

BRASOV PEOPLE'S FEARS AFTER EU ACCESSION. STUDY CARRIED OUT AT THE LEVEL OF BRASOV MUNICIPALITY

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Abstract: *This study is part of a wider research, a compared type based sociological survey using the questionnaire, applied in Brasov during January 2010 and June 2010: "Effects of the EU integration perceived at the level of Brasov community and its implications on life quality and styles." By trying to explain precisely these effects of European integration (as research objective) it was found that, in the scientific literature, the subject of the EU integration effort was oriented by means of the utilitarian theory (Gabel, 1998). Other international studies have also put in evidence that public opinion on EU integration matters, is determined by economic considerations and personal calculations such as cost-benefit (Anderson, 1995; Eichenberg and Dalton, 1993; Gabel, 1998). Using secondary analysis of the 2010 database and by following the proposed model of Ioan Mărginean, Iuliana Precupeţu and Ana Maria Preoteasa (2004) regarding the development of a measurement model of the post-accession EU fears, adapted to the Brasov realities and based on three dimensions (the sphere of private life, the sphere of social life and the relationship between the individual and the society), the statistical analysis provides new clues upon the types, the categories and the attitudinal fears profiles found in Brasov and their correlation with a new global factor - the economic crisis.*

Key words: *European integration, the evaluation of EU integration effects, the liberalization of the European economic market, types of fears, cluster analysis.*

1. Previous studies

An important premise of the herein study consists in the explorative research „Elites of rural Romania about European integration” achieved by Dumitru Sandu in 2004, by means of sharing out a free newspaper on the issue of EU integration (60000 copies), accompanied by an answer coupon, by mail with paid written confirmation (1500 respondents). In

Brasov county, out of 43 communes, only 10 answered (the share of the answers providing communes being of 23,3%). The issues suggested for the newspaper (answers to the question „What debate issue would you rather have in the next edition?) were, in fact, answers to the more or less structured concerns of rural population with regards to the European integration process.

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On a national level the main concerns of the rural elite are of an economic nature (agriculture's backward state, the new market mechanisms) and institutional nature (corruption, the Romanian's mentality, the sense of institutional impotence). Before adhering to the EU, rural Romania was concerned with the following issues: migration (1,2%), loss of identity (6,4%), costs and poverty (7%), imposed conditions (15,1%), Romanian mentalities and institutions (16,2%), differences and economic problems (35,4%). In Brasov county, the most frequent concerns were related to: economic differences and problems (26,3%), imposed conditions (18,4%), Romanian mentalities and institutions (15,8%), prices and poverty (7,9%). County's inhabitants did not have any concerns regarding migration.

At country's level, a number of six cultural types of villages were identified: traditional, isolated, modern, immigrational, with ethnic minorities and religious ones, the villages of Brasov County were included in the typology of „immigrants' communities” like those of Constanta, Hunedoara, Timis, Arad, characterized over several decades, in the context of strong local industrialization.

The medium level of the thematic interest towards European integration for the villagers residing in this type of villages in terms of occupational categories are distributed as it follows: officer (3,4), postman (4,1), mayor/ vice mayor (4,6), others active (5,1), inactive (4,6), teacher/educator (4,7), businessmen, entrepreneurs, administrator (5,4), other intellectuals (5,5), persons working in agriculture (5,9).

Concern is stronger in large villages, cu many inhabitants, which suffered a regress in development during the last years. In these cases we might speak about a type of “social unrest based on information and

high expectations”. The villages situated in the proximity of small towns favour such high levels of concern regarding the EU integration difficulties. In this situation we can speak about a concern associated with lack of resources [15].

Another Romanian research accomplished by Ioana Petre (2007), “Rural Romania and European integration”, underlines the fact that the support given to the European project by the rural Romanian population is strongly motivated even on the emotional level, inspiring, usually, hope and trust and less likely lack of confidence or lack of trust. Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the villagers support integration in the EU and $\frac{2}{3}$ expect improvement after adhesion-integration. Thus, optimism and trust prevail, but they are more and more temperate, according to the increase in knowledge.

International studies [9], [8] emphasized that individuals attempt to assess the benefits of EU integration from the angle of their effects in their private life.

Another conclusion is related to the fact that those who expect to gain benefits from the integration in the European economy, are likely to provide more support to the institutions which do sustain this integration (institutions such the EU).

Education is a resource which renders the benefits associated with the status of EU member more profitable, in the sense that respondents with a higher degree of education are more in favour of the integration than undecided or against it.

Moreover, in post communist countries, satisfaction with the democratic transition or general political situation is not associated with the support of the EU integration [16].

2. Theoretical interpretation framework

Literature aims at explaining the support for EU integration by means of the

utilitarian theory [8]. International studies emphasized that public opinion regarding the issue of EU integration is determined by economic considerations and personal calculations such as cost-benefit [2], [6], [8].

This instrumental perspective is based on the researches undergone on the economic vote, which led to the idea that macro economy influences the popularity of a government as well as the electoral support [12], [2]. The perspective was influenced also by the conclusion that economy market's liberalization has influenced the assessment made on EU integration effects [8].

These ideas led to empiric studies carried on in east European countries which demonstrated that citizens do appreciate the costs and benefits related to Western Europe integration in the light of their effects on the internal economies.

Moreover, studies accomplished in western European countries proved that personal and national economic welfare is associated with the differences of the states when it comes to supporting integration within the EU [3], [6], [10].

Mathew Gabel (1998) puts forward the hypothesis of a certain connection between the liberalization of the European economy and the way integration is supported by the various social groups. „Too” liberal policies determined those less educated and exposed to unemployment to reject the European constitutional project.

Clifford Carruba (1997) provides a post materialism type explanation for the support/rejection of EU integration. Such explanations point out the connection of this attitude with certain variables such as national identity or political culture. There are also authors who launch the idea that citizens' support is higher if those countries have more benefited economically from the UE affiliation.

Joseph Jansen (1991) argues that the issue is not about the calculation of costs/benefits but about political knowledge.

Other hypothesis converges towards the fact that citizens' perception of national economic performances plays a shortcut role in order to evaluate the European integration effect on their country [14].

3. Methodology

3.1. Research method

This study is part of a larger research „Effects of the EU integration perceived at the level of Brasov community and its implications on life quality and styles” accomplished in 2010.

We speak about a questionnaire-based sociological investigation of a comparative type, carried on at the level of Brasov community in January and June 2010. We performed a secondary analysis of the data base.

The secondary analysis consists in a complex approach of the data by considering a well established set of rules and by applying specific methodological principles. It requires the archive of empiric sociological research. Nowadays, it registers a strong revival and proves to be distinctive for the actual evolution stage of empirical socio-human research (in the field).

The analysis resembles partially with the analysis of the communicational content; both apply on certain data produced by someone else in another purpose than the one targeted by us. “The main difference between the two types of approach consists in the fact that the secondary analysis directly applies to the quantified data which are already summed up and not to words whether they have been already written or uttered” [5, p. 102].

3.2. Selection of the respondents

The universe of research is represented by the population of Brasov over eighteen years of age. There has been conducted a simple random sampling (probability).

As an extraction procedure there was used the unrepeatd extraction with random numbers table. For a probability of 95% results guarantee, and an acceptable error limit of 3.1, the sample size was of 1,000 persons.

3.3. Measuring

While developing a model for measuring fear in the EU-accession we started from the interpretative model suggested by Ioan Mărginean, Iuliana Precupeţu and Ana Maria Preoteasa (2004) in the article

„support and critical elements in the evolution of quality of life in Romania”, based on three dimensions: private life (health, residence, family, job), social life (quality of education background, medical assistance, society leadership, assessment of local public administration, possibilities of employment, perception of social conflicts), relationship between the individual and the society (trusting people, trusting institutions, participation to political and social life).

At first, we developed a scale of categories used for re-codifying the indicator “main fears of Brasov community”. The question used was an open one: “What are you most afraid of now?” and free answers were classified according to fear types as it follows (see Table 1 below):

Classification according to the fear type

Table 1

“Now what do you fear the most?”

Types of fears	Category after re-codifying	Correspondence in the interpretative model
Poverty	Fears in the economic area	Social life sphere
Unemployment		
Rise in prices		
Economic crisis		
Lack of health	Fears in social services	Private life sphere
Lack of medicines		
Diminution of pension		
Children's future	Fears in private life	Private life sphere
Absence of residence		
Solitude	Fears related to the self	Private life sphere
Uncertainty		
Lack of safety		
Oldness		
Death		
God		
Pressure to leave the country	Fears in connection with social factors	Social life sphere
Gypsies		
War		
Earthquake	Fears in connection with environmental factors	Social life sphere
Natural disasters		
Change of local administration leadership	Fears in connection with political factors	Individual-society relationships
Political class		

4. Results. Types of fears

The preliminary analysis of the data revealed that the three main fears are related to poverty, employment and economic crisis. Interesting is that during midyear as compared to the beginning of the year, the number of the persons concerned about the economic crisis halved (see figures 1 and 2 of the annexes).

When it comes to categories of fears, in 2010, three years after accession, the large majority of Brasov community citizens explore fears in the economic field, and in July 2010 as compared to the beginning of the year, there has been a raise of the concerns related to private life. If the fears manifested by 70% of the respondents, connected to the economic field are situated on the first place, these are followed by fears connected to the relationship with the self, than by fears related to social relationships, and finally, on the 4th place, by fears related to private life (see figures 3 and 4 of the Annexes).

Attitudinal profiles for the not re-codified variable – fears

In order to draft an attitudinal profile, we have first identified the independent variables correlated with the fears' variable (not re-codified): neighborhood, education level, marital status, car possession (see table 2 of the annexes). Then, we accomplished a cluster analysis of the fears according to these variables. Cluster one includes all those afraid of poverty. Cluster two includes all those who fear: lack of health, death, lack of a home, oldness, pension diminution, solitude, natural disasters, God, the political class, lack of medicines. Cluster no. 3 includes all those afraid off: uncertainties, raise of prices, war, economic crisis, insecurity, earthquake. Cluster four consists in those afraid of unemployment (see table 3 of the Annexes). For cluster no. 1, the

discriminating role belongs to the education level variable. In the case of cluster no. 2 and 4 the most powerful discriminating role belongs to the marital status variable, while for cluster no. 3, the strongest discriminating role is that of the car possession variable (see figure no. 5 of the annexes). Out of the frequency tables it resulted that those afraid of poverty have in most of the cases a high school education level (see table 4 of the annexes), those who fear the lack of health, death and political leadership are in most cases married (see table no. 5 of the annexes), those afraid of the economic crisis are more likely those who do not own a car (see table 6 of the annexes), those afraid of unemployment are in an equal percentage married or single (see table no. 7 of the annexes).

Attitudinal profiles for the re-codified variable- categories of fears

The calculation of the correlation values from among categories of fears and the social demographical variables have shown that, as far as the July 2010 sample is concerned, the fears' category is weakly correlated with the age category and the car possession one (see table 8 in the annexes). Starting from this conclusions a cluster analysis was applied on these variables (a method of descriptive classification involving the identification of similar groups from among a multitude of objects) from which a number of 2 clusters have resulted. Cluster 1 includes fears from the sphere of economic life, whereas cluster 2 includes all the other fears related to: social services, family life, relationship with the self, social factors, political concerns as well as environmental ones (see table 9 of the annexes). It has been noticed that car possession does not discriminate cluster 1, whereas age discriminates more cluster 2 (see figure 6 of the annexes). The table content frequency

analysis revealed that fears pertaining to the economic field are mainly those of Brasov citizens of 18-54 years of age. Elder people are not concerned about social, political, environmental issues (see table 10 of the annexes). Moreover, those who own a car have generally more fears belonging to the economic sphere than those who do not own a vehicle, and concerns related to the self belong more to those who do not own a vehicle than to those who possess a car (see table 11 of the annexes).

Discussions

Due to the fact that the implementation of EU programmes and policies requires contextual studies regarding local attitudinal profiles, this study draws the attention on some factors meant to condition citizens' fears, thus pointing out the necessity to continue the research by the means of quality type in depth studies meant to facilitate the understanding of the mechanisms standing at the basis of citizens' concern formation and development.

By comparing the frequency of rural Brasov population's fears in 2010 with the results obtained by Dumitru Sandu (2006) before accession, in the rural area of Brasov county we assess that after accession, the urban situation is similar to the rural one that existed before the accession, due to the fact that economic fears are situated on the first place in the municipality as well.

Moreover, the fears identified by the study carried out in the rural area with regards to prices and poverty (7,9%) are mainly related to fears concerning social services (7,33%) identified by the herein study.

The novelty of this research is that, as compared to the amount of concerns which occurred in the rural area four years ago, in Brasov municipality, less fear does occur in

relation to the institutional lack of efficiency, but there is a stronger accent on fears related to the economic crisis. Both fears belong to the contextual sphere, but if institutional lack of efficiency represents a local factor, the economic crisis is a global one. After accession, there has been observed thus a transfer of concerns on macro economic factors. This research is a continuation of international studies which ascertained the discriminating role of the education variable at the level of attitudinal profiles. While researches carried out by Tverdova și Anderson [16] stressed the idea that those respondents who benefit from a higher education level tend to be more in favour of EU integration than undecided or against it, the herein study proves that medium education (high school studies) is associated with fears related to poverty.

In addition to the education variable, the study identifies at the same time the discriminating role on the fears of Brasov municipality population of the following variables: marital status, car possession, age.

If we accept the conclusions set forth by international researches which showed that attitude regarding EU integration is determined by economic factors and that citizens appreciate the costs and benefits of the integration through their effects on domestic economies [2], [3], [6], [10], [8], than this research draws an alarm signal by identifying as main category of concerns the economic factors (70%).

If we accept that citizens evaluate the integration effects according to the assessments of national economy progress [14] we get to the same conclusion.

These aspects accentuate the idea that more studies are necessary, especially of quality type, which would bring more information with respect to the complexity of the processes related to citizens' fears and concerns formation and development.

Annexes

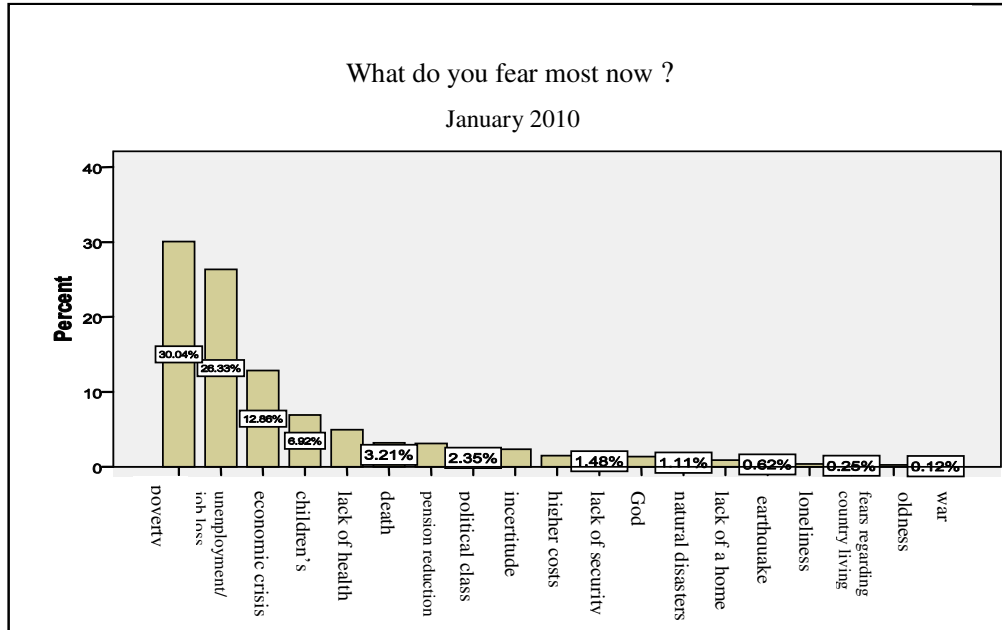


Fig. 1. Post EU accession fears in January 2010

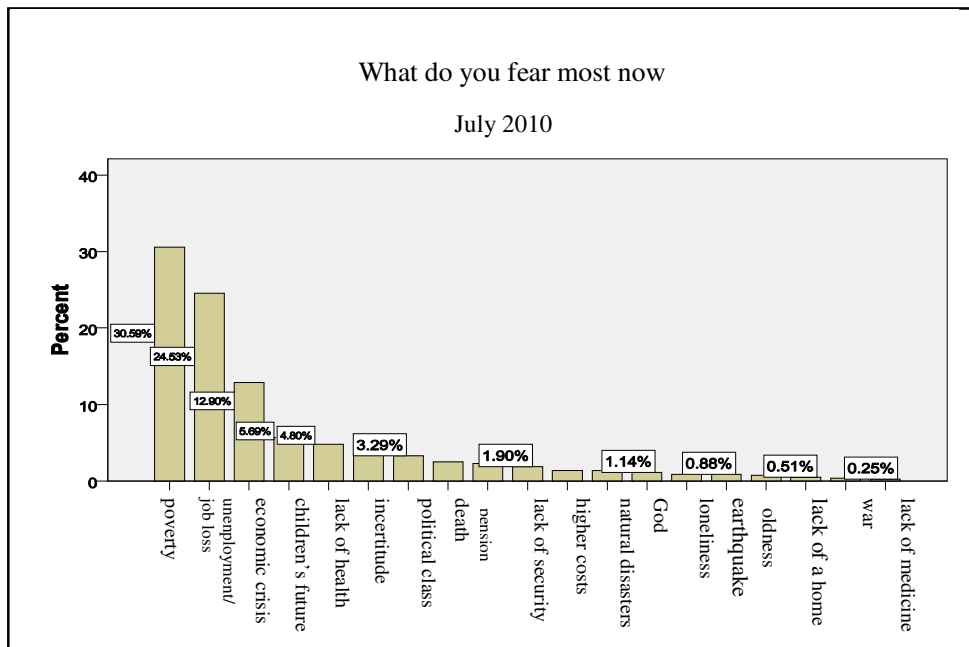


Fig. 2. Post EU accession fears in July 2010

Categories of fears

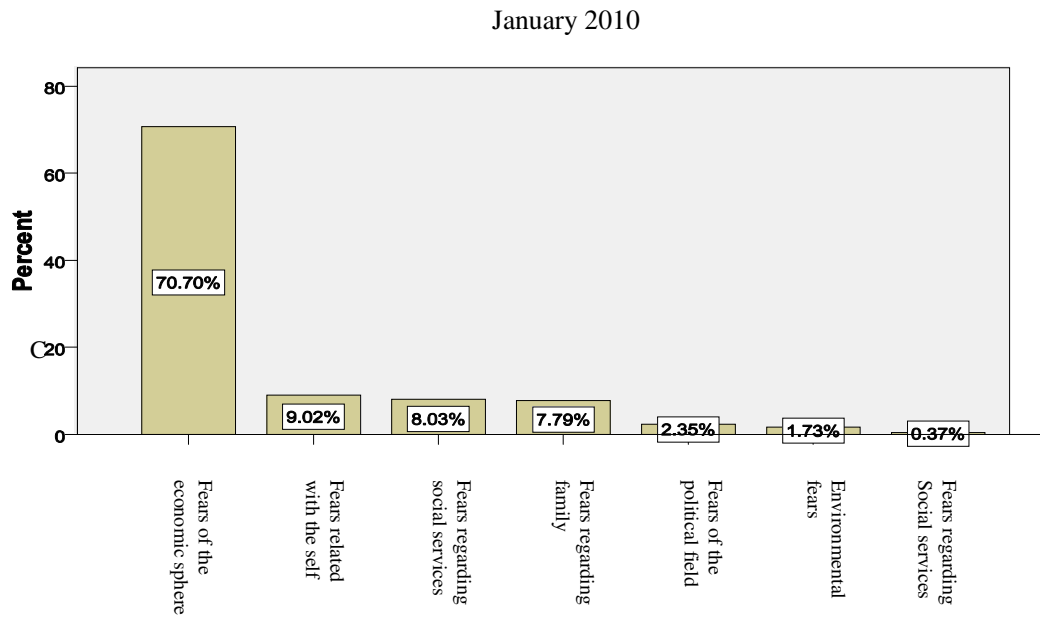


Fig. 3. *Post EU accession fears in January 2010*

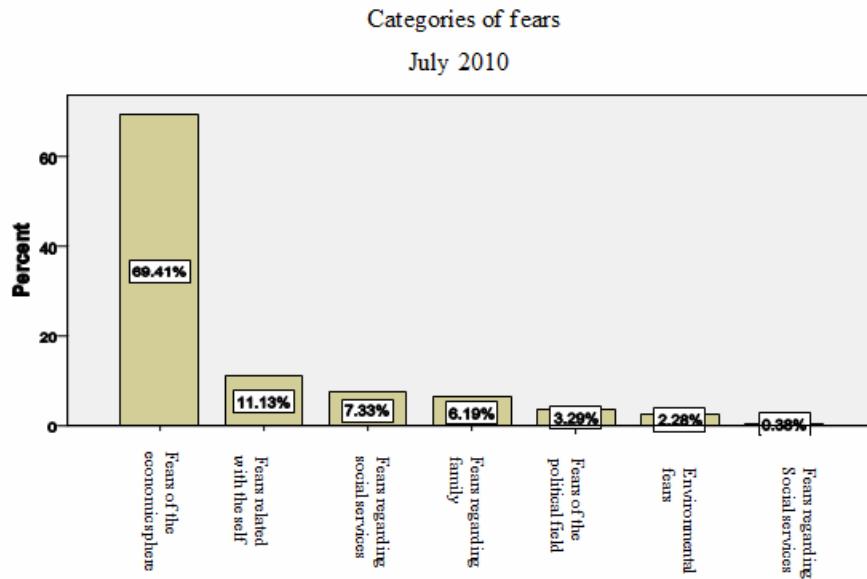


Fig. 4. *Post EU accession fears in July 2010*

Statistically Significant correlations of fears

Table 2

		What are most afraid of now?
What are most afraid of now? (July 2010)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.
	N	816
neighborhood:	Correlation Coefficient	-.125**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	816
Education level:	Correlation Coefficient	.139**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	810
Marital status:	Correlation Coefficient	-.133**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	808
Existing car in the household:	Correlation Coefficient	-.149**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	816

Clusters' profile for the fears' variable (before re codifying)

Table 3

What are most afraid of now?

		Cluster				
		1	2	3	4	Combined
Percent	poverty	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Lack of health	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Children's future	.0%	7.8%	92.2%	.0%	100.0%
	Unemployment/job loss	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	death	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	lack of a home	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	oldness	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Pension reduction	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	incertitude	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	loneliness	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Higher costs	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	war	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Economic crisis	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Natural catastrophes	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	God	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Lack of security	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	earthquake	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Political class	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Lack of medicines	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%

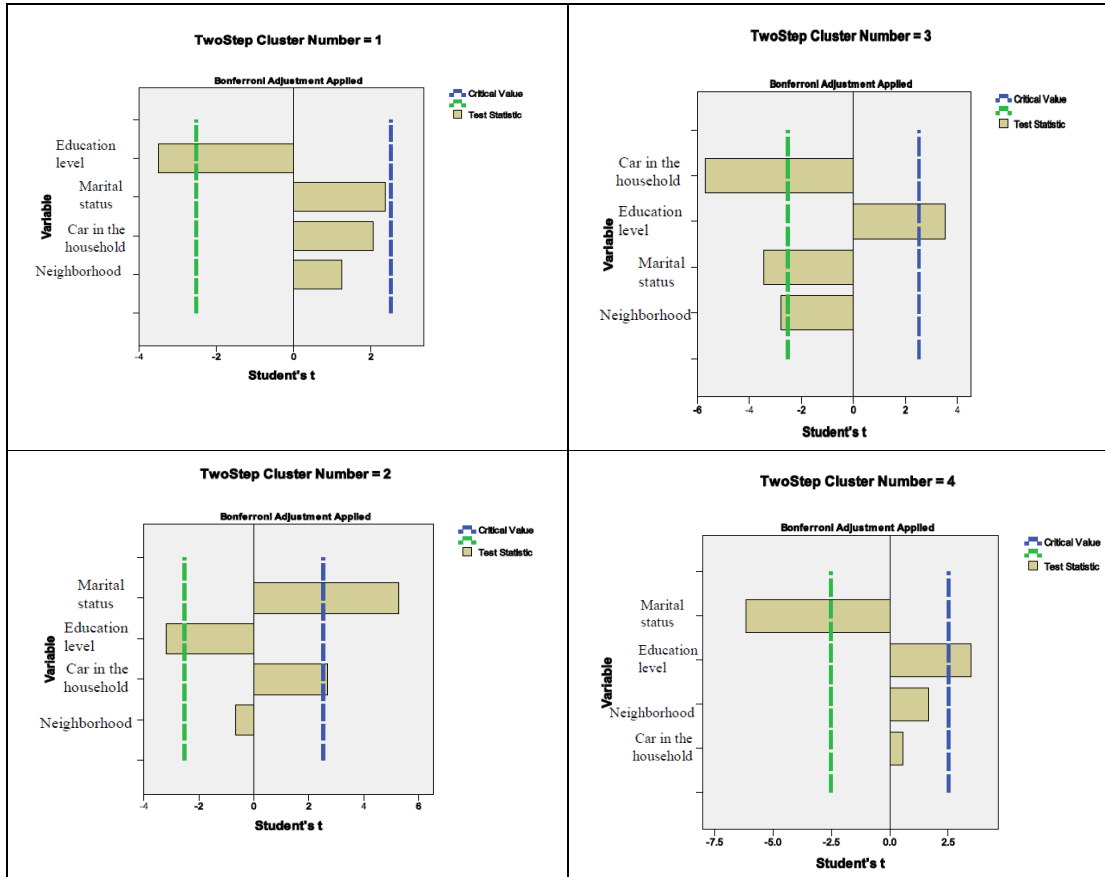


Fig. 5. The discriminating/non discriminating role of the following variables: neighborhood, education level, marital status, car possession, in the 2 clusters

The frequency of those afraid of poverty according to their education level Table 4

	Education level:					Total
	8 forms or less	10 forms/vocational	High school	college	faculty	
What are most afraid of now? poverty	13	55	98	26	52	244
Total	13	55	98	26	52	244

Table 5

The frequency of those afraid of Lack of health/ death / Lack of a home / oldness / Pension reduction / loneliness / Natural disasters / God / Political class, according to their marital status

		Marital status			
		single	married	divorced	widow
What are most afraid of now?	Lack of health	2	28	5	6
	death	4	17	0	4
	Lack of a home	3	1	1	0
	oldness	0	3	2	1
	Pension reduction	3	11	1	6
	loneliness	1	3	0	3
	Natural disasters	3	5	1	0
	God	1	6	0	2
	Political class	5	15	3	0
	Lack of medicines	0	2	0	0
Total		22	91	13	22

Table 6

The frequency of those afraid of incertitude/higher costs/economic crisis/lack of security/earthquake according to the car possession variable

		There is a car in the household		Total
		yes	no	
What are most afraid of now?	incertitude	10	11	21
	Higher costs	9	4	13
	war	1	1	2
	Economic crisis	84	12	96
	Lack of security	9	8	17
	earthquake	3	3	6
Total		116	39	155

Table 7

The frequency of those afraid of unemployment/job loss according to their marital status

	Marital status:				Total
	single	married	divorced	widow	
What are most afraid of now? Unemployment/job loss	100	98	9	4	211
Total	100	98	9	4	211

Table 8

Statistically significant correlations of fears categories

July 2010	Fear category	Pearson Correlation	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	
		N	791
	Age category	Pearson Correlation	.100**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.005
		N	791
	Car presence in the household	Pearson Correlation	.078*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.028
		N	791

Table 9

The cluster analysis for the fears' categories according to age and car possession

Category of fears						
	Frequency			Percent		
	Cluster			Cluster		
	1	2	Combined	1	2	Combined
Fears of the economic sphere	549	0	549	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Fears related to social services	0	58	58	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Fears related to family life	0	49	49	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Fears related to the self	0	88	88	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Fears related to social factors	0	3	3	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Political fears	0	26	26	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Environmental fears	0	18	18	.0%	100.0%	100.0%

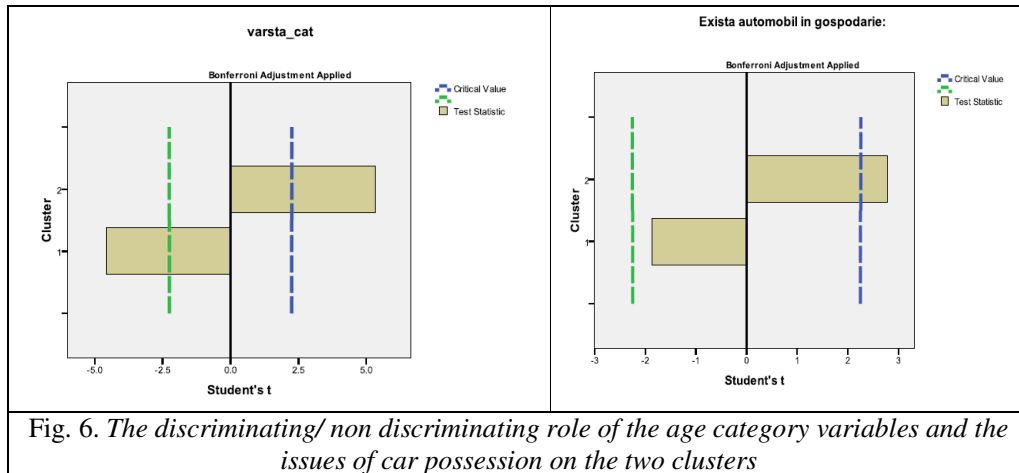


Fig. 6. The discriminating/ non discriminating role of the age category variables and the issues of car possession on the two clusters

Frequency of fear categories according to age

Table 10

cat fears * age cat Cross tabulation
Count

		age cat (years)				Total
		18-34	35-54	55-65	over 65	
Fears category	Fears of the economic sphere	262	191	71	25	549
	Fears related to social services	7	11	15	25	58
	Fears related to family life	18	20	6	5	49
	Fears related to the self	23	28	23	14	88
	Fears related to social factors	1	2	0	0	3
	Political fears	13	6	6	1	26
	Environmental fears	13	1	4	0	18
	Total	337	259	125	70	791

Frequency of fear categories related to car possession

Table 11

Fear category * Household car possession: Cross tabulation

		Household car possession existence		Total
		yes	no	
Fears category	Fears of the economic sphere	318	231	549
	Fears related to social services	24	34	58
	Fears related to family life	24	25	49
	Fears related to the self	34	54	88
	Fears related to social factors	1	2	3
	Political fears	19	7	26
	Environmental fears	7	11	18
	Total	427	364	791

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