

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Reflection of the value in practical plans of secondary school youth from country areas of Greater Poland – a pilot study of research approach

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BACKGROUND

The research on values constitutes an essential part of social research. These studies usually use an approach associated with the lists of values and their evaluations on scales, ranging or comparative. This approach is problematic, particularly in the situation of youth who are often characterized by low reflectiveness. One of the ways to achieve the value is to conduct research on practical plans.

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

The study involved 218 pupils from three lower secondary schools from the Greater Poland region. We used the card description of practical plans ("Timeline"), in which pupils described their intentions within perspectives ranging 5, 10, 15 and 20 years. The study was carried out during lessons, conducted by teachers. However, rather than the cognitive goal, the more essential aim was to estimate the usefulness of research tool.

RESULTS

The presented data serves only to illustrate the possibilities of the tested research tool. The obtained descriptions identified a low crystallization of practical plans. In the context of values it is necessary to refer to the dominance of a materialistic and pragmatic approach, a family remains essential as a value, but self-fulfillment does not.

CONCLUSIONS

The study was primarily conducted to check whether the analysis of practical plans will be useful approach to examine values important for youth. In the study, issues of standardizing the research situation proved to be relevant – hence there was a demand to use the lesson script. The results show that this approach to research on values leads to valuable results.

KEY WORDS

lower secondary school pupils; practical plans; modern values; value research method

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BACKGROUND

Since values underpin human behaviors and activities, they constitute quite a common subject of philosophical or ethical deliberations, as well as research. In addition, there is a huge diversity between disciplines and approaches, both in terms of basic definitions and research procedures. For sociologists or psychologists a key matter is the subjectivity of evaluation. For psychology it is an issue of recognizing relatively permanent features of individuals, whereas for sociologists – expressing the effects of the socialization process and placing them in the social structure or the influence of, for example professional ethos (cf. Brzozowski, 2005; Oleś, 2002). Values constitute the basis for the evaluation of behaviors, but they can also be a criterion for evaluation, for assessing ourselves and social action of groups. Ossowski (1967) pointed to the need to distinguish between perceived and recognized values, measures and objectives (which corresponds to distinction of absolute and instrumental values in the Rokeach's or Schwartz's approach), festive and everyday values. Thus, on the one hand, values include norms and guidelines rooted in the culture, and on the other, translate into motivations, aspirations and specific choices of individuals. In turn, pedagogy raises the issue of values primarily from a perspective of shaping the ability to recognize them and intentionally shaping desires (from the entire society's point of view or its selected subgroup) of their hierarchy (Dubis, 2014). Above all we have analysed different ways of research on methods (or strategies) to study value related to respondents, which due to their age and stage of personal development, are characterised by a low level of crystallisation and awareness of value (including the structures of their relative importance in this paper). Therefore, questions that refer to recognition in research proposals of definitional and operational decisions are important, because they lead to specific methodological solutions.

APPROACHES IN THE STUDY OF VALUES

An overview of ways to study values leads to an indication of two main approaches. The first is related directly to the respondent's question about values, and the second is indirect and relates to an approach leading to the recognition of the values (and their relative order). In the case of the first type of study, lists of values are usually the starting point, which respondents organize (range) in terms of subjective importance or aspiration to achieve them, which they evaluate on scales or compare in pairs. As a result of these procedures, researchers can recognize a hierarchy of values. An example is the study with Value Survey (VS) by Rokeach. The scale consist of two

lists of values (terminal and instrumental), which are used to range them according to their importance for respondents, for comparison in pairs (Brzozowski, 1989), as well as for evaluation with a use of scale, e.g. 5 point, but also regular or anchored 100 point (Moore, 1975). In addition, methodological analyses lead to one conclusion about the superiority of ranging over evaluation on scales (Miethe, 1985), whereas, contrarily, another (Moore, 1985) regards evaluation on the scale from 0 to 100 as the most valuable. In studies using Schwartz approach (The Survey Instrument – SI) usually the 7 point scale is used, with a zero as indifference and –1 as the rejection of a given value by the respondent. These types of hierarchies try to include everything that can be the most important for a human being, creating universal sets of values. At this point it is worthwhile to point out that an universal hierarchy of values, which is advocated by philosophers, is still not confirmed by research. Although e.g. Schwartz's approach can suggest that it is possible to identify the universal catalogue of dimensions or prototype of their structure (Brzozowski, 2002; Brzozowski, 2005; Lee, 2008).

Oleś (2002) notices numerous problems with the study of values directly and the accuracy of achieved results, since “regulating legal validity of the value in a large degree regards rejected than taken behaviors” (p. 59). Moreover, such studies have a declarative character, and because values are an important part of the culture, hence respondents response can be dependent on social acceptance. Strengthening these effects is a low level of reflectiveness (we rarely give thought to values, unless possibly with exception to taking crucial, practical decisions) and an abstractness of the category. Educators postulate to conduct “axiological education”, which would focus on “arousing in the pupils of reflection over themselves and social reality surrounding them” (Dubis 2014, p. 44), but this seems a distant purpose, although the shaping a hierarchy of values is carried out in school processes, both as a part of explicit and implicit program.

Discussing examples of carried out research on values in Poland and recognizing the types of research studies, Szczygieł (2011) lists:

- attitudes,
- orientation and practical purposes,
- practical aspiration,
- involvements in the culture,
- axiological orientations,
- personal development,
- understanding the value.

Types of research listed by Szczygieł illustrate the diversity of research on values in an indirect way through asking about aspirations or practical plans. Thus the researcher indirectly establishes the relative importance of individual aspirations and ways to achieve objectives, and in this way reconstructing

the hierarchy of values. It seems that such an approach is particularly valuable in the study of the nature of quality e.g. based on a biographical interview the researcher can recognize premises of the decision taken by individuals. In spite of this potential advantage, listed by Szczygieł types of studies have mainly a quantitative, questionnaire character. Amongst problems, which Oleś indicated, Szczygieł (2011) is added involuntary participation (which according to the ethics of social research shouldn't have happened) and susceptibility to emotion i.e. to the influence of the current life situation of respondents to their responses.

Based on a review of problems related to the study of values, it is necessary to indicate that direct and quantitative study leads to research results that though are often and widely quoted (CBOS, 2011, 2014), evoke questions about their cognitive value. In repeated periodical CBOS studies with different intensity, the young people pointed to education, family and work as the most valued values (CBOS), but what do these slogans mean? Furthermore, as Wojciszke indicates, the hierarchy of beliefs concerning values depends on situations in which man invokes specified subsystem values (Wojciszke, 1986) – although these survey reports are not shown in this thesis, it is possible that for most of respondents such a situation can be because of the specific time in which the study was conducted.

TYOLOGIES OF THE VALUE

The most commonly applied and scientifically used hierarchies of values are the ones drawn up by Rokeach and Schwartz, but also of importance is to refer to the value of the incentive orientation associated with materialistic or nonmaterialistic (Zawadzka, 2006).

In the case of the typology drawn up by Rokeach there are two sets of values – terminal and instrumental. The first relates – generally speaking – to practical purposes, and the second to operational methods. Each group consists of 18 values (Brzozowski, 1989). Terminal values are: 1) national security, 2) family safety, 3) mature love, 4) prosperous life, 5) wisdom, 6) sense of accomplishments, 7) sense of dignity, 8) world peace, 9) true friendship, 10) pleasure, 11) internal balance, 12) equality, 13) happiness, 14) world of beauty, 15) social recognition, 16) freedom, 17) salvation, 18) life full of experiences. Instrumental values include the determinations of features and activities: 1) ambitious, 2) clean, 3) intellectual, 4) loving, 5) logical, 6) independent, 7) imaginative, 8) responsible, 9) brave, 10) self-controlled, 11) broad-minded, 12) cheerful, 13) helpful, 14) obedient, 15) honest, 16) polite, 17) talented, 18) forgiving.

In turn, as a result of empirical works, Schwartz based on Rokeach's approach, distinguished ten

types of values, ordered “circularly” or according to the logic of interests (individual and group, with mixed between), or in two-dimensional space formed by categories “openness to change – conservation” and “self-transcendence – self-enhancement” (Brzozowski, 2002). These values are: 1) benevolence, 2) tradition, 3) conformity, 4) security, 5) power, 6) achievement, 7) hedonism, 8) stimulation, 9) self-direction, 10) universalism.

An important key of analyses is also constituted by Inglehart's approach, with a reinterpretation of Ziolkowski (2000) which corresponds to transformations of value in Polish conditions. According to this (Inglehart's approach), they pass from materialistic to postmaterialistic orientation along with the development of society. In addition, these orientations have a reference to the hierarchy of needs – materialistic is associated with the incentive influence of existential needs, whereas postmaterialistic relates to development needs or self-fulfillment. The two-dimensional presentation to orientation on values (deficiency or postmodern – self-fulfillment) provides a dimension of ruling sources: rational-legal and traditional. However, from the materialistic and postmaterialistic orientation point of view and values, the first dimension remains crucial. In analyses, and in spite of departing from the Inglehart's concept, Swadzba (2014) limited the hierarchies to three values: work, family and religion, as the most important. Zawadzka (2006) by the analysis of relations between orientations and values showed that high valuing such values as “financial safety”, “pleasure” (in women) or “life experience” (in the older group of respondents) accompanied the materialistic orientation.

STUDY OF PRACTICAL PLANS

A parallel current of research, which requires consideration, is the study of objectives and practical plans and also temporal orientation, particularly with regard to youth – pupils of lower secondary school or upper secondary schools. In the study of young people, values are analyzed as one of the essential control components that allow for “a better understanding of the awareness of young people, to understand their life needs” (Matyjas, 2012, p. 91). This study includes both objectives (aspirations, and needs), as well as the means to achieve them – both of them belong to the culture and carry not only axiological, but also normative transmission. Values understood as objectives and measures constitute an essential part of education, which explains the interest of educators in value issues. Matyjas's findings can be an example; in the study of the young from the second classes of lower secondary school she used a questionnaire consisting of 25 sentences expressing the values in reference to which respondents expressed a degree

of approval. Contrary to the earlier described lists of values, in Matyjas's approach more contextual and simultaneously more specific descriptions are used. However, it should be noted that Matyjas used also questions about the respondents' practical plans. By obtaining a clear discrepancy in research results, she interpreted these through practical plans rather than by the average of responses (Matyjas, 2012). Although the author doesn't say, it seems that she indirectly alone undermines the accuracy of the applied tool to the study system or hierarchy of values.

In turn, Dziwańska in her own study (senior pupils and secondary-school pupils for comparison) focused on objectives and practical plans, referring to a so-called forward-looking perspective, and treating objectives as a future, potential state which has a control ability (including – incentive), and these are values in themselves (Dziwańska, 2007). Dziwańska's findings led her to the conclusion about the dominance among young people of a forward-looking orientation, in addition, in the case of senior pupils, short-term objectives (on a yearly timescale) were primarily educational, whereas in more distant timescales (up to 10 years) the objectives concerned learning, work and family (Dziwańska, 2007). The presented research tool, includes two issues separately (after a clear defining): 1) description of objectives (in three time prospects – up to a year, up to 10 years and above 10 years) and 2) practical plans to achieve. Through these two issues we could evaluate not only objectives (the sense of belonging to a specific category), but also the concreteness, realities or flexibilities of the plan to achieve a particular purpose.

The approach applied by Boba and Michlowicz (2007) is interesting with regard to the description of the aspirations of the youth. They asked senior pupils to describe "the graduate of lower secondary school". These written works allow us to recognize the expectations of pupils at the completion of this stage of their education, as well as for which tasks and choices they will be prepared. It is possible to assume that in this case it is a study of objectives outlined in a short perspective but with a slight transition to a longer time horizon. A similar approach, also based on long written statement, was applied by Mikut (2007), asking pupils of the third classes of lower secondary schools to imagine themselves at the age of 30 years and to describe their lives in a letter to an old friend from their lower secondary school. The cited time perspective was longer and allowed for the recognition of more distant practical objectives. In Dziwańska, Boba and Michlowicz or Mikut attempts, an important factor was to focus on descriptions of the future, from which we can indirectly draw conclusions about values (although the authors of the study don't conduct it directly), i.e. what respondents perceive as valuable, and what they want to achieve.

SPECIAL CASE – VALUES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

The above-described problems associated with the study of the hierarchy of values are particularly important in the case study of young people, because they characterize by a probable unstable hierarchy, but also by an unstable, immature personality and identity, which is particularly susceptible to emotion and social pressures (especially by the peer group). Youth are also untrained in reflectiveness. They have not had the experience and faced the decisions that would allow them to "try out" the values i.e. to face decision taken on the basis of their own values system. Even if diagnoses, such as "young people are thinking five minutes ahead – not five years ahead" (Eckersley 1995, p. 15), are extreme, it is still hard not to doubt the lack of experience of young people in the use of values.

In other words – how to study the value of young people, who, by themselves, do not quite know what to value? Researchers are aware of these problems. Fatyga in relation to the youth, writes "consciously instead of using the term *hierarchies of values*, she uses *value layout*, since it better indicates the instability of preferences in young people's values" (Fatyga, 1998). Świda-Ziemia (2005) cites research of values conducted by her students writing a master's thesis by using the subject of competition for their dissertation entitled "What generation we are?", in which students, with full freedom as for the form and content, described what was significant for them, what they wanted to achieve, and what problems or dilemmas they had.

Quantitative studies based on different types of surveys dominate in Polish literature about the value of young people. They usually refer to the study the system of values and characteristics of youth as generations, mainly due to the perception of young people as a driving force of social change (Domalewski 2013), or they are associated with plans or aspirations (Fiedorczuk & Fiedorczuk, 2012).

In foreign-language literature, there is very little research about the entire systems of values of young people. Researchers more often deal with the diagnosis and analysis of specific values that are important for young people e.g. health, happiness, work, family, and education rather than a hierarchy of values (e.g. Piko & Keresztes, 2006; Eurostat, 2009; Proctor, Linley, & Maltby, 2009).

In our own analyses, we use inverted logic compared to "classical" study of direct value and so, therefore, the values are not as much studied with regard to premises or guidelines of the objective choice and operational methods. Our proposal analysis is different from the classical study of values. We study values in an indirect way, which means: life plans, aspiration, life goal, things to do, to achieve in the future etc and these are the source of information about values hierarchy. In the classical method people are asked about their values e.g. "what is most important

in your life?”, “what are values in your life?” and they answer for example family, job, religion.

In other words – given that the direct value study assumes that it is possible and worthwhile to ask e.g. how senior pupils value family or freedom. But in the study of practical plans we assume that the description of strong intention to start a family or have children allows us to come to the conclusion, that for respondents, the family constitutes an important value. In this analysis, the study of values is carried out not in the outline of direct research, but through practical plans, objectives and aspirations. Disclosures of how lower secondary schools perceive their own future along with its shape, reveal values by which they are guided in planning lives. However, current attempts at the study of values are, above all, approaches carried out in the outline of evaluations or ranges, whereas analyses of practical plans include the contents of plans or conclusions about flexibility, sustainability involved in creation of cognitive procedures. For this reason, our approach requires serious methodological reflection and application which, as shown in this paper, leads to relevant cognitive motions, but mainly to methodological guidance that enables for a future, successful and more standardized use. The main point of the analysis concerns the research tool by indicating its strong and weak points, including possibilities of its improvement. On the other hand, as they are a kind of novelty in present research, there is an analysis of results of the study conducted among secondary school youth from the areas of Greater Poland.

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

Research was conducted in May 2015 in selected lower secondary schools from one of municipalities in

the centre of Greater Poland. The study involved 218 pupils from 1st, 2nd, and 3rd classes of three lower secondary schools (the population of these schools was 240 pupils). Studies were conducted during lessons, by teachers constantly working with pupils (Table 1).

In terms of methodological goals the study had two main objectives:

- pilot study of research approach – during this study we wanted to check whether and under what conditions the tool – relating to the life plans, but not referring directly to values – can be a useful way to study the value of lower secondary schools pupils;
- check the possibility of parallel application of quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis of the results. This objective was related to structure-based tool conclusion of the possibility of the use of tool (“Timeline”) in both – qualitative and quantitative – oriented research.

In terms of results study address the following research questions:

- What values (with reference to Rokeach’s concept) are reflected in descriptions of senior pupils plans for the near and distant future?
- Whether and how pupils of lower secondary schools are planning to carry out activities relating to materialistic values (according to the Inglehart’s approach) – work and consumerism, self-fulfillment, family life, but also values associated with environmental protection or action on behalf of others?

Pupils of lower secondary schools attending in one of the municipalities of the Greater Poland provinces were provided with the study. Because growing up in the country constitutes one of the crucial factors of inequality and developmental barriers (Strzemińska & Wiśnicka, 2010), studies are usually focused on the educational plans or aspirations or

Table 1
*Social-demographic features of respondents**

Town (school)	Class	Number	Sex		
			Female	Male	Unknown
A	1 (a and b)	26	10	9	7
	2	27	8	12	7
	3	18	5	8	5
B	1	23	6	14	3
	2	24	18	5	1
	3	12	10	2	0
C	1	21	9	10	2
	2 (a and b)	26	7	13	6
	3 (a and b)	41	12	17	12

Note. *Demographic surveys weren’t used in the study, the class was determined by the teacher, and sex based on pupils statements.

competence of young people living in the countryside (Długosz, 2012; Wasielewski, 2007; Domalewski, 2006). On the other hand because of the uniqueness of lower secondary schools and assigned to them (as a part of the reform in educational system), the task of leveling educational chances of young people from country areas and from cities (Herczyński & Sobotka, 2015) is a prerequisite for such comparative studies. Our study was focused on pupils from the countryside, checking their plans and values, which is quite unique and leads to indicate the specificity of rural youth intrinsically, but not disregarding urban youth.

The task of the surveyed pupils was to describe their plans for the future, with the target groupings in the ranges of 5, 10, 15 and 20 years. Thanks to this we indicate what are the most important objectives of young people, i.e. terminal values, autotelic (as Rokeach would say), but also how they perceive time perspective (ability or inability to think about their lives in 5, 10, 15 and 20 years). It was also possible to determine, to what extent their plans are real/unreal, and to what extent consequences of decisions taken are noticed. A developing issue about planned life is the subject of analysis in terms of consistency and concreteness in planned activities, and also the disclosure of sequences and consistency in value. From the point of view of the present analysis, these plans aren't analyzed in detail; the main purpose is to indicate the desirability of studied values by descriptions of senior pupil's practical plans.

The tool was a card that listed future perspective and indicated the main activity and categories of life, to which pupils were supposed to refer. A scheme of the tool is presented below. Referring to the methodological goals of the study it should be noted that according to the wording of the instructions, this tool ("Timeline") is suitable for use both in qualitative oriented and quantitative oriented research. In the case of qualitative orientation it is crucial to indicate the expectations of detailed narrative descriptions or planning a future

in-depth interview, in which a card filled by study participants is the starting point on interview (Table 2).

RESULTS

Due to the pilot nature of the study and, above all, the methodological purpose of it, the results were discussed primarily as an illustration of the tool's capabilities and basic ways of analysis possible during research. To show one of the important characteristics of this research tool we have analyzed both quantitative (e.g. counting event, an indication of the share plans crystallized) and qualitative (e.g. content analysis) approaches.

Taking into consideration, that young people are characterized usually by an immature personality and identity, and consequently with weak (but even) hierarchy of values, it seems interesting – as to how realistic are the practical plans of youth. On one pole we can find very specific plans, ordered and clarified. In this version pupils listed specific professions, such as: farmer, electromechanics; the place of residence as a specific locality or country, declarations of their intention to acquire a driving license or indicate the number and sex of their children. The second pole is a lack of practical plans with responses such as: "it will sort itself out", "life is not a myth", "I don't know". The most specific plans turn out to be those with the shortest time horizons, those for 5 years. Including education and profession, they constitute a point of departure for further intentions, but often not-clarified, described with statement like "work in accordance with educated profession". In contrast to the research of life plans conducted by Matyjas (2012), Dziwańska (2007, 2009), Boba and Michłowicz (2007), in the reporting tool we provide life plans for the long-term perspective (for 15 and 20 years). It transpired that the addition of this distant perspective gave interesting results. Interviewees reveal

Table 2

Questionnaire of practical plans

Timeline: Me in 5, 10, 15, 20 years			
– continuation of education			
– choice of school, direction			
– choice of profession			
– place of settling			
– family			
– lifestyle			
5 years	10 years	15 years	20 years

Note. Source: conducted research.

that only in the perspective of 15 years is detailed the description of work and family, and that only 15 years later do they begin to pursue their hobbies and dreams. On the other hand, the prospect of 20 years is often an abstract one, described as “probably I will be working and I will aspire to open own business” or associated with a declaration of being retired then.

Analysis of descriptions enables to determine to what extent and how young people are planning to carry out activities relating to work and consumption and to family life. These can be interpreted in the context of materialistic orientation, as values of deficiency. On the other hand we can find (or expect) descriptions related to activities connected with self-fulfillment, values associated with environmental protection and action on behalf of others – and these are, in turn, postmodern values, associated with the needs of development.

CAREER

In the area of work the first plans appear in the category of 5 and/or 10 years from specific answers: an indication of the profession, school profile, direction of studies, simple expressions of “continuation of education”, “selection of occupation”, “selection of school”. For 40% of pupils (87 indications to 218 responses) in a perspective of 5 years it is possible to recognize the plans associated with a specific profession, or by the direct pupil’s declaration of a given planed profession, or by the specific scope of school (Table 3).

Practical plans in the area of work are described also by such categories, as: “good job”, “work in accordance with competence”, “work in educated profession”, “well-paid job”.

The aforementioned statements reflect the orientation to a search for a specific occupation, whereas evaluation comments (“good job”, “high earner”) point to the materialistic orientation. Together they

highlight the pragmatic choice and it is clear not only among pupils who have indicated a specific profession but also many others. In a few cases, comments appear in statements that reveal values other than pragmatic-materialistic, which are the inspiration behind the selection of an occupation e.g. “to help animals”.

FAMILY

In the area of family, the plans are probably the most specified and appear for the first time in a perspective of 10 and 15 years – 45% of pupils refer to them (100 indications in this perspective), most often according to the paths: wedding, children (often determined number of children, sometimes sex) or a relationship without children and therefore a standard choice and in accordance with social norms (cf. Crockett & Bingham, 2000). Aspirations of pupils for having a family were expressed by sentences with evaluation: “to have a loving wife and two children”, “family (having children, happy family)”, “family of 4 persons: loving wife, good father”, “I would like to have a beautiful wife, children, I will take care of everything for my wife and children”.

Descriptions of the family include not only an indication of the respondents when they are planning to start a family and how many children to have, but also a determination on how to perform the role of father, mother, wife, husband: “to be a good wife”, “take care of everything”. It is worth noting that only in the case of the family appears a need to clarify the role, which may be an indicator of the validity of owning and being in a family in the lives of surveyed pupils.

SELF-FULFILLMENT

In turn, in the area of self-fulfillment, the plans appear only in a few statements in the perspective of

Table 3
Professions indicated by pupils

Profession/School Profile/Studies	Indication
Hairdresser, computer science	after 7
Gastronomy	6
Veterinarian	5
Mechanic, farmer	after 4
Constructor, economist, electromechanics, electrician, agricultural and car mechanic, bricklayer, soldier, CNC operator	after 3
Banking, cosmetology, pedagogy, carpenters	after 2
Administration, architect, journalist, pharmacy, photographer, lorry driver, footballer, law, printing, technician of machines and renewable energetics, pastry chef, media studies, medicine, editor, seminar, seller	after 1

5 years and are associated with the development of a hobby, whereas in the perspective of 15 years they are more likely to be formulated as more concrete plans, including:

- fulfilling dreams: “to make my dreams come true, which as a child was unfulfilled, to be a happy, enjoy every moment”, “I will fulfill my dreams from teenage years”,
- travelling with the family, all over the world, but also more specifically: “to Papua New Guinea”, “to Paris”, “to go on trips every year”,
- physical activity and health (practicing sport, running and dance, active lifestyle).

Amongst the statements, in the area of self-fulfillment plans contain references to gaining independence, to be spontaneous, to enjoy life, to party (“do crazy things”), to use every moment in the best way (tour the world), to lead a quiet life, but also to lead a good life (“morning coffee, and evening sex”), “to be fulfilled professionally”, but also directed to other people (“I would like to be a volunteer, to help other”).

Interestingly obtained data can be interpreted both in the sense of post-materialistic orientation (like in Inglehart’s concept) and materialistic orientation (according to the concept of Zawadzka) that is, as the pursuit of pleasure or a life full of experiences.

PRACTICAL PLANS AND VALUES

In conclusion: what image of pupils, from the perspective of value, is drawn from this study?

Work or education is perceived instrumentally – education is used to get a good job and good remuneration, rarely a manifestation of passion, aspiration to self-fulfillment or to help others. Practical plans in the area of work reflect the orientation to specific solutions related with seeking the profession, and evaluation comments indicate the materialistic orientation, and pressure is emphasized on the pragmatic choice of occupation. In a few cases, comments appear in statements that reveal pro-social values – altruism behind the selection of occupation. Therefore, pupils pragmatic approach to work... from one perspective is certainly a sign of the saturation of a mercenary and meritocratic approach towards career and earlier education. Pupils of the lower secondary schools, although they know little about professions they could perform (as evidenced by their limited list), they believe that education helps them to get a job and good earnings. Of course, not everyone is aware of such requirements and they posit unreal plans e.g. graduating law in Poland and taking a practice in the USA. However, viewed from another angle, this approach – in view of the conditions of the current labour market in Poland – seems both pragmatic and protective in that sense.

Plans relating to family life, leisure time or lifestyle show that it is only here pupils place their terminal values – in family life (watching children growing up, happy relationship), in travels and realization of dreams, but also in health. It is especially striking that for the implementation of youthful plans they set aside about 20 years, as if desiring to preserve the madness of youth.

Undoubtedly, the study reveals values, and that they are more hidden and do not create a relative importance i.e. their hierarchy. Descriptions of future life indicate both to terminal and instrumental values (Rokeach’s approach), so it reveals according to the pupils what will give their life meaning and what is sought.

CONCLUSIONS

The answer to the question “what are my values” or “what is most important in my life” is not simple. Sometimes it is given under the influence of someone (as a socially approved answer) or something (i.e. life situation) and without much hesitation, without reflection, and which proves to be a groundless and rootless declaration. It seems even more difficult when talking about the hierarchy of values. This issue affects people in general, not just the young. Therefore, the study of values did not directly through the aspirations and life goals seem a good approach to the diagnosis of values. Questions about life plans are a more natural situation. Spinning plans reveals important situations, events and goals – is therefore a source of source of self-reflexivity, which allows to discover their own value system.

Taking into consideration the problems of quantitative research of the value of using different kinds of questionnaires (e.g. Rokeach, Schwartz, CBOS), associated with the abstract and declarative character of answers described in this text, and while referring to the aforementioned researchers Matyjas (2012), Boba and Michlowicz (2007) or Dziwańska (2007, 2009), we performed the study not directly through the life plans of young people but by using a new research tool. This in turn raises questions about the adequacy of applied approach – which on the one hand, indirectly and implicitly refers to values, whilst on the other – is clearly structured as a research tool. We are not able to demonstrate the statistical reliability of the tool, because we cannot calculate the appropriate indicators (Cronbach α) because the procedures of test-retest (the study has a pilot character), and we are not able to compare our results with the results of the measurement using another validated tool. However, it is possible to verify its quality through construct validity and content validity. Below we will try to show that “Timeline” can be an interesting alternative tool used in value research, indicating its strengths

and weaknesses. Research with the use of a questionnaire of practical plans enables us to maintain the repetitiveness of procedures and which is undoubtedly the strength of this approach. Depending on the quantitative or qualitative nature of the planned analyses there should be placed more or less emphasis on the expansion of narrative expression. The use of the mixed analysis is a further advantage of the proposed tool. At the same time this possibility can be assessed as a weakness given the difficulty of interpreting the results without deepening the interviewees. Therefore, it seems that the real improvement of the procedure of the in-direct study of values is continuing the research by carrying out individual interviews. In the scenario of such in-depth interviews the card filled by the respondent should be treated as the starting point (anchor). On the one hand, it has the effect of rooting and structuring of expression, on the other hand – gives the possibility of further knowledge of their meaning and interpretation of the test. But in case of lack of time or other obstacles to conducting individual in-depth interviews, it is worthwhile to include in the lesson plan focused group discussions about life plans – similarly using filled cards as the starting point. Projection techniques would help to reveal some of the ideas for future. A weakness of the approach can also be the procedure of conducted research. In the scope of conducting research – much depends on the introduction before the study. Schemes in results of individual classes reveals that: if the teacher implemented categories differently from the questionnaire (work, profession, family...) e.g. as “writing them down between years” or as “use of all in each category, i.e. in 5, 10, 15 and 20 years” pupils filled up cards in a different way. A good solution would be to introduce more detailed instruction, and even the script of lesson. The teacher or researcher would have sufficient time to provide information to the subject of future planning, identifying and formulating objectives, connections of personal and professional objectives, and to instruction.

A weaknesses, and at least a potentially problematic part of the procedure includes the encoding of data. In the quantitative approach, it is worthwhile to show that the opening structure of the questionnaire causes a bit of a problem in encoding data. It is relatively easy to encode specific responses (in a type of profession or place of residence). But implementing the encoding of the entire story about planned life – in terms of consistency and concreteness in planned activities, also disclosure of sequences and consistency in value – would require at least cross-encoding in order to keep a due reliability and accuracy.

In conclusion it should be noted that despite some difficulties encountered during leading analysis, the in-direct study of values performed using the tool “Timeline” leads to interesting and valuable results, revealing a hidden area of pupils values.

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