



Please cite the source as:

Hirsch, A. (2006). The construction of a state of knowledge on professional values in Mexico. *Revista Electrónica de Investigación Educativa*, 8 (2). Retrieved month day, year, from: <http://redie.ens.uabc.mx/vol8no2/contents-hirsch.html>

Revista Electrónica de Investigación Educativa

Vol. 8, No. 2, 2006

The Construction of a State of Knowledge on Professional Values in Mexico

Construcción de un estado de conocimiento sobre valores profesionales en México

Ana Hirsch Adler

hirsch@servidor.unam.mx

Instituto de Investigaciones sobre la Universidad y la Educación
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Edificio del IISUE, 3er. Piso
Centro Cultural Universitario
Delegación Coyoacán, 04510
México, D.F., México

(Received June 7, 2006; accepted for publishing August 13, 2006)

Abstract

This article presents the state of knowledge on professional values in Mexico and the elements that have allowed its construction, beginning in 2001. This is a meaningful, open-ended task, which grows as it is enriched by the addition of new-found research relevant to the study topic. There is described the process of the article's preparation, which took into account six types of resources: two anthologies from which were taken the chapters related to professional values; a state of knowledge produced by the Mexican Council of Educational Research, dedicated to research in this field; some articles from the online journal *Reencuentro's* special issue on ethics; an anthology on values and moral development in education; and research reports on professional ethics and graduate thesis, not included in the five publications mentioned above. The construction of states of knowledge is considered to be greatly useful for the discussion of new research projects, and for supporting the development for those in process.

Key words: Professional values, Mexico.

Resumen

Este artículo presenta un estado del conocimiento sobre valores profesionales en México y los elementos que permitieron su construcción desde 2001. Se trata de una tarea abierta y significativa, que se enriquece a medida que se localizan investigaciones relevantes en torno a la temática de estudio. Se describe el proceso para su elaboración, en el cual se tomaron en cuenta seis tipos de recursos: dos libros colectivos de los que se tomaron los capítulos relacionados con valores profesionales; un estado del conocimiento del Consejo Mexicano de Investigación Educativa, dedicado a la investigación en este campo; algunos artículos de un número monográfico sobre ética profesional en la revista *Reencuentro*; un libro colectivo sobre valores y desarrollo moral en la educación, y reportes de investigación sobre ética profesional y tesis de posgrado, que no están incluidos en los cinco rubros anteriores. La construcción de estados del conocimiento se considera de gran utilidad para el planteamiento de nuevos proyectos de investigación y para apoyar el desarrollo de los que se están llevando a cabo.

Palabras clave: Valores profesionales, México.

Introduction

The construction of a specific state of knowledge involves a continuous search for materials, primarily in the form of books, book chapters, articles in specialty journals (in print and online), and master's and doctoral thesis.

This effort gives priority to studies which have a theoretical and empirical basis (both quantitative and qualitative). The main obstacle is finding out what has been done, or what is being done (with a high degree of advancement) in the country in recent decades.

It starts out from the knowledge that although there have been contributions in every state in the country, these—especially graduate thesis—have not had sufficient distribution. Of such studies, we have found a significant number.

1. Construction phases

The state of knowledge has been developed gradually, taking into account six types of resources:

- 1) The anthology *Education and Values*, compiled by Hirsch (2001, 2005), and published in three volumes. The second tome includes various reports on professional values.
- 2) The state of knowledge concerning *Studies on University and Professional Values*, a result of the second campaign launched by the Mexican Council for Educational Research (COMIE*), which sought to develop states of knowledge on a wide range of educational topics. The object of these texts was to locate and analyze the research carried out in the country from 1990 to 2000. The work was done in committees/commissions between 2001 and 2002, and was published in book form in 2003.

One of the groups was the *Education, Values, and Human Rights Commission* which, in turn, subdivided the field of study into six working groups: values training in basic education; civic education; philosophical and theoretical aspects; research on university and professional values; Mexican education and values; and human rights.

Specifically, the team studying *research on university and professional values* (Hirsch, 2003a), located 53 research reports. The period covered was 1990 to 2001. The results were classified into eight areas: university values, professional values, professional ethics, university students' values, university faculty values, university students' psychological values; and values at the postgraduate level. Few studies were found on professional ethics, but some of those found are extremely relevant.

- 3) Ten chapters of the anthology *Professional Ethics and Institutional Identity* (Hirsch and López-Zavala, 2003b), which presents four themes: ethics and professional identity, institutional identity, university students' identity, and university teachers' identity.
- 4) Some articles on professional ethics, in the special issue of *Reencuentro. Analysis of University Problems*, published by the Metropolitan-Xochimilco Autonomous University (2005).

* For ease of reference, where the names of organizations have been translated from the Spanish, their acronyms have been retained as given in that language. In the case of international organizations which have commonly-used acronyms in English, those acronyms have been used.

- 5) A selection of 12 chapters of the anthology *Education, Values and Moral Development*, Volume 1, "Values of university students and faculty" (Hirsch, A. 2006).
- 6) Research reports on professional ethics, as well as master's and doctoral thesis completed and in progress, but not included in the other five areas.

II. First resource

The first resource used for this state of knowledge is the anthology compiled by Hirsch (2001), *Education and Values*, which includes a 16-chapter volume on academic and professional values. Generally speaking, these chapters allow us to conclude that:

- a) In recent years there has been a greater concern for research in the field of values, and for its relationship to education.
- b) This is a subject area under construction—one of enormous diversity, and which involves academics from different fields of knowledge, mostly the Social Sciences and Humanities; but also from other sciences: professional ethics and science education, for example.
- c) Much of the studies come from master's and doctoral thesis.
- d) There can be found a great wealth of selection in research problems, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, theoretical and methodological strategies, construction of specific states of knowledge, results and bibliographical and hemerographic compilation.

Regarding this volume of material concerning college and professional values I will specifically emphasize only two issues: 1) the social commitment of graduate students and those involved in social service*; and 2) professional values.

2.1. Social commitment of students, alumni and those contributing their social service

There are three chapters on this topic.

- a) The first is by Carlos Muñoz-Izquierdo and his work team from the Ibero-American University (UIA), Mexico City (Muñoz-Izquierdo, Rubio, Palomar and Márquez, 2005; and Muñoz-Izquierdo and Rubio, 1993). In it are presented three interconnected, pioneer studies of college graduates' values, as regarding their commitment to helping solve the problems of the socially disadvantaged.

* In Mexico, one of the requirements for receiving a degree is the donation of a specified number of hours of social work to the community in some specific and approved manner, situation and/or organization.

Two of these studies were done only in the UIA, while the other were done in five institutions of higher education, three public¹ and two private.²

In the first study, the authors applied a questionnaire to 706 graduates of the UIA, between 1981 and 1991.

In the second study, a comparison was made between the five universities, the sample was composed of 754 graduates, between 1992 and 1994. The five-institution study sample, and the UIA graduates were asked similar questions, as to what they would do with their free time and their additional financial resources should they find themselves in two hypothetical situations: 1) having twice their present amount of free time without a reduction in their income; and 2) having their income doubled, with no increase in their work hours.

The third study was proposed to find out the most important socialization agents for graduates. To make up the sample, there were selected those subjects who, according to their values profile, were located at both ends of a continuum, i.e. those who had a profile more focused on themselves (individualism) and those whose profile was focused more on service to others (solidarity). In the three papers it was concluded that there is a low proportion of qualities which reflect some interest in helping to solve society's majority-sector problems.

- b) The second case concerning this first issue is the one researched by Eduardo Arias-Castañeda and Manuel Armando Flores-Hernández (2005), of the Western Institute of Technology and Higher Learning (ITESO), dedicated to the institutional strategy of university social service. The work has to do with the organization of this activity relevant to the three sectors involved: the institution, the students, and the various receiving organizations in the state of Jalisco.
- c) The third and final is the study by Concepción del Rocío Vargas-Cortez (2005)³ on the formation of engineering students' social commitment at the Technological Institute of Toluca. This is an ethnographic study, conducted between 1997 and 1998, in which interviews were conducted with 36 students and 18 teachers from various engineering-degree programs. The author describes the technological emphasis on training, leaving aside the humanistic aspects and attitudes, as well as the development of social skills.

2.2. Professional values

On this topic, two papers are very significant:

- a) The first is that of Maribel Ríos-Everardo, of the Regional Center for Multidisciplinary Research, National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), and entitled "Values and the professional socialization of the UNAM nursing faculty" (Ríos, 2005, and Ríos, 2001). The author presents 12 life stories that allow us to look at the training and the professional career of UNAM

nurses/teachers in two of its three units: the National School of Nursing and Obstetrics, and the Iztacala School of Professional Studies, in their priority spaces, such as the family, the university and the hospitals.

- b) The other work is by Juan Lafarga-Corona, Irene Pérez-Fernández and Hanne Lore Schlüter-Sartorius (2005), of the UIA, Mexico City; the title is "Ethical values promoted by Mexican psychologists in the exercise of their profession." Irene Pérez-Fernández's PhD thesis (same title) extends this enormously significant effort (Pérez-Fernández, 1999). It provides important elements in terms of core values which psychologists say they exercise in the course of their work, how these are hierarchized, and what meaning they are given. In this thesis, Pérez-Fernández also presents the analysis of psychologists' various professional codes (at the national and international level) and a summary of the priority areas contained therein. In both cases, the great value of the research goes beyond concrete cases and specific disciplines.

III. Second resource

The second resource was the state of knowledge of the Mexican Council for Educational Research (COMIE), coordinated by Hirsch (2003a), and entitled *Research on University and Professional Values*, to produce which, there were reviewed 53 research reports (from 1990 to 2001). Most of these came from master's and doctoral thesis, and are divided into eight areas:

- a) University values (6 reports). The team that produced this COMIE state of knowledge concluded that the research reports:

...Make contributions to the knowledge of the institutions studied, contribute to the evaluation of results in higher education, allowed (in one case) the development of a model for promoting values and an essential debate on education policies in higher education (Hirsch, 2003a, p.1016 and 1017).

- b) Professional values (6 reports). Include four disciplines: Nursing, Ecology, Agronomy and Psychology. The importance of these reports is not confined to the disciplines under study. The issues addressed are: gender; scientific culture, and intellectual values; identity and professional socialization; moral values in professional training; and the conceptualizing and vision of professional practice. Concerning this theme it was considered that:

Among the possible contributions is the fact that this body of research has helped delineate professional values as a significant object of research. They provide knowledge and information on the importance of these values, both in training and in practice, to improve curriculums in institutions of higher education. Where no contributions were found, the team considered it necessary to perform this type of investigation in all the study programs offered in the country, and comparative research between the professional training projects of different local, regional, national and international institutions (Hirsch, 2003a, pp.1018-1019).

c) Professional ethics (4 reports). One of the reports is in the book *Education and Values* (Hirsch 2001), entitled “Ethical values promoted by Mexican psychologists in the exercise of their profession” (2005); it is by Juan Lafarga, Irene Pérez-Fernández and Hanne L. Schlüter. The second is the doctoral thesis of Irene Pérez-Fernández. Both are mentioned in the first paragraph of this paper. The third is an article on the subject of ethics in the country’s medical-school curriculums. The fourth is a report on ethical and scientific work at the Autonomous University of the State of Morelos. The team considered the area of professional ethics to be very important, and regarded educational research as just beginning to grow into a possible line of research.

d) Social commitment of students and alumni (9 reports). The Commission on Education, Values and Human Rights, within the team that produced the state of knowledge, concluded that:

Research located in this section provides important conceptual and methodological elements, in addition to the review of different types of values. The social commitment was of concern to the Jesuit University of Guadalajara / Ibero-American University (ITESO-UIA) system. “We consider it necessary as well, for this to be part of the research carried out by public universities. We must know the factors that impede the development of a strong social commitment, and of the liaison between corporate identity and university education (Hirsch, 2003a, p. 1021).

e) University students’ values (9 reports). This category covers the following topics: political culture; lists of values and their selection by students; students’ development of moral judgment and values regarding academic performance. According to the team responsible for this area of the COMIE state of knowledge:

It is important to point out that the study of values in university students is still at the most general level, and lacks in-depth research to provide data on the meaning given by college students to each of the values (...) It is essential to give continuity to this research field by means of inter-institutional research projects that would provide elements of understanding and involvement in integrated training (Hirsch, 2003a, pp. 1026 to 1027).

f) Students’ psychological factors and values (8 reports). This category includes work done by psychologists on issues related to political culture and university-undergraduate students. These are studies that used instruments pertaining to that discipline—quantitative in character, and aimed toward the validation of tools and concepts.

g) University teachers’ values (6 reports). Topics studied in this area were: values of those in the teaching profession; academic status; academic and intellectual preferences; microcultures of teacher trainers; ethics and values of access and teaching practice.

- h) Values in graduate school (5 reports). This category includes three themes: social commitment, students' values; and teachers' values. Regarding studies of this type, the team says, "Although there are only a few, they are of enormous importance for understanding that level, since most research on values in higher education has to do with BA and BS programs" (Hirsch, 2003a, p. 1031).

IV. Third resource

The anthology *Professional Ethics and Institutional Identity*, compiled by Hirsch and Lopez-Zavala (2003b), is divided into four areas: ethics and professional identity, institutional identity, student identity and university teachers' identity.

- a) On the subject of the book's first theme, in the case of Mexico, there are presented advances in:

- A research project on professional ethics by Ana Hirsch (Hirsch, 2003c).
- A subproject of Guadalupe Ibarra's doctoral thesis in Education, on the values of scientists and ecologists trained at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), (Ibarra, 2003).

- b) Concerning the second issue, institutional identity, and in connection with the area of academic and professional values, the book includes a chapter by Ana Esther Escalante-Ferrer and Luz Marina Ibarra-Urbe, of the Autonomous University of the State of Morelos, about alumni of their East Campus (Escalante and Ibarra, 2003).

- c) As to the third theme, the identity of college students, there are two very important works:

- That of Barbara Kepowicz-Malinowska (2005), entitled "Identity and professional ethics in college students. The investigation of three curriculums at the University of Guanajuato"; studied are the professions of chemical engineering, CPA, and International Business. The work begins with the supposition that university training emphasizes disciplinary preparation, but does not give enough support to the construction of identity in its ethical dimension. The author has found serious problems regarding the professional identity of university students and their low expectations a propos the labor market.
- Then there is the solid-gold work of Guadalupe Chávez-González, "Values and value-related trends in the students of the School of Philosophy and Letters of the Autonomous University of Nuevo Leon" (Chávez, 2003), which is a subproject of a book (Chávez, Charles and Benavides, 2003). This paper presents the results of research on the seven curriculums of the

school mentioned in its title. Among its objectives is the study of the identity of the school and the university. Unlike Barbara Kepowicz's research, the results of this study mark the students' strong identification with the disciplines they are studying, and with their school.

Although there are interesting differences between these two works, both are of great significance in the investigation of students' identity. An interesting recommendation would be (although it would be a huge task) to promote such research in all academic disciplines in institutions of higher education. It would be equally significant to share and compare processes and results between universities.

d) The fourth and final theme of this book, *Professional Ethics and Corporate Identity*, is the identity of teachers, on which there are five papers:

- "Ethics of the academic profession in the global age", by Rodrigo López-Zavala. It exemplifies the theme with the cases of the Autonomous University of Sinaloa and the University of the West (also in Sinaloa), in an investigation of how teachers are seen, and how they see themselves in facing the challenge offered by knowledge (López-Zavala, 2003).
- "Identity tensions and professional *ethos*. The case of the teacher of civics and training in ethics", by Maria Teresa Yurén-Camarena (Yurén, 2003, a), part of a larger research report (Yurén, 2003, b). This work presents the tensions that led to the introduction of a Civics Training and Ethics course at the junior-high-school level, in the State of Morelos, and the way this affected the teachers' professional *ethos*. The author builds an interesting typology, with six categories that relate the behavior of teachers with the types of instruction and the ways they face the task of promoting the acquisition of practical knowledge. It is a comprehensive and relevant study, which would be of immense use in the study of this subject in every state of the nation, and which provides basic elements through which to approach teachers' identity.
- "School microcontexts: genesis of teachers' professional identity and ethics", by Andrés Moisés González-Loyola, Pedro Torres-Félix, and Santiago Zúñiga-Barrón (2003a and 2003b). In this work, there were studied the behaviors, beliefs and values that shape the construction and reconstruction ethics of teachers and students, especially the identity and the significant features of the teachers' professional ethics. This is a magnificent ethnographic study allowing the construction of categories, which present, with great originality, the information obtained.

As shown in these last two reports (b and c) knowledge is constructed from the development of explanatory categories

- “Normal schools: responsibility and ethics of change”, by Medardo Tapia-Uribe (Tapia, 2003); it explores educational change in the normal school, and the authors’ responsibility in the process. For this, it uses information from an extensive survey of normal-school teachers and students in Morelos. It also presents the conditions under which teachers work, and refers to such important topics as value and power; social responsibility; trust and social capital.
- “The corporate identity of teachers at Simón Bolívar University”, by Jennie Brand-Barajas (2003), which is a subproject of her Ph.D. thesis in Education at La Salle University. Based on a questionnaire and interviews, it investigates the identity this private institution says it promotes in its teachers, as regarding their philosophy, ideology and mission, and how this is perceived by the teachers themselves.

V. Fourth resource

The fourth resource used for this study was composed of three articles from a special issue of the Metropolitan-Xochimilco Autonomous University journal *Reencuentro* (2005), on professional ethics: *Reencuentro. Analysis of university problems*.

- a) “Attitudes and professional ethics in postgraduate students at the University of Valencia and the UNAM” by Hirsch and Pérez (2005), presents the results applying a scale of attitudes on professional ethics to groups of graduate students (from all areas of knowledge in the universities studied), classified into four competencies: 1) cognitive and technical, 2) social, 3) ethical, and 4) affective-emotional; and 16 traits in both universities. This work is a subproject of a study on ethics, coordinated by Ana Hirsch, at the UNAM Institute for Research on the University and Education (IISUE).
- b) “Training of Future teachers on the ethics of democratic coexistence. Yesterday and Today”, by Kepowicz (2005), is a study of graduates of the normal schools of the state of Guanajuato, using the methodology of the situational analysis of experiences in professional practice. It explores these future teachers’ ethical principles.
- c) “Teaching and values profile in the Autonomous University of Baja California’s School of Engineering, Ensenada” by Osuna and Azuara (2005), presents the design of a questionnaire and its application to a sample of 69 teachers. The results indicated that the teachers’ profile does not match what, according to experts, should characterize a faculty member at the university where the study was conducted. The authors also found discrepancies between the educational objectives documented in the university’s mission and its institutional plan.

VI. Fifth resource

The fifth resource is the anthology entitled *Education, values and moral development*, from which I chose, on the theme of professional values (and for the case of Mexico), the following topics:

a) Professional ethics and professional values. Concerning this theme there are chapters on:

- “The principal features that determine ‘being a good professional’,” derived from the research project (mentioned above) on professional ethics, coordinated by Ana Hirsch. The authors, Ana Hirsch and Judith Pérez-Castro, report the main results generated by the question, “What are the five outstanding traits of a professional?” when applied to samples from groups of graduate students in 15 programs of Valencia University, and 40 programs of the UNAM (Hirsch and Pérez, 2006).
- “Field work in community health. Education and ethical values,” by Imelda Ana Rodríguez-Ortiz (2006), describes and analyzes the academic activity called fieldwork, in community health, concerning the training of a surgeon at the UNAM’s Zaragoza School of Higher Education.
- “Identity and professional values in History students,” by Guadalupe Chávez-González (2006), presents a study done at the Autonomous University of Nuevo Leon’s School of the Arts.
- “Education and values in the dental profession,” is a study of four dentists in the UNAM’s Zaragoza School of Higher Learning, (Álvarez, Sánchez, Orozco and Moreno, 2006).

b) Professional identity. The chapters dealing with this topic are:

- “The production and reproduction of uncertain social positions. The case of the degree program in Sociology at the UNAM’s Aragón School of Professional Studies” is a subproject of the doctoral thesis of Armando Ulises Cerón-Martínez (2006a, 2006b), having to do with students in the Sociology-degree program of a UNAM school. This study is a reconsideration of Pierre Bourdieu’s categories, to find out why and how students enter that program, and why they are able to stay in it.
- “Construction of professional identity in future teachers”, by Barbara Kepowicz-Malinowska (2006), of the University of Guanajuato, is an approach to the construction processes of teacher identity in its personal and collective dimensions.
- “Education and training of teachers as an ethical event”, by Eustolia Durán-Pizaña and Valentín Félix-Salazar (2006), of the University of Sinaloa,

emphasizes the relationship between instructors and the future teachers who will graduate from the Sinaloa Normal School.

- “Teaching practice and values: an unavoidable relationship” emphasizes the results of an ethnographic research aimed toward identifying the processes by which teachers transmit values in their daily activities, and toward analyzing the implications for the moral development of these teachers’ students (Durán and Félix, 2006).
- On the subject of teachers, and having a gender perspective, there are two interesting papers: The first relates to the women teachers of the Autonomous University of the State of Morelos, East Campus; the authors are Ana Esther Escalante-Ferrer and Luz Marina Ibarra-Urbe (2006). This paper is based on in-depth interviews, and describes how teachers combine the duties of wife and mother with their academic work at the university. The second is about the health problems faced by teachers in the state of Guanajuato. Lucía Rodríguez-Guzmán (2005 and 2006) is the author.

VII. Other resources

Other resources such as research on ethics, and postgraduate thesis, were used in the production of this state of knowledge.

a) Research on professional ethics. In this category are:

- A research project on professional ethics, by Ana Hirsch-Adler; the project is part of a UNAM postgraduate students’ group project, *University and professional values, 2003-2005*.
- A research project on professional ethics, coordinated by Edna Luna-Serrano. In this project, the researchers worked with students and teachers in every field of knowledge at the Autonomous University of Baja California (UABC), at the undergraduate level.
- The Inter-University Project on Professional Ethics, coordinated by Ana Hirsch-Adler, who began it in 2006, is a study done with students and teachers at the postgraduate level, in 14 universities.

b) Other post-graduate thesis, finished, or with a high degree of progress. The following works were found.

Doctoral thesis:

- *Teachers’ values in the academic profession of higher education. Public and private schools in the North-Central Region of Sinaloa*, by María Concepción Mazo-Sandoval (2006), Ph.D. thesis in Education at the

Autonomous University of Sinaloa. The author particularly studies the value of knowledge and the value of responsibility in university teachers.

- *Moral conflicts in the exercise of elementary-school administration*, by Cecilia Fierro-Evans, PhD thesis in Educational Research, Department of Educational Research (DIE), Center for Research and Advanced Studies (CINVESTAV), National Polytechnic Institute (2006). This work is based on a narrative strategy by which administrators present ethical issues that contribute to an understanding of the moral dilemmas that arise in elementary-school education in the Mexican state of Guanajuato. The interpretation of situations and specific cases permits the researcher to delineate categories; this can be extremely useful in other studies.
- *The status of professional ethics in university training in the areas of Natural Sciences and Engineering at the Autonomous University of Baja California*, by Cecilia Osuna-Lever (2006), is a UABC in-process PhD thesis in Educational Sciences. This study is part of a broader project, mentioned in the previous area, coordinated by Edna Luna-Serrano, from which there also ensues Brenda Boroel's master's thesis, still in process and on the same topic.
- *The axiological orientations of higher education in Mexico. Diagnosis of the degree program in Communication and Journalism at the UNAM Aragón School of Higher Education (UNAM FES Aragón)*, by Claudia Garcia-Benitez (2006), is a doctoral thesis in Education, in process at the UNAM Faculty of Philosophy and Literature. Currently this work is in its final stage. The doctorate enters the field of a specific applied ethic, such as is the case of degree programs related to the mass media. Note that in Mexico, there is still little research on the professional ethics of the various university disciplines.

At the master's degree and specialization level, the works are:

- *Values education in a protestant college in the state of Puebla*, by Mauricio Toxqui (2006). Thesis in progress, Master's Degree in Education, UNAM Faculty of Philosophy and Literature.
- *Professional ethics in students, faculty and alumni of the B.A. in Communication and Journalism at the UNAM's Aragón School of Higher Education (UNAM FES Aragón)*, by Araceli Noemí Barragán Solís (2006). Thesis in process, M. A. in Education, UNAM FES Aragón. The candidate designed three questionnaires, one for each subject under study; these questionnaires relate to the profile, professional identity and institutional elements of professional ethics.
- *The vocational and ethical profile of the nursing-school student*, by Mavel Jeovana Beas Esquivel, María del Rocío Cerros-Aristorenas and Juliana

Saucedo-Macías (2005), is a thesis emanating from the specialty program in Nursing Administration and Teaching of the University of Zacatecas. This work begins by considering the lack of vocation and ethics in some graduates of the nursing school. It seeks to support the importance of selecting the nursing-school applicant on the basis of a vocational and ethical profile.

VIII. By way of conclusion

8.1. On the state of knowledge

Although there are still few studies on professional values in Mexico, it is easy to see that there has been a significant increase, mainly beginning in the 1990's, and peaking in recent years.

It is a field under construction—a pioneer area in our country. We need to generate new research processes, and reinforce existing ones. Moreover, given the enormous diversity of approaches, theoretical frameworks and methodological strategies, it is necessary to promote the structuring of lines and configurations for organizing what has been done, and what is taking place in the country, and to encourage the training of researchers in this field.

Although in Mexico there are important studies on some professions, and although the fields are gradually expanding, it would be appropriate to promote these in all the university professions.

There are more concurrent questions in the studies (e.g. the problem of students' and graduates' low social commitment, and the difficulties of building a solid professional identity on the part of students and teachers), than there are contradictions and differences in what has been done. These last may be mainly due to two factors: the first, institutional and contextual in nature, has to do with the huge differences between the country's institutions of higher education, and the conditions under which professional training is carried out at the university. The second relates to the majors and university departments selected by the researchers. In some studies, all the degree programs of a school were chosen, and in others, only certain programs from different fields of knowledge were picked. It is evident that more research is needed to explain why there are contradictions in the results of the investigations, considering that these are not necessarily wrong, but are a reflection of the situation prevailing.

This field has an enormous thematic diversity. The issues that stand out are:

- a) *Professional ethics* in all the areas of knowledge in general, and in specific disciplines such as psychology, engineering, communications and journalism, dentistry and nursing. We reiterate the importance of studies on specific disciplines, in the majority of cases, not limiting such studies to the disciplines

themselves, but perceiving them as a source of knowledge about other fields of learning and on professional ethics in general.

- b) *Scientific and professional values.*
- c) *Gender values*, usually in a university academic unit, such as the employment situation of the women teachers at the Autonomous University of the State of Morelos, East Campus; or in the State of Guanajuato, the health-related issues of women teachers, specifically in professions such as Agriculture and Nursing.⁴
- d) *Professional socialization*, examines all the degree programs of a university, or a specific one, such as Sociology at the UNAM.
- e) *Teachers' Beliefs* is a study in progress at the Center for Research and Educational Services of the Autonomous University of Sinaloa (CISE-UAS).
- f) *Values of university faculty regarding knowledge* is a line of research propelled by the CISE-UAS, together with the previous two, in several of its PhD thesis in Education.
- g) *Students' Identity* is representative of the magnificent works of the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature at the Autonomous University of Nuevo Leon, and the University de Guanajuato.
- h) *Teachers' Identity*, represented by a thesis on teachers developed at the Simon Bolivar University.

Involved as researchers are, essentially, professionals from the social sciences and humanities, and linked to university education. There are few academics from other sciences, such as Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing and Engineering. In addition, although there are academics from various public and private universities, these are still very few.

Most are case studies of an educational institution. Work is usually done with students and teachers separately. We thought it appropriate to cover students and teachers simultaneously at the university level (undergraduate and graduate). In the case of the students, we also considered it useful to study them in groups, and in all the fields of knowledge.

In reference to the coverage and the professions we investigated, we can conclude that:

We studied the problem of teachers' professional values in entire states (the states of Morelos, Guanajuato and Sinaloa).

In some reports there is an approach to the professional values of students or teachers in all the fields of knowledge in the institutions of higher education under study.

In several of these, professional values were studied in the students or teachers of an entire university unit (as is the case, for example, of the students of the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature of the Autonomous University of Nuevo Leon, its seven majors: Philosophy, History, Sociology, Education, Translation, Linguistics and Library Sciences; and of the teachers at the UABC School of Engineering).

For the most part, there was an attempt to locate them among students and/or teachers (or programs) of specific disciplines. For example, Psychology, Medicine (specifically in the UNAM's Zaragoza School of Higher Education) and Dentistry (in these three professions all over the country), Ecology (UNAM School of Science), Agronomy (Chapingo Autonomous University), Nursing (UNAM and the Autonomous University of Zacatecas), Engineering (Autonomous University of Baja California, Technological Institute of Toluca and the National Polytechnic Institute), Chemical Engineering (University of Guanajuato [UG]), CPA (UG), International Business (UG), Sociology (UNAM FES Aragón), and Communication and Journalism (UNAM FES Aragón).

Regarding the institutions reported in the resources considered to date for the construction of this state of knowledge, we sustain that there are:

- a) Twelve public institutions: The National Polytechnic Institute, The Technological Institute of Toluca, Guanajuato Official Normal School, Sinaloa Normal School, the Autonomous University of Chapingo, the Autonomous University of Baja California, the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico, the Autonomous University of the State of Morelos, the Autonomous University of Sinaloa, the Autonomous University of Zacatecas, the University of Guanajuato, and the National Autonomous University of Mexico.
- b) Three private institutions: The Monterrey Technological Institute of Higher Learning; the ITESO-UIA System (The Western Technological Institute of Higher Learning, and Ibero-American University), with several studies; and Simon Bolivar University.

Several projects have generated interesting research lines, which have become a central element in the training of graduate students, in the form of masters' and doctoral thesis. An example of this is the case of the master's-degree programs and doctorates in education at the Center for Research and Educational Services (CISE) at the Autonomous University of Sinaloa; the Institute of Educational Research and Development (IIDE) at the Autonomous University of Baja California; and the Project on University and Professional Values, at the Institute of University Research and Education (IISUE) of the UNAM.

In addition to continuing the search for reports on research on this specific thematic area, which is an open task, shared and ongoing, we believe it necessary to conduct interdisciplinary and interinstitutional studies in order to enrich this special category of education and values.

8.2. Roads to follow

As mentioned previously, the construction of a state of knowledge is an open and collective task, which involves having an investigative attitude so as to:

Detect and monitor the research groups in the field of professional values.

Locate graduate thesis completed or in a high state of advancement, and which are being developed in Mexican institutions of higher education, especially in programs of Social Sciences and Humanities and even more particularly, in Education.

Locate hemerographic literature which is being produced in the country on this issue.

Continue with the task of coordinating and compiling anthologies and special issues of journals on education, that will expand the knowledge and dissemination of research processes and products.

Coordinate and participate in institutional and inter-professional research projects related to values and ethics. In this regard, there has been completed at the UNAM, the project *Collegiate and professional values of UNAM graduate students* (2003-2005), specifically concerning professional ethics. Currently, in 2006, fieldwork is being conducted on the second phase of the project, which focuses on the teachers/tutors of the 40 graduate programs at the university. Also in 2006 there was begun the *Inter-University Project on Professional Ethics*, a cooperative project between the UNAM and 13 of the country's public and private institutions of higher education. The liaison between those schools in terms of research, will increase the detection of research works.

The Mexican Council of Educational Research should also be willing to continue its participation in the construction of the state of knowledge on education and values, specifically in the field of professional values and ethics.

Continue the process of reinforcing the National Network of Researchers on Education and Values, created in May, 2002. This Network holds an annual event for the purpose of meeting together, and sharing the processes of research. One of its priority items is that of professional values and professional ethics.

References

Álvarez, Á. F., Sánchez, C. L., Orozco, L., & Moreno, W. (2006). Educación y valores en la profesión odontológica. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral: Vol. I. Valores de los estudiantes universitarios y del profesorado* (pp. 223-244). Mexico: Gernika.

Arias, E. & Flores, M. A. (2005). Un ámbito especial para la formación ético profesional. Organizaciones civiles y servicio social en el Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación y valores* (2ª ed., Vol. II, pp. 215-237). Mexico: Gernika.

Barragán, A. (2006). *Ética profesional en los alumnos, profesores y egresados de la carrera de Comunicación y Periodismo en la FES Aragón UNAM*. Master's thesis in progress, University Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico, D. F.

Beas M., Cerros, M. R., & Saucedo, J. (2005). *El perfil vocacional y ético en el aspirante de Enfermería*. Unpublished thesis, University Autónoma de Zacatecas, Mexico.

Brand, J. (2003). La identidad institucional del docente de la University Simón Bolívar. In A. Hirsch & R. López Zavala (Coords.), *Ética profesional e identidad institucional* (pp. 341-366). Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

Cerón, A. Ú. (2006a). La producción y reproducción de posicionamientos sociales inciertos. El caso de la carrera de Sociología en la Facultad de Estudios Profesionales Aragón, UNAM. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral: Vol. I. Valores de los estudiantes universitarios y del profesorado* (pp. 119 -146). Mexico: Gernika.

Cerón, A. Ú. (2006b). *La producción y reproducción de posicionamientos sociales inciertos. El caso de la carrera de Sociología en la Facultad de Estudios Profesionales Aragón, UNAM*, Doctoral dissertation in progress, University Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico, D.F.

Chávez, G., Charles, L. I., & Benavides, B. (2003). *Estudiantes y valores. El caso de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*. Monterrey, Mexico: University Autónoma de Nuevo León.

Chávez, G. (2003). Valores y tendencias valorales en los estudiantes de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la University Autónoma de Nuevo León. In A. Hirsch & R. López Zavala (Coords.), *Ética profesional e identidad institucional* (pp. 213-242) Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

Chávez, G. (2006). Identidad y valores profesionales en estudiantes de historia. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral: Vol. I. Valores de los estudiantes universitarios y del profesorado* (pp. 169-198). Mexico: Gernika.

Durán, E. (2005). *Creencias de los egresados de posgrado sobre su tarea docente*. Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

Durán, E. & Félix, V. (2006). Educación y formación de profesores como un acontecimiento ético. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral: Vol. I. Valores de los estudiantes universitarios y del profesorado* (pp. 447-470). Mexico: Gernika.

Félix, V. (2002) *Creencias pedagógicas y prácticas de enseñanza del futuro profesor. El caso de la Escuela Normal de Sinaloa*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Centro Universitario de Tijuana, Mexicali, Mexico.

Ferrer, A. E. & Ibarra, L. M. (2003). Los egresados....después de la promesa. El caso del Instituto Profesional de la Región Oriente. In A. Hirsch & R. López Zavala (Coords.), *Ética profesional e identidad institucional* (pp. 107-134). Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

Ferrer, A. E. & Ibarra, L. M. (2006). Si a ella le gusta lo que hace....esposa-madre- académica. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral: Vol. I. Valores de los estudiantes universitarios y del profesorado* (pp. 509-536). Mexico: Gernika.

Fierro, M. C. & Carbajal, P. (2006). Práctica docente y valores: una relación ineludible. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral: Vol. I. Valores de los estudiantes universitarios y del profesorado* (pp. 471-508). Mexico: Gernika.

Fierro, M. C. (2006). *Conflictos morales en el ejercicio de la función directiva del nivel básico*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Instituto Politécnico Nacional, DIE-CINVESTAV, Mexico, D. F.

García Benítez, C. (2006). *Las orientaciones axiológicas de la educación superior en México. Diagnóstico de la carrera de Comunicación y Periodismo de la FES Aragón UNAM*. Doctoral dissertation in progress, University Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico.

González Loyola, A. M., Torres, P., & Zúñiga, S. (2003a). Microcontextos escolares: génesis de la identidad profesional y la ética de las y los docentes. In A. Hirsch & R. López Zavala (Coord.), *Ética profesional e identidad institucional* (pp. 297-322). Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

González Loyola, A. M., Torres, P., & Zúñiga, S. (2003b). *Valores que se fomentan en los microcontextos escolares de educación primaria y secundaria en Sinaloa*. Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública y Cultura del Gobierno del Estado de Sinaloa.

Hirsch, A. (Coord.). (2001). *Educación y valores* (Vol. II). Mexico: Gernika.

Hirsch, A. (2002). Valores de género en el ámbito universitario. Dos casos de investigación sobre las académicas en carreras femeninas y masculinas. In University de Guanajuato-Asociación de Universitarias de Guanajuato. *Reflejo y resonancia de la sociedad* (pp. 23-34). Guanajuato, Mexico: University de Guanajuato-Asociación de Universitarias de Guanajuato.

Hirsch, A. (Coord.). (2003a). Investigaciones de valores universitarios y profesionales. In M. Bertely (Ed.), *Educación, derechos sociales y equidad. Vol. III: Comunicación, cultura y pedagogías emergentes. Educación, valores y derechos humanos* (pp. 1007-1032). Mexico: Consejo Mexicano de Investigación Educativa.

Hirsch, A. & López, R. (Coords.). (2003b). *Ética profesional e identidad institucional*. Culiacan, Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

Hirsch, A. (2003c). Elementos significativos de la ética profesional. In A. Hirsch & R. López Zavala (Coords.), *Ética profesional e identidad institucional* (pp. 27-42). Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

Hirsch, A. & Pérez, J. (August, 2005). Actitudes y ética profesional en estudiantes de posgrado en la University de Valencia y la UNAM. *Reencuentro. Análisis de Problemas Universitarios*, 43 [Número monográfico sobre ética profesional], 26-33.

Hirsch, A. (Coord.). (2006). *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral: Vol. I. Valores de los estudiantes universitarios y del profesorado*. Mexico: Ediciones Gernika.

Hirsch, A & Pérez, J. (2006). Rasgos de ser un buen profesional en los alumnos de posgrado. Los casos de la University de Valencia y de la University Nacional Autónoma de México. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral* (pp. 73 -102). Mexico: Gernika.

Ibarra, G. (2003). Los valores científicos y profesionales del ecólogo. In A. Hirsch, & R. López Zavala (Coord.). *Ética profesional e identidad institucional* (pp. 83-103) Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

Kepowicz, B. (2003). Identidad y ética profesional en los estudiantes universitarios. La investigación de tres carreras de la University de Guanajuato. In A. Hirsch & R. López Zavala (Coords.), *Ética profesional e identidad institucional* (pp. 191-212). Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

Kepowicz, B. (August, 2005). Formación de los futuros maestros en la ética de la convivencia democrática. Ayer y hoy. *Reencuentro. Análisis de Problemas Universitarios*, 43 [Número monográfico sobre ética profesional], 34-44.

Kepowicz, B. (2006). Construcción de la identidad profesional en futuros docentes. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral: Vol. I. Valores de los estudiantes universitarios y del profesorado* (pp. 391-420). Mexico: Gernika.

Lafarga, J., Pérez Fernández, I., & Shlüter, H. L. (2005). Valores éticos que promueven los psicólogos mexicanos en el ejercicio de su profesión. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación y valores* (Vol. II, 2ª ed., pp. 321-344). Mexico: Gernika.

López Zavala, R. (2001). *Educación superior y valores. Valores del profesorado en las Universidades públicas de Sinaloa*. Culiacan, Mexico: University de Occidente.

López Zavala, R. (2003). Ética de la profesión académica en la época global. In A. Hirsch, & R. López Zavala (Coord.), *Ética profesional e identidad institucional* (pp. 245-266). Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

Mazo, M. C. (2006). *Los valores docentes en la profesión académica de la educación superior. Las escuelas profesionales públicas y privadas en la Región Centro Norte de Sinaloa*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University Autónoma de Sinaloa, Mexico.

Muñoz Izquierdo, C. & Rubio, M. (1993). *Formación universitaria, ejercicio profesional y compromiso social. Resultados de un seguimiento de egresados de la University Iberoamericana*. Mexico: University Iberoamericana.

Muñoz Izquierdo, C., Rubio, M., Palomar, J., & Márquez, A. (2005). Formación universitaria y compromiso social: algunas evidencias derivadas de la investigación. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral* (pp. 153-182). Mexico, Ediciones Gernika.

Osuna, C. & Azuara, F. (August, 2005). Perfil docente y valoral en la Facultad de Ingeniería Ensenada de la University Autónoma de Baja California. *Reencuentro. Análisis de Problemas Universitarios*, 43 [Número monográfico sobre ética profesional], 70-77.

Osuna, C. (2006). *La condición de la ética profesional en la formación universitaria en las áreas de Ciencias Naturales e Ingeniería en la University Autónoma de Baja California*. Doctoral dissertation in progress, University Autónoma de Baja California, Ensenada, Mexico.

Pérez Fernández, I. (1999). *Los valores éticos que promueven los psicólogos mexicanos en el ejercicio de su profesión*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University Iberoamericana, Mexico, D.F.

Ríos, M. (2001). *El género en la socialización profesional de enfermeras*. Mexico: Centro Regional de Investigaciones Multidisciplinarias, University Nacional Autónoma de México.

Ríos, M. (2005). Valores y socialización profesional de profesoras-enfermeras de la University Nacional Autónoma de México. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación y valores* (Vol. II, 2ª ed., pp. 289-320). Mexico: Gernika.

Rodríguez Ortiz, I. A. (2006). El trabajo de campo en salud comunitaria. Educación y valores éticos. In A. Hirsch (coord.), *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral: Vol. I. Valores de los estudiantes universitarios y del profesorado* (pp.147-168). Mexico: Gernika.

Rodríguez Guzmán, L. (2005). Estudio de caso en México. In UNESCO, *Condiciones de trabajo y salud docente. Otras dimensiones del desempeño profesional. Estudios de casos en Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, México, Perú y Uruguay* (pp.137-169). Mexico: Oficina Regional de Educación para América Latina y el Caribe-Correo de la UNESCO.

Rodríguez Guzmán, L. (2006). Valoración de la salud en el trabajo docente. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación, valores y desarrollo moral: Vol. I. Valores de los estudiantes universitarios y del profesorado* (pp. 537-547). Mexico: Gernika.

Tapia, U. (2003). La responsabilidad y ética del cambio en las Normales. In A. Hirsch, & R. López Zavala (Coord.), *Ética profesional e identidad institucional* (pp. 323-340). Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

Toxqui, M. (2006). *Educación en valores en una institución de educación superior protestante en el estado de Puebla*. Master's thesis in progress, University Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico, D.F.

Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco (August, 2005). *Reencuentro. Análisis de Problemas Universitarios, 43* [Número monográfico sobre ética profesional].

Vargas, C. R. (2005). La formación del compromiso social del ingeniero en el Instituto Tecnológico de Toluca. In A. Hirsch (Coord.), *Educación y valores* (Vol. II, 2ª ed., pp. 345-368). Mexico: Gernika.

Yurén, M. T. (2003a). Tensiones identitarias y ethos profesional. El caso del profesor de formación cívica y ética en la escuela secundaria. In A. Hirsch, & R. López Zavala (Coord.). *Ética profesional e identidad institucional* (pp. 267-296) Mexico: University Autónoma de Sinaloa.

Yurén, M. T. (Coord.). (2003b). *Ethos profesional de los profesores que imparten la asignatura de Educación Cívica y Ética en la secundaria en el estado de Morelos*. Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública.

Translator: Lessie Evona York-Weatherman

UABC Mexicali

¹ National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), Metropolitan Autonomous University (UAM), and Autonomous University of the State of Mexico (UAEMEX).

² Monterrey Technological Institute of Higher Education (ITESM) in the State of Mexico, and Iberoamerican University (UIA), Mexico City.

³ This has to do with a subproject of her master's thesis. It is important to point out that she continued with research on her thesis in pursuit of a doctorate in Education, now in its final stage.

⁴ These two plans of studies allow us to see the working conditions of teachers in areas traditionally considered "feminine", as in the case of Nursing at the UNAM, or "masculine", as in the case of Agronomy at the Chapingo Autonomous University (Hirsch, 2002).