hare (2001) „man is a valorising being and he'll probably remain so” (p. 63). Man

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cannot abandon his values. Consequently, it becomes necessary and important to know what values, beliefs and principles have the academics and therefore, what are they liable to transmit to future intellectuals, be it intentionally or unintentionally.

2. Purpose of study

The study aims to draw attention to the tendency to narrow the way of regarding the personality of academics, their personal and educational functions; to draw attention to the limitative-quantitative conception referring to their activity and presence within the university environment. This conception tends to win the perspective of the education system's administrators and of those who evaluate the performances of professors.

3. Research methods

As the third stage in a broader project, this study aims to research comparatively the values, beliefs and principles of two generations of academics in the Petroleum Gas University of Ploiesti. First, it is about the generation with over 20 years seniority in higher education, brought up at the end of the XXth century (and implicitly the IInd millennium) – raised and educated within the communist ideology – and the generation with a seniority of under 15 years, hired and active at the beginning of the XXIst century (and implicitly the IIIrd millennium), raised in a market economy ideology. In the research took part a number of 28 subjects from the first sample (the first stage of the study) and 28 subjects from the second sample (second stage of the study). The first stage of the research took place in March 2012 and the second in October 2012, and was a qualitative research. The research instrument was a questionnaire (that included open questions, some of which required ranking the options of subjects; for the first option were given 3 points, for the second 2 points and for the third 1 point).

4. Results

Following the collection, analysis and comparison of data we have found the following (we make the specification that from now on, throughout this entire study, we will address the group of the academics with 20 years or more in education as G1 and the group consisting of subject of 15 years or less seniority in education as G2):

Table no. 1. The fundamental value of a meaningful life

The generation with 20 years or more seniority in higher education (G1)	The generation with 15 years or less seniority in higher education (G2)
Justice: 2 options	Love: 5 options
Wisdom: 2 options	Honesty: 5 options
Trust (in better life, in God): 2 options	Truth: 2 options
Honour: 2 options	Respect: 2 options
Honesty: 2 options	

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