

Leszek ŚWIECA

Jagiellonian University in Kraków
Faculty of Management and Social Communication

Jolanta PUŁKA

Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Kraków University

LEVEL AND DYNAMICS OF CHANGES OF ETHICAL STANDARDS IN THE PROCESS OF UNIVERSITY-LEVEL EDUCATION IN STUDENTS' PERCEPTION

Introduction

International studies on collectivism vs individualism show cultural differences existing in the individual nationalities in the scope of attitudes to others, recognised values, standards cultivated by specific communities, and ethical standards. These research attitudes and studies include the works of G. Hofstede and G. J. Hofstede,¹ who consider the collectivism – individualism phenomenon to be one of dimensions of culture, manifesting in human behaviour. Collectivists more often set group objectives above their own, emphasis more strongly the values that promote success of the group, and more often use the pronoun “we” than “I”. Individualists value autonomy, their own benefits and in social situations think in terms of “I”. The works of H. Markus and S. Kitayama² prove that Eastern culture is more often identified with the vision of collectivism (mostly Asian states), whereas the culture of the West (European states) with uniqueness, independence closer to individualism. On the background of other communities, Poland is perceived as a country with the dominant collective approach (Suh E. Diener, S. Oishi, H. Triandis),³ but with clear trends towards individualism, reported among the youth on the basis of their beliefs and values.⁴ The trends to “shifts” are also recorded by Breiner in a broader context, in a larger number of phenomena. The author says about it: (...) *from the society orientation to a more individualistic approach, from responsibility to the society to self-actualisation, from concentration on vocational work to concentration on consumption, from opening to people to pursuit of profit (...), from domination in social life of the categories of equality, justice and cooperation to exhibiting the meaning of freedom, possibilities and competition (...).*⁵

In our approach, we focus on the relationship of two ethics: collectivism and productivity with the level of university-level education, with perception of ethical nature of behaviour of their lecturers perceived by students. According to the

¹ G. Hofstede, *Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1) 2011, p. 8-11

² H. Markus, S. Kitayama, *Culture and the self: implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. Psychological Review* 1991, 98(2), p. 231

³ E. Suh, E. Diener, S. Oishi, H. Triandis, *The shifting basis of life satisfaction judgments across cultures: Emotions versus norms. "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology"*. 1998, 74, p. 485

⁴ A. Cybal-Michalska, *Spółeczeństwo przyszłości w wyobrażeniach młodzieży: indywidualistyczna vs. kolektywistyczna koncepcja społeczeństwa* (in:) Z. Melosik, B. Śliwerski (eds.): *Edukacja alternatywna w XXI wieku*. Kraków 2010, p. 315-333

⁵ Breiner, za: Z. Melosik, *Kultura popularna jako czynnik socjalizacji* (in:) Z. Kwieciński, B. Śliwerski (eds.): *Pedagogika. Podręcznik akademicki*, t. 2. Warszawa 2004, p. 83-84

definition of B. Wojcieszke,⁶ we assume the following understanding of the individual types of ethics and values that is regarded as dominant in their area.

Collectivistic ethics, for which the most important values are respect for the good, matters of the community, one's own group, maintaining integrity of the group, loyalty to the group, conformism. The ethics of productivity, which puts in the centre usability, effectiveness, diligence, thriftiness, delaying gratification, success.

Analysing the level and dynamics of the attitudes and values acquired by students during their education, we perceive the tendency to increase emphasis on the final result, the product. Education is beginning to be important as a service with the final result of winning the diploma, the certificate, qualifications. In the opinion of A. Buzgalin and A. Kolganov,⁷ the university is changing into the supermarket of knowledge. In our opinion, the need to develop in students high level of ethics and social responsibility is important. The process of education devoid of these values and ethical standards poses the risk of educating people who will be innovative, creative participants of social life, but they will lack mechanisms of mitigating anti-social behaviours. This paper presents the attempt to verify the section of the reality which is the space of university-level education of students in the context of ethical issues: ethics of collectivism and productivity.

Methodological aspects of the research

The presented theoretical grounds became the reason to initiate the study of ethical codes and the factors that differentiate it. We attempt in this paper to reply to the study problems that we have formulated in the form of questions:

What is the level of intensity of ethical codes (in the aspect of ethic of collectivist, ethic of productivity) in the process of education of students of pedagogy in Polish colleges/university in the context of the assumed results of education in pedagogy?

What is the level of intensity of ethical codes in the process of education of students of pedagogy in Polish colleges/university in terms of the level of education?

What differences may occur between the level of intensity of ethical codes and the students perception of ethical behave of their lecturers?

We have assumed the following hypotheses:

H1: The level of intensity of ethic of collectivist in students of pedagogy will be high according to the presumed effects of education in pedagogy.⁸

H2: The level of intensity of ethic of productivity in students of pedagogy will be high according to the presumed effects of education in pedagogy.⁹

⁶ B. Wojciszke, W. Baryła, *Potoczne rozumienie moralności: pięć kodów etycznych i narzędzie ich pomiaru*. „Przegląd Psychologiczny”. 2000, t. 43, nr 4, p. 395-421

⁷ A. Buzgalin, A. Kolganov, *Critical political economy: the 'marketcentric' model of economic theory must remain in the past—notes of the PostSoviet School of Critical Marxism*, “Cambridge Journal of Economics”. 2016, p. 594

⁸ Annexes to the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education: 4.11.2011r. (position: 1521), *Wzorcowe efekty kształcenia dla kierunku studiów Pedagogika studia pierwszego i drugiego stopnia*.

⁹ Ibidem

H3: On the basis of theoretical analyses, significant differences are expected in the level of intensity of ethic of collectivist in students of pedagogy between the average values in the compared groups, varied in terms of the level of education.

H4: On the basis of theoretical analyses, significant differences are expected in the level of intensity of ethic of productivity in students of pedagogy between the average values in the compared groups, varied in terms of the level of education.

H5: On the basis of theoretical analyses, significant differences are expected in the level of intensity of ethic of collectivist in students of pedagogy between the average values in the compared groups, varied in terms of the students perception of ethical behave their lecturers (in the declared assessment of the students).

H6: On the basis of theoretical analyses, significant differences are expected in the level of intensity of ethic of productivity in students of pedagogy between the average values in the compared groups, varied in terms of students perception of ethical behave their lecturers (in the declared assessment of the students).

These hypotheses determine the space of variables that we conventionally call:

Dependent variables:

X_1 (level of ethic of community). Indicator: the result obtained in the Ethics Questionnaire.

X_2 (level of ethic of productivity). Indicator: the result obtained in the Ethics Questionnaire.

Independent variables:

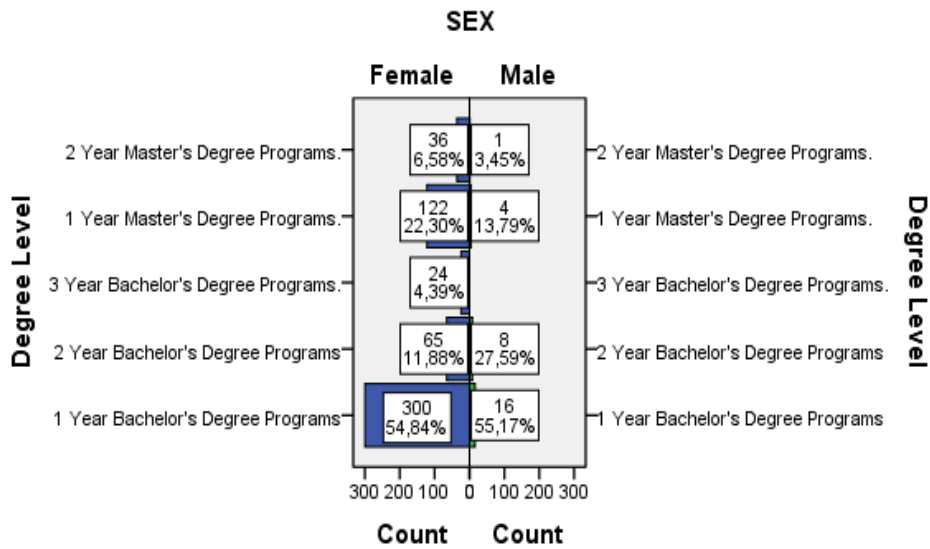
Y_1 – level of education. Indicator: the level of education declared in the questionnaire.

Y_2 – students perception of ethical behaviour of their lecturers. Indicator: the answer by the subject to the question in the questionnaire: What do you think, do your lecturers usually behave ethically? (categorisation of answers: yes 2, rather yes 1, neutral 0, rather no – 1, no – 2).

The study included students of universities and colleges from the area of the Silesian and Małopolskie voivodeships (sample $N = 577$).¹⁰ They were studying pedagogy, mostly women ($n = 547$). The study was conducted in 2015 and 2016. The sample was selected randomly. The data that take into consideration the level of the studies and the gender of the respondents are presented in the following chart (Fig. 1)

¹⁰ Not all respondents answered the question, which is why the number of respondents is given in each chart with the answers (n) to indicator questions.

Figure 1: Characteristics of the research sample (N=577)

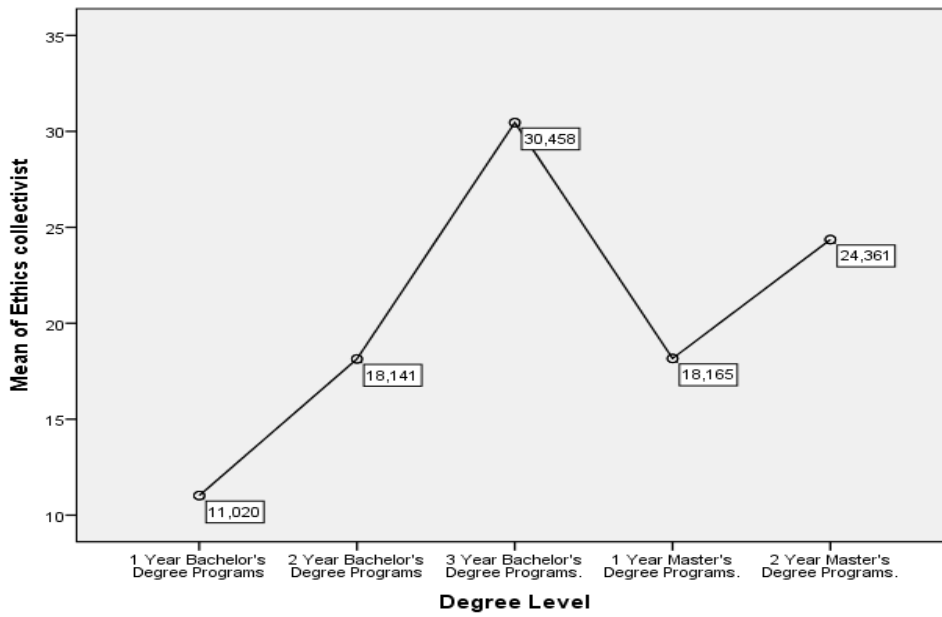


Source: own research, 2015-2016

Results

Ethic of collectivist

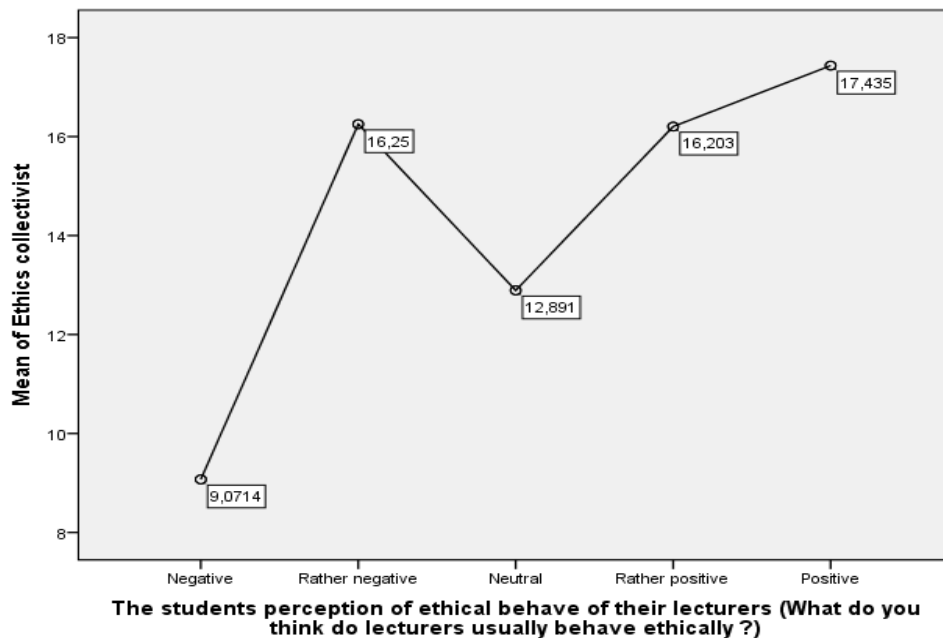
Figure 2: Ethic of collectivist and the level of education (n=548)



Source: own research, 2015-2016

The results of the student were in the range 11-30. On the basis of the obtained results, we can conclude about the low level of ethic of collectivist, because the maximum number of points in this scale was 60. Therefore, we reject the hypothesis H1 that the level of intensity of ethic of collectivist in students of pedagogy is high according to the presumed effects of education in pedagogy. To confirm the differences between the average values in the compared groups varied in terms of the level of education, the Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted as a nonparametric alternative to the one way ANOVA. The test was used to compare the average values whose distribution is not similar to normal distribution (the variables were tested with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test – the zero hypothesis about parametric distribution the variables was rejected). There was statistically significant difference between the ethics collectivist by degree level ($H(2)=53.296$, $p= .00$; $\eta_H^2= .089$), with a mean rang of 234.80 for 1 Year Bachelor's Degree Programs, 297.87 for 2 Year Bachelor's Degree Programs, 411.77 for 3 Year Bachelor's Degree Programs, 305.20 for 1 Year Master's Degree Programs, 360.10 for 2 Year Master's Degree Programs. Due to finding differences in the compared groups, the H3 test hypothesis is to be confirmed that the level of intensity of ethic of collectivist in students of pedagogy is statistically significantly varied by the level of education.

Figure 3: Ethic of collectivist and students perception of ethical behave of their lecturers (n = 463)

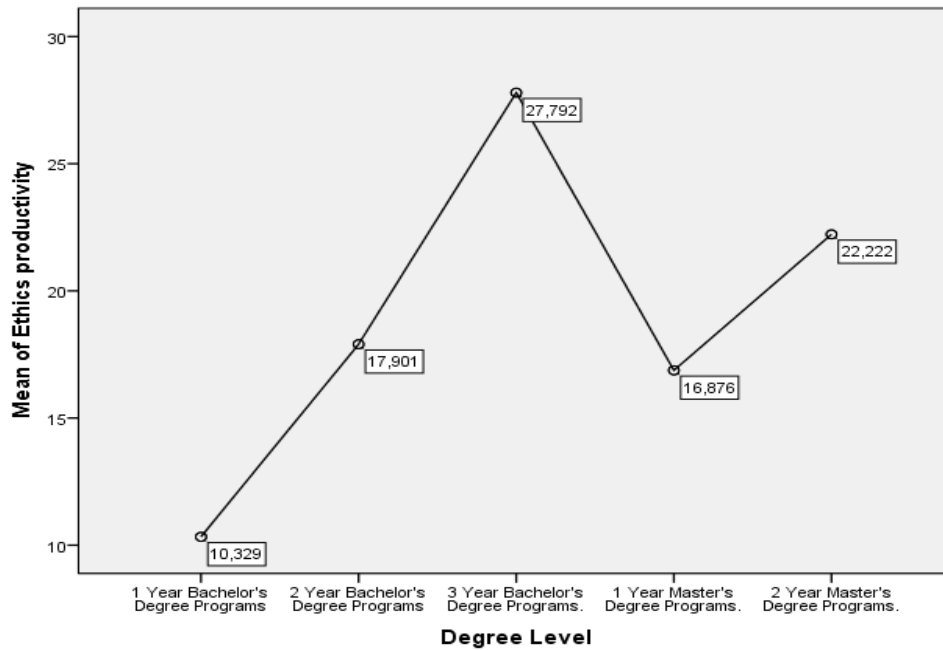


Source: own research, 2015-2016

To confirm the differences between the average values in the compared groups varied in terms of the level of education, the Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted as a nonparametric alternative to the one way ANOVA. The test was used to compare the average values whose distribution is not similar to normal distribution

(the variables were tested with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test – the zero hypothesis about parametric distribution the variables was rejected). There was no statistically significant difference between the Ethics collectivist by The students perception of ethical behave of their lecturers (What do you think do lecturers usually behave ethically?) ($H(2)=5.437$, $p= .245$; $\eta_H^2= .003$), with a mean rang of 173.82 for Negative, 243.79 for Rather negative, 214.84 for Neutral, 238.18 for Rather positive, 242,41 for Positive. Due to finding differences in the compared groups, the H5 test hypothesis is to be rejected that the level of intensity of ethic of collectivist in students of pedagogy is statistically significantly varied by the students perception of ethical behave of their lecturers.

Figure 4: Ethic of productivity and the level of education (n=550)

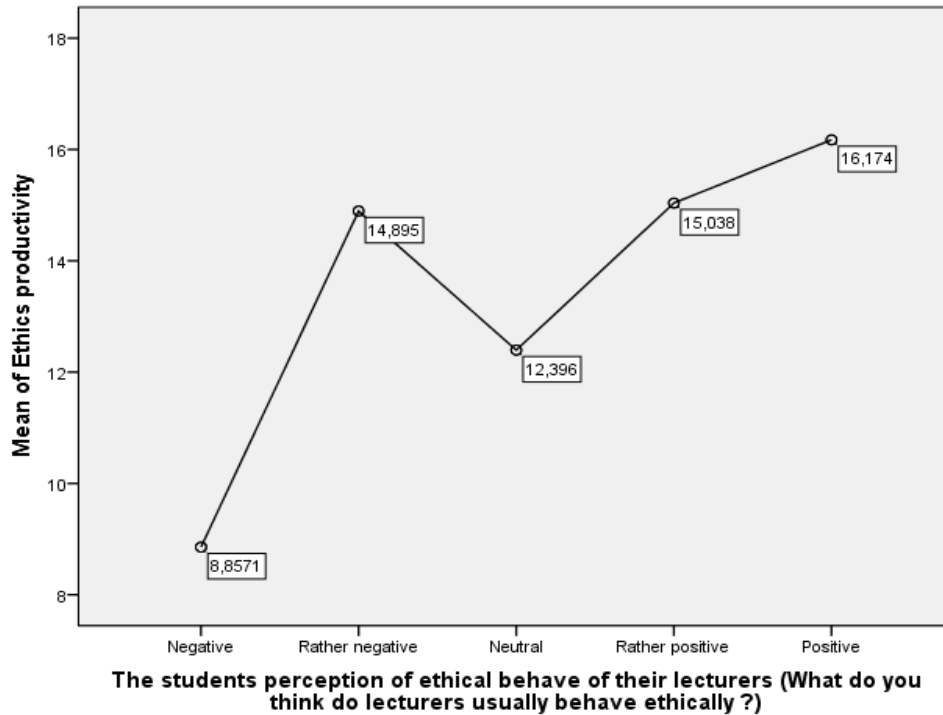


Source: own research, 2015-2016

The results of the student were in the range 10-28. On the basis of the obtained results, we can conclude about the low level of ethic of productivity, because the maximum number of points in this scale was 66. Therefore, we reject the hypothesis H2 that the level of intensity of ethic of productivity in students of pedagogy is high according to the presumed effects of education in pedagogy. To confirm the differences between the average values in the compared groups varied in terms of the level of education, the Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted as a nonparametric alternative to the one way ANOVA. The test was used to compare the average values whose distribution is not similar to normal distribution (the variables were tested with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test – the zero hypothesis about parametric distribution the variables was rejected). There was statistically significant difference between the ethics productivity by degree level ($H(2)=47.237$, $p= .00$; $\eta_H^2= .078$), with

a mean rang of 237.90 for 1 Year Bachelor's Degree Programs, 310.61 for 2 Year Bachelor's Degree Programs, 407.71 for 3 Year Bachelor's Degree Programs, 299.39 for 1 Year Master's Degree Programs, 349.04 for 2 Year Master's Degree Programs. Due to finding differences in the compared groups, the H4 test hypothesis is to be confirmed that the level of intensity of ethic of productivity in students of pedagogy is statistically significantly varied by the level of education.

Figure 5: Ethic of productivity and students perception of ethical behave of their lecturers (n = 465)



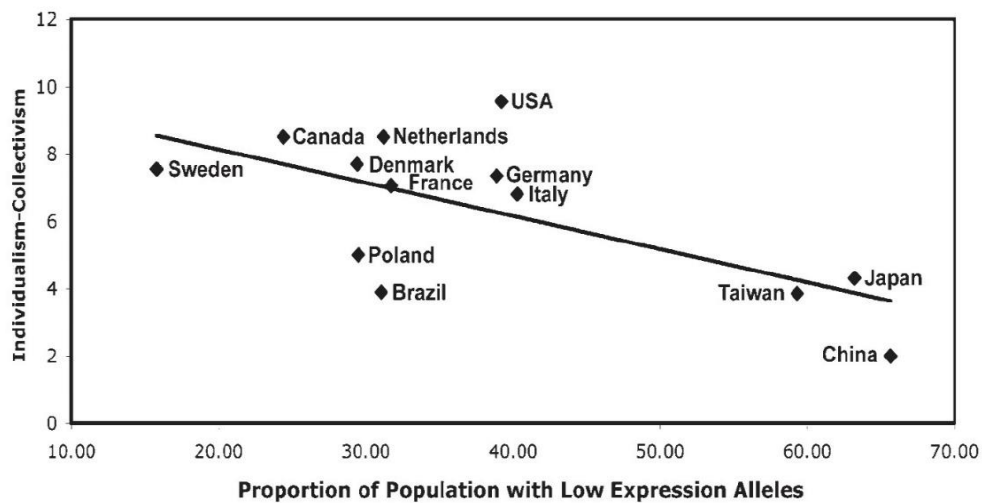
Source: own research, 2015-2016

To confirm the differences between the average values in the compared groups varied in terms of the level of education, the Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted as a nonparametric alternative to the one way ANOVA. The test was used to compare the average values whose distribution is not similar to normal distribution (the variables were tested with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test – the zero hypothesis about parametric distribution the variables was rejected). There was no statistically significant difference between the Ethics productivity by The students perception of ethical behave of their lecturers (What do you think do lecturers usually behave ethically?) ($H(2)=5.754$, $p= .218$; $\eta^2_{H^2}= .004$), with a mean rang of 166.43 for Negative, 237.79 for Rather negative, 217.76 for Neutral, 239.74 for Rather positive, 243,80 for Positive. Due to finding differences in the compared groups, the H6 test hypothesis is to be rejected that the level of intensity of ethic of productivity

in students of pedagogy is statistically significantly varied by the students perception of ethical behave of their lecturers.

Discussion

It follows from the research conducted that students have low results in the scope of knowledge and skills related to standards of ethical behaviour. Pondering about the causes of this situation, we also asked them about ethical theories and concepts learnt during their studies (an open question: “Do you know any currents of ethics and their principles? If yes, name them: ...”). With worry, we have discovered that none of the students was capable of stating currents in ethics, morality, which additionally confirmed our conviction about the necessity of paying more attention to this realm of education. If they do not have knowledge, they will not acquire the basic skill of critical analysis of ethical standards set in specific cultural circles. The results of the studies presented in the paper by Way and Lieberman¹¹ that place our society in the area of moderate level of individualism and collectivism show the importance of the role of the cultural aspect. The following chart presents the detailed data:



Source: Way, B. M., & Lieberman, M. D. (2010). Is there a genetic contribution to cultural differences? Collectivism, individualism and genetic markers of social sensitivity. *Social cognitive and affective neuroscience*, 5 (2-3), 203-211. Correlation between the proportion of the population with low expression alleles of the MAOA-uVNTR polymorphism and individualism-collectivism [Suh et al., 1998; $r(13) \frac{1}{4} 0.67$, $P < 0.05$]; higher scores represent greater individualism and lower collectivism.

One has also to remember that educated and creative people who have no principles of ethical behaviour may more easily surrender to others, may be manipulated towards unwanted, aversion-based social behaviours. Ethics in the course of university-level education should prevent this. Educating and fixing high

¹¹ B. M. Way, & M. D. Lieberman, *Is there a genetic contribution to cultural differences? Collectivism, individualism and genetic markers of social sensitivity*. *Social cognitive and affective neuroscience* 2010, 5(2-3), p. 207

ethical standards in persons aspiring to have higher education must be the essential element of the culture of our society. Considering the fact that the level of education is a variable that statistically significantly differentiates both ethics of collectivism and ethics of productivity, emphasising ethical content in the individual years of studies (the spiral curriculum) to have the best impact on this realm of sensitivity in students is worthwhile.

Summary

The results of our study showed that:

- the level of intensity of ethic of collectivist and ethic of productivity is low in students of pedagogy according to the presumed effects of education in pedagogy,
- the level of intensity of ethic of collectivist and ethic of productivity in students of pedagogy is statistically significantly varied by the level of education,
- the level of intensity of ethic of collectivist and ethic of productivity is not statistically significantly varied in terms of students perception of ethical behave of their lecturers.

Summary

The objective of the paper is presentation of the studies on the level and dynamics of ethical standards in students (in the context of ethics of collectivism and productivity) developed in the course of university-level education. The theoretical determinants of the studies was the concept of ethical codes by B. Wojcieszke and W. Baryła and the concept of dimensions of culture in the aspect of collectivism – individualism by G. Hofstede and G. J. Hofstede. The results of the studies show the low level of knowledge and skills acquired by students in the scope of ethics, lack of statistically significant differentiation in the scope of affecting with one's own example (behaviour) by academic teachers and statistically significant differentiation in the aspect of the relationship of ethics with the level of education of students in the individual years of studies.

Key words: ethic of collectivist, ethic of productivity, student – lecturer relationship, training process, dynamic of ethical standards

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest prezentacja badań poziomu i dynamiki standardów etycznych studentów (w kontekście etyki kolektywizmu i produktywności) kształtowanych w toku kształcenia uniwersyteckiego. Teoretycznymi wyznacznikami badań była koncepcja kodów etycznych B. Wojcieszke i W. Baryły oraz koncepcja wymiarów kultury w aspekcie kolektywizmu – indywidualizmu G. Hofstede i G. J. Hofstede'ów. Wyniki badań ukazują niski poziom wiedzy i umiejętności nabywanych przez studentów w zakresie etyki, brak różnicowań istotnych statystycznie w zakresie oddziaływania swoim przykładem (swoim zachowaniem) przez nauczycieli akademickich oraz istotne różnicowania statystyczne w aspekcie związku etyki z poziomem kształcenia studentów w poszczególnych latach studiów.

Słowa kluczowe: etyka kolektywistyczna, etyka produktywności, dynamika standardów etycznych studentów

Bibliography

1. Annexes to the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education: 4.11.2011r. (position: 1521), *Wzorcowe efekty kształcenia dla kierunku studiów Pedagogika studia pierwszego i drugiego stopnia*. 2011
2. Ash M. G. From 'Humboldt' to 'Bologna': History as discourse in higher education reform debates in German-speaking Europe. Education and the knowledge-based economy in Europe. Rotterdam/Taipei: Sense publishers 2008
3. Buzgalin A., Kolganov A., *Critical political economy: the 'marketcentric' model of economic theory must remain in the past—notes of the PostSoviet School of Critical Marxism*, "Cambridge Journal of Economics". 2016
4. Cahn S. M., Markie P. J., *Ethics: History, Theory, and, Contemporary Issues*. New York 2002
5. Cybal-Michalska A., *Spółeczeństwo przyszłości w wyobrażeniach młodzieży: indywidualistyczna vs. kolektywistyczna koncepcja społeczeństwa* (in:) Z. Melosik, B. Śliwerski (red.): *Edukacja alternatywna w XXI wieku*. Kraków 2010
6. Foray D., Lundvall B., *The knowledge-based economy: from the economics of knowledge to the learning economy. The economic impact of knowledge*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd. 1998
7. Hofstede G., Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2(1), <http://dx.doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>, 2011
8. Markus H., Kitayama S., *Culture and the self: implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation*. "Psychological Review". 1991, 98(2), 224-53
9. Melosik Z., *Kultura popularna jako czynnik socjalizacji* (in:) Z. Kwieciński, B. Śliwerski (eds.): *Pedagogika. Podręcznik akademicki*. Warszawa 2004, t. 2
10. Suh E., Diener E., Oishi S., Triandis H., *The shifting basis of life satisfaction judgments across cultures: Emotions versus norms*. "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology". 1998
11. Urban M., *Indywidualizm i kolektywizm w świadomości młodzieży*. Studium psychologiczno-politologiczne. Warszawa 2008
12. Way B. M., & Lieberman M. D., *Is there a genetic contribution to cultural differences? Collectivism, individualism and genetic markers of social sensitivity*. Social cognitive and affective neuroscience 2010
13. Wojciszke B., Baryła W., *Potoczne rozumienie moralności: pięć kodów etycznych i narzędzie ich pomiaru*. „Przegląd Psychologiczny”. 2000, t. 43, nr 4
14. Wojciszke B., *Multiple meanings of behavior: Construing actions in terms of competence or morality*, "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology". 1994, 67(2)