TOWARDS A *SUI GENERIS* SYSTEMIC THEORY: THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL SPIRAL OF SENSE. A STUDY IN ARGENTINA APPLIED TO IDENTITY AND PROFESSIONALIZATION (PART 1)

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Abstract

This article introduces a new theory called "Towards a Systemic *Sui Generis* Paradigm: The Three Dimensional Spiral of Sense Theory" applied to Identity and Professionalization". The epistemological mainstays of the theory are stressed here, a theory supported by more than 30 years of empirical research at CONICET (National Council of Scientific Research, Argentina), with individuals belonging to different populations, some of them covering periods of over 20 years (intra-generational studies), and others covering three generations in-line (inter-generational studies). This article presents the most specific theoretical frameworks – which are common to the research to be dealt with –, and it formulates the five disciplinary areas in which the new analysis of the social data was carried out: Education, Health, Science, Media, International Relations and Interculturality. After that, the firs area – Education – is dealt with through different levels (secondary level, tertiary level, University and PhD training), and some research is presented in each case in which, briefly, the theoretical frame, objectives, hypothesis/questions, variables/dimensions, material and methods, results and discussion are shown. Article 2 deals with the same, regarding the other four disciplinary areas. It shows the interpretation of results and a conclusion, from which the mainstays of this research clearly arise *in vivo*, i.e., from reference research works. It should be pointed out that, among the selected reference research works, some are comparative studies with European countries, others with Latin-American countries. The methodology used was quantitative (statistical analysis, a semi-structured survey) but mainly qualitative (lexicometric analysis, hierarchical evocations, interviews). The approach was macro-micro-meso-macro, micro, not quite common yet. It consists of a kind of *sui generis* systemicism which recovers relationships (links, back and forth) between individuals and contexts, without overlooking neither the former nor the latter, thus, avoiding any type of reductionism. Individuals, organizations and frameworks interplay and feedback themselves. The results, particularly the qualitative ones, show the rich interactions underlying the continuance or innovation processes, which favor or hinder the individuals' development and identity in times of abrupt change; at the same time, these results reveal the need for Professionalization in emerging countries. All that aiming at continuous improvement.

Key Words: Systemic *Sui Generis* Paradigm, The Theory of the Three-Dimensional Spiral of Sense, Identity, Professionalization

1. General Introduction: Epistemological Support

This theory or, if someone prefers, pre-theory is the result or synthesis of the principal research works done within the CONICET (National Council of Scientific Research) and since 1995 the Argentine Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

My scientific career had two stages. The first one dealt with the problem of socio-professional Mobility in relation with Education. It developed within the field of Educational Sociology, and it is just mentioned here for it already bore the germ of the central ideas expanded in later research (and detailed analysis at HDR 2007 a and b). On the contrary, the second stage, developed since 1995 along the lines of Social, Labor and Organizational Psychology, and its core issue was Achievement at University and at Work, and their mutual sustained interaction. My interest grew stronger, particularly in relation with the analysis of the impact (explanatory/quantitative level) and comprehension (qualitative level) of the psychosocial factors on achievement within the context of the international patterns related to Quality Assessment at University in its connection with the scientific and productive systems (for a case reference, see Aparicio, 2014 b). It should be noticed that the prevailing criteria for quality assessment are efficiency, political effectiveness, efficacy and relevance. However, due to the difficulties regarding the interactive analysis of the answers provided by the university system to the needs of the socio-productive and scientific world, this last criterion – the core issue in our studies – was mostly overlooked at the international level.

It should be mentioned here that this Assessment was started late in Argentina, in 1995, when the University Quality, combined with context, is first considered a priority. University polices emphasize the need to reach systemic analyses. However, Assessment comes down to figures, statistics, diagnoses, inputs and ouputs, but the human processes, which lie at the base of such figures, remain unknown in the Argentine system and, more globally, within the international framework, as it has been commonly pointed out literature until these days. As regards this issue, since the publication of *L'inégalité des chances* (1973), translated by Aparicio (1983), R. Boudon, one of the methodological mainstays in my research, despite our differences, urges us to work on this kind of patterns, which in 2004 were yet nonexistent, as he himself stated in one of his latest works.

It was a challenge to implement a systemic analysis of the factor with an impact on achievement at the macro level, and of the impact of the macro or micro organizational contexts on the individuals. My research is oriented in that direction, i.e., towards the search for a more holistic and comprehensive approach to analyze the "mechanisms" and/or factors that, when acting interactively, anticipate the achievement in three levels or dimensions:

psycho-individual, meso-institutional/organizational and macro. Such approach will let us surpass diagnosis and identify the interplay between the macro cosmos and the micro cosmos; a kind of resourceful play, such as the one between the individual, culture and society. In other words, our perspective aims at the comprehension of macro and meso organizational results and deals with the micro psychological and meso-institutional processes.

This new approach, which will reveal itself in the scientific production of 2005 and 2006, comprises explanation and comprehension, quantitative and qualitative methodology, macro-micro-macro strategy analysis, processes and results, diachronic and synchronic and retrospective and prospective analyses, transdiscipline. It also includes factors of different kinds which interact and transform mutually into a self-ecosystem.

My theory is inspired by R. Boudon's ideas, yet it separates from his methodological individualism: I work with "real" individuals, not with "ideal-types"; my field is Social/Educational Psychology, not Economic Sociology; I apply the quantitative methodology, which is aimed at explaining, but also qualitative, aimed at comprehending; I use different tools which are techniques from both methodologies; my perspective is in line with a kind of *sui generis* Systemism[1].

These theoretical-epistemological mainstays are presented here in this brief Introduction with the purpose of making results reading and interpretation easier[2].

I cannot retrace a long history or the core issues of the many research works (central or peripheral) developed. Nor can I make an inventory of the theories designed (particularly, in the field of Sociology, Social Psychology, Education and related disciplines), or expand on the complementarity of certain micro-theories and/or factors which have been dealt with in literature in an isolated way, thus, overlooking the semi-dependence and semi-autonomy typical of the social and human phenomena.

On the contrary, I am definitely interested in emphasizing some key point on the method and other aspects related to underlying principles.

As regards the empirical models, they are open-circuit models which include, at least, five factors: base, psychosocial, pedagogical/institutional, organizational and structural factors. They offer a double way, or "back and forth movement" between the individual and the

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[1] Other differences can be observed in Aparicio, 2005 a. My research develops around three levels: the macro level, the micro-institutional/ organizational level and the micro level, which has to do with the individuals with their own psychology and their own "contextualized" history/career.

[2] Scientific development of over 30 years and its prospective for the following 15 years can be seen at HDR, 2007a and b. It should be stated that HDR (Habilitation à diriger des recherches in France), is the synthesis of the original aspects of a 20-year research work, and its defense-dissertation qualifies for Professorship in Europe and to coordinate research programs.

(institutional or macro) context with positive and negative effects on the individuals and the institutions.

It is important to point out that central research, dealing with complementary disciplinary areas and which are at the base of this theory, were carried out on populations covering two decades and also, the first studies were intergenerational[3].

This broad time and space coverage of the research regarding "academic-professional careers" – 20 years in the lives of two universities – and broad also as regards university graduates' and students' predecessors – three generations: grandparents, parents and university students – let us analyze the meso/micro relation (organizations and individuals) within the "framework" of singular, family and group (cohorts) careers with remarkable differences at the macro social, economic and political level in Argentina.

In fact, working with large populations let us, on the one hand, determine the differences among the older university graduats' careers, who enter University in a different moment of our history, a time of prosperity in which they could realize their needs for achievement, their ambitions better than the previous recent graduates, who found themselves within a context of unprecedented institutional and economic crisis. The "back and forth" of the individual/structure system appears very clear (macro/micro level). On the other hand, working in the same organizational contexts, yet with data gathered from different historical, economic, social, educational moments, let us observe better the strong presence or weight of the macro level over the meso-organizational and micro levels as regards professional insertion and promotion (mobility) and many other variables which we cannot deal with now. The different environments, then, leave their imprint on the individual careers.

The temporality (time) factor played a fundamental role regarding the possibility to observe the "back and forth movements" on the system with different consequences[4]. Moreover, it was a decisive factor in order to grasp the movements and self-sustaince loops between the three levels or dimensions of our theory, which would have been impossible had we not had small samples or worked only at one synchronic level, leaving aside the diachronic level. Besides, due to the combined methodologies and techniques applied, we could relive each of the actors' past, go over their history, with all that it involves, analyze their socio-

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[3] The first world study was made on three generations in line, 1977-1980. Large populations: As can be seen in some research presented here, we worked with very diverse populations: individuals who entered University since 1980/1985 (18 study-courses at UNCuyo (Cuyo National University) and 5 Engineering study-courses at UTN (National University of Technology) and, among them, some got their degree; others delayed their studies and another group dropped out studies . Others were developed with researchers, teacher researchers, doctors, university, tertiary level and secondary school teachers, organizations of the Judicial System (magistrates), university graduates working exclusively for the State, etc.

[4] See Aparicio, 2005 a and 2009 c. In this work, "Temporality" and its impact on professional achievement and associated careers take up a full chapter.

professional situation at the time of our research, their projection for the future, their goals, ambitions, frustrations; their positions whether or not accompanied by recognition, their identity strategies in order to face difficulties…

This, also let us gradually reveal the sense underlying human actions, organisations decisions and even at the macro political structural level; these decisions are not always "innocent", with consequences coming over the actors, the organizations and even the country itself.

The base of this theory or pre-theory – which took me over 30 years of study and research –, is rooted in the search for sense of "social functioning". This "functioning" does not leave aside individuals nor the mediate context nor the immediate context in which they are inserted.

Past, present and future appeared in interweaving, showing "back and forth" movements, negative effects, and, mainly, the power of culture and socialization within the heart of such self-sustenance (Aparicio 2005 a ; 2007 a and b, 2009 a and b).

The CONICET helped us reveal the differences and similarities according to factors, times and spaces and reach higher levels of generalization and higher levels of depth. From here, after years of research, emerged the mainstays which I now present in theses lines and summarize, even at the risk of simplification, my perspective, its stages, its transformations, and it theoretical-methodological issues, revealing a unit in dynamic and interactive " metamorphosis".

After analyzing this dynamic interplay in three levels (macro, meso and micro), which is called three-dimensional spiral of sense, and how to nterpret this self-sustanance in different fields through the research works which have been by way of example–, finally, we will present a short Interpretation of results which we have referring to along the two articles and a Conclusion.

Let us stop for a moment in two core theoretical frameworks related to our research works.

1.1. About Professionalization and Identity

We are now to make reference to Professionalization matters (or better, lack of Professionalization) and its impact on personal and professional Identity, although findings are not limited to it (Silva & Aparicio, 2015 b). Other issues are dealt with since:

a) They inspired, and hence, deal with the research the author has been doing since 1995. As I previously pointed out, at the bottom there lie the worries about certain aspects inherent in the institutional policies and systems which have been affecting, during the last years, the possible performance of the individuals and their professional "future". Why it is so obvious:

only when we are aware of the reasons underlying them, could we improve the systems in terms of Quality (micro, meso and macro level). b) Career path, like identity, is in my opinion, a meeting place between a certain history, a biography, and the relational/structural level. That is, a context favoring or impairing the realization of different levels (Dubar, 1991; Aparicio, 2009 f). In fact, all identities are interwoven between the individual "the others" (a system – or systems and an organization – or organizations – recognizing or not, and compel the individual to develop "surviving" identity strategies (Goffman, 1963), given the gap between what is desired and what is imposed/denied; due to the existence of mechanisms (often times these mechanisms are far from necessities, disregarding relevance or response to the contextual needs, in spite of being this one of the mail criterions to assess organizational quality,…) We will later refer to these aspects when dealing with Professionalization.

c) Identities are not shaped from nothingness but from institutions (family, school, business, etc.). The interplay of individuals, institutional and macro contexts is shown clearly.

Let us now analyze some issues.

The issue of Professionalization has been analyzed by some research carried out with different populations (university graduates, drop-outs, students who take longer to complete their studies, teachers, etc.), covering 20 years of existence of different courses of study at Cuyo National University (UNCuyo) (see Aparicio 2014 a).

We have worked on two core issues: identity related to professionalization in the field of formation, and professional insertion.

Professionalization has been source of long debate since the 80s (Lang, 1999). On the one hand, the effects of "overcrowding" in higher education (Bourdoncle & Demailly, 1998) has emphasized the need to consolidate certain competences and sets of knowledge essential for professional practice and its corollary, social recognition of professional groups (Bourdoncle, 1993). The professionalization of individuals (training on an existing field) or of the activities (construction and/or redefinition of new profiles of an existing profession) demands the implementation of new mechanisms. On the other hand, as regards this research, the conditions of professional practice in the working world have changed, and professional insertion as well as duration and promotion represent a complex problem with a variety of variables.

Briefly: the quick changes within the professional world demand innovative transformations in training institutions and consolidation of new competences valued by the market. All that could influence on professional and institutional identity updating.

There are many institutional efforts which have not always been accepted. In the specific field of training, the new professionals encounter various difficulties, in addition to lack of recognition. Some authors even speak of de-professionalization of those graduates on this field, and they are left behind into a process of "proletarianization" (Ozga & Lawn, 1981). There exist other problems: "semi-professional" status in a broad sense (Etzioni, 1969), the devaluation of the graduate's image in the field of education (training) along with an ever growing weakening (burnout) (Tardiff & Lessard 1999); Maroy 2006; Aparicio, 2006 a, 2006 b, 2007 a, 2007 b, 2009 a, 2009 b, 2009 c, 2013 a). In general, considering the existing literature, it can be said that there is a certain tension between the area of work and the area of training, as well as between the expectations at the moment of vocational choice and the actual experience in the professional environment; also, between the "ideal" situation expected by the PhD students and the real one of the PhD graduates; between the representation of the doctors and their world experience. Is there an identity crisis as regards the deep changes in the labor market and as regards expectations? (Goffman, 1963). Is there certain overprescription in the institutions to respond to the changes in the labor market along with underprescription in the means used to such response, as it is usually said? Within this framework, the links between the personal training experience and the professional life become a source of concern in the field of training and, especially, in the studies related to humanities and social sciences.

Besides, this issue involving institutional and even disciplinary identities, as well as the identity reconstruction processes, is accompanied, as it has just been said, by actual insertion conditions, duration and professional mobility; all of them will have an impact on professional careers (Dubar 1991, 2000 a, b and c).

Identity crisis as a result of deep changes within the market is clearly shown in the perspectives the engineers have as regards their professional future. There appear two concepts of socialization and identity. Regarding the identifications or identity "official/virtual" identity forms (Goffman, 1963: 57 and 12), arising from labeling and from the stereotypes attributed by others (identification through others), we find the "subjective identifications". On the other hand, regarding the relational socialization of the interacting actors ("through others" identities), we find the "biographical socialization of the actors who are engaged in a social performance" ("per se" identities) (Dubar, 1991, 2000ª; 2000b and 2000c; Dubet & Martucelli, 1996 a and 1996 b).

As far as we are concerned, both concepts of socialization and both types of identity become crucial in order to understand the situation of these individuals affected by difficult contexts;

these individuals must correlate the official or prescriptive aspect with the subjective one (in which they not always succeed), the day-to-day facet and the stereotypes.

Identity is, then, the result of a history and a certain time marked by specific characteristics. Within this frame, professional practice is shown as a privileged means of professional socialization. The factors inherent in "inherited" or "per se" identities are of great interest since the latter will produce identity crises affecting both the individuals and the schooling institution these individuals are part of: the prevalent conditions nowadays evidence widespread discomfort (Gelin, Rayou & Ria, 2007; Aparicio, 2013 a). All of which leads to the implementation of identity strategies.

Finally, we should give some thought to the identity aspect of the individuals; In fact, we consider that, along with the institutional issue – affected by the problem of uncertainty – Argentina there appears the existence of a favorable context to the identity crisis. Uncertainty prevails. To the institutionalization and Professionalization problems, still weak, it is added the social problem, subject to quick changes for which the individuals are not always ready, either from the personal point of view or regarding their education.

When considering all the changes in the conditions of university professionals' practices, it is interesting to carry out an interdisciplinary analysis of their situation from the educational and the psychosocial (expectations, pessimism/optimism, etc.) viewpoints and the impact of these new contexts on health and identity in view of improving the respective dynamic and interactive systems.

Two final words about this theme: Identity and Professionalization.

As regards Identity, we cannot expand any more at this point. We refer to our own work and other international literature (Aparicio, 2012 c; Lipiansky, 2008). There the reader will be able to find different form of identity (ethnic, professional, cultural, sexual,…); the different approaches – sometimes opposites – unity, decentration, essentialism vs. constructivism, difference vs. resistance); identity in terms of transaction. The processes related to Identity are also shown (individualization, identification, attribution and introjection, conservation, narcissism, realization); the most prominent perspectives (behaviorism, genetic, clinical, social and psychosocial views…); perspectives associated to cultural anthropology, to symbolic interactionism, to phenomenology, to systemism). Identity appears in the interweaving of history, biography and relations, it always involves an "alter" – other – who may or may not recognize, may or may not accept. Related to this, different identity strategies

are used to deal with new, unexpected and bewildering situations; these strategies were found "in vivo" in the accounts of individuals in complementary research.

Finally, since this a central line, when dealing with each research work, we will refer to other authors, the Founding Fathers (Dubar, Martucelli, Dubet, among others).

As regards Professionalization, as is widely known, it affects people, job positions, professions, groups, and from it comes the so called Professionalism. There usually exist different approaches to the issue. Kaddouri (2008) makes reference to the institutional and collective projects carried out by some groups and lead to professionalism, and personal projects, i.e., originated as an individual initiative. Once again, we can see here our levels, at least, the micro and meso levels. These projects have different levels of development according to areas, countries, etc.

When the personal project comes into conflict with the institutional one, a gap is produced, along with tensions and the implementation of identity strategies.

These strategies are made out of a set acts and discourses aiming at reducing the distance between different projects, between identity "per se/inherited" and identity "through others" And precisely, Professionalization involves the "of oneself over oneself" project, which expresses personal identity, and the "of others over oneself" project (which expresses the project others have regarding an individual).

As Kaddouri says (2008:149) Professionalization has 2 purposes: acquiring collective capacities, previously dealt with by Bourdoncle & Demailly (1998), and internalizing cultural and professional rules (autonomy, polyvalence, team work). Thus, those who are responsible within the labor market try the individuals to identify themselves with the aims of the company and get involved with the identity model the company follows. However, conflict often arises between the personal and the collective projects and the individual hast to resort to identity strategies.

Professionalization may, in fact, encourage transformation regarding those identities that have been injured due to a break between the internalized and the imposed models; it may encourage a change of one or more identity components (specializing and polyspecializing professionalization). It may also encourage to keep the existing dynamic identity, for the individuals are satisfied with their job, i.e., the aim is to consolidate identity and to keep/consolidate competences. A successful transaction can be reached between the personal and the institutional projects. The threatened identity can also be confirmed. This occurs in individuals with little or a lack of social recognition (whether because they do not have the necessary competences, or due to absence of updating, etc.). In short, we find transforming identity

strategies when a change of profession is needed because there is a broad gap between the inherited and expected identities, maintenance), attempting reaffirmation in view of threat, and reconstruction. In all cases, Professionalization tends to reduce the gap; this gap is smaller in some cases than others.

Finally, it is difficult to find the link with the burnout syndrome, marked by a ball in the expectations within wearing-out environments: precisely here is where Professionalization becomes essential as regards personal and professional achievement as well as organizational improvement itself.

1.2. Theories of Achievement

There are various causes related to achievement / failure, and in addition to this problem there is the unambiguity of the term "failure": the definitions refer to different aspects, such as poor performance, course repetition, drop-out, poor education quality, school maladjustment, etc. Failure is also linked to physiological, psychobiological and family background factors.

Achievement Related Approaches: Studies by Cabrera and Nora (1994), offer five broad categories to classify the approaches related to dropout and retention, considering whether the emphasis assigned to the core explanatory variables falls on personal, family, or institutional factors. We can identify five approaches: psychological, sociological, economic, organizational and interactionist, which are supported by empirical research.

As regards the psychological approach, the pioneers Fishbeim & Ajzen (1975) put the emphasis on the role of attitudes, beliefs, and behavioral intentions with respect to achievement. Later on add the role of perseverance, perception of obstacles during studies, goal relevance, their ambitions and expectations in view of the fulfillment of their objectives (Lévy-Leboyer, 1971). As regards the sociological approach of academic achievement, the French School has made important contributions since the 70's, especially from cultural reproductivism (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970) and hyperculturalisms with their wide range of perspectives (Bernstein, 1965).

The economicist models put the emphasis on the cost-benefit ratio students observe between their investments on education and what they expect to obtain from it within the labor market (Becker, 1964; Mingat & Rasera, 1981; Lévy-Garboua 1976, 1977; Jarousse, 1984; Aparicio, 2007 a and b).

Finally, the organizational approaches emphasize the opportunities provided by the institutions in terms of extra-curricular offers, sports, academic support, bibliographical resources, laboratories, internships, tutoring, etc. (Corman, Barr & Caputo, 1992).

Along this line, different models show the impulse of adaptation to university life and acceptance of the fashion or "identity" each institution presents; the role of engagement and positive interactions among students and with teachers, as well as the role of perspective, which, as stated by Tinto (1975, 1987, 1993), exhibits an individual side and an academic

one. Nevertheless, Tinto is one of the principal writers about this subject and particularly about the causes of drop-out. (This relationship between socio-academic inclusion and retention has been also observed in studies with representative samples at the national level in the US (Astin, 1991; Horn, 1998; Leppel, 2002; Thompson, 1990; Tinto, 1998) and in studies on a single institution (Eaton & Bean, 1995; Thomas, 2000).

Bean, 1980; Bean & Metzner, 1985 adds the persistence factor to Tinto's model on behavioral intentions within the business labor framework. He states that institutional (external) factors, such as the programs offered by a university or the interrelationship between students and teachers, may have an impact on the student's decision to endeavor to persevere. Satisfaction with the institutional offer could work in like manner. Therefore, we can see that focus is on organizational/institutional, environmental, and non-cognitive personal factors (ambitions, motivations, interests, etc.).

Later, other authors emphasize the influence of the socioeconomic factors. Pascarella (2001; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005) suggests, in turn, a model that combines institutional and environmental features, distinguishing five groups: 1) personal features (aptitudes, performance, personality, ambitions, and ethnicity); 2) structural and organizational factors (admission systems, selectivity); 3) environment; 4) interactions within university life; and 5) the quality of students' effort.

A more recent approach, the psychosocial approach, claims that it is necessary to test the relationship among motivation, social and institutional constructs. This implies considering academic goals, institutional performance, social support, tight bonds (one of the most relevant indicators of resilience), decision-making processes, among others.

We observe that the constructs, despite some differences, describe a series of coincidences, experiences and academic and social forces that could influence on the individuals, globally favoring persistence and completion of studies. In the foregoing methods, the general framework comprising the different components lies in academic and social involvement, i.e, as long as the students feel engaged (Astin 1985) or included within the academic and social systems of their respective institutions (Tinto, 1975, 1987, 1993).

Studies carried out in the US also show that the best predictors for graduation are academic training and students motivation (Adelman, 2004; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005)[5].

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[5] For more details, see Aparicio (2014 a).

Compared with the foregoing methods, ours integrate a variety of these factors grouped in the last two approaches: psychological and organizational (see especially Aparicio 2005 a, 2006 a and b; 2008 a and b). Some variables used in the afore mentioned models are incorporated and the impact of these variables on the subjective and objective achievement is analyzed based on quantitative methodologies and predictive models (Aparicio, 2005 a); on the other hand, in the light of qualitative methodologies, we intend to account for the origin and sense of this problem in the students' personal-professional experiences.

In this study**,** we deal, especially and always from a qualitative point of view, with the psychosocial aspects of the problem (processes leading to failure), and the institutional aspects, which have been observed in some typical practices identifying each course of study and, in a more global manner, the university. Both aspects are combined based on an integrating perspective without disregarding educational institution, nor the individuals and their sociocultural background (close and distant), nor the structural present context. However, the latter is part of our analysis only as a secondary aspect, whether from the viewpoint of degree devaluation in the labor world, or from the discontent students express (i.e., from their opinions as regards these poor institutional practices in relation to the higher demands of the labor market). All this has an impact on the perseverance and success in studies and employability). Individuals, institutions and macro-social contexts interweave in this analysis.

The meso-institutional and micro-personal levels within a structural background of crisis (underemployment, high unemployment rated, even for university graduates, etc.) are self-sustainable in this integrating and holistic perspective (Aparicio 2008 a, 2009 a and b, 2009 c, 2012 a, 2012 b). Here lies the uniqueness of our quantitative/qualitative *sui generis* model.

General Hypothesis: within achievement at university level there exist different factors: individual (objective and subjective), pedagogical, institutional and structural (labor market). Their interaction operates selection in higher education. Specific **Psychosocial Hypotheses**: a) Psychosocial factors (combine aspects of the individuals and their context) favor academic and/or work failure. b) Ambitions, expectations and n-Ach (need achievement) have a specific impact on the selection which operates before and during entering university as well as during the course of studies. c) These factors together with others (pessimism of perspectives, dissatisfaction, anomy, etc.) create achievement patterns which are different according to the courses of study, whether favoring achievement or not. d) All this benefits different institutional identities linked to biographical-contextual identities of the individuals.

2. Global Disciplinary Areas

Before developing this point, we should point out that, due to the extension of Article 1, it will be dealt with only within the Area Education, and it will be preceded by an **Introduction.**

Article 2 will cover an important number of areas: Health, Science, Media, Interculturality and International Policies, Cooperation and Relations.

1. Education, with special application to Professionalization and Identity: This issue is present in several research works, mentioned below within the Specific section (university graduate students, drop-outs, delayed students, students "retained" within the system and PhDs). The studies were carried out at different universities: Universidad Nacional de Cuyo (*Cuyo National University*) – UNCuyo –, Universidad Tecnológica Nacional (*National University of Technology*) – UTN –, and Universidad Austral (*Austral University*), all of them in Argentina. They have quite distinct profiles. Our research showed the differences and similarities related to the interaction of individuals, macrosocial/structural contexts and institutions. We finished the section about Education with research carried out at the Non-University Tertiary Level (i.e., studies with individuals studying at Teacher Training Institutes, INFD). The remaining areas will be dealt with in Article 2 in this issue.

2. Health: We have carried out several research works on the three mentioned levels. We will refer to studies done about *burnout* in different populations (some are cooperative studies) and Factors operating "para-choc" (measured quantitatively): Engagement, Well-being, Optimism, Pessimism, Resilience, Coping or strategies to cope with adversity (helping improvement and/or controlling it), attributive factors such as Alignment, Internality, application or motivational factors (2005 a, 2009 a and b, 2014 d[6]).

Among the qualitative dimensions, we can mention: Personal and Professional Expectations, N-ach/Ambitions, Sense of Effort and Engagement, Resilience (importance of building firm and solid bonds). Other aspects related to the importance of Professionalization appear here (teachers' support mechanisms, level of social and for-life competences formation beyond procedural and disciplinary competences, satisfaction – although not always related to economic aspects or hierarchical position, among other aspects) (Aparicio 2005 a; 2007 a and b; Aparicio & Cros, 2015 a).

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[6] For the sake of brevity, see the synthetic research by the author or the founding fathers.

3. Science: A very important study was carried out by university teachers who are also researcher on "Invisible Schools": schools referring to institutional and disciplinary identities (Crane, 1972; Aparicio, 2014 b)[7].The findings reveal the relation between Disciplinary Identity/identities (hard sciences vs. soft sciences, with their rules, values, etc.) and Institutional Identities in an unfavorable macro/structural context, all of which leads to a low level of Professional Satisfaction with consequences at the level of anomy, pessimism, etc. The three levels are again in their self-sustained interaction, in a relation of partial dependence and partial autonomy.

4. Media and Institutional Cultures: In this study, inspired by the *agenda-setting theory*, the micro/meso interplay is evident; i.e., personal identities getting feedback from institutional identities (Aparicio, 1995 b, 2005 b). Institutional homogenization is surprising and makes us rethink the role of the university in educating for the critical reading and filtering of the material the media provide as (Pasquier, 1994; Aparicio, 2013 b).

5. International Policies, Cooperation and Relations[8] : We will analyze a study about the impact of Food Allowance – a program implemented by international organizations – within the framework of the fight against hunger in an unpromising context which puts the Goals of the Millennium at risk. It is especially interesting to see how the quantitative variables and the qualitative dimensions appearing at the macro level (political and economic in particular) also occur at the meso level (regional) and, on the basis, at the micro level. The mainstays of the theory appear clearly again, although the areas and disciplines change since work is no longer on-site.

This disciplinary area interweaves with many others, especially, with axis-variables in Social, Community and Health Psychology and Psychosociology (field of research).

Professionalization does not play a direct role, although it does appear when dealing with improving the Management on the Matter, which has an impact on these International Programs and their quality.

6. Interculturality: It refers to a more recent issue in our context, although its roots come from long ago, in a history plagued with prejudices, stereotypes, discrimination against those who were different, against the others. All these aspects have often been concealed under words of "acceptance of diversity". Comparative studies from Argentina and other countries are

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[7] The Founding Fathers are referred thereto.

[8] The author was advisor in theoretical-methodological matters. See Santander Aparicio, 2012.

presented here, revealing personal and professional identities always interwoven between the individual and his/her immediate and macro context in a sustained interplay (See Aparicio, 2014 g, h, i, j).

3. Specific Fields of Application: A Research-Based Analysis

In this Article 1 we will deal exclusively with the *field of Education*, only mentioning the core points based on on-site works (Aparicio, 2013 a). We will follow this strategy, not so much because of the research itself, but in order to show how the mainstays of this theory interact.[9]

As regards Identity and Professionalization, they appear, as we will see, with special strength in the field of Education. This fact consolidates the theory within this domain, in which there are precedents dating back to many decades, even though the abovementioned mainstays are shown in other fields. Finally, it is important to anticipate that Professionalization and Identity have strong implications on practices and, globally, on personal and institutional achievement or failure levels, and deep down, on the macro system.

In Article 2 we will deal with other disciplinary areas.

3.1. University Degree Education

The research carried out in different private and public universities in several Argentine provinces involves professional, institutional and disciplinary Professionalization and Identity regarding their primary actors – teachers and students –, although sometimes Authorities and Officers of the Political/Educational and Labor area are also included. All these people are inserted within the issue of Institutional Quality (especially at university). The latter has been a core issue in the education agenda in Argentina and worldwide since the 90s. The system undergoes a radical change. The evaluation of the academic system in relation to the scientific and productive systems becomes dominant.

However, such Quality was by then only a matter of figures, inputs and outputs (graduation and drop-out rates, infrastructure, etc.). In 1995, the author is granted a scholarship to study the causes of drop-out in Argentine universities, and she decides to also work on the *processes* intervening in success, processes that often remain in a "black box"[10].

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[9] This scheme was presented at the Sherbrooke Conference, 2009 d and e.

[10] Dr. Aparicio obtained a national award for this research. Sponsor: University Policies Department (Secretaría de Políticas Universitarias, Argentina). At that time, dropout was quite extended (70%); nowadays, the figures do not show a significant improvement (Aparicio, 2007 a and b).

The population includes, at first, drop-outs, graduates and individuals who delay their studies (1980-2004); in a second moment, the research is carried out up to present days.

The purpose was not only to *explain* the factors whit an impact on the achievement of such population (issues of projects refer to as "core"), but also to understand the reasons underlying that population's behavior and the level of success achieved. Finally, we can observe how academic/professional success or failure and Professionalization impact on Identity and, in turns, how the inadequate Professionalization in our country impact on such levels of success, often times blocked, which derives in different Identity Typologies[11]. The self-sustaining movement – the links (back and forth movements) – appear as the result of this interplay.

3.1.1. Drop-outs: The role of the University in failure interacting with the societal context and individual factors[12]

Material and Methods: This study was carried out in two stages: 1980-1987 and 1988 until present. It involved a significant fieldwork: at-home tracking of over 3,000 drop-outs that entered UNCuyo from 1988 on in 18 different courses of study (Aproximately 30% of them were found in both instances).

Sample: Consisted of 445 individual. The sampling was stratified, random start and sistematic. The sampling error was of 4.4 and the confidence interval was of 95.5%. Many different professional life profiles were noticed, especially if we consider that, during such period of time, there were changes in the economic situation and the market, which made insertion, continuance and professional promotion more difficult. The Techniques**:** A semi-structuralized type of survey was used which involved different kinds of variables, covering a wide range (212 indicators). The qualitative techniques included interview.

Variables: There were grouped according to the components of the model: 1) core, psychosocial and objective determining factors; 2) pedagogical and institutional factors; 3) structural factors (work market). Operationalization implied statistic treatment (quantitative) and process analysis (qualitative). The psychosocial factors are dealt qualitatively. Some of the core variables are: Ambitions, Engagement, Value of a university degree, Pessimistic

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[11]In fact, we have often found broken identities, some in search of new means of realization, others under reconstruction, and we also found "satisfied" identities. The characteristics of such institutions and their internalization carried out by the individuals, many times lead to perpetuation of certain structures, their values and rules. These institutions, once internalized by the individuals, seem to come back over the systems and thus reaffirm the structures.

[12] For the theoretical framework, we refer to the Achievement Theories, mentioned above. We refer here to aspects analyzed in more detail at Aparicio (2014 a).

perspective, N-ach, Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction (personal or according to the University/Work), Expectations (personal, academic, at work). All of them provide a way to measure the sense of self-fulfillment, fatalism, instability, lack of regulations, etc.

Here we will make reference to the qualitative findings showing the interaction between the individuals and the Institutional cultures. At this stage, we choose to define the most relevant psychosocial aspects observed in individuals who abandon schooling as well as the influence that the demands from the work market and the answers given to such demands by Universities have on drop-outs.

Given the variety of relationships, we chose to present the results following two very distinct typologies which, although they are just implied in some existing literature, they captivated us and fall into the under the "consumption model" or "investment model".

According to the investment model, traditionally, the most prestigious courses of study – hard sciences or simple Sciences – which offer limited quotas for admission, or are more demanding as regards attendance and/or full time engagement, but which, in the medium or long term, lead to a more favorable position within the labor market, recruit individuals with different basic, cultural and personal features. In fact, the ones who choose those courses are individuals from high social strata, of lower ages in average, and have reached higher levels of success in secondary school; who belong to families with a higher cultural level and a better socioeconomic situation.

However, at the psychosocial level, they are more ambitious people, more secure, with definite and clear personal goals, committed to their career choice, which they have usually chosen according to their vocation. In addition, they are more self-demanding and more demanding to the institution, which, they think, provide inadequate training in researching and latest methodologies, the poor connection between curriculum contents and the demands from the labor market, etc.

Always, in the "investment" model, the recruitment is for more motivated and hardworking individuals. Although they choose longer and more difficult courses of study, they graduate sooner and in a higher proportion.

The opposite occurs with the individuals that choose less prestigious courses of study (connected to the "soft sciences", according to this typology); they often come from less privileged homes, sociocultural speaking, and have poorer competences and fewer skills during previous academic levels. Their psychosocial profile is clearly different from those within the previous typology as regards expectations, n-Ach, life project, adaptation, fatalism, apathy, dissatisfaction.

In addition, they had a very strong self-perception about degree devaluation and a negative self-perception as regards the offer of universities. Many had to study and work at the same time, and they evidenced less enthusiasm and perseverance on their studies.

These individuals drop out, although they choose objectively shorter and less expensive studies. Anyway, what is really interesting is that the relationship between the variables was never linear and, ultimately, the factors influencing such success or failure derive from the very human being; psychosocial individuals who make choices and decisions, take responsibilities or not, take commitments, have an identity, with or without ambitions, who believe in personal and social progress, think effort makes everything possible. The decisional / psychosocial factors proved to be significant in dropping out, although drop-out is usually attributed to specific economic factors.

Understanding this success-failure phenomenon demands recovering the individual and his/her environment, the micro, contextual- social, and institutional levels, for each course of study offers different profiles in terms of achievement. There exist, in addition, macro-social and institutional identities – carrying different histories – which interact with personal identities. Finally, the issue of professionalization shows its negative aspect, more precisely due to the almost absent organizational mechanisms and inadequate practices which are developed in order to help students' retention.

3.1.2. Graduates: Academic and Professional, an Interplay between Individuals, Organizations and Macro-Social Contexts Achievement[13]

We will now refer to some research carried out within the frame of University Quality Assessment with graduate students at the UTN (1987-2002). We should also point out that another important research work was performed at the UNCuyo (1980 until present). Because of their original characteristics, both works have inspired other studies, in Argentina and internationally, giving way to implementing improvement programs. Among such characteristics we can mention: a) broad time and space coverage; b) construction of *sui generis* systemic models which not only include *inputs* and *outputs* but also *psychosocial or "human" processes / social competences* (know how) which median institutional quality and the university students' achievement inside the market, which have been scarcely dealt with; periodization of the pertinence criterion or response on the part of the University to contextual needs as well as the impact of other extended criteria (efficiency and effectiveness); the incorporation of

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[13] See Aparicio (2005 a). There is a detailed study carried out at the UTN – National University of Technology – (methodology, procedures and findings at the quantitative a qualitative levels).

indicators related to University and the labor market, analyzed within their *sustained articulation* thanks to an option for a macro/meso/micro/macro strategy, which is unusual in the domain. The methodological option allows for the explanation of such "contextualized" achievements and for the comprehension of their roots; finally, we advance towards an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary framing on Quality Assessment.

These aspects will not be dealt with in detail for the sake of brevity (Aparicio, 2005 a; 2010 a). However, it is important to point out in relation to temporality, that coverage is broad – 20 years in the lives of two Universities in Argentina –; it is also broad as regards the predecessors of the students since the study covered three generations (the students, their parents and their grandparents). We could analyze the macro/meso/micro/macro relation based on real empirical referents, not on fictitious cohorts. This helped recover the dynamic interplay between the socio-economic and the cultural (macro social level) contexts, between the university organizations and the labor market (meso/micro institutional level), and the individuals who went to University (micro level) and reached different levels of achievement[14].

Material and Methods[15]**:** The model included core, socio-cultural, institutional (independent/intermediate) variables, with two independent variables: success at University per faculty/course of study (RU) and success in the labor market (RO). Five factors were developed in order to analyze the latter: Objective Professional Success, Career Rising Mobility, Subjective Success/Professional Satisfaction, Socio-Professional Status Achieved and Socio-Economic Level. Bivariate and multivariate (varimax rotation) kinds analysis were carried out. Other techniques were also used.[16] All this was accompanied by the application of qualitative techniques.

This analysis was performed in two moments: a static instance (causal lineal relation among the factors linked to the explanation of the "measurable" factors underlying achievement) and a *dynamic* instance, which is essential within our systemic *sui generis* approach, liked to the comprehension of factors in their feedback (positive or negative) within a *system*, resorting to interpretation that breaks with linearity: three-dimensional spirals of sense.

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[14] See   Aparicio, 2005 a.

[15] See Aparicio, 2005 a. It explains in detail the methodology, procedures and findings at the qualitative and quantitative levels, almost 900 p.

[16] Taking just two cases, in order to analyze Career Mobility, a summation index was developed with the help of different Human Resources in the companies which employ UTN graduates. In order to analyze the level of university achievement (RU) we turned, instead, to a combined index with indicators commonly used in evaluation systems: GPA, number of failing marks, number of passed exams, number of failed exams, continuance within the system or number of years taken to complete studies (Astin, 1993; Cabrera & Nora, 1994; Kuh & Hu, 2001; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005).

Results: We focused on the relation between excellence at University and the level of subjective and subjective achievement of the graduates in the labor market, within a framework of degree devaluation and job crisis. Regarding this, the *quantitative* approach reveals: a) core, socio-cultural, pedagogical, institutional and psychosocial values linked to the graduates' professional achievement; b) the clear gap between university education, university achievement (analyzed from the point of view of performance) and achievement in the labor market: c) the weight of psychosocial, communicational, relational factors, factors regarding the competences related to the "know-how-to-be" and "know-how-to-live-together" levels within achievement profiles; factors often overlooked by some research due to the operational difficulties they involve.[17] d) All this is certainly linked to a need for Professionalization and puts institutions to a challenge. Achievement is not only associated to the disciplinary level; on the contrary, learning mediated by the quality of human interactions, of interpersonal relations, and related aspects involving teachers and students which concern the area of social competences and some collective and management meta-competences. Disciplinary competences are no longer enough to ensure employability: it is necessary to activate all the skills (related to experience, action, know-how, methodological, procedural,…), and also the affective-emotional and cognitive aspects (knowledge in a broad sense). e) Finally, the results about some variables do not go in the same direction as the results obtained in France and the US.[18] f) The individual/context/individual relation appears clearly in expressions full of hopelessness and pessimism of the graduates (22% of the population of engineers were *unemployed*). Individual and structure: both interacting in a complex and multidimensional spectrum. Power of the "living system" (not just theoretical) and of "socialization" prevail.

Regarding this study, the results in several variables reveal, in addition, that the theories are valid at the "local" level, for they are not explanatory at all times nor in all contexts: the power of the socio-cultural and personality system" within their sustained interaction shows its weight.

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[17] *Psychosocial* factors (representations of the value of education and struggle – typical of the Argentine cultural "ethos" – regarding professional and university achievement, ambitions, alignment, competences to act in professional and social situations,…) revealed significant/predictive associations to *labor achievement* (RO) in the five factors dealt with above, but not to university achievement (RU).

On the contrary, the *socio-cultural* factors (graduates' cultural background, intergenerational educational mobility) predicted the highest *University Achievement* Levels (RU), but did not show any impact at the professional achievement level.

[18] Two examples: Social Background showed a very weak association as regards achievement with respect to marked prioritization of discourse. This leads to reformulating some supposedly international theories (hyperfunctionalists and hyperculturalists, Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970, Bernstein, 1965). As regards n-Ach (McClelland, 1961; Hagen, 1966 and the Functionalist School; Astin, 1985), they were not able to predict achievement within a framework of structural crisis. The author's *sui generis* systemic perspective reveals that ambitions were not enough, at that moment, to gain a place in the labor market, even less to develop professionally. Later at Aparicio, 2005 a.

There are no "recipes", there are "situated" responses in relation to each micro-organization and context (Boudon, 1973; 1977).

We should finally point out that the broad temporal coverage has let us see this feedback among the three systems, see that which identifies institutional cultures, how these cultures are internalized by the individuals inserted in these systems and how, from culture itself, they contribute to perpetuate structure or, on the contrary, to break with its patters and promote innovation.

This coverage, together with the methodological strategy that includes an instance of static analysis and another dynamic (system) instance, has led to: a) to grasp the differences among the oldest graduates who could access to University in a different moment of our history and who could materialize better their ambitions compared with the new graduates. The back and forth of the individual/structure system becomes evident here. The Macro/Micro Plan. b) Working in the same organizational contexts, yet with data from different historical, economic, social, and educational moments, has led to:

- Be aware of the importance of the macro level over the meso-institutional and micro levels, and at the same time, to see the impact of prosperous and unfavorable times in Argentina in relation to the psychosocial factors which have shown much influence.

- Working with different courses of study/disciplinary fields from the same institutional and/or disciplinary *context* (University, students, teachers and researchers populations) has led us to:

> - identify the differences at the levels of beliefs, ideologies, social competences, etc.
>
> - be aware of certain organizational and disciplinary homogenization as well as the power of the self-selection and institutional selection processes; all this has an impact on individual achievement and organizational quality.

3.1.3. Delayed Students. Professionalization, Identity and Institutional, Disciplinary Professional and Cultural Homogenization. A Study about Delayed University Students[19]

Introduction: This research work is part of the University Quality Program and its purpose was to make progress on professionalization and improve institutional quality. We also tried to go deeper into the causes and "reasons" for the delay in studies (quantitative and qualitative levels). This represents a problem at the institutional level (economic), but also at

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[19] Sponsored by the Rectorate of the UNCuyo, Mendoza, Argentina.

the personal level (frustration, stress, etc.), and finally, at the social level, for it has an impact on employability and the possibilities of national development and of innovations (as our and other research shows individuals with a university degree fits better into the labor market than those without one). This study involves, once more, the three levels in a self-sustained interplay within the *spiral of sense*. In order to outline some aspects of cultural-institutional and micro-cultural self-sustenance we will only make reference to qualitative results.

Material and Methods: We worked with cohorts from 6 Faculties at the UNCuyo (1987-2004), N=253 individuals (stratified and random start sampling). The method used was quantitative/qualitative. The variables included Academic Achievement (VD) vs. core, sociocultural, psychosocial and structural variables (See Aparicio, 2009 a, b).

Results: Here are some of the most relevant.

a) Contrary to what classical hyper-functionalist (Parsons, 1959, 1971) and hyper-culturalist (critical aspect, Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970) theories, the *psychosocial* variables applied – Resilience, Alignment, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation, Ambitions, Job Satisfaction, among others – were once more predictive of achievement, although in the media the economic variables associated to a disparity of opportunities are usually favored (Boudon, 1973, Aparicio 1978-2014). The case of sociocultural variables was different. The local validity of the theories, the self-sustenance movement among variables and the importance of decision-making factors appear again. Thus, those who are satisfied with their job decide to continue studying (delayed gratification theories, Lévy-Garboua, 1977).

b) From an applied point of view, delay in studies could diminish by means of support and intervention systems. This would lead to University Quality. The need to include Professionalization as a systematic and permanent instance in the system becomes evident.

c) At the qualitative level, the results reveal points of agreement and disagreement among the problems different Faculties and Courses of Study have for the sample of delayed students, true "institutional micro-worlds", with their characteristic strengths and weaknesses which do not come from nothing. They come from convergence of similar profiles among the students of the same course of study; i.e., the confluence of "personal micro-worlds".

Worlds of beliefs, expectations, values, "ideologies", demands, marked by different representations which appear in a differentiated way among the faculties and/or study courses and, at the same time, show a degree of consistency that surprised us. Institutional homogenization? Disciplinary, institutional identities? Perpetuation of the dominant culture?

In other words, this study revealed the core issues of the "contextualized" situation and different profiles according to micro-institutions without disregarding the individual actor, within a structural framework that presents serious problems associated to employment.

3.1.4. Retention at University: An Analysis of the Impact of Organizational Cultures[20]

Theoretical Framework: Achievement Related Approaches

We have identified five approaches in the framework: psychological, sociological, economic, organizational and interactionist, related to Achievement. We will not turn to them again. This research, although it includes factors of different kinds, intends to analyze the impact of the *organizational* approaches, which emphasize the opportunities provided by the institutions in terms of extra-curricular offers, sports, academic support, laboratories, tutoring, etc. (Corman, Barr & Caputo, 1992). Besides, they show the impact of adaptation to university life, the role of engagement and positive interactions among students and with teacher (Tinto, 1975). All this grants identity to the small micro-Institutions (Faculties and Study Course), which also impacts on retention.

In this study, we deal, especially and always from a qualitative point of view, with the psychosocial aspects of the problem (processes leading to dropout and going against retention), and the institutional aspects, which have been observed in some typical practices identifying each course of study and, in a more global manner, the university. Individuals, institutions and macro-social contexts interweave in this analysis (Aparicio 2008 a, 2009 b and c). Here lies the uniqueness of our quantitative/*qualitative sui generis* model.

Objective: Identifying effective organizational-educational practices which have a decisive impact on the continuance and graduation of students, with the purpose of designing a *quasi-*typology for each course of study.

Working Hypothesis**:** As regards retention and achievement at university (objective, from the point of view of performance, and subjective, from the point of view of satisfaction), the following play an key role in comprehension: a) psychosocial variables (effort, motivation, engagement); b) social competences (resilience, coping styles, cooperation and inclusion capacity, problem-solving skills,…); and c) effective organizational-educational practices, etc.).

Material and Methods: We worked with a simple from the UNCuyo, Mendoza (a very prestigious public University) and from the Universidad Austral, Buenos Aires (private and

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[20] Sponsored by the National Agency of Science, Argentina. See Aparicio, M. et al, 2014 e.

selective university), including teachers and students of the last year. This comparison leads us to the first conclusions as regards Identity, Professionalization and Quality.

Qualitative techniques: we included open questions at the end of the semi-structured survey so the individuals can express themselves freely, we carried out in-depth interviews and we interviewed key informants. A lexicometric analysis was then performed. Using these techniques helped determining the social self-perception/representation shared by students concerning the effective educational practices encouraged by the institution which could cause a higher degree of students' engagement and involvement in their studies, and therefore, in their success at university.

Results: a) At the psychosocial level, there appear dimensions, in the core of the shared representation, such as engagement and the ability to face difficulties (positive coping strategies). There also appears, in a significant manner, the sense of effort, clear goals and well-defined life projects, previous successful academic experiences, prevalence of search for personal fulfillment over other factors. b) At the organizational level, the students of each course of study revealed the strengths and weaknesses regarding administrative staff support, organizational quality, mechanisms of support, institutional consulting devices. Finally, reference was made to extra-curricular activities which strengthen the socio-emotional bonds and favor the consolidation of social competences (i.e., being able to act in specific "situations"); c) There appear different "institutional identities " according to their own rules and the population received by institutional selection processes and self-selection (personal and relational identities comprising different histories/biographies, different levels of expectations, values, representations, etc.), which, within the interplay of individual/organization/context, end up influencing on the students' continuance or drop-out. d) Identity appears through different typologies (upset people wishing to quit or change studies and/or institution); others, instead, focus on the institutional strengths and feel satisfied; others prefer not to answer; for fear? For alignment? Culture in the individuals and the individuals providing feedback to the institutional cultures. Interaction.

3.2. Post Grade University Education (PhD) Professional Careers: What is the future for PhDs?

Introduction: This research work is part of the issue of Professionalization (Lang, 1999; Bourdoncle 1993) associated to the issue of professional, personal, institutional and social identity, since this is a comparative study carried out in two countries with different tradition (See Part I. Introduction; Aparicio, 2009 f; 2014 c; Aparicio & Cros, 2015 a).

On the one hand, the market demands new competences and, therefore, new mechanisms from the institutions, as well as the effort of the individuals to support the changes. On the other, this leads to identity transformations and the implementation of identity strategies (Goffman, 1963) to deal with the difficulties posed by the new contexts and, related to that, there appears the need for professional recognition. This problem does not seem to be different for those who reached the highest academic level. (Dubar, *ops. cits*.)

Material and Methods: The quantitative-qualitative method was applied. This study refers only to the qualitative method.

Participants: Consisting of doctors in education at Universidad Nacional de Cuyo (National University of Cuyo, 2005-2009), and doctors under training in Adult Education at Cnam (National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts, France). Two research laboratories took part in this work: the Laboratorio de Investigaciones en Educación (Education Research Laboratory, Conicet/UNCuyo, Argentina and the CRF, Centre de Formation sur la Recherche, Cnam). It is expected to find different profiles according to the work/professional contexts in which they are situated together with the differences of the respective contexts in our country and with the contributions from the micro level: the problems, values and priorities appearing in the social representations shared by each of these groups. As we can see, this lets us see different institutional, personal and professional identities as well as different aspects along their professional career.

The samples of the groups included were significant, and also allow for a quantitative treatment of the data.

Materials: Quantitative and qualitative techniques were applied. We also used the "hierarchical evocation" and the lexicometric analysis techniques (See Aparicio & Cros, 2015 a) The latter allowed to show which representations are part of the "nucleus" of a doctoral training in each of the national groups, and which are their most evident differences and the ways they experience their professional practice according to their expectations.

Results: They were presented in two sections: quantitative (descriptive plan, correlational and explanatory) and qualitative. As we could observe, no obvious differences are noticed between the French and Argentine groups. Doctoral training is valued by both groups; that is, although the general idea is that PhD degrees are devaluated, subjectively, doctors are quite satisfied. Along this line, they expect improvements in their future work life, thus a positive view prevails. On the contrary, other graduates on education without a PhD degree do not show the same prospect. Briefly: doctoral education (Argentine) is still considered an "add-

on". The strongest claim against labor market lies on the lack of recognition, especially among the French doctors. Comparatively, the Argentine group has higher expectations as regards the degree. The "plafond" effect, evident in various developed countries, also appears in our research.

At the theoretical level, this research allowed to: a) show the differences and similarities shared by both groups of doctors recently inserted in the professional field: b) supervise the heuristic implications of some explanatory and comprehensive methods; c) go deeper into the relationship between higher education and occupational market from an interdisciplinary perspective, as well as into the transformations in the professional world, the new demands and their impact at the identity level. On fact, the study showed more accomplished "identities", other identities were blocked, and others were in search of some transformation.

3.3. Teachers in relation with Professionalization and Identity

3.3.1. About the History of Teachers' Training in Relation to Professionalization and Identity

As far as teachers' training, during the last years, Argentina has undergone deep transformations with positive aspects and with grey areas. In this presentation, I will: a) point out only a few relevant aspects at the macro level (socio-historical/political level) and meso-institutional (educational system) which converge in a *weakened identity* in the teachers' training system.[21] b) Present briefly some results of my own research (central and peripheral, 1980-2012) in order to, on the one hand, emphasize aspects associated to Professional Identity and to Professionalization, on the other, to highlight core epistemological aspects, appearing in publications dating back to 1978 but, in particular, since 2005 a, 2007 a and b, to which I already made reference at the beginning of this study. In those documents, there appear the theoretical-methodological mainstays of this theory, extended to different professional fields.

Several historical, political and administrative aspects have combined at the teachers' "weak identity" and their possibilities of self-fulfillment up to 2007, when INFD (Teachers' Training Institute) was created by the Law of National Education, N° 26.206), which will contribute to the consolidation of a weakened professional identity[22]. Among them we can mention: the diversification of the functions of teachers' training, the inadequate importance given to research, abrupt administrative changes (until 1988, training was part of high school – Normal Schools). In that year, such training falls under the administration of the Higher

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[21] For a more detailed see Aparicio 2012 b.

[22] See MECyT, INFD (2007). *Hacia un Acuerdo sobre la Institucionalidad del Sistema de Formación Docente en la Argentina*, ítem 14, p.16-17 ; the following pages make reference to the fundamentals.

Education National Board, until in 1994 the administration of education passes on to the jurisdiction of the provinces.

Such polices caused *visible* effects (transference, curriculum changes, institutional accreditation) and *invisible* ones (fragmentation of the system and the subsequent *lack of organic identity*).

Other factors have an influence on this weakened identity: the concept that teaching has a status of a semi-profession, a devalued image of the teacher, the ever-growing demands from the context which have turned the teachers into "social support", the characteristics of the new students teachers receive with which they not always can cope with, the gap between the "ideal teacher" and the "real teacher", or between the expected world at the moment of choosing careers and the everyday-life world. All this makes "sense" or not on the teacher's daily practices and professional life.

These problems, among others, reveal the renewed need for professionalization within the framework of Teachers' Trainers.

Regarding the general macro-meso institutional framework, and despite the advances introduced by the INFD at the micro level, the practicing teacher actually reveals a weakened identity. As we can see, the issue works at three levels. The social crisis has an impact on the organizational crisis and on teachers, who, in spite of being weakened, reinforce the lack of identity in their own institution and in the educational system.

Teachers need Professionalization to be strengthened in favor of a better Professionalism, thus, increasing the mechanisms and rules which contribute to that. That is shown by the research carried out as regards their profession, their strengths and weaknesses, among other aspects. It is also shown by the appearing "typologies", which disclose blocked identities in search of some change or even the abandonment of their profession, and finally, the identity strategies they use to cope with such situation due to the lack of recognition.

3.3.2. Teachers' Training, Professionalization and Identity: An Analysis Based on Own Research

We will make a brief reference to the author's research done at the educational level, in which there is a combination of epistemological basis, identity related matters, professionalization and professionalism.

3.3.2.1. International Research Works (INFD)

3.3.2.1.1. Teachers' Careers, Professionalization and Employability (Research Council, UNCuyo, Argentina, CIUNC / CONICET – National Council of Scientific Research, Argentina)

Brief Theoretical Frame: This research will analyze University teachers' careers, as well as those of teachers from institutes with similar training programs; careers influenced by history, a social imaginary, but also by context and the sudden changes undergone lately. All of that will make an impact both on teachers' identity and on their employability. The population will include teachers from different areas, levels, departments, provinces and from three foreign countries. Such variety will provide a chance to recognize status and contextual differences concerning job mobility (careers), objective levels of achievement and satisfaction, dominant representations, differences between expectations from the field and actual daily experiences. The model includes not only socio-cultural and base factors, but also – and particularly – psychosocial, organizational and structural factors.

In the present-day situation of the working world, such structural factors could influence both professional careers and personal development. Thus, continuing studies with a high regional and international impact are completed. The methodology employed will be quantitative (statistical, systemic analysis) but, mainly, qualitative (lexicometric analyses, hierarchical evocations, word associations and in-depth interviews). All of that will permit knowledge of the core problems existing in each Study Program itself (specific scenarios) and in its relation with the working world (core shared representations), as well as the differences between what was expected and what was actually achieved in the actors' prescribed and real world. A semi-structured survey will also be carried out, and a macro-micro-méso-macro strategy will be applied. Models of University and job achievements will be developed and –especially when dealing with qualitative analyses- profiles will be compared of shared representations among teachers from different disciplinary fields, aiming to contrast the emerging typologies and the validity of some models still present in speech. Another objective is to inform authorities who make decisions in the field of education about such results in order to implement programs tending to overcome problems which somehow hurt organizations today and which upset teachers in general.

Material and Methods

Sample: It includes newly graduated teachers (less that 5-year experience) and with little experience from private and public teacher training institutions from Paraguay, Spain and

Argentina: university degree teachers currently working at universities and at the tertiary level (INFD) or high school; so their representations and problems may change. It also includes teachers working with hard and soft sciences at universities and tertiary level institutes, who have studied at different times under different philosophies. The purpose is to compare different teachers' disciplinary identity profiles and identity strategies. These strategies are developed to cope with difficulties.

Results: The first results reveal different profiles of identity of the practicing teachers' (similar or different) social representations according to country, place of work, seniority, training stage (different as regards base philosophy as well as acquired competences), working environment (urban, rural and poor contexts), institution (private or public with a teacher selection process based on the institutional mission), among others.

3.3.2.1.2. Teachers' Careers, Professionalization and Employability. A French-Argentine Comparative Study on Teachers' Training "Maisons familiales" and other Institutions (CONICET and Université Lille 1, France)

This study develops along two core issues: Identity and Professionalization in the field of teachers' training and their professional insertion. The issue of Professionalization has already been presented and we will not deal with it again[23]. The important fact to remember here is that, from the results of this comparative study, we are aware of the need: a) to go deeper into the issue of Professionalization from all the possibilities it offers and, particularly, into competences (not only skills) development, which are nowadays requisite for the professional practice and to cope with new demands, conditions for professional practice, circumstances with an impact on the teacher's future, their expectations, , their representations and the depreciation of their image within the context. b) To work in order to implement new mechanisms along these lines and thus avoid identity breaks.

Within this framework, briefly outlined, the links among the personal, training and professional performances become an issue of focal worry. Our hypotheses were the following: a) there exists tension between what is professionally expected at the moment of start working and what has been achieved during the day-to-day practice. b) Some psychosocial factors in particular impact on the achievement level and on the feeling of achievement (satisfaction). Along this line, one of our purposes is to determine, precisely, which core variables (age, gender, etc.) and professional variables (Engagement, n-Ach,

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[23] In order not to extend this analysis, we refer to the articles of research works from CIREL-TRIGONE, Université Lille 1, laboratory to which the author is an Associated Researcher.

Resilience, Coping) have an impact on the teachers' dependent variable in the field of Education (Lille 1 and UNCuyo), as well as their representations regarding the value of education in favor of professional and personal recognition and development. There is feedback between the macro social level (2 counties with different idiosyncrasies and different professionalization levels), the meso-organizational level (intuitions related to the aims pursued, which also provide institutional identity) and the micro level associated to the individual, the last and, paradoxically, the first actor in the system, since, without them, the system would not exist.

Material and Methods: It was qualitative (interview, lexico-metric analysis).

Sample: We worked with Teachers' Tainting Institutes in Argentina and similar ones in France called "Maisons familiales", which receive students with different characteristics.

Results: We already have some results which permit to determine the factors associated to professional achievement and professionalization for each study course (two countries involved), as well as those factors consolidation or breaking their professional identities. This was achieved by comparing the representations associated to professional identity under the current "devaluation of the teaching career" and the widespread discomfort within the labor market.

We will then transfer the results hoping that they have an impact on the new policies and strategies that consolidate the teachers' identity, and also contribute to improve the institutions involved in the system.

3.3.2.1.3. Teachers' Careers, Professionalization and Identity. A French-Argentine Comparative Study on Teachers' Training (CONICET- National Council of Scientific Research, Argentina / Paris 8 University)

The **theoretical framework** is the same as the previous one. It is a French-Argentine comparative study, but this time, they are teacher working in Argentina (Mendoza) at the INFD, in urban, rural and poor areas, and teachers from Paris 8 University, working in similar conditions.

Regarding **methodology**, it goes along the same lines, with emphasis on the qualitative aspect. We use techniques that allow us to compare shared (social) representations from both groups concerning their needs, problems, strengths and weaknesses of their institutions and of their education, especially as regards training, support and guiding mechanisms, and globally

speaking professionalization mechanisms. In addition, we compare the core philosophies which have led to reform in France and Argentina with respect to teachers' training (it should be noticed that Argentina tried to follow the French model).

Results: They start to show similarities that refer to extended problems teachers share even though they belong to different countries. There are also differences, and above all, there is the influence of the macro-social aspect on the interpretation teachers and the media have regarding their problems (this is quite interesting from the point of view of our theory based on three interactive mainstays).[24] The self-sustenance of the three systems (core mainstays of our perspectives) has become evident, as well as the inter-presence of each of them in the others: what "hangs" in the air within the macro-social contexts in Argentina has been internalized by teachers and authorities. Also, the institutions regard the issue in terms of inclusion almost exclusively. Culture manifests itself inter-penetrating the different levels or spheres. The national, organizational/institutional and personal cultures self-sustain interactively. There appear terms like Hologramatic, inter-retroaction and others used by authors following the perspective of complexity, led by Edgar Morin (1991, 2005), although from a different *sui generis* anthropological perspective.

3.3.2.2. Research in Argentina (INFD)

3.3.2.2.1. Towards the Professionalization of Teachers and its Relation with *Identity/Identities. A Case Study with Teachers Belonging to the School System (INFD)*

There are many studies on this topic[25]. We will make a brief reference to another research work conducted by the author that shows clear self-sustenance at the three levels. It is part of a National Program (CAIE), funded by international organizations in order to detect the main problems affecting teachers (CAIE 2013).

Material and Methods: We studied almost 600 monographic papers written by teachers from all levels of the School System who work in urban, rural and poor areas in all the Argentina (Martínez & Aparicio, 2013). The teachers were asked to write about a problem situation in the classroom which, in their opinion, they had managed to solve and how they did it. The aim was to analyze the recurring practices and solutions (often times, as far as we could see, were symbolic and/or even illusive) in order to improve such practices by the

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[24]Thus, for example, during the last years, Argentina regards inclusion as a central policy. Inclusion and Exclusion, as well as all the issues they lead to, appear repeatedly, almost invasively. On the contrary, such issues have never been considered in France, even less in those terms.

[25] See Aparicio, 17 directed research projects within the National Program of Research for Researchers-Teachers, and 20 directed research projects at CONICET.

implementation of specific mechanisms. Professionalization and Professionalism increase was one of the objectives of the Program.

Techniques: We worked on a document analysis and content analysis. The nodes, the categories and subcategories in teachers of different levels (kindergarten, primary and secondary) of the system, in different kinds of institutions (public and private schools) and different contexts or areas (rural, urban, and poor areas), revealed very significant inter-penetration. The problems prioritized at each of these levels or contexts differed significantly and consistently from those prioritized at other levels or contexts. This revealed identities interwoven between the individuals, the institutions they belong to, and the sociocultural contexts[26]. From the operational point of view, it is a contribution to the design of teachers support mechanisms; from the epistemological point of view, there clearly appears self-sustenance among the macro-social cosmo vision, the school institutions cosmo vision (differentiated by the criteria mentioned above), and the teachers' cosmovision.

3.3.2.2.2 Other Studies at the Educational Level

It is impossible to refer to all of them or just a selection. There is a large number of studies. Nowadays, many projects are being developed in Argentina as well as internationally (Manaos University, Brasil).

Finally, research at the secondary school level has been done. Let us simply point out that the mainstays of the theory have also appeared. Individuals, institutions and contexts interplay in a self-sustained movement, as regards the internalized culture.

Article 2 deals with other disciplinary fields: Health, Media, Science, Interculturality, International Cooperation.

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[26] Thus, the relevance of context (more demanding and, very often, even dangerous, according to the teachers' representations) appear in this study in charge of A. Martínez, more strongly in the poor areas, if we consider the occurrence of the problems the teachers referred to in their papers. This coincides with the findings in other countries with which we worked on research, such as France.

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