

„BABEŞ - BOLYAI” UNIVERSITY, CLUJ NAPOCA
FACULTY OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK

Qualitative and qunatitative aspects of social policies

ABSTRACT OF HABILITATION THESIS

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In accordance with the provisions of Ordinance no. 3121/2015 issued by the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research, the present habilitation thesis is divided in two major parts. The first part presents the main scientific results the candidate achieved after having obtained his Ph.D. title.

The first part presents the evolution of academic, scientific and professional career development in chronological order (Chapter I), presenting some of the original scientific findings as well as the main research directions in the academic, scientific and professional activities and in correlated activities in the private sector of NGOs.

The candidate's research activity has begun with his doctoral studies in sociology. Studies in law at BA and MA levels have influenced the author of the present thesis to conduct an interdisciplinary research in the field of human rights from a sociological perspective.

During his early research activities he has obtained the capacity to combine patients' rights and their legal protection with social aspects of minors' healthcare in medical units and hospitals. Subsequently, after finishing the PhD studies, almost every aspect of this research field was complemented by in-depth research, which allowed a better understanding of the situation of underaged patients. Because this subject has few scientific references in Romania, especially from the perspective of the rights, the published articles have a high level of originality and actuality. Within these publications, the scientific analysis of social problems has been conducted primarily from a legal perspective, and also from the perspective of the necessities of minors as they appear in the perceptions of research subjects. The main finding was that the child protection system at international and European level is also adopted in Romania, respecting the minimum requirements provided by treaties and conventions. The Romanian legal framework generally respects contemporary exigencies, but it is somewhat less comprehensive.

After obtaining the PhD title, the candidate has published his results in 2013 at Cluj University Press in a book titled "Rights and moral dilemmas concerning children with medical diagnosis". In the following period until 2014 he realized a thoroughgoing study by a series of specialized articles addressing the most delicate aspects of this topic. Through these preparation activities the candidate has become aware of other social issues closely related to patients' rights and medical ethics, such as dilemmas related to the euthanasia. He got also interested in other social problems related to certain categories of vulnerable persons such as minors and Roma. The candidate's scientific concerns related to vulnerable persons represented a first step towards initiation in social policy, as a related and extensive area to the topics of the doctorate. It also caused a transition from rights based approaches towards approaches used by social policies. This evolution of perspectives have broadened the candidate's research optics: rights are seen now as a legislative instrument fulfilling the objectives set by policy principles.

Between 2013 and 2017 the candidate conducted extensive research on society, communities, education, political issues such as democracy and multiculturalism, which have contributed to the understanding of social policies. It is noteworthy that at this stage of the author's career development he was contemplating various populations, such as young people at risk and local communities in rural areas. This research area was a necessary extension of the previous topics, because the preparatory research for these publications was also useful for his teaching activity. For example, the candidate has shown a research interest to the social protection and well-being of local communities. He has realized that ensuring optimal conditions to the development of these communities is a general interest of the society. New aspects of social policies have been recognized which contributed to a more diversified research perspective, such as the historical view, economic and social aspects of development and distribution of resources for sustainable development.

As a result the candidate has synthesized his results in the field of social policies by a scientific volume entitled "Introduction in social policies and the decline of welfare prospects", edited by Cluj University Press in December 2017 (ISBN 978-606-37-0289-1, p. 212). The novelty of the book resides in its logical structure and due to the easily comprehensible style of writing and to the many examples of the debated topics it is easy to read and understand even by the first grade students. The information contained in this volume has a fundamentally-introductory level, suggested also by the volume title. This book covers an important gap in the education of social policies of students from sociology and social work. The most relevant theoretical knowledge-pack in the field is presented, regarding the legal framework of social policies in Romania.

Simultaneously with the preparation of the above mentioned book, the author of this thesis has coordinated a collective volume "Dilemmas in multicultural spaces" at the same publishing house, which appeared in January 2018 (ISBN 978-606-37-0360-7, p. 143). These publications have contributed to the candidate's specialization in the field of social policies, having strong tangencies with the subjects taught at the university and with civic involvement activities.

In addition to teaching and research activities, since 2015 the candidate has been concerned by social issues, therefore has been voluntary involved in civic activities such as educating and informing the local community. In this order he participated in the establishment of the StudCoop Association in Cluj-Napoca. The association was set up by the founders' own resources as a Romanian legal entity of private law, non-governmental organization, with non-profit orientation and apolitical nature. The main objective was a contribution through different activities to raise our country's standards in the field of promoting sustainable social and economic values to reach the level of other European Union Member States' with the purpose of fulfilling a non-patrimonial interest consisting in promoting, supporting, realizing and coordinating activities that contribute to

local, regional, national, international, urban and rural development in terms of economic, social, educational, cultural, public health and environmental friendly aspects. Within the association, the candidate held workshops for students and participated in guiding the local community on some legislative issues.

The second part is demonstrating the candidate's individual capacity to coordinate research teams, organize and manage teaching activities, detailing the main scientific results obtained during these projects (Chapter II). The candidate has participated in 5 major international projects between 2011-2015 as research-team member and expert. In 2017 he has won and coordinated a project for institutional development entitled "Achieving vocational training in social work". With these projects, the candidate has developed a set of skills such as strategic thinking, teamwork, communication and influencing skills, the ability to delegate project tasks effectively, and building and motivating a high-performing research team. During the interactions with colleagues he also managed to familiarize with introspection techniques and has got trained in analyzing how the objectives were perceived by the other members of the research team. Therefore he acquired skills of analyzing strengths and also the areas requiring improvement.

Summing up, in the last 10 years the candidate has published 34 scientific articles in three languages (Romanian, English and Hungarian). Most of these articles were published in scientific journals indexed in at least three international databases. Two articles were accepted Thomson Reuters ISI papers. During this period the candidate has also made 23 presentations at various scientific national and international conferences. He is the author of three books edited by A2 ranked publishing houses and has coordinated a collective volume.

The author of the present habilitation thesis has become an editorial board member in 2016 of the Hungarian Human Innovation Review with ISSN no. 2062-0292. In terms of research activities he was invited as a professor-researcher in October 2015 to the University of Eger, Hungary, and in April and September 2017 to the University of Pécs, Hungary.

So far the candidate's development in his teaching, academic and research career was characterized by an extension of the areas of interest in order to accumulate well-founded professional knowledge. These extensive research fields helped him over the years in providing up-to-date information during the teaching courses. A further step has to be a specialized focus on research topics in order to gain high-level in-depth academic and professional knowledge.