

# Identity in Times of Crisis, Globalization and Diversity

Practice and Research Trends



**iCea** Children's  
Identity &  
Citizenship  
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ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ  
UNIVERSITY OF PELLOPONNESE



ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ  
ΠΑΤΡΩΝ  
UNIVERSITY OF PATRAS



**iC** Jean Monnet  
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# IDENTITY IN TIMES OF CRISIS, GLOBALIZATION AND DIVERSITY: PRACTICE AND RESEARCH TRENDS

Edited by:

Despina Karakatsani, Julia A. Spinthourakis & Vasilis Zorbas

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### *Editors Forward:*

The 17th Annual CiCea Conference took place at a critical time in world history; a time when educators, researchers and citizens alike found themselves having to find ways to explain, deal with, and teach both during and about times of crisis.

The conference, entitled “Identity in Times of Crisis, Globalization and Diversity”, was jointly sponsored and funded by the University of the Peloponnese and the University of Patras. It brought together a stalwart group of academics, research students, teachers, and education and policy stakeholders from across Europe and around the world, with an interest in issues related to identity and citizenship.

Identity remains an influential force in society, education and individual lives, at both the micro and macro levels. It can be challenged in times of crisis, globalization and diversity, facing issues including, though not limited to: How is culture intertwined with other identity markers? What, if any, interface exists between individual identity and social, cultural, economic, political, and citizenship factors? How is identity formulated and actualized in terms of the way in which individuals, groups, and nations relate to it? What factors mediate the expression of identity? What role can or does education (formal, informal or lifelong) play in relation to this identity?

These proceedings include the titles, abstracts, presenter names and contact information of presentations which took place at the 17th Annual CiCea Conference. This information is provided to allow the reader to contact presenters for queries, comments or requests. The papers included in the proceedings are those submitted for publication by the presenters addressing the aforementioned issues in the conference in Corinth, Greece.

D. Karakatsani, J. A. Spinthourakis & V. Zorbas (Editors)

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*Keynote Lectures*

## Opening Keynote Lecture: “A Failure of Will: The Taming of Diversity Education”

Dr. Alan Sears, University of New Brunswick, Canada

Should a Muslim immigrant to Canada be able to take her oath of citizenship while wearing a niqāb? Are crucifixes hanging in Italian classrooms an imposition of the Christian religion on people of other faiths or no faith? Is multiculturalism “a threat to the very basis of the Australian culture, identity and shared values” as claimed by the One Nation Party in that country? These are just some of the difficult questions with which citizens in modern, pluralist democracies are expected to wrestle. Unfortunately, though, civic education, and particularly education about ethnic and cultural diversity, often fails to adequately prepare them to engage productively with issues like these. Drawing on my own and others’ research, I will argue this failure is often due to a “taming” of diversity education. Tame versions of diversity education focus on managing conflict and creating superficial harmony rather than on helping citizens struggle with difficult issues as a means to working toward the common good. I will propose a liberated version of diversity education designed to induct young citizens into the crucial deliberations that will shape their futures.

Alan Sears is Professor of Social Studies Education at the University of New Brunswick. He has been a history and social studies teacher for more than 30 years, working at all levels from primary to graduate school. Dr. Sears’ research and writing have been in the fields of social studies, citizenship education, and history education. He has published more than 50 articles and book chapters and co-authored and co-edited a number of books, including *Education, Politics and Religion: Reconciling the Civic and the Sacred in Education* (Routledge, 2010),



*Globalization, the Nation-State and the Citizen: Dilemmas and Directions for Civics and Citizenship Education* (Routledge, 2010), and *Challenges and Prospects for Canadian Social Studies* (Pacific Educational Press, 2004). He is also Associate Editor for the international journal *Citizenship Teaching and Learning*.

Dr. Sears’ most recent research has focused on how children and young people understand key ideas related to citizenship. He is currently principal investigator on an SSHRC funded project designed to map how young people in Alberta and the Maritimes conceptualize democratic participation and a co-investigator on a similar project looking at how young people and teachers conceptualize diversity in Canada. Alan Sears is Associate Editor for the journal *Citizenship Teaching and Learning*. One of their most exciting initiatives has been the Spirit of Democracy Project. It is a collaborative effort with Russian colleagues focused on developing an approach to teaching key democratic ideas.

## Keynote Lecture: “ “Citizenship and national identity in Greece in the 19th and 20th centuries”

Dr. Christina Koulouri, Panteion University of Political and Social Sciences, Greece

The main argument of this keynote lecture is that the ongoing debate in Greece about immigration and the right to Greek citizenship of the immigrants of second generation has to be analysed and understood from a historical perspective. The lecture is going to focus on the linkages between Greek national identity and citizenship since the Greek war of independence (1821), which led to the creation of an independent state (1830) in order (a) to detect how the definition of citizenship parallels the stages of construction of national identity; (b) to investigate the fluidity of national self-definition and the transformation of national otherness during the last two centuries, and (c) to analyse the concept of “origins” on which the contemporary law of citizenship lies.



Christina Koulouri is Professor in Modern and Contemporary History at Panteion University of Political and Social Sciences (Athens, Greece), Dean of the Faculty of Political Sciences and Director of the Research Centre for Modern History (KENI). She studied at the University of Athens, the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales and Paris I - Panthéon - Sorbonne where she also received her PhD. Since 1999, she is the chair of the History Education Committee of the Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) and general coordinator of the Joint History Project (JHP). She is author of several books and articles on the teaching of history, the history of historiography, school textbooks, national identity, national holidays and the history of sports and the Olympic Games. She is also the editor of four workbooks (alternative educational materials) for the teaching of modern and contemporary history in Southeast Europe.

*Conference Papers*



## Teachers' construction on student diversity and its role in education for citizenship

János Győri, Krisztina Borsfay & Dóra Pálos Institute of Intercultural Psychology and Education, Faculty of Education and Psychology at ELTE University, Budapest Hungary - [gyori.janos@ppk.elte.hu](mailto:gyori.janos@ppk.elte.hu)

### **Abstract**

*As part of a research on Hungarian teachers' beliefs on multiculturalism and multicultural education, from a pool of 350 participants we chose 15 teachers, video recorded 3 consecutive lessons of each of them in their school, and finally we carried out video-recorded supported interviews with them on one of their lessons. These interviews were then content analyzed – how the teachers thought and talked about diversity issues and multicultural educational aspects of their lessons – and then we carried out a comparative analysis of the interviews and the video-recorded lessons themselves. In our presentation, we introduce part of our results which show how teachers experience a special dilemma of social/cultural 'diversity' and 'sameness' during their classroom communication. If they put too much stress on their students' social/cultural diversities (and also put stress on how different their students are compared to the members of the class) this may lead to social segregation rather than social integration. On the other hand, if they put little stress on their students' social/cultural diversity, this may lead to them supporting social homogeneity more and not acknowledging the real social/cultural diversity of their students. While sensitizing their students to the role of a well-integrated citizen, teachers themselves try to strike a balance in their classroom communication between emphasizing the social/cultural "sameness" and "diversity" of the students.*

**Keywords:** teachers' diversity constructions, citizenship education, social/cultural 'sameness/diversity' dilemma

## Liquid modernity and identity strain: understanding the narratives of incarcerated lads in Scotland

Chris Holligan, School of Education, University of the West of Scotland [chris.holligan@uws.ac.uk](mailto:chris.holligan@uws.ac.uk)

### **Abstract**

*This study is sympathetic to Zygmunt Bauman's notion of liquid modernity which can be used to help illuminate the strains experienced by teenage boys facing social exclusion and stigma in the contemporary world. The identity of these lads reflects their adaptation to adversity and it constitutes a presentation of a masculine selfhood. In line with liquid modernity we see a melting of the bonds which interlock individual choices into collective projects and actions. Their days are no longer 'given' or 'self-evident' which not only imposes strain on their identity, but causes a privatized burden of self-management falling upon the individual's shoulders. This qualitative research engaged with the life stories of 40 Scottish lads who had experienced multiple kinds of exclusion over their life trajectory to date. The interview based findings illustrate that strain theory affords a fruitful morally non-judgmental account of their situations which are colored by a version of the American Dream and anomie or alienation. Their roles and identities it is argued are informed by their membership of offending networks in local communities and prison careers. The paper concludes that we are in danger of fostering a generation of 'spoiled identities' and that more policy interventions are required to address the hurt underlying the anger and sense of grievance associated with sections of our communities.*

**Keywords:** identity, exclusion, crime, teenagers, alienation

## Aging societies: is there a difference between young and old citizens' risk taking and competitive attitudes in Europe

Márta Fülöp, Gábor Orosz, & Márk Molnár, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary  
[fulop.marta@ppk.elte.hu](mailto:fulop.marta@ppk.elte.hu)

### **Abstract**

*The growing number of old aged European citizens, the growing life expectancy and the parallel low birth rate in Europe will require from old people to be able to cope with the uncertainties of contemporary economies. Therefore, more and more have to be able to adapt or remain adaptive to an intensively competitive economic context and make decisions that are risky or are related to financial issues. The notion of successful aging also implies that old people stay active participants in the society and especially the highly-educated ones are seen as a growing market for consumption.*

*This research is part of a bigger research project (OTKA K 104332). The goal of the present part of the research was to reveal age and gender related differences between old and young citizens that may shed light on old people's ability to cope with competitive situations and to take decisions that imply risk in general or in financial terms. Altogether 152 (111 females and 51 males) young adults and 214 old adults (138 females and 75 males) participated in the research. Their mean age was 24 and 71 years, respectively. The great majority of the young adults were university students and the great majority of the old participants were university graduates, almost 5 percent of them with a PhD degree. The participants filled out the Multiple Competitive Attitude Scale (Orosz & Fülöp et al, 2015), the Risk Orientation Questionnaire (ROQ, Rohrmann, 2002) and the Ten Dilemmas: Financial Risk Propensity Scale (Farágó et al, 2008). The results show great similarity in terms of competitiveness and financial risk taking between the two age groups and higher proneness to take risks in general and less cautiousness among the young. Women are more competition avoidant in both age groups.*

**Keywords:** aging, risk taking, competitive attitudes, gender differences

## A follow-up report from a 3-year project to provide psychological & counselling support to Roma students and their families

Ioannis Dimakos & Artemisia Papakonstantinou

Department of Primary Education, University of Patras [idimakos@upatras.gr](mailto:idimakos@upatras.gr)

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of the proposed paper is to report on a 3-year project, co-funded by the European Union, for the integration of Roma groups into Greek society. More specifically, the focus of the paper will be on Action 5 of the project, (i.e., the provision of psychological and counselling services to Roma students in schools). In order to achieve the goals of Action 5, the project employed psychologists, social workers and special educators whose task was to visit schools with high levels of Roma student enrollment and to work with these students on a regular basis. The theoretical foundations of the Action's work can be found in the work of Hatzichristou (2008) and the application of a program for the social and emotional education of children. The Action's psychologists and other support personnel provided individual and group counselling opportunities and led various activities in order to enhance the self-image and self-efficacy of Roma students. A second goal of the project was to increase the number of Roma children enrolled in schools and to reduce the very high levels of school drop-out observed in Roma communities. Given the fact that it is difficult to separate work done in schools and work in the families, the same psychologists also visited Roma families and their homes in order to provide a more complete psychological support framework for the entire family. During the project's run, the Action team observed increased levels of Roma student satisfaction with the Action's activities as well as increased numbers of Roma students registered to attend schools. Moreover, the institution of summer programs aimed at Roma families (parents and students) also helped in reaching the project's and the Action's goals. Suggestions for the provision of social services for the integration of students and parents are further considered.*

**Keywords:** Roma children, psychological support, counselling, schooling

### **Introduction**

Roma people are among the largest ethnic minorities scattered across Europe according to European Union agencies (European Commission, 2010). In addition, as has been reported earlier, the members of the Roma community are often excluded from society and lack in opportunities for social integration, access to education and health services (Dimakos & Papakonstantinou, 2012; Pnevmatikos, Geka, Divane, 2013).

Because of this lack of social integration, formal and accurate data on the Roma community and the conditions they live in are difficult to come by. However, according to unofficial data obtained from the regional directorate of primary and secondary education of Western Greece, in the administrative region of Western Greece (which encompass the prefectures of Achaia, Ileia, and Aetoloacarnania), on any given day approximately 450 – 500 Roma children of school age should attend schools (both primary and secondary) on a daily basis. Moreover, the majority of adult Roma people (i.e., Roma parents) are either illiterate or functionally illiterate, while almost all Roma children have not attended kindergarten, which lasts two years (pre-K and K) in Greece and is mandatory for all students.

Dimakos and Papakonstantinou (2012) reported on a three-year long programme appropriately titled *The Education of Roma Children*, which aimed to “... alleviate the lack of educational opportunities, various educational inequalities and the marginalization of Roma children and their families” (Dimakos & Papakonstantinou, 2012, p. 97). As further explained in that report, ultimately the project aimed to assist in the integration of Roma children and their families in Greek society and the development of citizenship identity for the Roma participants. The issue of ethnic identity has been examined by Pnevmatikos, Geka and Divane (2010) who found that as a group, Roma children had a high sense of their own (ingroup) Roma identity and that identity was different from the identity of the (outgroup) Greek identity.

The *Education of Roma Children* project aimed to improve the inclusion of Roma students in their local schools (which included native Greek students as well), to reduce dropout rates (already high within the Roma community), to increase school registration numbers for the following academic years and to improve the relations between Roma and local, native Greek students. Further, the programme aimed at changing the attitudes of Roma families towards schools and bringing Roma parents closer to the schools their children attend.

The entire project consisted of various interrelated Actions. Action 5 of the project focused on the psychological support of Roma students. After three years of implementation, the Action covered 10 primary schools and 5 kindergartens, although in the 2012 report (Dimakos & Papakonstantinou, 2012) reported that the Action initially included only 5 schools. However, the main characteristics of the Action remained the same. Action team specialists (psychologists, social workers and special education teachers) visited schools and worked with students and teachers alike on a weekly basis. In addition, when needed (e.g. cases of delinquent behaviours exhibited by Roma students or other in-class problems), the Action team specialists were available to all schools on an as-needed basis.

During their regular meetings, the Action team specialists held person-to-person and group sessions with Roma students. Following the suggestions of Hatzichristou (2008) who outlined a programme for the promotion of mental health, social and emotional education in schools, specialists and students worked on social skill promotion exercises, confidence building and emotional awareness activities. In addition, special education teachers overlooked, monitored the students’ learning progress and assisted in learning related issues. Moreover, the teams consulted with teachers and offered ideas and suggestions for in-class interventions and other projects led by teachers and supervised by the team specialists. Finally, the Action team specialists worked closely with school administrators in order to assist with new enrolments at the start of the following academic years (Kaouri & Dimakos, 2012). On a separate note, because a large number of teachers were newly hired, the team specialists offered minimal psychological support to the teachers in order to assist with work-related stress.

### **Good practices**

During the three years of the programme, the Action team introduced a token economy system to help students engage in their class work more actively. They also assisted the schools to organize a book fair with the participation of Roma as well as native Greek students. The purpose of the fair was to showcase the progress of the Roma students and to assist in cultivating a sense of community between native Greek and Roma students.

At some point during the second year of the programme implementation, lectures and open seminars were introduced to better inform the teachers and the parents of the both native Greek and Roma students. In addition, a summer school programme was organized for Roma parents and children. The programme was deemed a success and was attended by several Roma parents who could “drop off” their children (who were given activities to complete) while their parents attended the school. In informal interviews with several attendees, the key to the success of the summer school programme was partially due to the ability to have some free time in their hands (without having to take care of the children).

### **Some results from the programme**

For each year after the first year of its implementation, the numbers of new school registrations for Roma students were higher than before. This continued throughout the entire programme and is, perhaps, one of the reasons behind the success of the programme.

In addition, Roma students indicated that they liked the increased attention and the presence of the Action team specialists in their classrooms. Because of this extra attention they received, Roma students indicated their desire and interest to participate further in the programme and to remain in the school (without dropping out) until the end of the academic year. Unfortunately, this interest was matched by Roma family actions. Therefore, student enrolment numbers were lower after Easter break holidays (in other words, during the months of May and June).

With regard to the attitudes of native students towards their Roma school peers, the participation of so many specialists benefited not only Roma students but the entire classroom. As a result (and perhaps, unintended outcome), the attitudes of Greek students were positive towards their Roma peers. This was demonstrated through informal talks and interviews with Greek students who were attending the same schools as their Roma peers. This is an interesting finding, although it requires further examination and verification. In past investigations, Dimakos and associates have shown that Greek students have a different and rather diverse perspective when it comes to their foreign or migrant peers (Dimakos, Spinthourakis, & Tasiopoulou, 2011). However, little is known about their attitudes towards Roma students.

Finally, teachers who participated in the programme reported generally positive attitudes towards their Roma students. More importantly, they seemed to understand the difficulties and the obstacles Roma students must overcome both in terms of classroom behaviour and in terms of teaching and learning expectations. However, they voiced their concern that despite their daily

work with Roma students, they were often left without official support in their daily work. They stressed the lack of proper multi-cultural education with a focus on Roma students and their needs and they also hinted at the need for specific in-service counselling for them and their students.

### **Implications for future programmes**

It would be an exercise in futility if one considered the implementation of a three-year programme as adequate to alleviate the struggles Roma students continue to face in the Greek schools daily. However, this programme provided the opportunity for interaction with a challenging ethnic minority group which has been often stigmatized in the Greek society. Based on our experience, it is evident that there is a need for continuous psychological and counselling support for Roma students. More, it is evident that such a programme cannot succeed without the concurrent support of Roma parents. The offering of parental counselling opportunities through parents' schools (Kaouri & Dimakos, 2012) will only lead to more active participation of Roma parents in the daily life of the schools their children attend. Finally, perhaps the next step would be to establish Health Education prevention programmes aimed at bolstering the psychological resilience of Roma as well as native Greek students.

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## Consequences of Low Student Satisfaction from Schooling

Fotios Petropoulos, PhD & Angeliki Anagnostopoulou, MA - Principal of Diavolitsi Elementary School, Messinia Division, Greece / EFL Consultant in Peloponnese Province, Messinia Division  
[petrofos@gmail.com](mailto:petrofos@gmail.com) [angieanagnostopoulou@gmail.com](mailto:angieanagnostopoulou@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*In recent years there is increasing evidence that student satisfaction originating from school reflects direct emotional reactions such as pleasure, fun as well as a sense of well-being stemming from school life. In contrast, student dislike regarding school pertains to their displeasure as well as dissatisfaction with the school environment, the interpersonal relations among students themselves or among students and teachers, the school subjects, the social school life as well as the education system in general. The behavior of students who display displeasure and indifference toward school is depicted in their unsuccessful attempt to partake in the school curriculum, in the lack as well as the disruption of school attendance patterns, in the development of feelings of distrust toward school as well as in the low levels of academic motivation and interest. Signs of fatigue, a feeling of stress deriving from schoolwork, destructiveness trends, behavior problematic instances, unjustified school absence, systematic abstinence from schoolwork as well as high dropout rates appear to be frequent phenomena of characteristic student attitude toward school. In this paper we look at student satisfaction as well as disaffected behaviors of children in schools and present the findings of a study conducted in Greece regarding the low school satisfaction and its consequences on school life as well as on student progress. It is our hope that this will foster discussion and contribute to both the discourse and the praxis efforts dealing with the subject.*

**Key Words:** School satisfaction, Student school displeasure

### **Introduction**

There has been research in the latest years that school dislike relates to student mood and emotions for school life as a whole, i.e., the attitude – the view – the perception students have regarding school through acquired schooling experiences. Students experience school as a dull, dreary place since, as inferred from research, they are not granted with desired psychological support while at the same time they feel that educators do not demonstrate genuine interest in them nor do they comprehend original student needs.

### **Theoretical Approach**

The relevant research of the World Health Organization – W.H.O, conducted in 1993, measured student satisfaction with school by examining the extent to which:

- students liked school
- school was a nice place to be
- going to school was boring

The results of the research have indicated that satisfaction deriving from school diminishes as students get older. More specifically, it became obvious through the research that, in all countries

in which students took part, the girls reported they liked school more than the boys. In addition, the research showed that the attitude toward school seemed to have more negative effects in populated cities in comparison to less populated as well as rural cities. Students of populated cities mainly said that they did not like school and thought that school was boring. It came out that 40,1% of students reported that they liked school 'a little', 14,1% of students stated that they liked school 'a lot' while 6,1% of students replied that they did not like school 'at all'.

### **Factors Relating to School Satisfaction**

Most studies, which have investigated the factors pertaining to satisfaction originating from school, examine the essential role of such features of the school environment, such as student support by teachers, the quality of student relations, the school climate (i.e., resilient, rigid, fair), students' participation in decision making, the extent of student participation in school activities as well as the degree of parent involvement in school affairs. A research conducted by Wright in 1962 revealed that part of student displeasure is directly related to the educators' lack of human qualities such as warmth and politeness as well as the absence of student feelings of joy. One more factor was the lack of appropriate school policy and administration by stakeholders as well as interpersonal relations with peers. According to Barbara Thompson (1975), student attitude toward school and teachers deteriorates as students proceed to higher grades. According to Wood (1999), as students move up the grades, they demonstrate an even more negative attitude toward school.

In light of the above, the factors which relate to student satisfaction stemming from school seem to be, according to W.H.O (1993), the following:

1. Student participation in decision making as well as in the forming of school regulations
2. Student support by teachers when needed
3. Student backing by peers when necessary
4. High expectations by parents and teachers

### **Consequences of Low School Satisfaction**

Low school satisfaction leads to a series of negative consequences such as low school performance, aggressive behavior, school alienation and school failure and/or school leaving. Such forms of withdrawal from school as unjustified absence – truancy, systematic abstinence from schoolwork as well as the overall potential abandonment of the school program constitute the most crucial consequences. There is evidence that the positive relation of students to school is in line with the academic levels of commitment and performance. Participation in school activities can be part of a cycle which promotes or reduces academic performance (Voelklkristin, 1995). Student attitude toward school has been associated with their academic achievement (Neale et. al., 1970). As Beelick (1973) states, increase of school satisfaction is likely to lead to potential rise of school efficiency.

### **Inadequate Attendance – Unjustified School Absence – School Leaving**

Due to the fact that students do not find school interesting, they think of it as a bleak place with irregular attendance to follow as a plausible aftermath. Truancy constitutes a way of living for a growing number of students, it can be defined as 'an unjustifiable abstinence from school' and remains a problematic situation the frequency of which gradually increases proportionately to the age of students while at the same time it is more frequent at the age of 13 and is more often observed in boys (Hebert, 1992); notwithstanding, a great number of truancy appears in the elementary school. In general, the extent of student attendance is likely to predict a child's adjustment to adult life.

According to the HSBC research of W.H.O (1993), 34,5% of students played truancy at least once. In particular, 18,5% played truancy once or twice, 7,3% over three to four times and 8,7% over five times. According to the aforementioned research, older students (15 years old) played truancy at the amount of 49,8% in relation to younger students (13 years old) who played truancy at the amount of 18,5% at least once in the first trimester. The research was repeated in 1999 in which a great number of students seemed to have found an outlet in truancy: 62% of 15-year-old boys as well as 56% of 15-year-old girls reported playing truancy at least once in the trimester while 41% and 31% respectively stated that they had played truancy over twice in the same period. Comparing the above studies, we note an increasing growth of truancy in a seven-year span.

Gottfredson's (1986) research leads to the same conclusion: students who are not in favor of school do not demonstrate regular school attendance. Galloway (1985) locates, among many factors relative to inadequate attendance, school phobia and truancy as the main causes of poor student attendance. She highlights school denial in its wider sense in the framework of which such cases as truancy, deliberate school rejection as part of a value system as well as occasional refusal for school, play a leading role.

Newmann, Rutter and Smith (1989) research have led to the same results in which the alienated student frequently leaves school, completes less amount of work and is not generally interested in school; the same results have indicated that alienation from school is accompanied by poor attendance. According to Ekstrometal (1986), the reasons of school leaving comprise true repulsion for school. Ruby & Law (1983) state that students' negative view of their own teachers, which associates with the negative perspective of appropriate school behavior, encourages the obvious negative behavior which relates to school dropout.

### **Fatigue – Pressure from Schoolwork**

Research indicated that 24,5% of the total number of students who took part replied that they felt tired when they started school. What is more, 14,3% of them said that they felt tired once up to three times a week while 10,2% four times or more. In addition, 52,1% of the total number of students answered that they were not capable of completing their assignments at home or school. In particular, 14,5% of the girls in comparison with 10,7% of the boys said that they were not able to work 'many times' while 32,3% of boys and girls reported that they were not able to work

‘sometimes’. In 1999, half of the 15-year-old boys of 47% and 56% said that they felt stressed with school work (W.H.O, 1993)

Kalabaliki’s student research sample (1995) (who mentioned frequent trends of destructiveness) reported experiences of dullness, oppression, displeasure and as well as a sense of being exempted from school much more often than the rest of the students. Stress stemming from schoolwork varied among different countries which took part in the research: 1% in Russia and 36% in Britain. In most countries, as research showed, stress from schoolwork increased as students got older. Some differentiation may have been traced due to various school systems or to the different school cultures which determined the conditions of success.

### **Destructiveness Trends – Behavioral Instances**

In the latest years, there has been a growing concern regarding violence as well as behavioral disorders in schools (Hebert, 1992). Behavioral disorder in social as well as other relations appears between:

- Student and authority (late arrivals, absence from school, truancy, disobedience)
- Student and subjects (repeated inadequate homework preparation, refusal for exam preparation, reaction to scheduled assignments)
- Student and teacher (use of vulgar expressions and inappropriate language in general, repeated teacher talk interruption, listening of instructions refusal, class disruption)
- Student and student (quarrels, threats, bullying, violent attacks, blackmails, thefts)
- Student and property (lack of care for books and school equipment, destruction of school furniture, deliberate vandalism)
- Student and society (destruction of the other’s property as well as the state property such as traffic signs and means of transport)

Student anti-social behavior appears to be a severe matter with many negative social and educational consequences. It opposes the concept of “discipline”, which constitutes a form of socialization and a means of control facilitating the teaching process so that the students internalize cultural values, mold their personalities and develop conscious “self-discipline”.

More severe violent as well as destructive offences have been reported in surveys conducted in Secondary schools. Students who took part in a relevant research have reported, in high percentages (74%), that they have caused school damages during their school life (e.g., desk/wall writing, desk/board breaks) (Ministry of Education, Pedagogic Institute, 2000).

### **The Survey**

In a survey conducted by Fotios Petropoulos, the following conclusions were drawn, which are in line with the results of the aforementioned surveys regarding low school satisfaction and its consequences on school life as well as in student progress. Specifically, the drawn remarks relate

to student school displeasure and to a statistically significant difference between boys and girls concerning school dislike:

- 32,7% (N=774) of students, who were asked about their opinion for school, replied that they liked it 'a little' while 13,2% (N=312) answered that they did not like it 'at all.'
- 45,4% (N=1074) of students think that school is 'a little' boring and a dull place, 18,7% (N=442) think that school is 'quite' boring while 10,7% (N=254) think that school is 'very' boring.
- 33,9% (N=802) of students believe that that there is 'enough' doubt and indifference on the part of students toward school, 29,8% (N=706) of students say there is 'a lot' of doubt and indifference while 25,5% (N=605) have answered there is 'a great deal' of doubt and indifference toward school
- 29% (N=686) of students consider school regulations to be 'a little' fair while 25,7% (N=608) not fair 'at all'
- 20,9% (N=497) of students feel 'a great deal' of fatigue at the start of school, 14,2% (N=337) feel 'a lot' of fatigue, 16,7% (N=395) feel 'enough' fatigue while 34,3% (N=813) feel 'a little' fatigue
- 39,5%(936) of students have reported they feel tired 'sometimes', 24,8 % (N=588) have said that they feel tired 'often' while 9,9% (N=234) have replied that they 'always' feel tired in school
- 30,6 % (N=725) of students 'rarely' feel happy when they are in the school environment while 19,4% (N=460) have answered that they 'never' feel happy to be at school
- 28,1% (N=666) of students have said that they 'sometimes' feel stressed by the obligations of their schoolwork, 32,9% (N=780) have responded that they 'often' feel stressed while 18,3% (N=434) 'always' feel pressured at school
- 30,6% (N=725) of students have criticized school encounter as 'indifferent', 10% (N=236) as 'almost unfair' while 9,2% (N=218) as 'unfair'
- Students with a low graduation rate from junior high school appear to be even more indifferent to school in the first class of senior high while the average rate of dislike is greater in boys than in girls
- 21,5% of students have 'rarely' caused deliberate damage in the school environment, 6,3% have 'sometimes' done so, 3% have 'often' caused damage in their school while 3,3% have 'always' caused damage in school.

## **Conclusions**

Young students spend quite a long and at the same time significant part of their lives in school, the experience of which contributes to a large extent to the shaping of their character as well as to the forming of the conditions which will play an important role later in their lives. If young students draw satisfaction from school experience or not is an issue which is worth being examined and dealt with. However, school pleasure as well as student perception of life are integral constituents of a quality life for adolescents. Low satisfaction from school constitutes a main source of stress as well as a degraded life quality.

Most surveys about students' emotions as well as reactions to school environment indicate that school is not a place in which they feel convenient, demonstrate cognitive achievements or develop healthy interpersonal relations. If negative school attitudes constitute a forerunner of children's future, it is vital that attempts should be made in order for school stakeholders to discover the reasons behind negativity in an effort to create positive future for young students (Ruby & Law, 1983).

A great deal of survey elements confirm that school organization, policy and practices significantly influence children's behavior. School itself is capable of constituting the key factor which will determine if certain students are likely to become disruptive and uncooperative or not (Newman, Rutter, & Smith, 1989). A school which displays sensitivity to student needs and functions in an affective, constructive and positive way is likely to cope with fewer instances of anti-social behavior than the school which adopts a punitive attitude less focused on students. Empirical research has indicated the essential affiliation among such school factors as positive school climate, discipline code, judicial actions as regards student behavior taken in school. The three traits which contribute to a learner - centered environment are the following:

1. Goals, organization, scheduling, evaluation
2. Regulations and procedures consistently implemented
3. A climate of care which guides interpersonal relations in school

Schools are required to contribute to a smooth and prosperous student growth, to support students in contrast to potential alienating pressures through the development of the individual and the community school life, also via the provision of specific information which will aim at young students' theoretical and moral equipping. The learner – centered approach in the educational process constitutes substantial hope for an effective school with high rates of acceptance and student satisfaction as well as low rates of school dropout and early school leaving.

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## The Concept of Diversity in Greek Health Education Programmes

Artemisia Papakonstantinou, MSc, Health Education Department, Primary Education of Achaia, Greece [papart71@gmail.com](mailto:papart71@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Health Education is part of the curriculum in the Greek educational system. It involves specifically structured learning activities which enable students to think and improve their physical and mental health. Generally speaking, Health Education aims at making young people adopt positive attitudes and behaviours. It contributes to the field of primary prevention, it is related to students' lifestyle and life choices and it can be implemented from the early pre-school years. The concept of diversity is found at the epicentre of the topics covered in the field of education and it includes the concepts of comprehending, accepting and protecting people's identity. In primary and secondary education, diversity can be approached through Greek Health Education programmes, which are a part of school curricula and syllabi. The general aim of these programmes is to recognise the psycho-social factors which shape people's behaviour when faced with the 'diverse', while this can be further analysed in subsections regarding a person's emotional and psycho-motor development, interpersonal relationships, active citizens' education, human rights, the quality of life and the human-environmental relationship. The methodology of these programmes is based on the principles of experiential education as well as on students' active participation and personal experiences. These programmes last up to 6 months and can be implemented by classes in every school unit, while collaboration efforts with other school units or classes are reinforced and collaboration in school networks is also promoted. Health Education departments mainly assume to support educators for the implementation of such programmes, as well as to train educators by organizing seminars and workshops. This work is also reinforced by governmental and local bodies.*

**Keywords:** Diversity, Health Education, programmes

### Introduction

School violence, juvenile delinquency, use of addictive substances, cases of sexual harassment, racism, but also issues of obesity, first aid, are some of the phenomena that characterize contemporary Greek society and are linked to a high rate of school failure, dropout and social exclusion (Papanis & Giavrimis, 2008). Addressing these important social and educational problems means that we have to deal with human behaviour and develop proper personal and social skills (Marks, 2008; Schall, 1994). All of the above are related to Health Education in schools. Schools, as places of learning and education, contribute to the formation of students' personalities and the adoption of proper values, attitudes and behaviours by them (Matsagouras, 2007).

The concept of diversity is found at the core of health education with particular emphasis on comprehending, accepting and protecting people's identity as well as being aware of the issues of other people (Pedagogical Institute, 2003). Diversity is presented through the appropriate health education programmes for primary and secondary education, which are part of school curricula and syllabi and they are designed in general to locate and identify psychosocial factors that shape the behaviour towards the 'other'. These programmes can be broken down into subsections regarding the emotional and psychomotor development of the individual, interpersonal relations, treatment of active citizen, human rights, quality of life and the relationship with the environment (Stappa-Mourtzini, 2007).

### **Health education**

Health education, as a coherent educational process, interdisciplinary in nature, aims at developing skills in order for students to adopt healthy attitudes and behaviours (Sokou, 1999). It is cross-thematically approached and it uses planned learning opportunities in order to enable individuals to act consciously and improve their physical and mental health (Kousoulas, 2004; Matsagouras, 2002a). It aims to protect, improve and promote students' mental, physical and social wellbeing. The end result is the empowerment of students in their journey to develop their personal and prosocial skills and to adopt positive attitudes and behaviours (Fisher, Howat, Binns, & Liveris, 1986; Ioannou, Kouta, & Charalambous, 2012; Schall, 1994; Tones, 1986).

The first part of this aim, regarding the promotion of mental, physical and social well-being of students, focuses on the content and the need for a holistic approach for every aspect of life (physical, mental, social) as an asset for "good life" (Ioannou, et al., 2012). It is also connected with the core mission of the school and education in general (Schall, 1994), and the values that govern it, such as democracy, social inclusion, capacity for action etc. (Simovska, 2012). The second part is related to the methodology of Health Education on the empowerment of the individual (personal and social skills) with the parallel creation of supportive environment (upgrading of their social and physical environment), so that the healthier choice is the easier (Ioannou, et al., 2012).

According to the Cross-Thematic Curriculum Framework (D.E.P.P.S.) and the Curriculum Framework (A.P.S.) of Greek Compulsory Education, as well as the Programmes of Planning and Developing Cross-thematic Activities (Pedagogical Institute, 2003), Health Education in schools is an eminently cross-thematic activity that contributes to school life's improvement and school's connection to social reality. It indirectly aims to reduce school failure and drop out of compulsory education and thus to prevent young people's exclusion from society and labour market. Throughout the Curriculum Framework, students are concerned about individual's interdependence and the intended behaviour of the economic, cultural, social and political environment and they implement practical actions in order to claim better conditions of their physical and mental health (Alahiotis, 2003).

Innovative actions in general and health education in particular, are the cross-thematic way of achieving knowledge. Students have the opportunity to integrate knowledge and skills, to develop their personal opinions on both, everyday life, and social issues in general and formulate their own worldview (Alahiotis, 2002).

The implementation of health education programmes in schools is based on active-experiential learning and it is aimed at students' attitude and behaviour change by enhancing accountability, communication, self-confidence, self-esteem, developing their personality and their ability to adopt healthy lifestyles (Stappa-Mourtzini, 2007). Health Education programmes set students at the center of their efforts. They are adapted according to their needs and particularities with respect to diversity. They encourage teamwork and methods with participatory processes and they develop new cooperation gateways between school, family and the community (Gold, 1990;

Seffrin, 1990). In addition, they enhance the role of teachers and school in order to correspond to their students' needs as these are reflected within the socio-economic, cultural and physical environment (Hargreaves, 1994). The teacher from the player-transmitter of knowledge and the center of the teaching process becomes into the co-researcher, the partner and the mentor. He follows his students' activities, assists the difficulties that will arise in the implementation of the work plan, not as a master but as a more experienced partner. With this methodology the dynamic of the school team that cooperates with is utilized and the activities are implemented in an accepting climate, encouragement and creativity, as each student plays a central role throughout the process. Also, the teacher facilitates, advises and encourages him/her to achieve the acquisition of knowledge and cultivate the attitudes and skills required in today's society of Information and Knowledge (Alahiotis, 2002).

The systematic implementation of health education programmes in schools contributes to the development of healthy interpersonal relationships, promotes human rights, the diversity, the equality of opportunity and sexes, the volunteerism, faces the delinquency, the social inequality and exclusion, racism and xenophobia. It can fulfill the educational and social goals of school regarding the formation of citizens who know how to demand better living conditions (Pedagogical Institute, 2003).

The intense mobility of groups and people maps a new reality for the developed countries of the postmodern world, alters the structure of the countries' social stratification and creates the cultural diversity (Hatzichristou, 2011). The multiculturalism that characterizes the modern Greek society has resulted in the creation of a student 'mosaic' in education, and now the school has to play its role (Papakonstantinopoulou & Vassilopoulos, 2012). In all schools, there are children with 'diversities'. These differences are determined by language, customs, values, religion, ideas, disability, etc., and the school is obliged to combine all of them and find their resultant (Ayton-Shenker, 1995).

As diversity, we usually define the personal components that distinguish an individual and make his/her activity difficult within a school or social group (Chatzichristou, 2011). A multicultural society, in the way it is shaped, involves diversity, which is characterized by conceptual openness. The fight against racism and xenophobia, gender equality, peaceful coexistence and respect for individual differences are very important, because there can be no cohesive society and pluralism without a commitment to respect human rights (Karamanou, 2011).

Diversity as a complex concept should not be confused with the concept of plurality. As pluralistic society we could determine the composition of modern societies in which they live people with diverse individual characteristics, both in the internal as well as to the external reality and presence. Compared with the above condition, diversity includes the concept of understanding, acceptance and protection of plurality of people's characteristics (Hatzichristou, 2011). It focuses on practices that recognize, accept different diverse characteristics of each individual and his/her rights to freedom of opinion, expression, education, creative occupation, non-discrimination,

conservation, development and diffusion of language, religion and culture (Ayton-Shenker, 1995; Brems, 2001). Respect and practical acceptance of diversity are the elements that can contribute to creating societies characterized by ideas of equality, mutual respect, fair treatment and protection of human rights.

School raises our awareness of the major problems humanity faces and therefore aims to develop the necessary attitudes and behaviours for communication, cooperation and solidarity (Hatzichristou, 2011). The question is how this can be achieved when our students are characterized by various differences, such as racial, religious, physical, colour, language, cultural. This adds to the contribution of the health education programmes which are lied in the field of primary prevention, are directly related to the manner and the person's attitude to life and can be applied from the pre-school age (Pedagogical Institute, 2003).

### **Designing and implementing a health education programme for Diversity**

At this point we should insert a summary chart of Greek education. The central body is the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. The policy of the Ministry is implemented by the 13 Regional Directorates of Primary and Secondary education. The Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Western Greece is one of them and deals with educational issues of three prefectures: Achaia, Ileia and Aitolokarnania. There is a Regional Director and two Heads of Scientific and Pedagogical guidance, one for Primary and one for Secondary Education. Each of the three prefectures has one Educational Director for Primary education and one for Secondary education. Directors of innovative actions, such as health education, cultural and environmental issues, assume a pedagogical and advisory role for teachers, both in primary and secondary schools. The contribution of school advisors is also important for both primary and secondary teachers (Table 1).

The Ministry of Education publishes annually the relevant circular letter for the design and implementation of programmes, which describes in detail the procedures (M. E. R. R. A, 2015). The circular letter is addressed to all schools and sets the framework for the conduct of these programmes. At county level, the Departments of Health Education undertake to monitor the smooth development of programmes, the active presence of participants and support teachers in the implementation of their programmes. All the above are based on the relevant circular and the curriculum framework generally. Health Education Directors study each design programme, authorize its implementation and initially perform relevant planning trainings for teachers according to the respective theme. These trainings may be carried out through the organization of seminars, workshops or experiential activities for teachers with the assistance of specialists in various subjects but also by teachers themselves who share good practices and efficient ways of implementing activities with their colleagues. Simultaneously they plan actions with the students' participation, both within the school premises and outside it, at public events in order to disseminate the issues in the local community. These actions are usually carried out in cooperation with departments of Universities, School Advisors, the Local Government, Museums, Libraries, Archives, NGOs, scientists, health professionals according to programmes' thematic.

GREEK MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS				
REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL DIRECTOR (3 PREFECTURES)				
HEAD OF EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION		(ACHAIA, ILEIA AITOLOAKARNANIA)		HEAD OF EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION
DIRECTOR OF PRIMARY EDUCATION (ACHAIA)			DIRECOTR OF SECONDARY EDUCATION (ACHAIA)	
INNOVATIVE ACTIONS				
HEALTH	PROMOTION	CULTURAL	THEMES	ENVIROMENTAL EDUCATION
SCHOOL ADVISORS			SCHOOL ADVISORS	

**Table 1.** *Organizational plan for Greek education*

Health education programmes are part of comprehensive school programmes (Pedagogical Institute, 2003), they are implemented through the regular school day cross-thematically diffused in other courses. Another creative enough time of their implementation is within the framework of the “Flexible Zone”. The F. Z. is an innovative programme that covers at least two teaching hours a week and operates within the compulsory curriculum. The purpose of F.Z. is to secure more time and resources for students and their teachers in order to study topics that interest them. Due to its principles and practices, the F.Z. enhances students’ role in the learning process and the autonomy of the educator and the school unit and promotes the connection between the school and the community (Matsagouras, 2002b).

The methodology of health education programmes is based on the principles of experiential education, as well as on students' active participation and personal experiences and on non-formal education, as well.

Non-formal education (Programme 'Iris', 2011) as an organized educational activity outside the formal school education system is a methodology based on participatory and active learning, personal experiences of children and voluntary participation. Today non-formal education is implemented by many voluntary organizations and agencies. It is appropriate for educational issues, such as the formation and the development of personality, the individual and social responsibility and the solidarity of responsible and critically thinking citizens. This could be happened because values, such as tolerance, dignity and respect to each other and skills, such as cooperation and mobilization to defend rights are mainly conquered through experience, practice and action in a democratic environment from the pre-school age.

Non-formal education aims through a collective and student-centered approach at the development of values and skills useful in everyday life and in preparing for an active civic role. It is exploited in areas such as diversity management and phenomena of discrimination, human rights, fighting xenophobia and racism and is slowly included in the Greek school.

Formal and non-formal education act as complementary and mutually reinforcing elements of a lifelong learning process. Activities of a programme of non-formal education can be applied to different educational contexts: formal context, such as the flexible zone, by the teacher of primary school, or less formal environments, such as a children's camp. The teacher chooses the activities that contribute to his learning objectives and adjusts them to the needs and characteristics of the learners in the group.

A health education programme that focuses on the emotional and psychosocial factors can also shape the behaviour about the 'different' and general interpersonal relations, the treatment of active citizenship and human rights. Depending on the age group being targeted, it should include some of the following objectives (Gearon, 2003):

- enable students to recognize similarities and differences between individuals and contexts,
- describe their own characteristics as individuals, as gender and as citizens of a country,
- work with several or different groups,
- demonstrate in practice respect for all individuals (diversity acceptance),
- identify the factors that can foster the co-existence of people and nations without problems,
- connect their experiences with the concept of acceptance of diversity (special focus on people with special needs).

The activities planned by teachers vary depending on the subject and age cohort being addressed, with the ultimate general aim of all team members' active participation in the learning process, the expression of the experience, the critical thinking, the respect and acceptance between each other. The implementation of each programme has duration from 2 to 6 months.

### **School networks for Diversity, the example of the Health Education Department of Primary Education of Achaia, Greece**

A particularly important factor, which promotes maximum results from the implementation of health education programmes for students and teachers, is the promotion of collaboration between classes or sections in school networks. The creation and coordination of each Local Thematic Network undertake the Health Education Directors to the local laws, after the approval from the responsible sector of the Ministry of Education. The function of a Health Education Network includes introductory training seminar, public presentation of work plans for all schools, feedback sessions and a final presentation. Teachers have the possibility to adapt the proposed activities in the dynamic of their class, test additional good practices and modify the original plan for the benefit of their students. They share their experiences with their colleagues in feedback meetings, in person or online and a part of their work is presented in the network's central event at the end of the school year. In this way there is greater opportunity to share their views with their colleagues, help one another and feel more supported. The students also can come into contact with other classmates, express their views and influence each other.

During the academic year 2014-2015, the Health Education Department of Primary Education of the Prefecture of Achaia (Western Greece) established three school networks that approached the concept of diversity in relation to promoting psychosocial behaviours, among others. For each of these networks, activities were designed that aimed at the active, cognitive, social and psychological involvement of each student, the creative use of their imagination, the challenge of their assumptions and the stimulation and integration of such concepts in everyday life as diversity, equality and dignity. Modern learner-centered techniques were used, such as case study, creative/artistic expression, dialogue and interview, simulation, role-playing, drama, narrative reconstruction, brainstorming, works of collecting and processing data. During the implementation, each programme which approaches issues of behaviour and acceptance of the 'different', is indicated the combined use of these techniques in order to be flexible and adaptable to each group's characteristics.

The first network entitled "I walk in life" implemented by eleven nursery schools with the participation of 29 teachers and 248 infants. Its main purpose was to strengthen students' empathy and self-esteem, friendship-social competency skills, enhance personality, recognition and emotion management and promote positive interpersonal relations. These activities were structured according to the group's age, so that the students can recognize and express their feelings after completing the programme, describe friendship in their way, present through imitation roles problem solving instances in a relationship, demonstrate respect for others' rights. They were dominated experiential active learning activities, such as role playing, brainstorming, fiction, classroom discussions, games which combine music with movement and outdoor ones. The second network, entitled "Touching the Circle", had the participation of eleven nursery and primary schools, with 31 teachers and 256 students from A to D class. Its primary objective goal was the strengthening of personality, social skills and interpersonal relations, so students can have confidence in themselves and their forces to deal with difficult situations, without resorting to behaviours that are harmful to their physical and mental health. Specific objectives of the network were to strengthen self-esteem, develop unity and cooperation among students and cultivate trust and security through the interaction within the group and communication through the use of verbal and non-verbal channels. Moreover, it was given students the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the process of self-presentation, identify attitudes and behaviours that facilitate collaboration and enhance the good functioning of the group and reflect on the factors affecting positively and negatively the social relations. They were used previous experiential activities, tailored to the specific theme and enriched by mutual learning activities, student diaries, debate, dramatizations, creating educational material.

The third network titled "And yet it's not a utopia..." had the overall purpose of the approach of diversity and racism. Six primary schools with 12 teachers and 155 students from fifth and sixth grade participated in this network. Its goal was for students to learn about and understand the cultural differences between groups and individuals, and the common characteristics, needs and desires of all, human rights and the equality as a basic democratic principle. Moreover, they could realize that art can become the mean of expression of the equality and diversity of individuals.



Specific objectives of the network were students identify similarities and differences among individuals, describe their own characteristics as individuals, as gender and as citizens of a country, develop cooperative relationships with several or different groups, demonstrate artistically the beauty of diversity. There were also used participatory experiential techniques, already mentioned, and additionally, case study, simulation, roundtable discussions, Forum theater's techniques.

The review and evaluation of the school networks had been done throughout the 6-month duration by the teachers themselves and the participated students, both formal and non-formal techniques. Mainly, there were used:

- Overall questionnaires for the action of networks and their results compared to the initial objectives.
- Observation regarding the behaviour, understanding, involvement and skills of pupils and the team's function, both by teachers and by the students themselves (self-assessment).
- Group discussions for assessing the content of activities, the degree of difficulty, the opportunities offered for participation and involvement of students and for their connection to the real world, both by teachers and by the students themselves (self-assessment).

This assessment framework contributes to the overall goals of the network as well as promotes accountability to the students through collaborative work processes and enhances pupils' self-assessment, self-confidence and self-esteem (Pedagogical Institute, 2003).

## **Conclusion**

This article tried to describe the curriculum of Health Education in Greek Education and highlight the dimension of diversity that emerges within this place and seems to be necessary in today's multicultural societies. Health education programmes, as eminently cross-thematic activities, proactively function towards factors shaping the behaviour around the 'different' and provide of promoting emotional and psychosocial development of all students. They place the student at the center, aim at changing attitudes and behaviour, strengthen the personality and are adjusted according to the needs and peculiarities.

Teachers are the main agents of this effort who implement the health education programmes within the school and their work is based on principles of experiential learning. They seek the active participation of their students and exploit their personal experiences in order to develop their values and skills useful in their daily life and prepare them for taking over the role of active citizenship. Health education programmes appear to have great impact, achieve most of their goals and be more effective when they are implemented through school networks. It is noteworthy that the possibility of exchanging views and mutual support is further increased by this way, not only among students, but also among teachers participating in each network.

The time needed for the implementation of such projects, especially in network level, far exceed the available teaching hours and take much more personal time as well as outlays for their

completion. The Greek State Budget does not provide coverage for costs of educational supplies and overtimes. Although this can be difficult in many cases the design and implementation of actions within networks, there are few times when individual allocation of teachers for offer towards their students compensates any difficulties.

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## Immigrant identities: in danger of being outsiders in their own culture and family

Riitta Korhonen, Julia Spinthourakis University of Turku, University of Patras  
[riitta.korhonen@gmail.com](mailto:riitta.korhonen@gmail.com), [jspin@upatras.gr](mailto:jspin@upatras.gr)

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this presentation is to show how important and necessary in immigrant children's education is for them to keep on and develop their own culture. Every child has rights for his/her own language, culture and own manners. This point of view is important to all children in these same groups. Good contacts and friendship need understanding, respecting, values. Teachers in early childhood education, pre-primary and primary education are key persons to develop all children's self-confidence, emotional, social and ethical aspects. This presentation is theoretical and will show the importance of one's background in the practice of school and group education. The agreement of Children's rights, human rights and principles of culture and global education are in the focus. Curricula for education and teaching in different levels show the way for teachers.*

**Keywords:** Ethnic identity, immigrant children/families, culture, integration

## Cultural Identity in the Globalization Context as a Topical Issue of Pedagogical Theory in Latvia

Zoja Chehlova, Ingrīda Keviša, Mikhail Chehlov, University of Latvia / University of Latvia / Riga Institute of Communication and Management - [chehlova@inbox.lv](mailto:chehlova@inbox.lv)

### **Abstract**

*Globalization is an objective trend in the development of world societies in the 21st century. Globalization causes social and ethno-cultural transformations, which bring to the foreground the issue of cultural identity and individual's spiritual self-determination. The consequences of globalization, the crisis of cultural identity in particular, are actively discussed in the world science. The analysis of scientific literature shows that the issue of cultural identity in the context of globalization needs to be revisited.*

*The aim of the research is to work out the structure and content of the concept "cultural identity" in the context of globalization in Latvia and to determine the conditions for the development of cultural identity of senior secondary school students (aged 17 – 18) and the strategy for the development of cultural identity in the actual pedagogical process.*

*The methodology of the research: the axiological approach, the humanitarian approach, the personal activity based approach;  
theoretical methods – analysis, comparison;  
empirical methods – survey questionnaire, conversation, experiment and mathematical statistics.*

**Keywords:** globalization, cultural identity, the humanitarian model of education, the universal cultural component.

### ***Cultural identity: its nature and peculiarities in the 21st century***

Cultural identity is an integral part of a multi-level concept "social identity". Most scholars treat cultural identity as individuals' awareness of their cultural belonging to a definite ethnic community, as the result of cognitive and emotional processes involved in the awareness of oneself as a representative of a definite ethnos, the identification with it as well as the dissociation from other ethnic groups (Phinney, 1990).

Most researchers are aware that the development of identity is not a linear process. It goes through the so-called identity crises – the periods of conflict between the structure of identity that had been formed at a certain time with the corresponding mode of life activity and the social situation that has changed in the interim. In order to get out of the crisis, individuals have to make an effort to reconstruct their identity, accept new values, goals, etc. The conflict is resolved by accepting supra-ethnic values, for instance, religious or cultural ones (Achkasov, 1999, 48). Most contemporary psychologists include the following components in the structure of cultural identity:

- the cognitive component (knowledge, the ideas concerning the features of one's own culture and the awareness of oneself as its member on the basis of signs that differentiate cultures);

- the affective component (the feeling of belonging to a certain culture, the appreciation of its quality, the attitude to belonging to it);
- the behavioural component (the real mechanism of not only being aware, but also manifesting oneself as a member of a certain cultural group (Breakwell, 1986; Phinney, 1990).

Each component of cultural identity has its own characteristics; in their actual functioning, all the components are dialectically interconnected and interdependent. The integration of the components of cultural identity enables individuals to adapt to the changing conditions of their life maintaining dynamic integration between themselves and the surrounding world.

The key characteristic of cultural identity is its integrity, which can be understood as a continuous process of finding one's self-identity in the course of one's whole life in the conditions of changing social and cultural reality (Chagilov, 1991, 121).

Continuity as a principle of the model of identity presupposes the existence and preservation of invariant components in its content. The mechanism of the integration of the structural components of cultural identity is constituted by processes that refer to the dynamics of its development. We share the view of G. Breakwell, who believes that the development of identity takes place with the help of two main processes:

1. assimilation and accommodation: which involve the selection of new components for the structure of identity and then the adaptation of the structure to these components (restructuring);
2. evaluation – the determination of the meaning and value of identity, both the old and the new one. These processes are interconnected: the process of valuation can affect the selection of content for assimilation and the form of accommodation. On the other hand, the values that are assimilated set criteria for evaluation. The interaction of these processes in time leads to the formation and integration of the cognitive, affective and behavioural components of cultural identity (Breakwell, 1986, 28). If the processes of assimilation, accommodation and evaluation no longer support the integrity of an individual for some reason, it results in the crisis of cultural identity, which is understood in psychology as “the process of inner restructuring of the content and value orientations of personality” (Chagilov, 1991, 144).

For instance, the shift in the cultural paradigm in Eastern Europe in the late 1990s changed the status of ethno-cultural diasporas traditionally living in the Latvian cultural space. In these conditions, the representatives of ethno-cultural minorities were not always able to adapt to the fast changes in several areas (economic, social, linguistic, etc.). This was the cause for the crisis of cultural identity among the representatives of ethno-cultural diasporas. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a crisis among the representatives of the dominant ethnos can also be observed. The social and

political situation has changed: Latvia has become the member of NATO and the European Union. This situation required changes in the content of cultural identity. Different values have become systemic in the structure of cultural identity: tolerance, democracy, poly-culturalism, dialogue with the representatives of other ethnic groups. According to contemporary scientists (R. D. Albert, Y. Berry, S. Bocher, etc.), integration is the most positive strategy for overcoming the present crisis – “the tendency of preserving one’s own cultural belonging along with the tendency of acquiring the culture of the dominant ethnos” (Lebedeva, 1999, 218).

***The specific features of the crisis of cultural identity in the conditions of globalization at the beginning of the 21st century***

The 21st century is characterized by active globalization processes although the gradual interconnection of cultures can be observed in the course of the entire human history. According to scholars, globalization refers to the process of social transformations in the last decades, which involves the formation of common economic space, common world market, the global openness of information (the internet), the appearance of new information technologies, as well as increasingly closer global cultural connections between people and nations (Giddens, 1991, 64). Globalization refers not so much to the movement of people and goods, but rather to the way the participants of the world system identify events and phenomena. In the most general sense, globalization refers to the process leading to the global interconnectedness of structures, institutions, and cultures (Archer, 1991, 133). Globalization destroys the structure of the key principles of society and the state. As a result, the crisis of cultural identity can be observed. In the conditions of globalization, the crisis of cultural identity manifests itself both on the individual and social levels: it implies the loss of orientation in the historical space and time, the loss of ideals and individual meanings, frustration, interpersonal conflicts, the revision of traditional values and behavioural norms, the loss of connection with ethnic roots. It is important to understand that the crisis of cultural identity can have serious consequences since the lost feeling of spiritual roots can cause anxiety, the feeling of being lost and vulnerability, which brings about the protective aggression towards the “other” and “strange” as something alien and hostile. The analysis of the characteristics of globalization leads to the conclusion that in order to overcome the crisis of cultural identity, it is necessary to single out the humane foundation of globalization. Such a foundation is made up of education, culture, religion and universal human values. Education plays a particular role in the development of cultural identity. We regard education as the acquisition of culture and the realization of its creative potential, while culture is the key condition for the development of personality and the perfection of the process of education.

***The key conditions for the development of cultural identity of senior secondary school students (aged 17 – 18)***

In Latvia, traditional models of education do not fully provide young people with the worldview foundation necessary for productive interaction with the representatives of other ethno-cultural traditions, styles and lifestyles. One of the causes of the insufficient potential of moral education in the system of education in Latvia is the dominance of knowledge-based approach in the actual pedagogical practice with regard to the content of education, to the detriment of value-based

approach. In order to re-focus education on cultural values, it is necessary to work out a new model of education. In the Latvian pedagogical science, M. Chehlov has developed the humanitarian model of education. The key idea of the new conception is a student as a value at the centre of the process of learning. Knowledge and skills are the means for the development of personality. According to the author, changing the content of education is the main condition for the development of cultural identity.

Changes in the content of education are aimed at the development of learners as personalities and citizens of the united Europe. In view of this aim, the content of education has to be enriched by the universal cultural component. We believe that the incorporation of the universal cultural component in the content of education is not connected to the expansion of the volume of information on culture, but rather to the cultural development of each learner in the process of independent productive educational activity. The content of the universal cultural component includes the following elements:

- the subject content, including the cultural experience of the humanity in the form of knowledge and ideas;
- the activity content, expanding the modes of human activity in the system of culture;
- the subjective content, including individual socio-cultural experience, the system of attitudes, value orientations;
- the universal cultural component, including universal human values (individual freedom, democracy, dialogue, tolerance).

The content of the universal cultural component presupposes free communication in the process of learning. Free communication and dialogue serve as the basis for the interaction of the participants of the process of learning and as a source of tolerance. Free communication is regarded as a condition for the development of cultural tolerance.

Another important condition for the development of cultural identity is the openness of young people to cultural influences on the basis of the knowledge of different languages. It is necessary to know one's national traditions, the traditions of other ethnic groups as well as European traditions.

The aforementioned conditions facilitate the integration of various elements of the content of the universal cultural component, which forms poly-cultural identity. Poly-cultural identity refers to the integration of the European and ethnic identities and has universal human values as its foundation.



***The organization of the process of learning in Pushkin Lyceum with regard to the development of the poly-cultural identity of students***

The humanitarian model of education was approbated in the process of learning in Pushkin Lyceum in Latvia. Different versions of the integration of the content elements of the universal cultural component in the process of learning were used:

- the creation of poly-linguistic educational space;
- the integrated teaching of humanitarian subjects;
- the incorporation of the synchronized courses of history, world literature and world arts in the content of education;
- the incorporation of universal cultural issues in the content of subjects;

The main principles underpinning the organization of the pedagogical process in Pushkin Lyceum are as follows:

- openness (to the social environment, contacts and connections, other levels of education);
- partnership (the development of relationships with different partners - parents, students, social organizations, etc.);
- pluralism (cultural priorities corresponding to the European dimensions);
- poly-linguism (the knowledge of Russian, Latvian and two foreign languages of students' choice: English, German or Spanish);
- poly-culturalism (the knowledge of Russian culture, Latvian culture, European cultures, the development of inter-cultural interaction and dialogue);
- the integration of different levels of education. In Pushkin Lyceum, the integrated system of education, which involves the interconnection of general secondary education with initial professional training and practice (which means the application of knowledge in socially meaningful real-life activity), exists.

Integrated education is provided in all the departments of the Pushkin Lyceum (the departments of Psychology and Pedagogy, Philology, Journalism, Economics, Law, and Medicine).

A particular attention is paid to the dialectical interconnection of education and upbringing in the broadest sense of the word, which makes it possible to ensure the individual development of each student and educate responsible and conscientious citizens of New Europe with a poly-cultural identity.

In the Pushkin Lyceum, scientific research work plays an especially important role in the development of poly-cultural identity. It is an integral part of the process of learning. Scientific research activity is regarded as a space where the potential of the cultural development of the lyceum students can be actualized. The writing of research papers is a natural form of activity for all students. The presentations of research papers are held at all departments of the lyceum. After that, the best papers are presented at the lyceum conference. An opportunity to present

their work at the University of Latvia is particularly challenging for the students. The best students have also participated in international conferences in the fields of pedagogy, philosophy and economics. The theme of research in pedagogy is “The development of the professional self-determination of the lyceum students in the process of pedagogical practice”. It has to be noted that the key objective of students’ research activity is not the best scientific result, but the realization of an individual’s creative potential, becoming familiar with world cultural heritage, entrance into the world of poly-cultural values and the development of inter-cultural dialogue. It is important that the participants of scientific research have free communication and an active position in the research process determined by the equal rights of the participants of this process to their own development. Another aspect is the equality of the position of a teacher – the supervisor of research work – and that of the students. It is important that the research problem is studied by a team of students from different schools: with Latvian and Russian as languages of instruction. In our case, these were students with different ethnic identities. Collaborative activity: a common goal and the joint searching for the ways of solving the problem, the ability to share responsibility and feel oneself as a member of the team as well as the knowledge of languages promote creative communication and facilitate the development of tolerance and intercultural dialogue, as well as the development of poly-cultural identity on this basis. The development of poly-cultural identity was observed when conducting research activity in larger groups. The study of the motivation of learning was performed by Russian, Latvian and Finnish students. Thus, the integration of the elements of the universal cultural component in the content of education promotes the development of poly-cultural identity of the lyceum students.

### **Conclusions**

1. Cultural identity is an integral part of individual’s social identity. The integrity of individual’s identity and its stable functioning are necessary conditions for the active inclusion of the individual in the socio-cultural environment.
2. The structure of cultural identity includes the cognitive, affective and behavioural components; the mechanism of their integration enabling individuals to adapt to the changed conditions of their life activity manifests itself as the processes of assimilation, accommodation and evaluation of the content of identity.
3. The development of cultural identity by means of solving important problems takes place in the course of the entire human life and goes through identity crises, during which the restructuring of identity and the adoption of new values and life goals occur.
4. The development of personal identity is activated during the period of adolescence, when individuals start forming the system of values and beliefs, gradually becoming aware of the freedom of choice with regard to their identification with a certain cultural group, whose members they are considered to be by others, or with the group of the dominant majority.
5. The pedagogical basis for the integration of the content, affective and behavioural components of the cultural identity of learners is constituted by the organization of the process of learning including the universal cultural component in the content of education. The universal cultural component represents the system of the following interrelated objective and subjective elements:

- the subject content, including the cultural experience of the humanity in the form of knowledge;
  - the activity content, expanding the modes of human activity in the system of culture in the form of dialogical skills;
  - the subjective content, including the individual experience of emotional and value-based attitudes to culture;
  - the universal cultural content, including universal human values.
6. The main conditions for the development of poly-cultural identity in Pushkin Lyceum – a secondary school for national minority students – are the following:
- the problematization of the content of learning based on moral and philosophical problems, which represent the dominants of the values of human culture, which makes it possible to maintain harmonious proportion between knowledge and values in the pedagogical process;
  - the use of the research method in studying the content of education, which enables the students to find their own unique individual image in culture;
  - dialogue, which promotes the development of poly-cultural identity and the cultural openness of the lyceum students.

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## Using cultural genogram as a method to strengthen student's cultural identity and awareness

Ieva Margeviča-Grinberga, University of Latvia [ieva.margevica@lu.lv](mailto:ieva.margevica@lu.lv)

### **Abstract**

*Over the past decade ongoing global economic and political changes have significantly affected human migration. Hazan's (2014) study showed that since 2000, 260,000+ people have emigrated from Latvia. In 2014, 8700 persons emigrated. However, 10,300 arrived (CSP, 2015). Increased migration creates challenges in education. Due to this growing cultural diversity, children, whose values and attitudes formed in different cultures contrasts with Latvian teachers, attend Latvian schools. Teachers must develop appropriate skills in order to work with culturally diverse students; incorporating dispositions that respect and value differences, and adopting culturally sensitive strategies in order to ensure opportunities for academic success and personal development. Diversity awareness begins at the personal level with the understanding of one's own cultural identity. In order to recognize one's cultural differences, one should consider diversity within the family. The aim of this study was to investigate the use of the cultural genogram as a method of strengthening student's cultural identity and awareness. Participants included 46 students enrolled in an "Intercultural Education" study course. Qualitative data was collected through the analysis of interview transcripts and the content analysis on a cultural genogram. Since the year 2002 the author has introduced cultural genogram as method of strengthening student's cultural identity and awareness. The cultural genogram gives opportunities for self-reflection on one's own cultural and identity. Results showed that through the process of creating the cultural genogram and reflecting on it, greater insight into cultural identity, and appreciation of the ways in which culture impacts one's life creates a better understanding of the cultures of 'others.' The results of this present study emphasize the need to develop teaching methods in teacher education that will impact students' thinking about cultural diversity, and highlights the importance of student's self-reflection about their own culture.*

**Keywords:** cultural genogram, cultural identity, teacher education, diversity

## Developing an international identity through intercultural encounters

Ulla Lundgren, Malmo University, Sweden

### **Abstract**

*This presentation focuses on a module in teacher education which brought together student teachers of different nationalities, with different traditions of education, with the purpose of equipping them to teach in multicultural and internationalised societies. This was articulated in the aims for the module as developing the 'knowledge, skills and attitudes which are required to engage actively with people from other ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds'. The module was taught three times and data in the form of individual reflections from the student teachers are drawn from all three occasions. Teaching strategies included group discussions, oral and written group assignments and interactive practical exercises, and the students often worked in groups of three representing different nationalities preset by the instructor. The analysis focuses on the effects of collaboration and group dynamics, on questions of identification and critical reflection in relationship to that part of the theory of intercultural citizenship which postulates that learners engaged in international groups will develop new insights and identifications, that this kind of experience leads to critical cultural awareness and re-assessment of assumed normalities. Linking to theories of 'contact hypothesis' the analysis addresses the students' development of: an awareness of their own stereotypes, a sense of international identification, an 'international' way of thinking and acting, an ability to apply the new way to 'knowledge' to 'self' and to 'the world'.*

**Keywords:** teacher education, student teachers, international, multicultural, identity

## Identities as represented in CiCe papers 1999-2012

Despina Karakatsani, Ulla Lundgren University of the Peloponnese - Greece, Malmo University - Sweden

### **Abstract**

*Over the years, CiCe has established an extensive resource base including guidance booklets and conference papers. The texts can be found in a data-base of almost 800 research and practice-based papers. The aim of the presentation is to introduce two themed packs of this valuable material organised from the point of view of identity related to educational levels ranging from early childhood to higher education. These packs are the results of two working groups in 2012-2014. The objective is to improve access to CiCe publications by providing a more user-friendly resource. One of four subthemes of the first reader, named Language and Citizenship, is Language and Identity. The second reader is focusing entirely on Identities. This presentation will give a short overview of how these readers are organized and then concentrate on the analysis of identity and its different meanings, identity beyond the national, European, transnational, multicultural and intercultural identities, thus leaving other facets of identity for the audience to read in written forms. Identity is a much-questioned concept and very few of the researched papers take a critical stance. Two contradictory overarching perspectives on identity can be pointed out: an essentialist view focusing on separate single and distinguished categories such as nationality, class, gender etcetera. As opposed to this, identity can be understood from a post-modern perspective as multiple and elective. Identity is not a single one but fluid, shifting and multi-dimensional. Social constructionists talk about an individual's multiple identities which are socially determined, contextual and discursive. Most of CiCe papers investigated represent the first perspective and only a few recognize multiple identities.*

**Keywords:** identity, research and practice papers, CICE

## Knowledge and teacher training in cultural diversity issues: a quantitative survey to teachers of Primary Education in Aitolokarnania

Zoi Karanikola & Stathis Balias University of Patras, Greece [balias@upatras.gr](mailto:balias@upatras.gr)

### **Abstract**

*This paper looks at the intercultural sensitivity and competence of teachers attending public elementary schools in Aitolokarnania. We administered 400 teacher's questionnaires with 56 proposals - questions, of which nine were related to demographics and events and six to training and knowledge they have about cultural diversity. The results showed that the main body of the respondents considers that they have sufficient (33.0%) or good level of knowledge (33.6%) with respect to cultural diversity issues, while 23.0% think that it is insufficient. Furthermore, the majority believes that the guidance set by the teaching staff in managing or resolving cultural diversity issues is insufficient and believes that it should have more knowledge about the language, religion and socio-economic conditions prevailing in the students' country of origin. The level of knowledge of teachers seems to be influenced by the period of acquisition of the diploma and the additional studies they have. The majority of teachers surveyed (85.5%) seem to know what intercultural education is, linking it to respect, understanding, and eliminating stereotypes and prejudices. However, there is a percentage of respondents (17%) who believes that the goal is the assimilation of students that constitute a cultural minority. Finally, 90% of respondents agree with the view that intercultural training is for all students, while 82.7% disagree with the view that intercultural education distracts from the main objective of the school which is the teaching of basic skills and knowledge that require students to take part in the common national culture.*

**Keywords:** knowledge, training, cultural diversity, teachers

## Attitudes & Perceptions of Primary School Teachers towards the challenges of Intercultural Education

Gregory Davrazos, Ioanna Maragkou & Athina Nikolopoulou,  
Secondary Education Teachers [gregory.davrazos@gmail.com](mailto:gregory.davrazos@gmail.com), [ioanna\\_maragou@yahoo.gr](mailto:ioanna_maragou@yahoo.gr),  
[athinanikolop@gmail.com](mailto:athinanikolop@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*Given the new changing times, teachers and schools have to adapt to a new multicultural reality. In this context, teachers have to obtain new skills in order to face new challenges. The present research initially attempts to highlight the variety of difficulties and problems that foreign/repatriate pupils face in Greek Primary Schools. Furthermore, we examine whether intercultural and counseling techniques and seminars can help teachers be more effective in their everyday school reality. We used quantitative methodology in our research.*

**Keywords:** Intercultural education, Perceptions, Primary Education.

### **Introduction**

The presence of foreign/repatriate pupils in Greek Primary schools is now a reality. Teachers and schools have to adapt to these new conditions by making the necessary changes. Coexistence among Greek and foreign pupils becomes difficult at times and teachers have to be prepared to face these difficulties by being supportive towards foreign/repatriate pupils.

The heterogeneous school population requires intercultural and counseling skills from the teachers. Meanwhile, in order for the teachers to be able to support their pupils, they need to acquire new techniques and knowledge. Thus, the need for postgraduate studies in the fields of intercultural education and counseling becomes more apparent nowadays.

This research aims to highlight the contemporary multicultural school reality, to focus on the problems that foreign/repatriate pupils face in Greek Primary schools and to examine whether intercultural education and Counseling can help teachers deal with the new classroom reality more effectively.

### **INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION**

#### ***Intercultural Education and Bilingualism***

The presence of foreign pupils in Greek Primary Schools has increased in recent years. A school is called intercultural when 45% of its population comes from other countries. This coexistence of a heterogeneous population is not easy to achieve and teachers have to be very patient and demonstrate new skills and abilities.

Defining bilingualism is not easy because there are many definitions. According to Triarchi-Herrmann (2003) "a person is considered to be bilingual when he/she has a linguistic ability



through which ideas can be expressed verbally or written, without any particular difficulties in either one of the two language systems".

There are several theories on language acquisition and language learning. Cummins (1999) believes that there is interdependence between the two languages and that they both interact with each other. This way, learning strategies acquired during the development of the first language can contribute to second language learning.

### ***Intercultural Education and School performance***

The contemporary school's purpose is not only to provide knowledge but also to create mutual goals and visions. Ensuring equal treatment and respect/acceptance of the diversity are fundamental preconditions in order to develop the emotional and social awareness of the pupils. According to Patesti (2012), it is difficult to maintain our cultural diversity in a multicultural world. Tsokalidou (2005) insists on the creation of an educational system, which allows the linguistic and cultural exchange, because it can act positively and encouragingly for the development of bilingual pupils. According to Bloome (1985) language development is primarily a social and cultural process.

In this context, the inclusion of a foreign pupil's family in the language learning process is very important. According to Clyne et. al. (1994), the participation and the active involvement of the foreign pupil's family in school life and activities contribute to enhancing the linguistic progress of the pupil.

### ***Counseling***

Counseling can play an important role in multicultural environments because it can contribute to the understanding of diversity. In schools, counseling can help teachers understand their foreign pupils better. This way, teachers will be able to help their foreign pupils integrate more easily in the school environment.

In the present research, we will look into how teachers deal with the difficulties and problems they face in their multicultural classrooms.

### **Purpose of Research**

The main aim of this research is to investigate the perceptions and the attitudes of Primary school teachers towards foreign and/or repatriate pupils.

### **Research Questions**

In particular, the research questions of this study were the following:

7. What are the main difficulties that foreign and/or repatriate pupils face in Greek Primary Schools?
8. What are the attitudes of the families of foreign and/or repatriate pupils towards school according to teachers?

9. What skills do teachers believe that they should have in order to be more successful in their counseling role?

### **Research Methodology- Data collection**

We used quantitative methodology in order to investigate teachers' perceptions and attitudes. A questionnaire was used to collect the data of the research. The questions of the questionnaire were the result of a literature review and of discussions with colleagues who have teaching experience with foreign pupils. The questionnaire used consists of 20 (closed-type) questions, the first five of which refer to demographic data of the participants.

The questionnaire was created with Google Forms because this way we could collect data from a larger sample of teachers quickly. The online questionnaire was sent originally via e-mail to Primary schools teachers and then posted to various groups of Primary schools teachers through Facebook. Data collection last a month, from 06.11.2014 to 06.12.2014 and we used the statistic programs SPSS and EXCEL for the analysis of results.

### **Demographics**

The research involved 70 Primary school teachers in total. In particular 22 of the sample were men (31,4%) and 48 women (68,6%). The majority of the sample are Greek language teachers (45) while the rest of the sample are: 5 ICT teachers, 4 Music teachers, 10 Foreign Language teachers and 4 Gym teachers. In the following table it is presented the demographic data of the participants.

Percentage (%)			Percentage (%)		
Age	<30	28,6	Years of educational service	<5	20,3
	31-40	31,4		5-10	34,8
	41-50	30,0		11-15	14,5
	51-60	8,6		16-20	15,9
	> 61	1,4		>20	14,5

**Table 1.** Age and Years of teaching experience Primary School teachers who participated in the research.

37 of the teachers who participated in the research had attended seminars on Intercultural Education and 4 of them have MAs in Intercultural Education while 22 teachers had attended counseling seminars and 2 of them annual Counseling Programs).

### **Teachers' Perceptions and Attitudes**

#### ***Difficulties of Foreign/Repatriate Students***

The majority of teachers (92,8%) consider that the Greek educational system does not meet the needs of foreign pupils. The teachers who participated in the research consider that foreign/repatriate pupils face basic cognitive problems due to the following reasons:

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Failure to adapt the curriculum to foreign/repatriate pupils	4,04	0,775
Confusion of teaching objectives for foreign/repatriate pupils	3,86	0,767
Incompatibility between teaching and extracurricular everyday bilingual activities.	3,74	0,879

**Table 2.** *Causes of basic cognitive problems of Foreign/Repatriate Pupils*

The majority of teachers say that there are no measures taken by the Greek State for the lack of knowledge of the Greek language by the foreign/repatriate pupils. In order to face the problems that come from the lack of knowledge of the Greek language, teachers usually turn to:

- remedial teaching in the classroom
- intensive programs of teaching the Greek language that take place after school.

The teachers believe that foreign/repatriate pupils often exhibit diminished self-confidence due to this lack of knowledge of the Greek language.

#### ***Teachers ' attitudes toward foreign/repatriate pupils***

The attitude of Primary school teachers towards their foreign pupils is shown by:

- the reduced requirements due to low expectations on their performance (M.=3.74, S.D.=0.934),
- the encouragement, understanding, acceptance and respect (M.=3.71, S.D.=0.931),
- the adjustment of the curriculum to the needs of these pupils (M.=3.52, S.D.=0.949).

#### ***Families of foreign/repatriate students' attitudes***

The teachers of the study felt that the parents of the foreign/repatriate pupils were mostly detached from school and school events. According to the teachers this is due to:

- communication problems (M.= 3.76, S.D.= 0.806),
- the workload and the lack of time (M.= 3,68, S.D.= 0.813).

#### ***The Counseling role of the teacher***

There is no question that teachers also have a counseling role among other responsibilities. In this research, we were also concerned about the counseling role of the teachers of our sample. According to the findings of our research, teachers try to create a climate of acceptance and expression of emotions (M.=4.53, S.D.=0.513). They adjust their speech and language accordingly, minimize the use of difficult terminology (M.=4.28, S.D. =0.895), they are more open-minded and accept criticism (M.=3.89, S.D. =1.079) and invite foreign/repatriate pupils' parents to school activities (M.=3.84, S.D.=1.214). In classroom, the techniques they use are presented in descending order in the following table:

	Mean	St. Dev.
Express sincere interest	4,52	0,512
Open to discussions and to solving problems	4,33	0,730
Encourage cooperation in mixed groups of pupils	4,25	0,786
Provide instructions	4,10	0,831
Presentation of different cultures (music, food traditions, etc)	4,05	1,129
Use of classroom rules (learning contract)	4,05	0,945
Group events-cultural events	3,90	1,252
Role-playing	3,55	1,276
They try to find out the truth in quarrels	3,50	1,395
Intercultural movies	3,40	1,465
Imagination games	3,40	1,273
Sport teams - school competitions	3,35	1,387
Extracurricular Entertainment	3,14	1,621

**Table 3.** *Classroom Techniques used in a Multicultural Classroom*

### Conclusions

Recognizing that the findings of the present research do not have a general validity, they should be interpreted with the appropriate reservations. The findings of the research show that poor knowledge of the Greek language on the part of foreign/repatriate pupils and the lack of measures from the Greek State lead to the alienation of the foreign pupils from school. Thus, Primary school foreign pupils, avoid talking which makes their inclusion more difficult.

As far as the attitudes of the teachers towards foreign/repatriate pupils are concerned, they try to be encouraging showing at the same time understanding and respect. However, the research also revealed teachers' low expectations and reduced requirements from their foreign/repatriate pupils and limited time spent to them by their parents who work overtime.

The teachers try to communicate with the foreign/repatriate pupils' parents as much as possible: they invite them to participate in school activities and during their meetings with the foreign/repatriate pupils' parents, they adjust their speech and language accordingly in order to avoid misinterpretations. More than half of the teachers who participated in the research have attended intercultural seminars and almost half of them seminars on Counseling. So they are able to use various techniques in a multicultural classroom.

Skills such as the unconditional acceptance of the pupil, the genuine interest, the respect for diversity and the continuous encouragement are considered to be fundamental in achieving a constructive relationship between themselves and their foreign/repatriate pupils. In order to be able to deal with the multicultural reality of the classroom, the contemporary teacher needs to be up-to-date with the new multicultural and counseling techniques. Younger teachers seem to attend quite often seminars on multicultural and counseling issues.

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## Democratic education in times of crisis. Views and practices of primary-school teachers

Stamatina Dimiza & Stathis Balias Preprimary teacher, PhD, University of Patras, Associate Professor, University of Patras [balias@upatras.gr](mailto:balias@upatras.gr)

### **Abstract**

The study of democratic education raises the political, social and moral reflection on the search and prospect of democratic education. The prospect of a school based on the viewpoint of Kymlika whereby a modern democratic school could become a nursery of political virtues -a school that will develop democratically awakened citizens and critical thinking people. This reflection takes on special importance in modern, constantly emerging with political, economic and social influences educational reality of our country.

This research study explores the views and practices of teachers of early childhood education given the innovative element of pre-school education. In an age where social and learning experiences are becoming crucial to the shaping of personality and the course of their adult lives, schools in general (especially pre-school education as the first official instruction and education of children) could cultivate values capable to shape future conscientious and active citizens in young students.

In times of crisis, in times of an unfavorable economic, employment and social situation, the views of kindergarten teachers about democratic education, both in theory and as an educational practice, remain at the core of the research in this study. The focus is on the status quo in terms of democratic education in early childhood, on the one hand, and on the importance of the role of teachers in current adverse circumstances, on the other.

Methodological, the research was based on the analysis of texts, related to pre-school level and on the analysis of the opinions of pre-school teachers through semi-structured interviews. The results of the survey show that teachers, though clearly influenced by the given working and educational context, manage to transform and remodel this structure through the creative side of their work, which in our case is the promotion of democratic education at pre-school level.

**Keywords:** preprimary education, democratic education, teachers, crisis.

### **Introduction**

The rapid economic and social developments, the rise of xenophobia and racism, require active, democratic and critically thinking citizens, who, free from stereotypes and prejudices, promote democracy and its values, living side by side, and create a common visions and goals. The modern multicultural reality and the crisis of values that characterize modern democracy highlight the need to promote democratic values through education in order to strengthen and revitalize democracy.

Exceeding the narrow framework of selective operation relating to the acquisition of knowledge through teaching of specific subjects, education can contribute to equal participation in the dialogue, promoting the ideals of social justice, equality, human rights, respect and civic participation as a basic condition for achieving meaningful democracy (Gutmann, 1999). As a

nursery of civic virtues, education may develop individuals with integrated personality and future active citizens who are able to cope with the difficulties of life and work for social cohesion and solidarity.

Both at the level of organized educational institution with a formal structure and curricula, and in terms of educational practices ultimately adopted and implemented by teachers, education should play an important role in relation to the cultivation and promotion of democratic values, which in turn will influence and shape the quality of modern democracy.

The findings on the view of education from the perspective of democratic education, and the way it has been shaped in the contemporary socio - economic - and cultural framework is the main issue of this study. The interest will particularly focus on the preschool level of education, not only of personal interest and working relationship in this area, but mostly because of the importance of social evolution of students. The importance of education during the first years in human life is now indisputable. Scientists from various fields, from ancient times until today, highlight the crucial influence of early childhood experiences in shaping the personality and the course of adult life of man.

### **Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework of the research focuses on two major theories of democracy and the values resulting from them. Schematically, the various interpretations and positions about democracy, could be summarized in two broad categories: *liberal* or *representative democracy* (or political liberalism) -a system with elected representatives" that undertake "representing" the interests and / or perceptions of citizens within a "rule of law" and *direct* or *participatory* democracy (or state humanism) -a decision-making system about public issues with the direct involvement of citizens.

The foundation of liberal democracy is defined as the power coming from the people exercised by institutions that acquire their legitimacy from them and the political principle of separation of functions is applied. Liberal democracy seeks fair, free and competitive separation of powers in various government sectors through elections. Moreover, it is a rule of law in everyday life, as part of an open society based on the principle of equal protection of human rights, civil rights, tolerance, dialogue and civil liberties for all individuals. Liberalism is based on significant individual freedoms such as freedom of speech, dialogue, associating, tolerance, and the defense of individual rights.

The state humanism is a political and philosophical orientation that focuses on the value and the importance of practical and moral virtues of the citizens through their active participation in the political life of their society. The main idea is to promote the values which are necessary for societies in order to exist responsibly and effectively: tolerance, responsibility, dedication to the law and the ability of forgiveness are the basic principles. Essentially, the state humanism is a democratic and ethical life stance, which affirms that human beings have the right and

responsibility to give meaning to their own lives. It stands for the building of a society through ethics based on human values, in the spirit of reason and free inquiry through human capabilities.

Given the emergence of democratic values, political humanism and political liberalism are the basis for investigating whether fundamental values of democracy are promoted in kindergarten. These shared values, that the defenders of these two theories revealed, will form part of the field of the present research work, such as: Dignity, Equality, Peace, Freedom (Freedom of speech / Dialogue), Diversity, Justice, Participation, Responsibility. Through understanding and experiencing the above democratic values, the democratic theory of education promotes the culture of democracy both in the classroom as well as in the wider school environment (The Council for a Community of Democracies, 2003). Democratic education, instilling democratic experiences initiates students to the democratic way of partnership and introduces them to democratic thinking; namely, promoting those cognitive and emotional processes by which democratic societies transmit their political values and behaviors.

### **Methodology**

As far as the methodology is concerned, it is a multifaceted qualitative research framed by:

- a. an analysis of official documents relating to the preschool level ("Cross Single Frame Curriculum for Kindergarten" (2001), "Manual Activities for Kindergarten Teachers" (2008), "Teachers' Guide for Curriculum of the Kindergarten (2011).
- b. an analysis of the views of kindergarten teachers through semi-structured interviews

### **Sampling:**

The sample was set preceded by a pilot study of three interviews with kindergarten teachers in Athens. The method of periodic sampling (judgmental) was used. In particular, periodic sampling is not random and the sample is determined by the investigator. The application of this method was chosen because the random sampling was not possible. The sample consisted of twenty kindergarten teachers working in kindergarten schools of Athens. Most of the preprimary teachers had received training but not training in a field related to democratic education.

### **Research questions**

Four basic questions arose from the above syllogism and the theoretical framework of this work:

- A. What are the views of kindergarten teachers regarding the content of democratic education?
- B. What values are promoted in relation to democratic education?
- C. What educational practices (teaching methods) are applied by kindergarten teachers on democratic education?
- D. What factors influence the work of kindergarten teachers towards democratic education?



### **Analysis and Interpretation of Findings**

The analysis and interpretation of research revealed that the democratic education is not adequately expressed by the formal structure of the educational system as well as the official instructions given. The information about the kindergarten texts analyzed show that the issue of democratic education and its theoretical framework is not sufficiently formulated in official textbooks. The interviews of kindergarten confirm the above conclusion. Although most of the teachers were unaware of the concept of democratic education during the investigation, not only did they use concepts and procedures of democratic education, but also this was so often, that it demonstrated through their personal example they work within the democratic education concept.

More specifically and in relation to the research questions the following conclusions emerged:

#### **Analysis of the 1st research question (Meaning / content of Democratic Education)**

Kindergarten teachers:

- relate the issue of democratic education to their own behavior.
- agree that there are benefits of democratic education for the students.
- make assumptions based on their personal perception in order to analyze the term of democratic education.

#### **Analysis of the 2nd research question (Democratic values)**

Kindergarten teachers:

- claim that there is no special care and action to promote democratic values.
- agree with the promotion of moral cultivation through democratic education and its positive contribution to preschool age.
- believe that the values they believe they can teach in kindergarten level is: respect, dialogue, freedom, equity, accountability, solidarity, sharing, cooperation, mutual understanding, participation, team spirit, fairness, justice and meritocracy.

#### **Analysis 3rd research question (Educational Practices)**

The educational practices of kindergarten teachers, regarding democratic education consists of daily conversation, celebrations and projects with a similar issue, the relevant work plans, frequent polls, story telling with respective content and interpersonal relationship among students and teachers.

#### **Analysis of the 4th research question (Institutional framework)**

Kindergarten teachers:

- believe that the education system is democratic in theory, but not in practice.

- say that the democratic elements identified in the educational system are mainly due to their own initiative.
- state that the official program could contribute more to the issue of democracy.
- claim that the current employment - economic and socio-political situation as a negative element in the direction of promoting democratic education.

## **Conclusions**

From the above analysis, the lack and also the necessity of promoting democratic education at preschool level, is made evident. The research showed a willing educational potential that is ready to try and implement the democratic education values to a greater extent, as to some extent it already does. The deficit, however, identified in education policy, creates a void that must be covered, not theoretically but practically as well. Especially nowadays that our country (Greece) is in an extraordinary situation. The economic crisis that exists has led to a crisis of values and culture but also a democratic deficit in many areas. All this has created a situation of unrest and confusion that allows one to thrive beliefs that are incompatible with the concept of democracy. And the most fertile ground for these beliefs is the young people, who on the one hand do not pose the adults social reflexes, and on the other hand, they live in a troubled era. Especially children who are in preschool age where the foundations of the socialization and their subsequent behavior and attitude, is created.

Therefore, the need for democratic education today is more necessary than ever in all levels of education, without exception, and particularly in early childhood which is the first formal education received by pupils. We Prepare the Democracy of tomorrow by Democracy at School (Celestin Freinet) through Democratic Education, which may be the resistance and response to the current crisis.

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## University counseling focusing to improve students' intercultural skills

Georgios Nikolaou, Julia Spinthourakis & Eleni Samsari, University of Patras [gnikolaou@upatras.gr](mailto:gnikolaou@upatras.gr)

### **Abstract**

The rapid technological progress, particularly in the sectors of telecommunications and multimedia, created a new period of opportunities, so much in the level of coexistence as well as in the level of respect of diversity. The multicultural evolution of European societies dictates a new situation, where cultures and teams interact in the frame of a new postmodern situation. Consequently, modern Europe needs young citizens who know how to collect and develop useful information and knowledge, in order to learn how to live with other people. Education, however, and specifically the University, is called to give them all the new precious supplies in order to be ready to cope with the challenges of present and future. However, and despite the big importance that is attributed in the intercultural skills as professional qualification in the new international environment, it appears that this factor is not taken into consideration by the services of professional orientation in the Greek Universities. Accordingly, it is useful for them to be convinced and change the direction of academic services, which are charged with the duty of professional orientation of students. Only by following this way, they will also include the intercultural skills between the rest of qualifications, which compose the picture of modern, professional, European needs and conditions of growth and development.

**Keywords:** interculturalism, professional orientation, intercultural skills, university tutorial

### **INTRODUCTION**

The twentieth century has reserved for our planet the explosion of knowledge and the emergence of education in an institution that can play an important role in economic development. The era we are experiencing today is a time of great change where we experience wider events such as the globalization of the economy, the explosion of technology, the emerging globalization of culture, the labor market, the building of the knowledge society. It is the era of advanced communication and the global web. Within this constantly evolving environment, young people shape their personality and build their future. This implies that their cultural identity, which is not something compact and unified, but is a component of their geographical, ethnic and cultural origin, but also of their socio-economic situation, is shaped by the search and formulation of basic questions concerning their future professional careers. A key element, therefore, in shaping their personality is the data they encounter in this search and selection process of their future professional identity. In short, their cultural and ethnic identity influences and shapes their professional identity.

However, rapid technological progress, particularly in the fields of telecommunications, information technology and multimedia, brings people closer and closer, signaling a new period of opportunities and opportunities, both in terms of coexistence and respect for diversity, diversity, And thus the possibility of different choices, both personal and professional. The process, however, is not painless. Knowledge and the cultivation of skills are the primary resources, essentially altering the structure of society and turning it into a field of conflict that characterizes the path towards globalization (Drucker, 1994, pp. 64-67).

Thus, the emphasis on the multicultural transformation of modern societies marks and dictates a completely new situation, with many and different circumstances, where cultures and groups intertwine and interact in the context of a postmodern state. This dynamic of reciprocal and promising exchanges leads to the creation of political, economic and cultural conflicts, resulting in a redefinition of perceptions of diversity in the light of a smooth and productive symbiosis and the cultivation of acceptance, with the final demand for a balanced and harmonious coexistence (Nikolaou, 2005, p. 42). This, moreover, is the new era of knowledge and information that shapes a new environment, full of requirements and new needs that await the greatest possible effort to deal with.

Consequently, modern Europe is looking for citizens who know how to collect and use useful information through the ocean of knowledge at their disposal. A minimum of vital and creative space remains for the individual and social integration of young people. At the same time, little effort is being made to learn to live with others today so that we can finally learn to create new collectives. Now, more than ever, education and especially the University are invited to give young people all those valuable supplies so they are ready to respond to the challenges of the present and the future (Rojo, 2002, pp. 19-22). By acting on the threshold of postmodernity, we find that we are at the brink of major changes in the field of production and education, which makes our concern for these areas of utmost importance. In a world that internationalizes and challenges the role of the nation-state, we have to design an education able to teach us to live together and based on the consciousness of the citizen-resident and the forms of social coexistence and cohabitation (Scott, 1998).

Each country's education policy is closely linked to the social changes and needs they create. We said it above, we might want things to be different and humanism and idealism in education prevail. To be, ultimately, a lever of change and humanization of society, it can make our world better. Today, for the most part, it is subordinated to the economic imperatives of modern states, which are obliged to operate within a highly competitive, globalized context. The latter has brought about profound changes at the social level, changing the relations of production and the structure of the social classes (Castells, 1998, p. 74).

At the demographic level, we also notice very significant changes. The aging of the population in the developed world, which is due both to improved living conditions for residents and the advancement of life sciences, such as medicine and biology, and dramatic decline in birth rates, is accompanied by very large population movements, major migrants. The latter seek a better life in countries that provide job opportunities. On the other hand, the expansion of international operations, accompanied by a shift of executives and a skilled workforce, as well as the establishment of supranational structures such as the European Union, favor the easier, permanent or temporary establishment in a country. These demographic remarks, if combined with the ethnic awakening of some minorities, mainly in Europe and especially in the Balkans, lead us to find that today, more than ever, the composition of the societies of European states is distinguished by an intense "polychromy" or multiculturalism (Nikolaou, 2004, p. 29).

In this new environment, young people, who put their hopes for professional rehabilitation and career, in their studies at Greek Higher Education Institutions, need, in addition to scientific knowledge, to acquire specific skills, which will enable them to better understand the complexity of the world in which they are moving, to communicate with other people, regardless of their origin and origin, and to cooperate in the context of the overall social and economic Legal development. Intercultural skills are a prominent place among the extra supplies that the new scientist should acquire, especially when the nature of his future profession may bring him into contact with a multicultural environment, which is almost the norm today.

The university has a role to play in this process. It is not solely a place of where didactic higher learning takes place, it is also a place where the student has to find their way not only through the maze of courses, career issues but also in relation to personal matters including problems and crises (Van Brunt, 2010, Kadison & Digeronimo, 2004). There is mounting evidence that students in higher education appear to be dealing with much higher rates of emotional and behavioral problems than did students in the past and as a result, universities have had to step forward to meet this growing need (Brunner et al, 2014).

Thus, in this article we try to approach the institution of Counseling at Higher Education Institutions, from the perspective of acquiring intercultural readiness. Our work is articulated in three parts: In the first we look at the provision of counseling services to the students of Higher Education Institutions in Greece. In the second part, we present the main axes of intercultural theory, we discuss the issue of intercultural communication and we specialize in what constitutes intercultural skills. Finally, in the third part, after studying the information material provided by the Counseling Centers and the Intercultural and Career Offices of the Universities, we focus on the substantial absence of the intercultural dimension in the services provided to the students and we try to formulate some first, indicative Proposals, which, in our opinion, would improve the situation.

#### **PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION AND LIAISON WITH THE STUDENT LABOR MARKET IN THE HELLENIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

For several years now, the Greek university, in response to the needs of the time, has set up "Liaison and Professional Information Offices". The development of Liaison Centers and Counseling Stations did not take place in all HEIs in the same way, nor did it evolve simultaneously. In some cases, Liaison Offices, Career Offices and Counseling Centers operate under the same structure. Again, they are separate departments of the Universities, with clearly distinct work. In the table below, we present the Counseling Centers or Centers of Greek Universities.

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION	ACTIONS TAKEN
<i>National and Kapodistrian University of Athens</i>	Founded in October 1990 with a Rector's Act, the University of Athens's Student Counseling Center, has been operating since January 1992. In the academic year 1997-98 it joined the Network of Centers for Social Support for Children and Young People General Secretariat for Youth. In 2002, it officially became a formally recognized it as the University's "Laboratory of Psychological Counseling Students".
<i>Aristotle University of Thessaloniki</i>	In 1999, the Rectorate of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, on a proposal by the Social Policy Committee, established the Center for Counseling and Psychological Support, which has been operating in the field of the Student Health Service.
<i>National Technical University of Athens</i>	At the Office of Liaison - Service for Students and Young Graduates, the "Career Counseling" has started. This allows students to meet the Career Advisor and to talk about personal and professional development issues.
<i>University of Patras</i>	Since 1997, the Student Support Center and Liaison Office staff, provide psychological counseling and career counseling support. The opportunity is given to those who wish to meet a qualified psychologist and discuss with them issues that concern them.
<i>University of Crete</i>	Advisory Center of the University of Crete. It operates on both the Heraklion and Rethymnon campuses, providing psychological support and counseling to all students.
<i>Democritus University of Thrace</i>	Students are provided with psychological counseling and counseling services through the Liaison Office.
<i>Piraeus University</i>	The Piraeus University Consultative Center was founded in 1995 with the initiative and decision of its Rectorate within the framework of the Research Programs of the Research Center of the University of Piraeus and is financed by it.
<i>Athens University of Economics and Business</i>	In May 2001, the mental health counseling service was launched. Its purpose is to support and assist the University Community and especially students in addressing the problems they have during their student life.
<i>Agricultural University of Athens</i>	Counseling Seminars and Group Work through the Liaison Office
<i>Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences</i>	Advisory Support on Career, Education and Employment through the Liaison Office
<i>University of Thessaly</i>	individual support of students and graduates through the Liaison Office. Consumers are able to support psychologically and process with the guidance of a counselor difficulties that may be encountered in their daily lives.
<i>University of Ioannina</i>	The Advisory Center of the University of Ioannina began operating in 1989 offering services to students in their various needs or problems faced during their studies.
<i>University of Macedonia</i>	The Student Counseling and Support Center is a new service of the University of Macedonia that provides information, support and psychological counseling to all the students and students of the Foundation.
<b>Source:</b> Website Counseling & Psychological Support Office of the Technical University of Crete, <a href="http://www.tuc.gr/advise/data.html">http://www.tuc.gr/advise/data.html</a>	

**Table 1. Counseling Centers of Greek Universities**

The purpose of the Liaison Offices is to connect the university community with the labor market, the development of communication channels and the active participation of the scientific community in the development of the productive sector in the country. In addition, the Liaison Offices inform students and graduates of universities of the possibilities of postgraduate studies or

other training to help them integrate smoothly into their future workplace. Thus, the Liaison Offices link production to education, develop mechanisms of mutual and continuous updating, record the skills and qualifications of students and graduates to make the best possible use of the country's workforce, while at the same time inform students / graduates of postgraduate study opportunities, Scholarships and any other type of training. The above objectives are achieved by providing information and counseling services so that the student / graduate can plan his / her career and be properly prepared for it (Career Counseling and Information Office of University of Patras, n.d., p. 2).

In order to better prepare the student / graduate, the liaison offices provide information on the possibilities that exist after the graduation, both in the educational and professional fields. In order to design the educational course of the graduates, the appropriate infrastructure has been created in printed and electronic material, which, with the help of specialized personnel, can lead to the optimal choice for each user. As far as the professional sector is concerned, liaison offices are a communication channel linking higher education with the labor market so that on the one hand students and graduates are informed of all labor market trends and needs Business and other employers' organizations to scientific staff, but on the other hand, economic operators to get acquainted with and appreciate the abilities of graduates of Greek universities (ibid, pp. 2-3) .

In particular, the Liaison and Professional Information Offices (ibid, p. 3):

1. offer help and counseling to students and graduates, both in the job search process and in the application process for postgraduate studies (curriculum vitae, letters of recommendation, preparation for a selection interview, etc.).
2. are the link between the scientific community and the productive units
3. inform the stakeholders about the labor market and the employers' organizations
4. have a record of new jobs in the private and public sectors
5. inform interested parties about postgraduate studies in Greece and abroad, for scholarships, vocational training programs, educational seminars and conferences]
6. organize workshops, seminars and conferences to better inform students and graduates on issues related to employment and access to the world of work
7. provide information on financial support for studies, through scholarships provided by public and private organizations in Greece and abroad, as well as for vocational training seminars, for European programs, as well as programs subsidized by OAED.

The information provided by the Liaison Offices on the labor market is addressed to all stakeholders, thus applying the principle of equal opportunities for access to information. As a result, students and graduates are informed of all vacancies, while employers can contact the Inter-Agency Offices for staffing their businesses. In order for the graduate's transition from the academic community to the labor market to be done in the best possible conditions, most of the Greek liaison offices in Greece organize seminars and events at regular intervals. For this reason, but also for constantly informing users, the Liaison Offices issue a significant number of support



material. In addition, liaison officers monitor developments in the field of production with a view to the validity of the services provided. In this way, the best possible preparation of students and graduates for entering and joining the labor market is achieved (ibid, p. 4).

Despite the short duration of its operation, the institution of the Liaison Offices has been extremely effective in linking the area of education to the workplace. Liaison Offices, an institution that has existed for several decades at academic institutions abroad, were fully absorbed by the academic institutions of our country after they had been adapted to the Greek reality. Like anything new, it was initially treated with skepticism and particular mistrust, especially by some who considered it an institution that promoted the globalization of the market, education and labor, altering the basic characteristics and values of Greek culture and contemporary Greek reality and, on the other hand, it introduces entrepreneurship and the world of capital within the University, which continues to encounter several reactions within the academic community. His course, however, over the years has shown that the Liaison Offices are useful in Greek society and for that reason they have been embraced by all. It is natural during their operation to face difficulties and obstacles, but they were successfully overtaken by their executives. It is worth noting that the Liaison Offices, taking into account the specificities of each institution, both spatial and educational, have been shaped and adapted accordingly. For this reason, there are also differences between the Institutions' Liaison Offices in terms of how they function, which makes them an integral and active part of each Foundation. The belief of all the actors in this effort is that the Liaison Offices will play an even more important role in the future and will become an indispensable component of the university community as well as of society in general (ibid, pp. 4-5).

The Liaison Offices of the most universities operate Career Counseling Centers. The role of educational and professional counseling focuses on an effort to mediate between the interests and skills of the individual and the requirements and needs of the labor market. This implies the need to provide information and services to the individual for the requirements of the market, and society in general, but also to the relevant social bodies and professional associations for the needs of the individual. However, if it is not possible to find a compromise solution or a viable solution, then it must advocate for the counselor. To guide him and help him discover himself, identify, understand and process his problems and eventually come up with a solution. Indeed, in order for a counselor to make decisions and to arrive at effective solutions to the social problems that concern him, it is necessary to contrast the subjective views of the counselor with the objective conditions (Brouzos, 1998). The important role of counseling can therefore be considered in a dialectical way. "The relationship between adaptation and self-determination must not necessarily be competitive. Completeness of action in the sense of self-determination also involves adaptability" (p. 72).

As a consequence, we can say that the Hellenic University Career Counseling Centers are mediating. Their main purpose is to bridge the gap between the qualifications, knowledge and skills provided by the educational system and the needs or requirements of the modern market. The close relationship between these two systems makes it even more difficult to work with Counseling Career Centers, which in many cases fail to fulfill their role as they do not promote and improve

young people's communication and coexistence skills in different work environments, or in different living conditions. Of course, we cannot safely say that the disconnection of the two systems, even if gradually promoted by the Career Centers, will mean the provision of educational and professional counseling without any practical effect. If, however, things remain as they are, then it is almost certain that we will have the opposite effect, in the complete subordination of the advisory activities to the demands and the constraints of the market (ibid, p. 73).

The aim of the counseling should be to use equal opportunities in an open social system that allows all future professionals to move freely, under specific working and setting conditions, their ideas, their science and the way of thinking and thinking. Their lives. It is only then that the individual will lead to self-realization and self-determination and will ultimately succeed in cultivating skills that ought to characterize a multicultural environment such as tolerance, respect for diversity, tolerance for diversity, and equality of all towards education and scientific opportunities. One of the main goals of counseling is to develop the individual's own personal interests and to integrate them fully with the needs and expectations of a constantly evolving and developing society (ibid, p. 73).

As part of these efforts, counseling at Greek universities seeks to prevent negation of individual interests by the requirements of the education system, particularly in societies such as Greece, where the needs of students and graduates with those of society and the political system may differ greatly and the content of their functions is different. In a number of cases, counseling in Greek universities may be used by educational planning to manipulate individual needs in order to implement political or economic aspirations at the expense of promoting and developing the skills or abilities of the individual and especially of the students or graduates, originating from socially disadvantaged groups. As part of this practice counseling is called to "freeze" the aspirations of students or graduates and the university to fulfill its reproductive role in a "mild" and lateral way. The gradual and latent reduction of educational and professional ambitions aims at weakening individual and structural tensions. These tensions are the result of the gap between ambitions and their potential. The gradual disorientation of students or alumni consists of accepting alternatives and is framed by seeking professional opportunities in the domestic market, with lower social status and prestige.

Thus, the graduate most often reaches a revision of his initial professional attitudes, as the counseling of the university instead of maximizing, restricting his or her abilities or abilities. As a result of this process, future workers will shift the question of finding their job or their professional choice to competence and performance, further exacerbating the consequences of social inequalities. The best, though, strong coordination between the interests and the offered professional outlets, as well as the promotion of individual skills so that the student or graduate to choose their mature profession, remain the main goals of counseling at the Greek university. However, the risk of using counseling as a manipulation mechanism to guide student masses at specific, far from real labor market needs and the ability to develop intercultural skills, guidelines, freeze their professional and educational aspirations, need to take seriously (ibid, p. 75).

However, we must not misinterpret or ignore the very important work of the Greek University Career Counseling Centers, aimed at supporting, facilitating and taking decisions in the areas of educational and professional development. In addition, personal meetings are arranged through their services having as a purpose (Career Counseling and Information Office of the University of Patras, n.d., pp. 6-7) with the ultimate goal being:

- a. to facilitate and support the professional projects of students and graduates,
- b. search for educational and professional information,
- c. to gain an integrated picture of their potential through exploring their skills, skills and personal characteristics,
- d. the acquisition of a full picture of the labor market in which they want to join.

They organize Career Counseling Workshops, based on the principle of Group Counseling. They are carried out through small groups in which students and graduates can participate with activities such as curriculum vitae, recruitment interview techniques, educational and professional project development, and decision-making.

Thus, the rules of the labor market then change. Young people are judged by new criteria. It does not just measure the degree of their training and education, but also the way that universities handle their human potential. The weight seems to fall into individual-personal characteristics, such as initiative, adaptability, persuasion, and the democratic principle of respect for otherness. It is the duty of all members of the university community to cultivate skills that are the key to success in the changing labor market and to manage their vast cognitive and scientific capital. This is the only way for graduates of Greek universities to make use of their cognitive and emotional skills and to respond to the new European and global marketplace that opens in front of them.

### **INTERCULTURAL THEORY AND INTERCULTURAL SKILLS**

The subject of cultural diversity has become dominant in a multitude of states and societies in the world. And it would be wise to underline that interculturality (or interculturalism as some say) is in turn in fashion. Although in our country the debate is mainly limited to pedagogical reasoning, it is true that the range of interculturalism extends to scientific fields as coherent and heterogeneous as one is psychology, philosophy, ethics, history, anthropology, But also economic science, mathematics or biology. The causes of such a development are complex. We could list, among other things, the emergence of a new, broader approach to human rights, the challenges and achievements of regional nationalisms, the development of the process of European integration, the recognition of the principles of the right to difference and the equality of traditional, Ethnic minorities and, lastly, demands and demands, increasingly prominent and underlined by immigrants, mainly those not from European countries. In the depth of all this, there is the acceptance of diversity as a situation and the need to manage it at the level of society, state, economy, and that of education (Spinthourakis, Karatzia-Stavlioti & Roussakis, 2009).

Managing multiculturalism is, as one might imagine, a very old affair, which was solved in one way or another more or less effectively. Thus, the history of mankind is full of ethnic cleansing and genocide, as well as by "compartmentalized" and fragmented, multi-ethnic (societies) societies. However, there are also examples of other societies that, despite the multicultural composition of their populations, have managed and formed a common space of conciliation, coexistence and, most importantly, common political action, particularly in the modern era.

Multiculturalism, historically, was the rule, not the exception. And if today there is more talk about diversity, multiculturalism and ways of managing them, the causes should be looked for rather in the changes that have occurred at the geopolitical and economic level, and to which we have already mentioned, rather than in dramatic demographic changes Developed world. Besides, the latter, and when they occur, are consequences of the general social, political and economic situation. Modernity, with the unifying and homogenizing idea of the nation-state, secured five centuries of political calmness, limiting the issues of otherness within national states, either with the "right of blood" (*jus sanguinis*), or sometimes with the "right of the soil" (*jus solis*) (Govaris, 2001, p. 29). At the same time, the process of differentiation was also developed through the control and separation of the "identical" from the "non-identical", which led to the construction of minorities and social inequalities within the national state (ibid, p. 30).

With the weapon of education, which is the state's most basic mechanism for shaping the population into a nation, modern states have managed to shape and maintain, for a long time, the much-needed homogeneity, tolerance or marginalization of any minorities inhabited by These. More importantly, they have sought, through education, to convince that nations are universal physical entities, independent of space and time, and that national identity is a self-evident and unmistakable imprint of national solidarity, continuity and coherence (Avdela, 1997).

From this approach, it follows that national identity is a social rather than a constructive, rather than an archetypal and universal form of group ties based on common objective traits such as language, history and culture, which largely refer to the concept of race, expressed by Romanticism of the 19th century (Levi-Strauss, 1987, p. 8). Modern thinking focuses on cultural diversity based on certain dominant assumptions and values:

- Humanity does not evolve monotonously, evenly, but with an unimaginable variety of social and cultural forms.
- No culture is not alone.
- Cultures intertwine and interact, evolving.
- In a world at risk of monotony and uniformity, preserving the rich variety of cultures is necessary.
- Parallel coexistence and harmonious symbiosis are built only in the context of mutual tolerance, understanding and respect, principles that only a modern and democratic educational system can guarantee (ibid, p. 73).

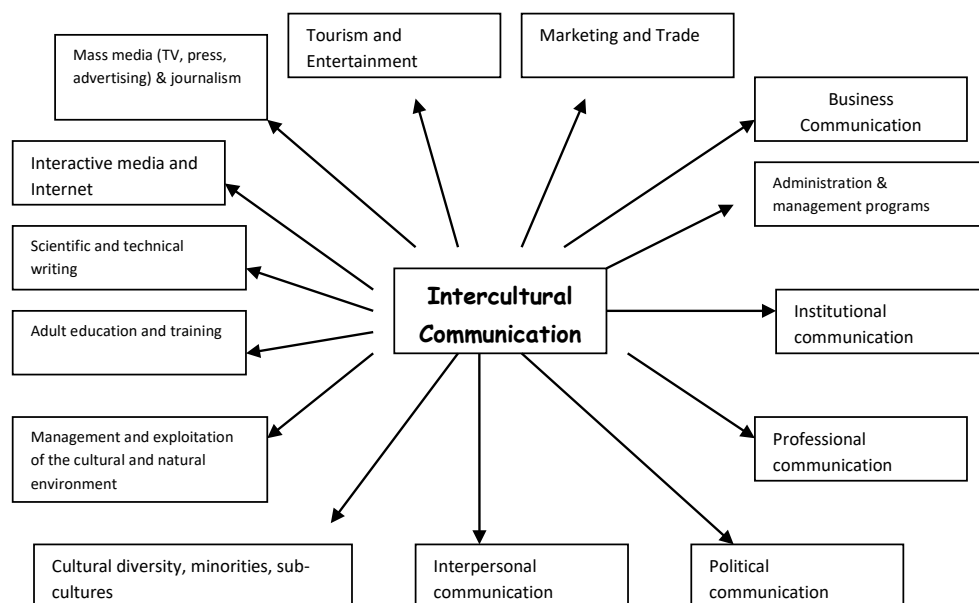
In intercultural theory, the emphasis is on acquaintance and interaction between the different cultures that form a society. The assumptions or basis on which the intercultural approach is articulated – are:

- The recognition of otherness / acknowledgement of diversity
- Social cohesion
- Equality
- Justice (Nikolaou & Kanavouras, 2006).

Provided that we do not intend to challenge the legitimacy of the nation state, the dynamic relationship that can be developed through the interaction of the various subjects of a society is now focused on the concepts:

- Participation, "belonging" to a collectivity, is associated with participation in the social event, but also participation in the produced product of the national identity.
- Access, in terms of equal opportunities and meritocracy, and finally,
- Responsibility, in the sense of consciousness of the obligations deriving from "belonging" to a collectivity (Gotovos, 2002, p. 129).

So, asking for a multicultural society is to ensure what has been called a cross-cultural course for a few years and is the process of building trust and co-operation within it. This intercultural course has as important benchmarks, such as promoting the acquaintance with the "Other", the removal of stereotypes and prejudices, the creation of relationships of trust, the communication with the "Other" and finally, the willingness and the possibility for cooperation in social and economic life. This intercultural course leads to the acquisition of intercultural skills necessary for understanding and accepting diversity, as well as for the ability to communicate and collaborate within an increasingly complex cultural setting. Especially new scientists, who are presumably required to take on increased responsibilities for management and human resource management, taking leadership positions in services and businesses, are required to have, among other skills and increased communication skills, the ability to deal effectively with potential crises in their working environment.



**Figure 1.** *Intercultural Communication - Fields of professional activities*

Finally, with a growing number of young scholars becoming more mobile, particularly in the European area, and other markets such as South-East Asia, China, Japan and North America, young scientists must be able to move comfortably between different cultural contexts. Intercultural communication is now part of the curriculum of many departments of Business Administration, since the latter have recognized the close link between business conduct and cultural context. Figure 1 shows the areas of professional activities, where intercultural communication is an additional asset.

#### **THE INTERCULTURAL DIMENSION IN PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION IN THE GREEK UNIVERSITY**

Through the previous analysis, it emerges that, although interculturalism is a new relevant parameter in the provision of counseling and career guidance by the Universities, it nevertheless presents a significant dynamic and intercultural competences are already a sought-after labor market qualification. We therefore considered it important to investigate the presence of the intercultural agent in the design and provision of career guidance services through a small research of texts and information material of the Liaison Offices and Advisory Stations of Greek Universities. In the present work, we have focused more on providing career guidance services than universities and not on addressing psychological, social or other student problems, areas in which action, in particular Consultative Offices, is expanding, because at this stage of our study what we Interest is the triptych: intercultural skills - professional orientation in the labor market. However, it is certain that we will come back to investigate the other fields of activity of the Advisory Services of the Universities, because they also have a great interest in their intercultural dimension.

During our study, from October to December 2006, we contacted by telephone, electronic and traditional mail the Liaison Offices and the Counseling Centre's - when these were separate services - of the Greek Universities, asking them, first of all, information about their operation and their actions. During our communication, we pointed out that we were interested in every aspect of the intercultural dimension of the services provided. As we expected, it was very often that the Center's officials did not understand exactly what the terms interculturalism and intercultural skills meant. In those cases, which were the most, we telephoned the people about the meaning of the term and insisted on sending us all the information and printed material of the Center, even if they thought it did not contain the information we were interested in.

Indeed, all our Liaison Offices and all the Counseling Stations of Universities responded to our request and a considerable amount of information material came to us.

The study of this material showed that:

1. Nowhere is there any reference to the terms: interculturalism, interculturality, intercultural communication, and intercultural skills.
2. The services of the Liaison Centers in relation to study or work abroad are limited to informing students of procedural issues, without any preparation for the difficulties that often arise from changing the cultural environment.
3. Both in terms of acquiring additional skills and in terms of CV writing, the intercultural factor is ignored.
4. The information of foreign students who come to study in Greece focuses on the processes of enrollment, feeding and accommodation, while the cultural factor, even when mentioned, is limited to folklore and to the obvious.
5. Any problems of students, whether Greeks or foreigners, due to mobility, are classified under the general title: adaptation problems, without even letting the cultural factor take into account.

However, it is almost certain - and this is clear from the discussions we have had with the staff and staff of the Centers - that there are always informal and general references to intercultural issues, especially when it comes to foreign students passing abroad or receiving aliens Students. These reports are not systematic, nor are they based on scientific knowledge. They always have an empirical and subjective character and depend directly on the experiences and interests of the person who assists in counseling. So, quite often, information is incomplete, fragmented, subjective and sometimes incorrect. In general, we could argue that the communication factor is not systematically approached, with full exploitation of the rich scientific knowledge in this field, and the services provided have rather a technocratic and regulatory texture. Finally, the nature and size of the university (general, humanitarian, economic or technological) is relevant to raising awareness of intercultural references in vocational guidance. Thus, economics and humanities universities seem to be more aware of intercultural issues, as is the case with smaller institutions than large ones.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Despite the great importance that is attached to intercultural skills as a professional qualification in the new international environment, it seems that this factor is not sufficiently taken into account by career guidance services in Greek universities. However, both Greek universities and Greek businesses have expanded their reach in the European and global world and this deficit is unfair to them and creates various difficulties. Cultural interaction, in a world that is becoming smaller, seems to affect markets, negotiations, consumer consciousness, as well as careers. Effective management of diversity and cultural interaction is a high priority, and people who have the necessary skills and abilities are sure to have an additional important professional qualification.

Consequently, it is useful to persuade the university departments responsible for the task of professional guidance of students to include intercultural skills among the other qualifications, which make up a good resume. Because intercultural theory is a relatively new scientific field in Greek Universities and is often limited as a subject of study guides of Schools and Departments of the Educational Sciences, it is necessary to interject it within other scientific spaces. As we have shown above, intercultural communication, which is only one of many practical applications of this theory, intersects a wide range of scientific areas and professional activities.

Thus, we believe that the basic principles of intercultural theory should be approached through undergraduate studies of all disciplines, perhaps as a separate chapter of a broader lesson. Particularly in those departments which provide guidance and specialization in counseling, the principles of intercultural theory, intercultural communication and intercultural skills should be specific theoretical and laboratory courses.

It is perhaps time for undergraduate studies to be introduced to more Greek Universities and Technological Educational Institutions.

Finally, we would argue that the Liaison Offices, the Career Centers and the Advisory Stations of the Greek Universities should acknowledge the importance of intercultural skills for the successful integration of young scientists in multicultural and globalized world and they should include this dimension in their activities and actions.

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## Identity construction in higher education and socioeconomic background

Olga Tzafeia, Eleni Sianou-Kyrgiou, University of Ioannina, Greece [esianou@uoi.gr](mailto:esianou@uoi.gr)

### **Abstract**

*In recent decades, social inequalities in higher education have gained too much ground of academic interest because of the mass participation in it. Moreover, higher education researchers have much to say about the reconstruction of the identity that comes as a result of the moving into a new life-sphere and the new way of acting. University education endeavors to support the development of personal and professional identity in an equal way. The study focuses on how socioeconomic background enables one to differentiate identity construction. It examines students' perceptions about university as part of life and identity construction. The research data are based on questionnaires responded by 400 undergraduate students from the university of Ioannina who come from diverse social backgrounds. They answered questions about personal and professional identity, as well as questions related to social relations and their construction: personal growth, professional and academic identity. The results of the qualitative analysis indicate that there are differences in identity construction among students from high and low socioeconomic background. Following Bourdieu's theory, the article argues that family identity accompanies the way students think and learn. Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are liable to face less positive and supportive interaction with the academic environment even though they have the same academic experiences. This review highlights the importance of universities to provide students with opportunities to develop themselves in diverse learning environments where career issues and future plans are regarded as an integral part of studies and that holistically support students in their identity construction.*

**Keywords:** higher education, identity, inequalities, social class

### **Introduction**

In recent decades, identity construction is one of the most important topics in the field of educational research. In the new landscape, there has been an increase in fundamental questions about the nature of identity caused, on the one hand, by the need for national identity preservation, as a shield against the global crisis and, on the other hand, by the diversity and interculturalism. The term "identity" is not defined within a universal framework. Widely, it refers to the perceptions of people about themselves, what people think of themselves in relation to other people.

An ideal environment to better explore this issue of identity construction is higher education academic environment. University offers a fertile ground for the development and construction of identity (Waterman, 1985). Transition from high school to university as though as transition from university to labor market is amenable to many psychosocial changes. These changes are caused by the fact that university offer a big variety of experiences to an individual's life (Marcia et. al 1993). These changes are also happened because, according to Bourdieu and Passeron (1964), students' life is a 'parenthesis' between family and professional life. At the same time, heterogeneity of university students results that students don't construct a similar identity even though they have the same experiences.

Identity construction is thought to be a psychological scientific field. Psychologists explore the individuals' actions, personal psychological development and growing into adulthood. Indeed, psychologists focus basically on individual actions and ignores the social factors that are central to the identity construction. Studying identity construction in social contexts, rather than with a sole focus on the individual agent represents one of the major shifts in educational research in the last decade. Particularly, the study of social class in shaping identities has been increased and is nowadays generally supported that identity is shaped in a social framework that is constructed by family, education, work, social activities and the society in which a person acts (Adams et al., 2000, 2006).

In other words, even though the issue of identity construction is extensively developed by both psychological and social approaches, in recent decades, higher education has paid more attention to consideration of social rather than psychological aspects of identity construction. We give an analysis of two major theoretical approaches, of psychologist Erik Erikson and of sociologist Bourdieu.

The work of the psychologist Erikson (1959, 1968) and his colleague James Marcia (1960, 1988) has provoked new theoretical models to the issue of the identity construction. Those models provide evidence that identity construction should be examined in a psychosocial context, especially in vulnerable social groups and minorities. Erikson argued that the term identity has received multiple meanings and is therefore difficult to have a universal meaning. Erikson begins with the idea that identity is the outcome of an individual's reflection with the external environment and can be changed when the individual's values system and experience changes.

According to Erikson, identity changes at any time into individuals' social life due to new experience and information acquired in daily interactions with others. If this process receives a positive acceptance, the person will feel a sense of mastery (mastery). If the process is a negative acceptance, the person will come out with a sense of inadequacy. During each stage, however, a person experiences a conflict that is a turning point in the development of identity. Academic environment is suitable to induce students with concerns liable to shape identity. The extent to which students develop their identity during their studies is significantly influenced by academic experiences. When students start their university life, they have to change the way they think both as students and as social subjects because they should move into a new life-sphere and should re-evaluate their own identity and ways of acting.

According to Erikson's theory, university life provides students with complete freedom of action. The period of studying may also include many unpredictable and uncertain transitions (Barnett, 2004). What is the main characteristic of this period, is lack of responsibilities. Similarly, Bourdieu and Passeron (1964) have reported that students live "in a unique space and time." They are embedded in social groups with common rhythms and perceptions but "the individual rates may have nothing in common except the marked difference with the collective rhythms". This helps them to test new roles and to reconstruct their identity. Most frequently, they seek to discover if

they are satisfied with their identity received from their families. If they realize that they have not constructed an ideal identity, the university enables them to seek new identity and taste among many identities. The process of developing a stable identity may sometimes be harmless (Hall, 1999).

Following Erikson, the psychologist James Marcia (1966,1980) argues that identity is primarily determined by the social, personal and psychological commitments and suggests that parents, university staff, and peer students influence in a positive or negative way university students' identity. Marcia focuses especially on how identity is reconstructed during adulthood. He concludes that it is a situation in which a person explores and creates a new way of thinking regarding to life experiences. His survey results in four forms of ID: identity diffusion, identity foreclosure, identity moratorium and identity achievement. Identity diffusion describes a situation in which a person does not recognize the importance of constructing an identity and make no effort to connect himself with a value system. Identity foreclosure relates to the time the person agrees to acquire certain roles such as to follow the career path of his parents. Identity moratorium refers that an individual explores several forms of new identities without adopting one of them. Identity achievement refers to a successful achievement of the re-evaluating an identity after having passed through an identity crisis. When a student enters higher education is moving into a new environment, which requires a reassessment of the way we act and the formation of a new identity. From this point of view, identities are based on individual stories of people, personalities and previous experiences (Busher, 2012) and may be affected by a number of key specialists, interactive and institutional factors (Johnston & Merrill 2009).

Using social perspectives to better understand identity construction in higher education raises many challenging new issues. More specific, the relationship between identity construction and social class has increased in recent decades because it is commonly believed that identity construction continues through life (Giddens, 1991) as a social project. Bourdieu's theory has provoked a significant shift to the effect of social class on the development of personal and professional growth during the studies.

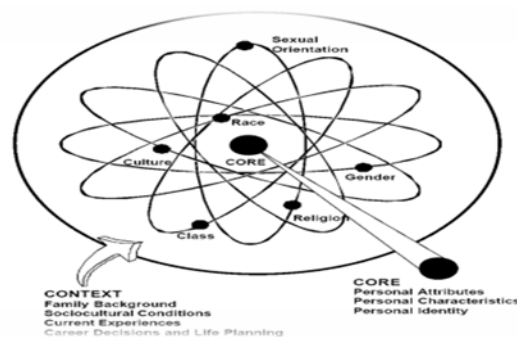
According to Bourdieu and Passeron (1964), students are open to change the norms of their life and are exposed to all those stimuli that enable them to re-evaluate their identity. The students acquire and carry ways of thinking from one place to another embedded from previous social fields, what is called habitus. He indicates (Bourdieu, 1989; Bourdieu & Waquant, 1992)

'...when habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it finds itself "and takes the world about itself for granted'

Concepts like these challenges the idea that identity construction raises inequalities in university admissions. In other words, the way of thinking and acting of students is determined by social class. As a consequence, identity construction is not only a matter of personal and learning processes. It is, however, a social construction where one's personal views for himself and the community

formed through interaction with the wider social context. According to the theory of Bourdieu, the inherited "cultural capital" - the previous knowledge and experience diversify students' academic and professional identity.

Many researchers argue that students with lower income (Johnston & Merrill 2009) or socio-economically and culturally disadvantaged students (Warmington, 2002, 2003) have a different academic and professional development. Similarly, it has been reported (Baxter & Britton 2001) that identity construction process is a class mobility process in which people are classified hierarchically in lower and upper level. Recent studies emphasize the fluid nature of identity process. The Jones McEwen's model -A Conceptual Model for Multiple Dimensions of Identity (2000)- refers to "core identity". Except for basic features like personal attitudes, identity in higher education is influenced by multiple social interactions with family background, the socio-cultural conditions, previous experience, study options and future business plans. The model not only draws attention to fostering complexity in students' self-perceptions of their identities but also serves as a reminder of the importance of social class to identity construction (Jones & McEwen, 2000).



**Figure 1.** *A Conceptual Model for Multiple Dimensions of Identity (Jones & McEwen, 2000).*

### **Academic and Professional Identity**

Researchers on identity construction among university students have approached questions of identity using particularly the concepts of academic and professional identity. During their studies students reconstruct their identity because studies are a time of psychological and social development and growing into adulthood. Socioeconomic background can influence and shape the identity construction. There are two major types of identity raised in higher education: academic and professional identity. Firstly, academic identity is constructed through participation in university culture and development of scientific thinking skills. Moreover, academic identity is achieved when an individual product new kind of knowledge and develop individualism. At the same time, during university studies an individual may lose his own familiar identity and increase self-directness and academic competence and participation in university culture.

Secondly, during their studies students construct professionalism and professional identity. It is a closer interaction between studies and working life. Professional identity is achieved through the

answer on the question “who I want to become”. It does not answer the question of whom I am at the moment (Beijaard et al., 2004). Especially, it refers to professional ethics and codes of labor market. It has been noticed that formation of a professional identity is more difficult in fields where the student does not enter into a particular profession, most clearly seen in the humanities and social sciences (Reid et al., 2008; Rouhelo, 2006). Employment difficulties affect these fields, especially in the initial stages of a career, because the employer does not necessarily have a clear picture of graduates’ abilities (Suutari, 2003). The development of professional identity is a matter strongly related to socioeconomic background. It is more likely for lower socioeconomic background students to experience uncertainty and anxiety in making the transition to complex working life and to worry about becoming unemployed. On the other hand, the graduates from middle and upper socioeconomic backgrounds have more positive experiences of the time as a student when entering working life. Nowadays, university graduates face uncertainty in their working life. Working life expectations has led to a situation where “notions of career are thus pragmatic and less related to personal identity than for previous generations” (Wyn & Dwyer, 2000). Recognition of one’s own abilities are supported by means of a career portfolio, where the student has the opportunity to describe both her personal and her professionally oriented knowledge and skills (Wright, 2001).

## **Methods**

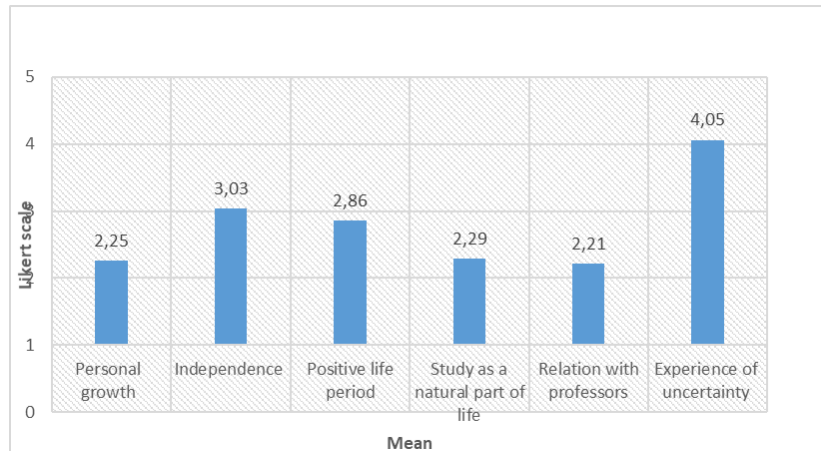
The present study focuses on the issue of identity construction as it is viewed in social contexts. The data are part of an ongoing research conducted in 2014/15 in an urban university of Greece aimed to examine students’ experience and transitions to the labor market. The paper presents students’ responses to a questionnaire related to the relationship between socioeconomic background and students’ academic and professional identity construction. We examined 500 students, 230 of which were from lower socioeconomic backgrounds: their family income was below 1.000, their father worked as high or low skilled workers and their parent’s education highest level was high school. In this study, we present the results of those students. The majority of the respondents were women (74%). They were students from seven faculties at the final stage of their studies. Since all the respondents (100%) were final stage students, the results predominantly reflect the experiences of such students. The questions were distributed into categories so as to better comprehend student responses. One student’s response could be assigned to several different categories. In other words, categorization is made on the basis of each separate reference. The main categories for academic identity are personal growth, independence, positive life period, study as a natural part of life, relation with professors, experience of uncertainty. The main categories for professional identity were future working plans, socialization to working life, graduate professional’s skills. Because the data are chosen in terms of socioeconomic background, the results cannot be widely generalized. Despite their limitations, the results have raised interesting issues which worth further follow-up research.

## **Results**

### ***Academic Identity***

Figure 1, presents the means among all the categories examined in the present study. First, the category “personal growth” reveals ( $M=2,258$ ,  $SD=0,89$ ) that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds did not develop their personalities during their studies. In the same vein, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds ( $M=3,037$ ,  $SD=0,89$ ) found difficulty in feeling independent. A growing literature provides evidence that university studies are a time of growing up and becoming independent, which included leaving home and taking responsibility for one’s own actions and choices. One of the most positive things in studying in HE was that they learn—for the first time in their lives—how to study independently; in addition, they felt that HE studies provided them with an opportunity to re-evaluate their relationship to learning (Brooks & Everett, 2008).

Similarly, positive life periods are not supportive by students for lower socioeconomic backgrounds ( $M=2,862$ ,  $SD=0,86$ ). For many students, university studies are not a positive and significant period of time in which they construct their lives. Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may have negative experiences about their time at the university. This may suggest that students often have feelings of optimism which may be balanced by apprehension associated with significant life change, especially and during graduation (Graham & McKenzie, 1995). Moreover, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds reported that they did not feel the academic life as a natural part of their lives ( $M=2,292$ ,  $SD=1,14$ ) as literature has previously indicated that there is ‘a grounded sense in which these adults see themselves as increasingly distant from the formalised status of learner; they do not easily perceive themselves as ‘student’ (Crosnan et al., 2003). A growing literature indicates that there is a strong interaction between students and university staff in the final stage of their studies. On the other hand, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds did not feel any kind of positive interaction with their professors ( $M=2,214$ ,  $SD=0,96$ ). The next category “uncertainty” is positively answered by ( $M=4,059$ ,  $SD=1,08$ ) students from disadvantaged socioeconomic groups as literature (Lairio et al., 2013) pointed out that students’ experiences of uncertainty were related to their choices, working life, future life plans and economic growth. Uncertainty is observed on students’ thoughts of choosing a field of study and finding the best employment prospects. Many students were aware that a degree does not necessarily guarantee employment, particularly in social sciences and humanities. It is now more common for university graduates to find work with requirement that do not match their educational level (Rouhelo, 2006). Other causes for concern may be the feeling of inadequacy of own skills and abilities in the labor market.



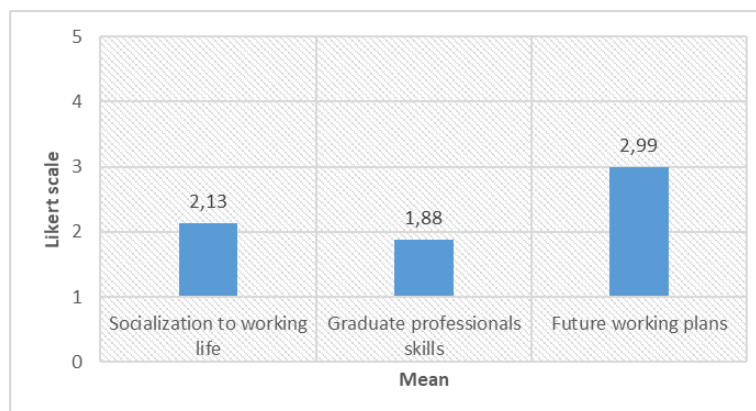
**Figure I. Academic Identity results (Mean) (N=230)**

### **Professional Identity**

Professional identity is categorized to future working plans, socialization to working life, graduate professional's skills. Reflection on one's own professionalism and professional identity are indeed typical for students in their final stage of studies since the transition to working life is imminent.

The results (Figure II) in first category socialization to working life show that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds didn't develop social skills during their studies. In the same vein, the results of the second category graduate professional's skills show that they didn't graduated professional skills during their studies. For students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, university studies offer an environment where it is not enough safe to plan the working life. On the other hand, much safety is associated with the working life of students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. They usually meet the demands of adulthood and working life.

Similarly, students' responses for future working plans reveal that they felt that they were living in some kind of intermediate space before adulthood (Arnett, 2000).



**Figure II. Profesional identity results (Mean) (N=230)**



## Discussion

The present study was focused on the issue of identity construction in higher education as it is seen in social contexts. The data show that socioeconomic background can influence and shape the identity construction. According to Bourdieu and Passeron (1964), students are likely to change the norms of their life and are exposed to all those stimuli that enable them to re-evaluate their identity. At the same time, social inequalities in higher education are supported by an increasing literature as a consequence of not developing a similar identity.

The aim of this article was to examine the relationship between socioeconomic background and identity construction in higher education. It is based on a quantitative data survey carried out at university of Ioannina. Even though multidimensional factors (psychological, social, cultural) are to be taken into consideration in order to better explain the issue, this study tried to give a new knowledge in certain quality dimensions of identity construction.

Advantaged groups (Literature review)	Disadvantaged groups (study results)
Developed social interactions (Reid et al., 2008)	No positive life period
Study independently (Brooks & Everett, 2008)	Lack of independence
Good interaction between students and university staff (Vermeulen & Schmidt, 2008).	Not developed communication with professors
Experience of uncertainty (Tynja et al., 2003)	Experience of uncertainty
Significant life change (Graham & McKenzie, 1995)	Not a natural part of life
"Education is a personal growth not just getting a job"	Personal growth
Networks influence career outcomes including job satisfaction and attainment (Podolny & Barron, 1997)	Less social networks to career development
Higher education support students with professionally oriented knowledge and skills (Wright, 2001)	No professional skills
High education motivates students to get into labor market (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2007)	Less motivation to transition in labor market

**Figure III.** *Advantaged and disadvantaged groups' identity construction*

Conclusions of the study are reported in the Figure III. Even though, many studies for middle class students demonstrate that students highlight the importance of social interactions in constructing identity (Reid et al., 2008) and one of the most positive things in studying in HE was that they had learnt—for the first time in their lives—how to study independently (Brooks & Everett, 2008) students from disadvantaged groups faced difficulties in having a positive life period and reported lack of independence. In a similar vein, students from middle class usually develop good relationships with the academic staff (Vermeulen & Schmidt, 2008). This result is against what our study reported happening on disadvantaged social groups. Moreover, students come from social disadvantaged groups are less like to feel that they improve their personalities. On the other hand, literature review states that "education is a personal growth not just getting a job". Last but not least, a growing number of researchers indicate that academic networks influence career outcomes. Networks influence career outcomes including job satisfaction and attainment (Podolny & Barron, 1997). At the same vein, higher education supports the development of professional

skills (Wright, 2001), and motivate students to get into the labor market (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2011). On the other hand, our study provides evidence that experience of uncertainty exists. Universities must be more active in constructing professional identity. They have to orient students towards academic identity and professionalism (Reid et al., 2008) and make them get a strong background to collaboration with people in the professional world of work.

The study concludes that there is a relationship between academic and professional identity construction and social class. It suggests that previous experience and socioeconomic background should be taken into consideration to the academic and professional identity construction. The theoretical framework given by Erikson, Marcia and Bourdieu demonstrate that identity construction in HE is highly influenced by social factors and they should be examined in combination with psychological and individual factors. Further research should be conducted in order to better explore the complexity of social factors that affect identity construction in HE. This is a theme that deserves closer examination with qualitative and quantitative research into university students' experiences of their own identity construction.

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## European policies for foreign languages

Tsiplakides Iakovos, Sianou-Kyrgiou Eleni, Model Zosimaia Junior High School of Ioannina (Greece) / Department of Philosophy, Education and Psychology, University of Ioannina (Greece) - [esianou@uoi.gr](mailto:esianou@uoi.gr)

### **Abstract**

*European policies actively promote knowledge of foreign languages. According to the official rhetoric, European citizens, and especially young people, need to know foreign language in order to communicate easily, to participate in the European Union as active citizens and in order to overcome cultural prejudices and stereotypes. Knowledge of foreign languages is considered to contribute to understanding, tolerance and an integral part of the European Union. Considering the above, in this paper we first present the official policies as regards knowledge of foreign languages, on the basis of official documents and decisions. We then present and analyse the theoretical underpinnings of these policies. Finally, the concrete measures that have been taken so far in order to achieve the aim of multilingualism are presented and discussed.*

### **Introduction**

European Union policies actively promote knowledge of foreign languages stressing the value of linguistic diversity in the EU. In this framework, multilingualism is seen as an important tool for social cohesion and mobility within the EU. Multilingualism is defined as “both a person’s ability to use several languages and the co-existence of different language communities in one geographical area” (Commission of the European Communities, 2005:3). As part of its efforts to promote mobility and intercultural understanding, the European Union has designated language learning as an important priority, and funds numerous programs and projects in this area.

In addition, the European Union policies recognize the importance of all languages spoken in the EU. This importance is reflected in official European Union documents, in which it is stressed that “all the European language, in their spoken and written forms, are equal in value and dignity from the cultural point of view and form an integral part of European cultures and civilization” (Official Journal of the European Communities, 2000). As a result, European Union policies actively promote the learning of foreign language in all levels of education, since it is believed they can have beneficial results on many levels. The current European Union views concerning multilingualism and the teaching and learning of foreign languages in schools is presented below.

### **The official rhetoric about multilingualism**

The European Union’s commitment to multilingualism is reflected in a number of decisions and official documents. To start with, the Commission's 1995 White Paper “Education, training, research: Teaching and learning: towards a learning society” stressed the importance for Europe to invest in education and research. The rational underpinning the decision is that investing in knowledge plays an essential role in “employment, competitiveness and social cohesion” (White Paper, 1995: i). In this paper, a number of initiatives and measures were established. These included: (a) the development of language learning as part of LINGUA, integrated in the SOCRATES and LEONARDO programmes, (b) foreign language learning starts at pre-school level, with the learning of a second Community foreign language starting in secondary school and (c) introduction

of a “European quality label” which is awarded to schools meeting certain criteria regarding promotion of Community language learning, such as schools that encourage innovative language-teaching methods (White Paper, 1995).

Another key document is the Commission's 1996 Green Paper “Education, Training, Research: The obstacles to transnational mobility”. In this paper the fact that “learning at least two Community languages has become a precondition if citizens of the European Union are to benefit from occupational and personal opportunities open to them in the single market” was stressed (Green Paper, 1996). The knowledge of foreign languages was linked to the concepts of (a) personal mobility and (b) the European Community's investment in human resources, which were considered as key factors in dealing with the economic, social and cultural challenges of the 21st century (Green Paper, 1996).

Moreover, in the Barcelona European Council, the European Council called for further action in order to “improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age...generalisation of an Internet and computer user's certificate for secondary school pupils (Barcelona European Council, 2002:19). Knowledge of foreign languages and in general investment in education was seen as a means to promoting competitive economies based on knowledge.

In another official document, Commission of the European Communities in 2005, multilingualism is linked to European values, as “It is this diversity that makes the European Union what it is: not a ‘melting pot’ in which differences are condensed, but a common home in which diversity is celebrated, and where our many mother tongues are a source of wealth and a bridge to greater solidarity and mutual understanding” (Commission of the European Communities, 2003:2). In this document, which sets “A New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism” (Commission of the European Communities, 2003:1), foreign languages are seen as ways to improve communication among people who live in the European Union and to establish a healthy multilingual economy.

More recently, in the Brussels European Council, a strong link between linguistic and cultural competences and education was established. More specifically, it was stressed that “linguistic and cultural diversity are distinctive features in the daily lives of an increasing number of European citizens and companies as a result of increased mobility, migration and globalisation” (Brussels European Council, 2008:21). Multilingualism was also linked to such issues as the economic, social and cultural benefits of free movement within the European Union, participation in the modern knowledge society, social integration and social exclusion.

The above policy outline as regards multilingualism and basic decisions at European level reveals that the multilingualism policy encompasses the economic, social and cultural aspects of languages in a lifelong learning perspective. It is also worth noting that at the same time official documents emphasize that the linguistic diversity of Europe should be preserved. This means that the broadest

possible range of languages should be available to learners, with the support of new technologies and innovative approaches.

In this framework, as it has already been mentioned, one of the EU's multilingualism goals is for every European to speak two languages in addition to their mother tongue. The best way to achieve this would be to introduce children to two foreign languages from an early age.

Conclusively, we can argue that multilingualism is considered a goal of primary importance, since it is linked to the European integration process, as mastery of foreign languages can encourage cultural and linguistic diversity (Official Journal of the European Communities, 2000). Multilingualism can contribute to "developing mutual understanding and giving a tangible content to the concept of European citizenship" (ibid). It is also a firm belief of the European Union that foreign languages are useful in modern "knowledge and information societies". These societies have the following features: (a) the social and economic relationships are organized on the basis of the exploitation of knowledge and information, (b) the production, management and consumption of information and knowledge are seen to be at the core of economic productivity and societal development (May, 2002). These developments require the need for restructuring of education. In modern societies in which information is vital, the knowledge of foreign languages is critical for individual success and the society's economic growth. Knowing a foreign language enables European Union citizens to speak to people in their own language and provides them with first-hand insight into the culture and literature of a place (European Union, 2010).

In relation to the English language, knowledge of the English language is essential for active use of modern technologies, as most of the websites are in English. The official rhetoric is based on the belief that the learning of the English language is a necessity for the new generations. Knowing English is essential for the transition of young people to the labour market and participation in modern societies that, in the framework of globalization, have no national boundaries (European Union, 2010).

However, despite the fact that the improvement of quality and efficiency of language learning constitute one of the principal aims of the Strategic Framework for Education and Training and the acknowledgement that education and training can be conducive to meeting the various socio-economic, demographic, environmental and technological challenges facing Europe and its citizens at present and in the future (Official Journal of the European Union, 2009), there are still obstacles to be overcome, as shown in the description of the position of foreign languages in the curriculum in European Union countries that follows.

### **Position of foreign languages in the curriculum in EU countries**

The teaching of foreign languages in primary and secondary education has gained considerable importance in recent years. In most European Union countries students learn foreign languages, while more and more countries introduce a foreign language from the first years of primary education.

In Europe, students are generally between 6 and 9 years old when they have to start learning a foreign language. In the majority of European countries, learning two foreign languages for at least one year during compulsory education is an obligation for all students (Eurydice, 2012a). However, despite efforts, the average number of foreign languages taught in secondary schools is still some way from the target set in Barcelona (Commission of the European Communities, 2005). A tendency to offer this provision from an earlier age than previously is evident in many countries which have implemented reforms or pilot projects to bring forward the teaching of foreign languages (Eurydice, 2012b).

As far as secondary education is concerned, official statistics show that, on average, in 2009/10, 60.8 % of students enrolled in lower secondary education in Europe were learning two or more foreign languages. This is an increase of 14.1 percent compared to 2004/05 (Eurydice, 2012). As far as which languages are taught, English is by far the most taught foreign language in nearly all countries. Very few students learn languages other than English, French, Spanish, German or Russian.

A closer examination of the official statistical data reveals that, while the age of students starting to learn a foreign language has decreased, the amount of taught time has not significantly increased. In other words, despite the efforts and the progress made, the average number of foreign languages taught in secondary schools is still some way from the target set in Barcelona (Commission of the European Communities, 2005).

### **Measures to increase foreign language proficiency**

The European Union has designed and implemented a number of measures aiming at helping young people improve their knowledge of foreign languages. One of these efforts concerns the Erasmus+, which started in January 2014 as the new EU programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport for 2014-2020 (European Parliament, 2013, European Union, 2013).

As it is stated in the above document, one of its specific objectives, in relation to education and training, is to improve the teaching and learning of languages and to promote the Union's broad linguistic diversity and intercultural awareness (European Union, 2013:32). This means that the promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity is one of the programme's specific objectives (European Commission, 2014). According to official documents, "Education, training, youth and sport can make a major contribution to help tackle socio-economic changes, the key challenges that Europe will be facing until the end of the decade and to support the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy for growth, jobs, social equity and inclusion" (European Commission, 2014). It funds projects that fall into three key actions: (a) learning mobility of individuals, (b) cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices, and (c) support for policy reform, while the budget implementation is the responsibility of the National Agencies. Practical experience with participation in a "Key Action 1" programme, mobility of staff of education institutions, which entailed undertaking a learning experience in another country



(Portugal) and a “Key Action 2” programme, (Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices – Strategic Partnerships) with teachers and students from schools from Germany, Romania, France and Spain has shown that they can have beneficial results. As regards the teaching staff in secondary education, among other potential benefits, participation in such programmes (funded by the European Union) can lead to improved competences linked to the participants’ professional profiles, increased foreign language competences and intercultural awareness. Students have benefited from their participation (Key Action 2), as well, since they have acquired a high level of communicative competence in the foreign languages used in the programme (as they have to use foreign languages to implement the programme), increased motivation, development of critical and creative thinking, increased level of digital competence (ICTs and Web 2.0 tools are used throughout the programme) and, through communication with young people from other countries, a greater understanding, awareness and responsiveness to social, linguistic and cultural diversity, thus, learning to respect cultural differences. In general, participation in this programme seems to have had a positive influence on the students’ academic and personal development. More information about the Key Action 2 programme (which is closely linked to an eTwinning project) entitled: “Power up! Get active for Your Future” can be found at: <http://www.poweruperasmus.com/>, while more information about both programmes can be found at: [http://gym-zosim.ioa.sch.gr/wp/erasmus/?lcp\\_page0=1#lcp\\_instance\\_0](http://gym-zosim.ioa.sch.gr/wp/erasmus/?lcp_page0=1#lcp_instance_0).

In a similar vein, eTwinning projects promote cooperation between schools, promoting, according to the official website “school collaboration in Europe through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) by providing support, tools and services for schools” ([https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/discover/what\\_is\\_etwinning.htm](https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/discover/what_is_etwinning.htm)). Such projects can promote foreign language learning and cultural awareness, as they provide interactive learning environments in which learners engage in practical, inquiry-based tasks that “promote collaborative and multidisciplinary learning” making use of modern technologies (Gilleran and Kearney, 2014).

In addition, the “European Year of Languages” initiative, aims at promoting multilingualism across schools in Europe. Its introduction is based on the belief that “the languages question is a challenge that must be tackled as part of the European integration process and the European Year of Languages may therefore prove to be highly instructive as far as the formulation of measures to encourage cultural and linguistic diversity is concerned” (Official Journal of the European Communities, 2000).

In addition, in relation to the certification of the knowledge of foreign languages, it was felt that a common framework is necessary, so that certification levels are comparable across Europe. As a result, in most European countries, official guidelines for language teaching fix minimum attainment levels for both the first and the second foreign languages. These levels correspond to the six proficiency levels defined by the “Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)”, published by the Council of Europe in 2001. It defines six levels of proficiency (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2).

However, despite continuous efforts, the European Union believes that there is still room for improving the effectiveness of language learning. A comparative analysis of the Member States' foreign language teaching policies reveals that despite significant investment in foreign language teaching in recent years, the competence level of European students continues to be below expectations. Renewed focus must be made on the quality of language teaching (ICF report, 2014).

Taking the above into consideration, measures were taken with the aim of improving the effectiveness of language learning. In this framework, one method which is used in an increasing number of Member States, according to the comparative country analysis, is the CLIL method (Content and language integrated learning). It is a teaching method in which the foreign language is used for the teaching of non-language school subjects.

Another strategy concerns using information and communication technologies (ICT) in foreign language education. This is often called “computer assisted language learning” (CALL). It refers to any process in which the learner uses a computer to improve foreign language competence (ICF report, 2014).

### **Policies for foreign languages teaching in Greece**

Policies aiming at promoting foreign language competences were taken. One such policy concerns the PEAP project (English for Young Learners project, EYL) (<http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/peap/en>). According to information available in this website, the programme is part of a larger project entitled “New foreign language education policies in schools: English for Young Learners”. It is co-funded by the European Union and Greece, through the Regional Operational Programme “Education and Lifelong Learning”, is implemented by the University of Athens and realized at the Research Centre for Language Teaching, Testing and Assessment of the Faculty of English Language and Literature (<http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/peap/en>). In this framework, the teaching of English starts from the first class of primary school. It is worth mentioning that primary school students in Greece learn a first and second foreign language in primary school (Dendrinou, Zouganeli and Karavas, 2013). As of 2010, students who attend the first grade of primary school are offered the first foreign language, which is English (Dendrinou, Zouganeli and Karavas, 2013).

The scholarly and political debate and the rhetoric presented in this paper, along with the European Union's measures, have had an impact on the teaching of foreign language in the greek educational system. As a result, a major concern of the educational policy in Greece is to increase levels of performance in the English language in secondary schools. Official rhetoric and policy supports the view that all students graduating from secondary education should reach level B2 on the proficiency scale in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

In practice, however, the public school fails to provide students with adequate knowledge and certification of the English language, despite the fact that students study English at school for many years. This weakness of the educational system in Greece has led to a massive resort to out-of-

school support. This means that the vast majority of students resort to out-of school support. Students and their families believe that the teaching of English in schools does not offer enough knowledge and does not prepare students adequately for participation in exams for the acquisition of English language certificates (Tsiplakides, 2014). In this framework, English, being a lingua franca, is considered as an indispensable qualification.

As a result, a widely spread system of private tutorial centers (frontistiria) or costlier private English language courses operate in parallel with state schools. This undermines the role of state school and turns knowledge into a commodity that consumers can buy. The privatization of “free” state education means that the family’s economic and social capital, rather than student ability and effort, impact on knowledge of the English language (Tsiplakides, 2009).

This is important, especially in a time of crisis. Given that there is an interconnection among the various forms of capital, existing social inequalities are reproduced and legitimized through schooling.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper we have outlined the philosophy underpinning European Union’s firm decision to invest in the knowledge of foreign languages, placing emphasis on the teaching and learning of the English language. It is thought that multilingualism will bring about multiple benefits at personal, national and European level. The most important policies adopted for achieving the above aim have also been described.

In Greece, official documents about knowledge of foreign languages are in line with the decisions of the European Union. However, research data show that there is an urgent need for the restructuring of the teaching of English as a foreign language in state schools. If Greece is to achieve the goals and objectives set by the European Union, it should adopt measures that ensure that students in primary and secondary education receive adequate knowledge that will enable them to learn foreign languages effectively. As we have argued elsewhere (Tsiplakides, 2009), at a practical level, there is an urgent need for changes in the teaching of English as a foreign language in state primary and secondary schools. First of all, in order to increase students’ motivation level, there is a need for schools to provide students with certification of the knowledge obtained at school. In relation to teaching materials and textbooks, they need to be modernized, while information and communication technologies (ICT) should become an integral part of the language teaching process in the teaching methodology. In addition, contemporary approaches and methodologies concerning the teaching of foreign languages (e.g. project-based learning, Web 2.0 tools, European cooperation programmes such as Erasmus+ and eTwinning projects) need to be incorporated. Finally, providing all students with equal opportunities should become the focus of policies aiming at improving the teaching of English as a foreign language.

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## Digital storytelling as a means for linguistic development, cultural expression and intercultural communication: a teacher training course

Marianthi Kotadaki (M.Ed.), ELT School Advisor [kotadaki@gmail.com](mailto:kotadaki@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*According to the Greek national education policy, primary and secondary school students need to develop diverse literacies and skills, in order to respond effectively to the challenges raised in the post-school globalised social, professional, or academic environment. The ability to access and use knowledge critically and creatively, to handle technological advances flexibly and purposefully and to adapt to and function in the contemporary multicultural society constitutes the spinal cord of current school curricula. As 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, linguistic development, media literacy, innovative creativity and communicatively effective collaboration are given particular emphasis basically in the syllabuses of subjects that either aim at language learning or integrate oral and written language expression. As a key agent of education policy implementation, a teacher is expected to align the learning procedures against the demands of the outside world through his/her multidimensional expertise. The present paper delineates an eight-week teacher training blended-learning course on Digital Storytelling, which was designed to enhance the teachers' awareness of the contribution of digital storytelling as a pedagogic approach to the development of the literacies and skills included in the national curricula for primary and secondary education. The course was offered to teachers of foreign languages and other specializations in the prefecture of Ilia, Peloponnese. Assigned learners' roles, the participant trainees explored actively the philosophy and strategic procedure of digital storytelling and investigated reflectively how the art of digitalized narratives can boost language skills, cultural expression and intercultural communication. The course content and structure enabled the participant teachers to find ways with which personal stories, which are symbols of cultural identities and experiences, can be used to build cross-cultural understanding and collaboration, skills mutually beneficial for teachers and students.*

**Key words:** professional development; digital storytelling; literacies; skills; culture

### **Introduction**

According to Schulman (1986), effective teaching is a blend of diverse types of knowledge which intertwine in order to produce learning. Content knowledge, general pedagogic knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of the learners and the educational context and knowledge of educational ends are identified as crucial ingredients of a teacher's pedagogical repertoire. In this light, teaching is perceived as a dynamic, goal-oriented, dynamic process, which involves multiple interactions of teachers, students and materials within a specific educational context (Cohen & Ball, 1999; 2000). The steadily developing diversity of the educational context at local and international level raises the need for the teachers to enrich and update their instructional practice, to meet the standards of contemporary learners and learning conditions. Continuing professional development, which is described as a career-long process aimed at improving teacher performance (Fullan, 1991:326) nowadays aligns its procedures against the pedagogic, cultural, socio-economic and other developments, in an effort to provide diversified and sustainable teaching effectiveness. This paper presents an eight-week long teacher development blended-learning course, which was designed and implemented with primary and secondary school teachers in the prefecture of Ilia, Peloponnese. Thematically embedded in the

conceptual framework of Digital Storytelling as a teaching and learning approach, the course engaged the participants in an active, self-exploratory acquisition of twenty-first century skills. Experientially sampling the procedural steps of this innovative trend, the trainees were led to develop an awareness of Digital Storytelling as a vehicle for cultural expression, cross-cultural understanding and collaboration and multi-culturally adaptable skills and competences.

### **Training the teachers for skills-based cultural awareness in Greek education**

Espousing the idea that the mission of education is to prepare the students for their role as proactive citizens, capable of coping with the challenges of a changing world (Trilling & Fadel, 2009), the Greek curricula are oriented towards the development of the so-called twenty-first century skills (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). Categorized under the umbrella terms of Learning and Innovation Skills, Information, Media and Technology Skills and Life and Career Skills, these comprise sets of abilities, which students need to acquire to succeed in the information age.

Essential and common properties of both the Greek Cross-thematic Curriculum Framework (2003) and the New National Curricula (2010) are a) the pursuit of a value-based education aiming at the students' intellectual, emotional, and moral growth and b) their consequent growth of sensitivity towards cultural diversity and cross-cultural communication. Therefore, both documents place significant emphasis on the development of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, as principal factors for the preparation of students for integration in diverse post-school global social contexts. Through methodological approaches which build on their ability to handle multimodal literacies in order to resolve problems critically, cooperate with others constructively and shape personalities for democratic citizenship, Greek curricula promote task-based, exploratory and cooperative learning.

The acquisition of communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation competencies and skills integrating today's digital literacies is perceived to be an asset for both the students and the teachers (Dede, 2009). As the teacher's role is to mediate and infuse current educational goals in school, it is significant that he has personally anticipated the development of the related beliefs, knowledge and skills. In the middle of a teacher's multifaceted pedagogic background lie his media literacy and its technological content knowledge, two competencies which safeguard the pedagogically purposeful use of technology for the attainment of learning aims (Mishra & Koheler, 2006). To this end, involvement in professional development activity which structurally exemplifies contemporary educational policies and worldwide pedagogic trends is thought to bring about a stronger impact on those involved and to establish better prospects for skill transference into classroom didactic procedures than traditional professional development forms (Wei et al, 2009).

### **The element of culture in storytelling and Digital storytelling**

Social constructivism posits that "...understandings are constructed in culturally formed settings" (Mercer and Fisher 1997:112–117), advocating thus the significance of the cultural basis of learning. Banks, Banks and McGee (1989) provide the following succinct definition of culture: "The essence of a culture is not its artifacts, tools or other tangible cultural elements but how the members of the group interpret, use, and perceive them. It is the values, symbols, interpretations

and perspectives that distinguish one people from another in modernized society; it is not material objects and other tangible aspects of human society". The term "intercultural", evident in national and international school curricula, describes the cultural interaction that is grounded in reciprocal respect (Fennes and Hapgood 1997) and which requires the sharing and negotiating of cultural similarities and differences towards the achievement of cross-cultural communication.

Traditionally, storytelling is a method through which cultural origins, values, and beliefs are passed down from generation to generation. People have told stories to communicate knowledge and experience, to address social and moral issues and to establish a sense of community and identity in social contexts. The narrative is characterised by Bruner as "one of the most ubiquitous and powerful discourses" in human communication (1990: 77). Narratives are generally seen as vehicles of meaning making, especially in the sense that they contain cultural symbolisms that are succeeded across generations and larger communities, thus shaping collective and individual identity (Wertsch, 1998). In storytelling people produce their own personalized version of the world, therefore stories are justifiably attributed special value as culture vehicles. Langellier and Peterson (2004) state that storytelling is an integral part of daily life and as such it engages people in cultural conversations. Similarly, Brooks (2000: 169) states that "... the more stories we have available to us the richer are our resources...the more voices and narratives we listen to, the more abundantly we experience our lives...for both their differences and their similarities, we can hardly afford to let some voices remain marginal and silenced and other voices dominate."

Digital storytelling emerged in the United States in the 1990s, promoted by John Lambert, Dana Atchley and Nina Mullen via the Center for Digital Storytelling. The group pioneered the merging of the the traditional art of storytelling with interactive technology in order to create cultural narratives that immerse the audience in a new cultural experience. Briefly and concisely defined, a digital story is a short story (between 2-5 minutes) that combines traditional modes of story narration with a wide variety of multimedia tools, such as graphs, audio, video, animation and online publication. One of its most noteworthy characteristics is that the author narrates the story with his own voice (Lambert, 2010; Robin, 2011). As part of this effort, the pioneering group elaborated a list of seven basic elements for digital stories: 1. Point of view, 2. Complication, 3. Dramatic tension, 4. Gift of one's voice, 5. Power of soundtrack, 6. Economy of detail, 7. Pacing.

Digital technologies have created new performance methodologies, and, consequently, new conditions for the expression of cultural identities. Erstad and Wertsch (2008) acknowledge that "the 'cultural tools' that we use for meaning making change over time". Digital stories play a key role in the dissemination of aspects related to historic and cultural preservation, community development, human rights and other issues relating to human life. (Signes, 2014).

Digital Storytelling has developed a new educational strand extending its benefits to increased learner engagement through valuing and validating the life experiences of students; expanded opportunities for skill building with an emphasis on the 21st century requirement of digital, media, visual, and informational literacies; and the addition of new channels for the development of voice



through multimedia authoring (Barett, 2006; Robin, 2008; Sadik, 2008; Benick 2012; Olher, 2013). As such, Digital Storytelling can be understood not only as a media form, but as a field of cultural practice, because of the new dynamic interrelations between textual arrangements and symbolic conventions, technologies for production and conventions for their use as well as the collaborative social interaction that takes place in local and specific contexts (Burgess, 2006). A student-author's digital story reflects his own intellectual and personal engagement with the topic, conveys his own testimony on it and embodies his individual creative representation of it as a witness and member of a social reality (Signes, 2014).

### **“Digital Storytelling for the development of Productive and Collaborative Skills”: a teacher development blended learning course**

#### **i. *Design and structure***

A highly prospective approach in professional development immerses teachers in situations that are very proximate to the classroom ambiance and induce the active construction of pedagogic knowledge through their assignment of student roles (Koutselini, 2008; Wei, et al., 2009). Such models are aligned against adult education principles, which argue that learning experiences based on personal, responsible, autonomous and collaborative action are regarded as key factors in the change of teacher beliefs, attitudes and behaviours, and are, therefore, more effective forms of professional development (Schibeci et al., 2008). Also, based on the assumption that technology-mediated models of professional development can contribute to the flexible, self-regulated and differentiated enhancement of the teachers' pedagogic knowledge and skills (Lionarakis, 2003), there was designed an eight-week long professional development blended learning course for the teachers of Ilia, Peloponnese.

The course titled “Digital Storytelling for the Development of Productive and Collaborative Skills” was thematically framed in the specific subject area, launched in two language versions (English and Greek) to involve teachers of English and of all other discipline specializations respectively and structured on the Moodle platform of the Achaia ICT Central Service of secondary education. The course also included two face-to-face sessions aiming at the trainees' acquaintance with and short practice on a variety of multimedia tools for Digital Storytelling and the anticipation and/or resolution of arising difficulties. The course procedures were supported by a network of digitally competent volunteering teachers, whose role was to assist in the assessment of the trainees' assignments and the coordination of the face-to-face sessions. The principal aims of the course were:

- to familiarize the participant teachers with the principles of written narrative discourse,
- to discuss the essential elements of storytelling,
- to investigate the concept, the essential elements, the procedures and the pedagogic value of Digital Storytelling,

- to broaden the participant teachers' digital literacy and develop their technological pedagogic content knowledge,
- to explore the merits of Digital Storytelling in the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century literacies and skills,
- to engage the participant teachers in media-based creative self-expression and develop an awareness of Digital Storytelling as a means of culture exchange and
- to immerse them in a reflective professional development experience, linked to their personal and professional interests and experiences as an incentive for the transference of the gained skills to their individual educational contexts.

The course content was delineated in eight modules, thematically distributed in the eight respective weeks. Each module explored a specific topic area related to Digital Storytelling. Participants were prompted to study the material and do a small number of assignments per week, which they submitted online within a set time span. Each week's content included a) PowerPoint presentations bearing the key theoretical framework of the topic under focus and links to websites and other multimodal resources (videos, articles, infographics, etc.), b) topic-related research articles for further study and use for assignment completion, c) documents in *doc(x)*, *pdf*, or *jpeg* form to use in particular assignments and d) the assignment instructions. The participant teachers were frequently required through their assignment instructions to share ideas, queries, and problems on the course forum, so that there would be vibrant interaction and collaborative problem-solving. The structure of the course modules are as follows:

Week	Module Title	Module Content
Week 1	Storytelling becomes Digital Storytelling	Definition and elements of storytelling and digital storytelling; scenario writing.
Week 2	Tools for Digital Storytelling (1)	Image and sound libraries and editing tools; presentation tools; comic strip/book creators.
Week 3	Tools for Digital Storytelling (2)	Video creators; animation creators; creativity multimedia tools.
Week 4	Digital Storytelling methodology	Digital Storytelling methodology; storyboarding; evaluation rubrics.
Week 5	Assembling the digital story	Reflection and decision-making on multimedia resources; forum-based interaction; collection of digital material.
Week 6	Creating, enriching and editing the digital story	Creation, enrichment and editing of digital stories.
Week 7	Story presentation and self-evaluation	Dissemination of digital stories; rubric-based self-evaluation of individual stories.
Week 8	Digital Storytelling in teaching	Educational use of digital stories; materials design.

ii. **Implementation**

According to the course schedule, in Week 1, the participants were provided a bulk of theoretical knowledge and a fixed set of visual prompts to use as an inspiration in order to write the scenario of a story. Weeks 2 and 3 were dedicated to their experimentation with a wide range of multimedia tools linked to Digital Storytelling. Personalized familiarization with new technologies both broadened their digital literacy and also boosted a reflective attitude towards the technological material they would eventually select to build their digital story with. In Week 4, the participants were introduced in the theoretical strands of storyboarding and turned their written scenarios into storyboards. Week 5 was allocated to academic study, reflection and forum-based interaction, with the participants sharing views on their experience so far and anticipating forthcoming plans. In Week 6, the trainees created their digital stories drawing relevant guidance from topic-related study, and in Week 7, they disseminated it to their peers debriefing its context. Finally, in Week 8, the participant teachers explored the pedagogical uses of Digital Storytelling through studying and designing either a lesson plan or a learning activity prompted by their digital product or linked to the overall Digital Storytelling context.

Transcending any limitations set by the visual prompts' scenes, the trainees tackled a wide variety of subjects in their digital stories. Culturally tinted topics as well as socially contextualized issues, such as human values, racism, bullying, search for identity, alienation, social rejection, domestic violence, orphanage, death, environmental respect, e.t.c., were presented and discussed under the personal lenses of the narrators' cultural properties. The differentiated writing and narration styles, the nature and the span of the selected digital resources and the different perspectives in which similar topics were examined, substantiate the claim that digital stories are used for "telling lives", being deeply personal journeys into one's own history and experience of identity formation (Porter, 2004). This combination of personal voice and its multimodal mediation to a social context emphasize the strong cultural and democratic potential of Digital Storytelling, leading Lunby (2008) to talk about 'mediatization' that is the media-influenced representation of the relation between the message sender and the message receiver.

iii. **Evaluation**

The course was summatively evaluated at the end of the course by fifty out of its total eighty participants, who responded to an online survey. The delivered questionnaire sought to gauge the course effectiveness in relation to a number of variables, primarily associated with areas such as literacies and skills development, professional development mode, degree of self-achievement, fulfillment of personal aspirations, and so on. Summarizing the feedback gained, the majority of the participants attested to the relevance of the course to the needs and challenges of their didactic situations and acknowledged its positive impact on their differentiated pedagogic deficiencies (94%). Despite the initial homogeneity of digital competence (88% of the trainees held basic level ICT certification, a considerable percentage of them (58%) admitted that their digital literacy was expanded during the

course. Furthermore, their active engagement in both self-exploratory and collaborative problem solving developed new literacies and skills (media literacy, visual literacy, information literacy) and provided insights into critically embedding them in their educational contexts (86%). The blended learning structure of the course was classified among its commonly shared assets (64%), with the participants particularly accentuating its appeal to individual skills, strategies and learning styles. Additionally, the high degree of enjoyment gained by the element of creativity of most of the course assignments was stressed with similar vigour (92%) as the prospects that were established for the activation of individual intelligences, talents, and creativity skills as vehicles for cultural multimodal expression and interaction (84%).

## **Conclusion**

From the paintings on the cave walls to the media-delivered stories of our digital era, stories are residence for cultural symbolisms and identities. As the media through which human beings express themselves evolve over time, individual and collective cultures integrate new elements to be negotiated and shared. The inherently cultural properties and dynamics of Digital Storytelling channels become distinctively evident in contemporary Educational Digital Storytelling (EDS) trends, which herald a positive impact on individual and collaborative expression. 'Luring the teachers lure into sharing their stories' (Lambert, 2013), the particular course attempted to demonstrate that making different perspectives available to a public not only validates diverse identities but also engages them in constructive intercultural dialogues with multiple educational and value-based merits.

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## *Identity in times of Crisis, Globalization and Diversity*

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### **Links**

Course portal: <http://e-learning.ilei.sch.gr/moodle/>

Course repository: <http://blogs.sch.gr/kotadaki/>

## Unity and respect in times of crisis: the importance of solidarity and alliance

Nektaria Palaiologou, School of Education, University of Western Macedonia [nekpalaiologou@uowm.gr](mailto:nekpalaiologou@uowm.gr)

### **Abstract**

*Issues of unity and respect have always been a core issue for all nations worldwide. Especially nowadays in times of global socioeconomic crisis, it seems that more than ever before it is important to follow international policies which at the same time take into consideration every nation's needs and particularities. These policies will have to set the matters of social stability and belongingness in a human rights direction as priorities.*

*This presentation aims at two dimensions on an educational basis. First, it offers some sociological background drawing upon the writings of eminent sociologists and modern philosophers. From a societal dimension, it attempts to show the importance for modern societies to provide social inclusion policies that would respect the needs of different social groups – such as groups coming from low socioeconomic backgrounds or groups that suffer from social exclusion.*

*From a humanistic perspective, to highlight that the notions of unity and belongingness could be vital axes for the agendas of the international policies, in terms of shaping global common policies but within each nation's needs and realities.*

*Nowadays in modern multicultural societies more than ever before issues of belongingness at a society that respects each person's personal, cultural, social and national traits, issues of stability and solidarity at all continents are of ultimate importance in order to guarantee social and global stability at all nations.*

**Key-words:** Unity, Inclusive Policies, Multicultural Societies, Solidarity, Tolerance

*First and foremost, **human solidarity** is founded on **mutual respect** of each other's uniqueness, and a deep sense of **appreciation of our common humanity** - that we are individuals with intrinsic self-worth, and that we are sisters and brothers within **one human family** inhabiting planet earth, our home and our heritage. While new trends, particularly globalization, link cultures ever more closely and enrich the interaction among them, they may also be detrimental to our cultural diversity and cultural pluralism. Thus, **the need for mutual respect** becomes all the more imperative. **Dialogue between cultures** appears to be one of the fundamental cultural and political challenges for the world today. It is an essential condition of peaceful co-existence.*

- (Lourdes R. Quisumbing, President, Asia-Pacific Network for International Education and Values Education Former Secretary of Education, Philippines, Speech at the International Conference on Cultural Policies for Development, Stockholm, Sweden, 1998).

### **1. Introduction: Solidarity and Tolerance in modern societies**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century world has been characterized by growing populations belonging to diverse ethnicities and cultural backgrounds that migrate to economically advanced regions. In dealing with diversity, societies need to find solutions for an effective reconciliation of apparently conflicting demands. Different cultures, societies and religions emphasize the importance of

educating members of an international community in such a way that they become better representatives and active exponents for a brighter global future.

Many of us never realize the real amount of control and constraint that society places on us. Especially in modern societies where many economic and sociopolitical events take place, affecting all people's lives, this is a major question.

Starting from a sociological viewpoint, Durkheim (1858–1917), a classical sociologist, gives us a framework for making sense of the stability of life and the layers of integration, control, and regulation that maintain it, pointing out the importance of *solidarity, which seems to interpret to a great extent the dynamics of societal changes in modern societies*.

In its generalized meaning, the term *solidarity* entered the political terminology during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and assumed a place alongside the term *fraternity*, which had gained prominence in the aftermath of the French Revolution, and even to an extent, replaced it. At the same time, Comte and later Durkheim helped it to become a basic sociological concept.

Whereas Marx had an eye for conflict and disruption, Durkheim asks us to think of social solidarity and stability as something special to be explained; not as a default or taken for granted experience. Durkheim's theories remain central to a number of sociological subfields, including the sociologies of religion, criminology, law and deviance, culture, and more. Especially today all these form matters that are in first line of debate in multicultural modern societies, where various societal groups are living together and interact.

Durkheim was primarily interested in what holds society together when it is made up of people with specialized roles and responsibilities. In *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893), an essential reading and key to understanding the relevance of Durkheim's ideas today, Durkheim provides an answer by turning to an *external indicator of solidarity*, the law, to uncover two types of social solidarity, *mechanical solidarity* and *organic solidarity*. Societies with mechanical solidarity tend to be small with a high degree of religious commitment, and people in a mechanical society oftentimes have the same jobs and responsibilities; thus indicating a low division of labor. *In other words, it is not a very complex society, but rather one based on shared sentiments and responsibilities*. Societies characterized by *organic solidarity*, on the other hand, are more secular and individualistic due to the specialization of each of our tasks. In other words, organic solidarity is more complex with a higher division of labor. Durkheim argues that societies move from mechanical to organic solidarity through the division of labor. As people began to move into cities and physical density mounted, competition for resources began to grow. Like in any competition, some people won and got to keep their jobs, whereas others lost and were forced to specialize. We now know this form of differentiation to be a key element in the division of labor. As a consequence, the division of labor generated all sorts of interdependencies between people, as well as key elements of organic solidarity, like a weaker collective conscience (see: Routledge Sociology, 2011).



Amongst other issues he has discussed in his writings, Durkheim's conceptualization of solidarity makes him a preeminent theorist of modernity.

In modern societies, another notion that is of major importance is that of *Tolerance*, which is well established as an important aspect of a successful democracy (Almond and Verba, 1965; Adorno et al., 1950). *Tolerance* here means the acceptance of the legitimacy of groups with attributes different from one's own. This legitimacy includes acceptance of their right to advocate values and interests that conflict with one's own values and interests. Such tolerance allows people to commit to the democratic process regardless of the outcome. Where such tolerance is a typically held attribute among the members of a political system, those in power are less likely to use the administrative power of the state to suppress those with differing values and interests (Arwine and Mayer, 2014).

Nonetheless the concept of *solidarity* will still be attractive in a post-modern world. Such solidarity will not be sufficient to sustain national moral community but it will inspire to look for a broader community (Bayertz 1999: 314). About the idea of a broader community and a global citizen, we will discuss at the next sections of this paper.

## **2. Inequalities, solidarity and citizenship education**

An estimated 214 million people live in states other than their state of origin today.<sup>1</sup> In the European Union alone, approximately 5.5 million migrants are currently residing without a valid immigration permission (Blus 2013: 413).

Particular groups have traditionally been the victims of European intolerance. Muslims, Jews, people of color, homosexuals and Roma have been in the first line of high risk groups. Gibson's findings (1992, in Arwine and Mayer 2014: 679) have shown that the perception of victimization or suppression is more prevalent amongst those out-groups that have in fact been the subjects of intolerant attitudes, which are not surprising. The discriminated groups may be simply stating a fact.

These groups face inequalities and discrimination almost at every aspect of social life, and of course, in their equal access to Education. As educators we allege that education, especially Citizenship Education today, could play an important role in the shaping of an intercultural global awareness and sensitivity towards common global problems. In March 2015, at their informal meeting, the European Union Education Ministers declared as follows the importance of human values:

"Issues of the attribution of citizenship are a core issue at the international debate. In response to the terrorist attacks in France and Denmark earlier this year, and recalling similar atrocities in Europe in the recent past, we reaffirm our determination to stand shoulder to shoulder in support of fundamental values that lie at the heart of the European Union: respect for human dignity, freedom (including freedom of expression), democracy, equality,

the rule of law and respect for human rights. These values are common to the Member States in a European society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail” (p. 2).

According to this declaration, “the primary purpose of education is not only to develop knowledge, skills, competences and attitudes and to embed fundamental values, but also to help young people - in close cooperation with parents and families - to become active, responsible, open-minded members of society. Children and young people represent our future and must have the opportunity to shape that future. We must combine our efforts to prevent and tackle marginalisation, intolerance, racism and radicalisation and to preserve a framework of equal opportunities for all. We must build on children’s and young people’s sense of initiative and the positive contribution they can make through participation, while reaffirming the common fundamental values on which our democracies are based” .... It is a noble challenge that we must strive to meet together” (as above).

In this direction, this is why it is of major importance for modern societies to provide social inclusion policies that would respect the needs of all the different social groups – such as groups coming from low socioeconomic backgrounds or groups that suffer from social exclusion. From a humanistic perspective, within polity agendas the notions of unity and belongingness could be vital axes for the international policies, in terms of shaping global common policies but within each nation’s needs and realities.

The post-modern dilemma is both sociological and philosophical. It is the dilemma caused by moral pluralism how to integrate all these different societal sub-groups. Yet, translation is possible. As Dobson and Eckersley (2006) have alleged both *solidarity and citizenship are often considered to require a degree of reciprocity* often based on a form of social contract.

### **3. What the recent economic crisis in Greece teaches other nations**

The harsh economic measures which have been imposed on Greece since 2012, have changed the sociopolitical scenery in the country. New forms of inequalities have been emerged with the middle class in its decline. This recession has started earlier within the end of the first decade of 2000s, following the Lehman Brothers’ collapse in 2008 in America, the very bad omen for the domino collapse situation that started.

*The situation which Greece faces could offer some insight to other nations that face similar harsh conditions.*

First, that each economic crisis is not one faceted: it is also social and political. The significant social changes in the Greek society after 1980s (i.e., the migrants different groups), the constant irregular migration, the subsequent fear and tension that has been created, fears reanimated by the extreme right party Golden Dawn in the name of national patriotism, as well as high unemployment, *all these have led to the rise of socioeconomic disadvantaged groups and show*

*that these awkward situations and difficulties are common global problems which most modern multicultural countries have faced or currently face to a smaller or larger extent.*

As mentioned earlier, this crisis in Greece has started long ago, following also the same route with the economic crash in USA in the early 2000s, when millions of people lost their jobs and houses. This is a new economic war with tragic implications for all nations. The earlier and recent history of Europe and USA could remind us that the mankind has suffered from other wars, which nobody would like to live again.

*In such hard times solidarity and alliance between nations are a very important issue:* not only in economic terms, but also in terms of bonding, of alliance and solidarity to people (as a nation) that currently suffer and need to continue to be treated with respect as members of a broader nations family, still belonging to it and not punished as a spoiled child.

As during the previous economic crises Greece in 1960s has faced, also now during the current crisis there is a new wave of emigration of the highly qualified young Greeks and professionals. The *brain drain* phenomenon or the new generation that is called “Generation G”: (i.e., young, talented, Greek- and part of the biggest brain drain in an advanced western economy in modern times (The Guardian 2015)).

One thing is certain: modern nations are bounded not only by laws and political regulations in terms of an economic agenda, but also with humanistic bonds based on the notions of belongingness, unity, dignity and respect, aiming at the welfare of their people. In such hard times all nations have to show empathy, since the history is usually repeated, what happens today to one nation could also happen to another.

At the American side, Torres Carlos Alberto (2002) in his inspiring article “*Globalization, Education, and Citizenship: Solidarity versus Markets?*” suggests that globalization places limits on state autonomy and national sovereignty, affecting education in various ways. Those limits are expressed in tensions between global and local dynamics in virtually every policy domain. Torres alleges that globalization not only blurs national boundaries but also shifts solidarities within and outside the national state. According to his frame of thought, “globalization cannot be defined exclusively by the post-Fordist model of production. Therefore, issues of human rights will play a major role affecting civic minimums at the state level, the performance of capital and labor in various domains, and particularly the dynamics of citizenship and democracy in the modern state” (p. 364). On the other hand, Torres points out that “globalization opens up new possibilities for democratic influence on essential common issues which by their nature are about the notion of the nation state” (p. 364). Torres refers to Kellner (1997, p. 2, in Torres op.cit., p. 395) who suggests that “the concept of globalization is ubiquitous, and entails from the Westernization of the world to the ascendancy of capitalism. Some people see globalization as increasing the homogeneity of societies, whereas others see it as increasing the hybridization of cultures and diversity. For still others, globalization is an evolving operation of power by

multinational corporations and state power, or the linchpin for environmental action, democratization, and humanization. Some see the concept of globalization as a contemporary ruse to describe the effects of imperialism or modernization. Some claim that modernization would open a new 'global age' that differs from the 'modern age'".

Developing his rationale, Torres (2002) is trying to offer a systematic appraisal of the limits of citizenship given the growing awareness of- and the globalization of the discourse and institutions of- universal human rights. In this frame of thought, Torres presents Nuhoglu Soysal's (1994: 166) analysis of the limits of citizenship which has implications at the following three levels (in Torres, p. 373): First, is the level of citizenship, where notions of identity and rights are decoupled. Second, is the level of the politics of identity and multiculturalism, where the emergence of membership in the polity "is multiple in the sense of spanning local, regional, and global identities, and accommodates intersecting complexes of rights, duties and loyalties". Third, is the level of what could be termed *cosmopolitan democracies*, which Soysal highlights as emerging from the importance of the international system for the attainment of democracy worldwide. The cosmopolitan democracies constitute a system relatively divorced in its origins and constitutive dynamics from codes of the nation-states".

According to Torres, "the question facing us in the process of increased globalization is whether the nation-state and citizenship are withering away" (p. 373). In his view, "in neoliberal times, the main questions are how globalization is affecting organized solidarity, how citizenship is being checked by market forces and globalization dynamics, and how democracy could be effective despite its ungovernability". In relation to Education, Torres believes that "clearly, the challenges to education have been magnified. How can education contribute to democratic citizenship? Will Thurow's (1992, 1999) view of universal, compulsory, publicly funded education as "mankind's greatest social invention" survive as a fundamental part of the democratic pact?" (in Torres, p.376). "In light of all these forces and challenges, to ask how educational policies could contribute to a democratic multicultural citizenship poses a formidable challenge to the theoretical imagination and to any political model that strives to go beyond the logic of instrumental rationality, or, worst, beyond the logic of fear" (p.376).

The Greek case calls for a 'paradigm shift' in our international agendas and policies, showing the importance for all societal groups to belong in an intercultural and inclusive society, to resurrect the humanistic values of belongingness and alliance, a need which seem to be in an orbit of decline, as Gundara points out in his recent writings (2015).

#### **4. Epilogue: Concluding thoughts**

Issues of unity and respect have always been a core issue for all nations worldwide. Reflecting on today's sociopolitical scenery: *What are the implications for public universal policies?*

From our point of view, especially nowadays in times of global socioeconomic crisis, it seems that more than ever before that at the international sphere it is important to follow international policies which at the same time will take into consideration every nation's needs and particularities. If there are "cultural requisites of democracy," tolerance of out-groups would seem to be one of the most important, especially in the face of rising levels of antipathy toward out-groups at both the elite and the mass level. Only with such tolerance will the political rules of the game be more important than the outcome (Arwine and Mayer 2014).

Thus, "to learn how to avoid cultural diversity resulting to the clash of cultures but rather to intercultural harmony and peace" (Our Creative Diversity, De Cuéllar's World Commission on Culture and Development Report to UNESCO, 1994) is a challenge to us, as educators, academics and teachers. The threat of culture wars and conflicts due to civilizational exceptionalism must be ended once and for all. The unity of mankind can only be preserved, and peace can only be maintained through the recognition of the diversity of the human race with all that this entails in terms of an integrated policy of economic, social and cultural cooperation.

As educators, we do believe that we can achieve milestones in education by imposing a set of basic humanistic character or moral values that will guide our lives regardless of nationality, social background, age, gender, spiritual beliefs.

Concluding, we would wish to quote Jacques Delors inaugural speech at the UN Conference on Environment, in Rio de Janeiro in 1992:

"The world is our village: if one house catches fire, the roofs over all our heads are immediately at risk. If anyone of us tries to start rebuilding, his efforts will be purely symbolic. *Solidarity* has to be the order of the day: each of us must bear his own share of the general responsibility. He continues to say: We need a global ethics to guide us in solving global issues, in strengthening our global interdependence and solidarity."

In the same line of thoughts, having a positive attitude, with a strong will and with one voice, *together*, we do believe that only good things will happen in our real lives, not only in our dreams.

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## Configuration of Social and Cultural identity of Adolescence through their Garments and Fashion

Zoi Arvanitidou PhD Candidate in Folklore and Fashion, University of the Aegean [arvanitidou@aegean.gr](mailto:arvanitidou@aegean.gr)

### **Abstract**

*Dressing is a key element of the material culture and is used by teenagers to negotiate or maintain their social and individual identity. The consumption of fashion garments, especially from teenagers, is an important factor in the projection of this identity as teenagers want to present their ideologies and their messages through their garments. Teenage girls try to express their identity through blogs. A garment is used as a means of language allowing for communication between them. The way they dress most of the time leads to their social inclusion or exclusion, especially visible in their school environment. Dressing is a form of expression for teenagers stating that they belong somewhere like a team, a "gang" etc. It also expresses their sexual identity. They view the garment as a means of identification with their peers which they exert pressure on the consumerist behavior of other teenagers.*

**Keywords:** Teenagers, Fashion, Identity, Culture

### **1. Introduction**

In our post-modern consumer society, changes are incorporated at an unpredictable, exponential rate, causing strong competition between people, especially the young ones, who want to find a voice, an identity and a place in society. Fashion plays probably the most important role in the manufacture, formulation and expression of identity, especially in cities, where teen people come together with foreigners and have little time to impress them (Bennett, 2005). Fashion is not limited to garments but because it deals with concepts and symbols, it is a cultural phenomenon and serves the instant, immediate visual communication enabling people to make statements about their identity and express who they are or who they would like to be. Through simple observation of the appearance, including hair style, accessories, makeup, shoes and interventions on the skin, such as tattooing and piercing, direct conclusions can be drawn about the possible ethnic origin, labor and financial position of the wearer/bearer (Kratz & Reimer, 1998). So, Fashion is the most "talkative of the social data" about personality and identity (Roche, 2000). Identity is a form of social representation that mediates the relationship between individuals and society and the reasons that he or she feels the need of expressing them in an announcement of socioeconomic classification, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion etc.

### **2. The Search of Identity of Teenagers**

Teenagers become moody, secretive and sarcastic, and feel disoriented, isolated and fearful because of their physical changes. Simultaneously they begin to look after for their identity. In particular, teenage girls use fashion to define themselves, to make statements about the stylistic choices of their friends and psychologically construct their identities. For some girls, the "right" clothes can be used as an entry vehicle into a popular team/group, while for others, they allow them to get unnoticed and in extreme cases they determine the staying or leaving of a teenage girl from her school. The majority of teenage girls constantly worry about whether they are in fashion,

since they believe that this gives them strength. In the world of adolescence one wrong choice of style can bring "social disaster" and become a cause of ridicule or insults. 13 - 15-year-old girls find their "best friend" and copy her styling choices, ways of speaking and her peculiarities, so that through these circumstances they feel more confident and less vulnerable. They use their girlfriends to strengthen their Ego and develop self-respect. Through this identical appearance, they try to squeeze implied approval and attention in order to strengthen their fragile self-esteem. This mirroring and twinship of one girl with the other is a psychological way to boost one's self-esteem. When one girl sees herself reflected in the appearance, actions and word of the other, she feels less insecure (Newman, 2010).

Teenagers usually unconsciously ponder who they would like to be and try to achieve it. When they see their reflection in their ideal version twins, they feel that they conquer the characteristics of the "buddy" who they admire most and thus they compensate for their shortcomings. Teenagers are in a difficult psychological situation and are not certain about their identity which is under formation. One way of establishing their identity is by gaining membership to a peer group and emulating the other members. In several schools there are many groups, such as College Kids, Sports Kids, Goth and Punks. Usually they go together to the mall and shop their clothes. So they feel integrated in groups. They do not feel right if they do not appear with the "correct" clothes and for the 15-year-old teens that means identical appearance and connection with their "buddy" (Newman, 2010).

### **3. Different Kinds of Dressing and Fashion: A challenge for Adolescents to Express their Identity**

Teenagers use their appearance as a means that reflects their values and the characteristics of their identity, but also use it as a special language to communicate with each other. They believe that their clothes help them stand out from the crowd and to appear unique. The "exodus" from childhood creates uncertainties and for that they present behavioral changes and they begin to experience particular habits of consumption (Piacentini & Mailer, 2004). The most important way of consumption is fashion and teenagers in Western societies mainly use the common language of the dressing to communicate with their friends, while at the same time they try to express their individuality.

But this kind of communication through preferences for certain styles can hinder the development of adolescent identity, because the strong focus of adolescents on some brands creates pressure that can cause loss of specific personality traits and even turn them into biased adults who "appreciate" others by their appearance rather than their personality. Specifically, teenagers focus on the branding of their appearance rather than the quality and functionality of the clothes mostly because fashion companies manage to affect them through their well-designed advertisements. This causes them a kind of "involuntary blindness" and they tend to believe what they see on the media. For example, a teenager may wear uncomfortable sports shoes, because a famous football player (who is his and her friends' idol) wears them, leading to the false impression that the most important thing is to look "cool" and that they "must" buy this product, even if they do not like it. Furthermore, a less advertised product may be better but teenagers will not prefer it and they will



buy the well-known brands, probably because sometimes their friends will mock them for not wearing clothes and accessories of famous brands. This kind of pressure that stems from friends' groups causes loss of individual characteristics, as teenagers use the garment as a signature of belonging to a specific group/team where most of the members impose a cool picture on their peers with well known fashion brands. On the one hand, the symbolic consumption allows the integration of adolescents in the group with the same consumer habits; on the other hand, it does not allow them to make decisions in concert with their personal tastes. Therefore, slowly but steadily the individual identity changes, individual values are lost and the group/team determines the identity of each member (Holman, 1980; Solomon & Buchanan, 2002).

Finally, the imposed dresscode by the group/team undermines the development of identity because this leads to the construction of a human being who measures others only by what they wear based on stereotyped classifications. The garment may give a first impression about the wearer but for the assessment of his/her personality an extensive discussion with him/her is required. Adolescents who are classified into groups according to their dressing preferences and not by their economic, social and cultural situation, soon adopt stereotypes that lead to the development of biased adults (Edwards, 2000).

#### **4. Clique Chic: The Options in High schools and Colleges**

The new school year every September brings new fashion trends in high schools and colleges, almost everywhere in the world. It is not a trivial matter that is caused by vanity. Dressing developed into a semaphore that introduces teenagers to groups and communicates the ties of its members. So, there are groups of skateboarders, preppies, heavy metal, rockers and punks. Fashion sets major tribal groups and small groups of friends. Within each group, large or small, the dress code is completely rigid and adolescents who are very interested to participate in a group are afraid of being ridiculed by others, if they are not wearing the "right" clothes (Wharton, 1995). The group, which they will choose, exerts great pressure regarding the "appropriate appearance". The team "Preppy Persians" wears Calvin Klein T-Shirts, white sneakers and boxer as their visual indication. In some schools, the girls of Asian origin adopted the gangster look with baggy clothes, while the boys wear athletic pants and polo shirt for a certain school season. Of course, these appearances differ from one college to another and from season to season, as adolescents fashion is complex and changeable, while the boundaries of the groups do not always follow ethnic lines. Skateboarder groups are probably in all schools and usually tie their wallets with chains attached to a noose of their zone in order to ensure their complex maneuvers. This look was extended to heavy metal fans, who also wear black t-shirts, ripped jeans and scarves. Punk comes back and its elements affect a high percentage of adolescents, who had not worn it when it was first introduced. Ravers wear weird vintage clothing and attract people of all nationalities (Wharton, 1995).

However, a common component of all groups is the expression of rebellion as all the above looks are not approved by teens' parents. This rebellion is carried out within the safety of groups of peers and forms a "mass personality" (Schwartz & Fouts, 2003). During the 40's and 50's teenage girls wore appropriate dresses and boys wore long pants. But the worrying thing is that fashion has

become multifaceted, which exerts pressure on teenagers to constantly buy clothes and make-up and spend time and money on them, while sometimes neglecting school duties (Brown, 1982). Of course, there are some teens who do not pay attention to what they wear. But they also spend their free time with their friends looking for designers' clothes in expensive stores. While they resist extreme fashion trends, they want to up to speed on new styles, yet do not succumb to the pressures of parents regarding to their dressing. All of them constitute a broader, not so cohesive or highly visible group, and their tastes are driven by pop culture and peer pressure (Eicher, Baizerman, & Michelman, 1994).

### **5. Teenage Collective Identities: The Integration into Subcultures**

The subcultures of youth are a very important cultural phenomenon, involving fashion and identity. The majority of them occurred in Britain since 1950. During this period living standards had grown for a while, but because the economic growth did not last for a long period, young people were marginalized and as a result the subcultures were born, such as teddy boys, Mods and Punks which were recognized directly from their special outfits and behavior. In this manner teenagers tried collectively to cope with problems and confront the existing political and social structures. The most important, most controversial and most extreme stylistic subculture are Punks who appeared in 1970 in Britain. With their anti - fashion and their protesting style, they affected the political structures and the way of thinking and appearance of millions of people today. Just a look at the teenagers in big cities of the West and you can see that almost all of them have some elements of the punk's appearance, especially in their hairstyle. Cultural proposal of punk and of other youth subcultures was not accidental, but collectively expressed social contradictions. Punk proclaimed and dramatized the existence of extreme poverty, unemployment and decline of ethical standards. The mismatched objects of everyday life that were incorporated in their "outfit" projected their ideology, their anger and their frustration. But their resistance in fashion built a new trend, anti - fashion, which is particularly important in the acquisition of a collective identity of its members. Even the changes of their bodies, with tattoos and piercing, state decisively that they write permanently these collective identities on their shaped bodies (Hebdige, 1979; Bennett, 2005; Barker, 2007).

### **6. Street Fashion and the Search for Identity among Japanese Teenagers**

Since 1980, Japanese fashion experienced a strong rise in the world fashion system, because of the appearance of innovative, avant-garde Japanese designers (Issey Miyake, Rei Kawakubo, Kenzo) whose clothes articulated new ideas on the relationship between body and dressing and the meaning of fashion and made Japan a power of change in fashion. On the other hand, due to the economic recession and unchanged inflation which began before 2000 and lasts until today, Japanese youth adopted a different lifestyle. In adverse economic conditions teenagers become more innovative and try to construct new individual identities. Of course, the simplest way of communicating and connecting with other people is fashion and dressing. Thus, various subcultures developed their particular look with which their visual symbolism of fashion supplied Japanese adolescents with the group/team identity that they needed. Street fashion which is mainly based on trendy neighborhoods of Tokyo (like Harajuku and Shibuya), created and managed

entirely by teenagers has no links to the fashion mainstream systems and has a completely different marketing (McVeigh, 2000; Kawamura, 2006).

Street Fashion appeared in 1993, when the female high school students of Tokyo began wearing wide, long, white socks that fell on their ankles (like the leg warmers of athletes) and until 1996 this trend prevailed everywhere, while a lot of teenage girls wear them until today in small towns. The commercialization of street fashion created a unique business model in Japan. The main power is teenage girls, students of urban centers who spend all their time and money on clothes and makeup items, as through these they will stand out, get attention and they will also rebel against tradition. The economy of street fashion is directly concerned with the opinions of adolescent girls, and it even uses them as fashion designers (Fernie & Azuma, 2004; Kawamura, 2006). The most representative, business center is a ten-floor department store under the name "Shibuya 109" with over 100 cheap shops that specialize in current fashion and where the female teenage sales positions are in great demand. The salespeople have immediate and thorough knowledge of the preferences of adolescents because of their daily contact with them. Salesgirls also play the role of models as they wear the clothes that they sell, and also have a major role in the design of clothing collections each season. The idea of a teenager who is both a consumer and designer is paradoxical in the western fashion industry where trends are created by the fashion companies and trend offices and the consumers just follow them. On the contrary in Japanese street fashion the preferences of teenagers come before the intellectual inspiration of professional male and female fashion designers. In this case what exactly teenagers wish is what is being produced. They wait hours in line to get in stores but they are there with the group/team of their friends, where they find the opportunity to have fun. These paradoxical differences in Japanese street Fashion are interpreted by the feverish search of a modern Japanese teenagers' identity (Kondo, 1992; Kawamura, 2006).

### **8. Digital Modeling of Teenage Girls Identity in Fashion Blogs**

The involvement of teenage girls in social networking sites and virtual communities helps them to improve self-expression, socialization and construct their identity. In 2006 around two million blogs were dedicated to fashion and shopping (Kadger & Bull, 2003). Half of these were created by teenagers. Teenage girls modeling their identities through blogs dedicated to fashion, where they suggest clothes' combinations and accessories for themselves and for other teenage girls - readers. Their online conceptual visualization offers teenagers a means of awareness of their formed offline identity. Teenage girls involved through writing, reading and commenting in fashion blogs express the complexity of their identities. Most of these fashion blogs contain collections of personal and professional photos of clothing and fashion models, taken from catwalk shows or magazines found in other websites. Furthermore, in these blogs teenage girls describe what they wear or what they would like to wear, or fashion items which they see on other sites and they like (Huffaker & Calvert, 2005).

The teenage girl's fashion blogs are an important source for understanding their thinking and desired representations of them on the Internet, as they constitute a list of their changing

preferences. In the Fashion blogs, teenage girls have the opportunity to try out risky or quirky clothes without the risk of losing their social capital which they have acquired with face to face encounters. They measure the reactions of their readers and find other teenagers with similar tastes. For this reason, fashion blogs offer an important dimension of social play and experimentation, where female teenagers exchange experiences on their appearance, detect common concepts and discuss the results of their experiments. If a "different" look that they will test fails, there are no consequences and that allows teenage girls to play with impressions that they can create through their appearance. The reasons why they chose these clothes and looks, is according to the creators of these blogs, initially their aesthetics, while others said that they imitate someone or something, such as a celebrity, a relative, the Japanese street style, a video game character, etc. All these promote an aesthetic socialization which is the matching ability of teenage girls with a cultural model and declares a prior acquisition of correct dress code from the teenagers. A lot of girls do online clothes collage on their bodies to experiment with a look that is prohibited during their offline lives due to limitations imposed by their parents and school. As female bloggers experiment with different looks they acquire a fluid and versatile identity through semiotic forms of action, of self-presentation, self-evaluation, differentiation and cultural commentary and thus gain experience in managing public/private time and space (Chittenden, 2010).

## **9. Conclusions**

As teenagers mature they begin to explore the limits of their independence and their identity. Fashion is the means to express what their peers ask of them to be. Teenagers use fashion and dress to infiltrate a group of peers and identify with it. They believe that branded clothes make them look cool. They are divided into groups (from small groups to tribes) based on their style and the brands of clothes which they wear and it gives them the feeling of belonging to the group. They feel that if they do not own known brands, they are not worthy to identify with their friends. Many times, the adherence of teenagers to fashion is due to the desire to imitate a celebrity. Their self-confidence is very low and to boost it they follow the stylistic choices of teams/groups. Yet teenagers follow fashion to avoid the humiliation and mockery of their classmates, as most of them fear that they will be victims of intimidation or isolation. However, when they try to find identification through fashion and adherence to a team/group with the same dressing preferences, their character and their personality can change because they are forced to follow the dressing choices and behaviors of the team/group and not their individual ones. Teenagers' membership in subcultures such as punk just shows the desire of integration in a group for the acquisition of group identity.

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## Using imagined contact to encourage positive interaction

Anne Glick, Executive Director of One Globe Kids, [globesmarkkids.org](http://globesmarkkids.org) [info@oneglobekids.com](mailto:info@oneglobekids.com)

### **Abstract**

*Context: As Europe becomes increasingly diverse, opportunities to encourage a positive, inclusive and shared European identity must be actively sought, especially among younger generations. When direct contact with peers from a different “group” isn’t yet feasible due to geographic, linguistic or even anxiety related barriers, imagined contact theories offer effective ways to improve attitudes and increase young students’ motivation and intention to engage with the “other.” It can be used to not only reduce prejudice but also enhance mutual liking, trust, and friendship between groups, preparing them for positive interaction and a shared European identity in the 21st century. Theory & Methodology: Research on imagined contact theory demonstrates evidence for its effectiveness in improving explicit and implicit attitudes towards and intergroup relations with a wide variety of cultural and ethnic groups including religious minorities, ethnic minorities, and disabled individuals. In imagined contact interventions, children take an active role in creating a contact scenario that involves the self and an out-group member. Imagined contact can act as a measure that prepares children to engage other groups with an open mind. Results & Conclusions: Imagined contact is a cost-effective intervention that can be integrated into classroom teaching. While its effects can generalize, interventions can be also tailored to prepare students for openness and sense of shared identity with specific groups. Technology offers new opportunities discourage inter-ethnic bullying and to smooth the path toward positive direct contact between groups. The presenter will demonstrate One Globe Kids and Globe Smart Education, a global iOS stories series that applies imagined contact theory to prepare young learners for positive direct contact with other groups. Participants will be invited to discuss opportunities to use imagined contact to encourage positive, inclusive and equitable European identity for young learners.*

**Keywords:** Imagined contact, prejudice reduction, dual-identity, technology

## A Comparison of Cultural Diversity in Canada and Greece

Ioannis Karras, Ionian Univeristy, Hellenic Open University, Greece [karrasid@gmail.com](mailto:karrasid@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*This paper explores and compares two countries –Greece and Canada- in terms of the main features of their cultural diversity and discusses the kind of policy responses these countries have towards their cultural diversity. More specifically, an analysis on the ways in which these policy responses might benefit or restrict work opportunities and practices for the disadvantaged groups at the workplace in these countries is presented. Moreover, this paper addresses the distinct and contrasting approaches that Greece and Canada take towards diversity and multiculturalism. It draws on literature to analyze the Canadian and Greek diversity through different interpretations of multiculturalism, viz. a sociological fact, as an ideology, as policy, and as a process. Finally, the paper goes on to explore the underlying approaches to the management of diversity in the two aforementioned countries and points out their limitations and contradictions.*

**Keywords:** multiculturalism Greece, multiculturalism Canada, diversity

### Introduction

At the dawn of the twenty first century, cultural diversity is ubiquitous as it is becoming more and more prevalent in most corners of the world. Both globalization and geopolitical factors can be considered the main culprits of this ever-increasing phenomenon, not only in the so-called developed world but in other developing countries as well. Canada is a prime example of a country whose cultural diversity has had a profound impact on its evolution. It could be argued that cultural diversity is almost synonymous with Canada. Greece, on the other hand, is an example of a county which has had to deal with the issue of cultural diversity only relatively recently and where cultural diversity has not historically had a profound impact. Until recently, it was a relatively homogenous country, at least on a surface level<sup>1</sup>. It has been only in the last twenty-five or so years that geopolitical factors have made Greece an immigrant reception country leading to an increasing cultural diverse population (ten to twelve percent) of the population is non-Greek). In the sections that follow, this essay's main scope will be exploring and comparing cultural diversity in Canada and Greece and thus providing the theoretical underpinning of cultural diversity as it relates to these two countries.

### Theoretical Considerations

This paper will focus on the aforementioned countries since they are viewed as quite distinct in their evolution as culturally diverse nations. First of all, it is important to define cultural diversity. Diversity is often given a narrow focus as it is limited to racial-ethnic difference (Mohan, 2001). Nonetheless, diversity spans various realms such as religion, gender, physical disabilities and gender, to name but a few. In its simplest form, cultural diversity can be said to refer to the multiplicity of cultures and/or cultural identities. Moreover, when one talks of cultural diversity,

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<sup>1</sup> Greece has had diversity with representation from a few ethnic groups, primarily Gypsies, Jews, Turks, and Slavs, but the numbers have been small, and due to historical reasons, and to a certain extent, these groups have always been seen as 'pseudo-hyphenated' Greeks, i.e. Greek-Jews, Greek-Gypsies.

he/she must consider the concept of multiculturalism, which can be seen as the set of policies that acknowledge, protect and promote cultural diversity (Brecknock, 2006).

Despite the seemingly straightforward defining properties of multiculturalism, the term has often received criticism in that it lacks one fixed and universally accepted meaning. The term 'multiculturalism' was first employed in Canada after World War II and since then its use has spread to many countries the world over. The increase in multiculturalism in the Western world in the past five decades has often stirred up controversy among theorists as to the way a state should approach and deal with multiculturalism and everything it entails e.g. implementation of policies to protect linguistic and religious rights of ethnic minorities (Spinthourakis, Stavlioti-Karatzia, Karras and Papoulia-Tzelepi, 2006).

Multiculturalism relies very much on culture and how 'culture' is perceived. Culture is an integral part of multiculturalism and hence cultural diversity. 'Culture' is quite an elusive term and various definitions abound. Indicatively, a few of them are put forth to construct a conceptual framework. Kymlicka (1995) is among the theorists who see the significance of culture in the lives of people as it forms the context for one's choices. Yet, others see it as a major constructing force of a person's identity (Magalit & Halbertal, 1994). Finally, Löfgren (1981: 30) contends that culture is "the common world of experiences, values and knowledge that a certain social group constitutes". The common denominator in these definitions is that culture is a key determining factor in the way someone perceives his/her position in society and constructs his/her identity.

In essence, one could claim that multiculturalism 'accommodates diversity' through the principles and practices that govern it. Consequently, the main concern of multiculturalism is not only the promotion of minorities and their rights, but also the transformation and growth of a society where diversity is recognized as an integral part of it. If one accepts the premise that multiculturalism is intrinsically positive, then by implication diversity is a valuable aspect within the social arena. To take the issue a step further, one could argue the systemic nature of cultural diversity, where the interconnectedness among cultures helps them develop and evolve in unique ways.

### **Cultural Diversity in Canada and Greece: A Comparison of their Conception**

So as to aid understanding of how cultural diversity has evolved in Canada and Greece, it is necessary to provide a brief historical framework of these two countries with specific reference to how cultural diversity came about. From a demographic standpoint, the literature often refers to the fact that Canadian society can be divided into three major "forces" (Leman, 1999). The first force consists of the natives<sup>2</sup> of Canada (Aboriginal peoples: both status and non-status Indians, Métis and Inuit). The second force refers to the colonizing groups (British and French settlers in the 17th and 18th centuries), who eventually defined themselves as the founding members of

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<sup>2</sup> The Constitution Act of 1982 defined all natives as aboriginal peoples



Canadian society (Leman *ibid.*). The final and more recent force are those racial and ethnic minorities such as native and foreign-born Canadians (e.g. immigrants).

The fact that Canada has become a haven for immigrants makes it one of the most ethnically diverse nations. Arguably, Canada's population is an amalgamation of cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity. It is reported that close to a quarter of a million immigrants a year from all corners of the globe choose Canada as their new home, drawn by the country's quality of life and its reputation for valuing diversity and overall open immigration policy to the extent where now the population has been increasing more from immigration than from natural growth (Fearon, 2003). Hence, cultural diversity in Canada is mainly attributed to the plethora of cultural minorities<sup>3</sup> found in this country.

The conclusion that could easily be drawn is that cultural diversity in Canada is one source of its economic, sociopolitical, and cultural development; therefore, it could be seen as an asset in the country's development, which is manifested in the various policies implemented that promote cross-cultural understanding. However, there is growing evidence that "while many members of ethno-cultural/racial communities participate fully in all aspects of Canadian life, some immigrants encounter barriers, some long term, to their full participation in society" (Online: Compendium).

Another controversial issue has been the French population in the province of Quebec, who has been skeptical about the federal multiculturalism policy since its inception. The so-called Quebecois feel that their status is being downgraded to that of an ethnic minority culture imposed by the more dominant English-speaking Canada under the precepts of multicultural equality. In other words, that the majority English-speaking Canada is exercising a kind of hegemony or supremacy over the minority French-speaking Canada. However, I believe such a stance on the part of the federal government is fallible as the French population is not an ethno-racial minority, but a founding part of Canada.

In response to its cultural diversity, Canada has passed laws and has introduced various policies. A commitment to multiculturalism is evident as it is embodied in the constitution<sup>4</sup> of the country. The federal government declared the country a multicultural society in 1971, and as early as 1985 entrenched multiculturalism in Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Since then, Canada passed the Multiculturalism Act in 1988, and created the Multiculturalism and Citizenship Department in 1991. Finally, to celebrate diversity, it organizes an annual Canadian Multiculturalism Day<sup>5</sup>. The clauses in the policy of multiculturalism reflect the fact that Canada

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<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that in Canada, the term, 'cultural minorities' applies to ethno-cultural, official languages, ethno-racial, religious and demographic populations, including immigrants (Fearon, 2003).

<sup>4</sup> Section 27 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms states that "This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.

<sup>5</sup> June 27 every year since 2003

acknowledges cultural pluralism as a core Canadian value. In summation, Canadian society is officially multicultural and as such, it has introduced a plethora of policies and enacted many laws that aim to maintain a society that encourages ethnic and cultural heterogeneity.

The concept of a "multicultural society" as it pertains to Canada can be interpreted on various levels. To borrow Leman's (op.cit.: 1) deconstruction of the concept, multiculturalism can be seen "descriptively (as a sociological fact), prescriptively (as ideology), from a political perspective (as policy), or as a set of intergroup dynamics (as process)". As a sociological fact, multiculturalism in Canada is connected to the actual presence of diverse racial and ethnic minorities (manifested at both ethnic and immigrant composition levels). From an ideological standpoint, multiculturalism incorporates a set of ideas and ideals that advocate and endorse Canada's cultural mosaic. At the policy level, multiculturalism is connected to the management of cultural diversity through the implementation of laws and policies at all three levels of Canadian government, namely: federal, provincial and municipal. Finally, multiculturalism can be viewed as a process through which minority groups can challenge authorities and decision makers so as to achieve certain rights and desired objectives. In essence, Canadian multiculturalism can be considered as a demographic reality and is a public policy implemented in response to this demographic reality.

On the other hand, in the case of Greece, things are radically different when compared to Canada. Until recently, Greece was a migration sender rather than a host country, which was contrary to the case for Canada (nonetheless, due to the financial crisis Greece has been facing for over the last six years, many Greeks have been forced to migrate; however, this new change of events is beyond the scope of this paper). Hence, Greece has traditionally been a very ethnically and religiously homogenous country, a uniform nation, as until recently it was almost solely grounded in the values and practices of its heritage and religion (Greek Orthodoxy).

The large waves of emigration did come to a halt in the late 1970s as a result of stricter migration regimes implemented in northern European countries (for example, Germany and Sweden) that discouraged Greeks from going there. However, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, geopolitical changes in neighboring countries<sup>6</sup> initially made Greece more appealing as a host country of (often illegal) immigrants<sup>7</sup> mainly from countries of eastern and central Europe, and increasingly from Asia and Africa<sup>8</sup>. Having had a couple of decades of continual migration influx, there is growing

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<sup>6</sup> Mainly Albania the Former Yugoslavian Republic and the USSR.

<sup>7</sup> Various population inflows since the late 1980s include co-ethnic 'returnees' and/or their descendants from former Soviet Republics (known as *Pontic Greeks*); Greek Albanian immigrants (ethnic Greek Albanian citizens known as *Vorioepiotes*); economic immigrants from non EU countries; and a returning Greek emigrants from northern Europe, the US, Canada and Australia (Triandafyllidou & Gropas, 2009)

<sup>8</sup> It seems that Greece's ethnic minority groups come from more concentrated ethnic backgrounds whereas in the case of Canada, migrants are from much more diverse backgrounds. In terms of absolute numbers, there is an exponential growth of immigration inflow that it at about 12% (Triandafyllidou, A. 2006) or over 1.2 million immigrants (including both undocumented and legal). This

realization that Greece is a host country for immigrants characterized by demographic and socio-economic diversity. Due to this new reality, Greece has had immigration policies being developed much later than those of Canada.

In essence, Greece responded relatively late in developing and institutionalizing a migration policy, and policies pertaining to cultural diversity are mainly EU driven, but interestingly enough constitutional, legislative or parliamentary affirmation of multiculturalism in Greece still does not exist (Avramopoulou, Karakatsanis and Pavlou, 2005). I support the view that this lack of existence is not coincidental. Unlike Canada's affirmation of its multiculturalism, Greece maintains a somewhat more conservative approach (a pluralist ideology), which indeed accepts tolerance of cultural diversity and secures cultural retention and maintenance, but it seems to strive for inclusion through assimilation into the dominant Greek culture<sup>9</sup>. However, in recent years, policies are being developed aiming at addressing primarily the integration of legal migrants and accommodating their needs in connection to access to health and education, equal employment opportunities and housing. At the same time, naturalization criteria and political rights for third country nationals (TCNs) remain a controversial issue in the public sphere. "Public authorities and agencies have been 'catching up' in most cases in developing adequate responses to the diversity characterizing Greek society today" (Triandafyllidou & Gropas, 2009: 7). Moreover, immigrants' political participation on both a federal and regional level is also often debated which signifies citizenry reluctance to accept immigrants as fully integrated members of Greek society.

It appears that immigration has been a significant challenge for both the Greek government and society at large. "The recognition of Greek society as a de facto multi-cultural and multi-ethnic, both on the part of state institutions and the native society has been pressing because of the growing need for suitable policy responses". (Triandafyllidou & Gropas, *ibid.*: 10) In comparison to Canada, Greek policies pertaining to immigration are still reactive, and "fragmented and extremely limited in measures promoting integration." (Triandafyllidou & Gropas, *ibid.*: 14)". In contrast, in the case of Canada, policies are proactive and are implemented to anticipate their demand.

Another issue worth exploring is the stance Greek policies take on religion and the freedom to practice it (cf. Greek Constitution Article 28, paragraph 1). Greece appears to recognize individual rights rather than group rights, whereas Canada recognizes rights with respect to individuals and groups. More specifically, the Greek state articulated its recognition and protection of immigrant individuals' ensuing rights; however, the "issue of recognizing new minority groups does not arise

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impressive migrant inflow puts "Greece at one of the top positions in Europe in terms of immigrant percentage in the whole population with an estimated 1.2 million of economic immigrants, including co-ethnic returnees, i.e. about 10% of the total population and over 12% of the total labor force" (Triandafyllidou & Gropas, 2009: 12).

<sup>9</sup> Avramopolou et al. (2005, 8-9) state that the government's "main goal is to encourage migrants to integrate by learning the language, culture, history and traditions of Greece".

and the state does not publicly recognize or enfranchise any groups to represent citizens. As such, individuals relate to the state as individual citizens, not as members of the group” (Triandafyllidou & Gropas, op.cit.: 117).

The above premise regarding individual and group rights does have its consequences. For instance, let’s briefly look at the ways in which these policy responses might benefit or discriminate against the freedom of religious practices and also work opportunities/practices for the immigrant populations. In the case of Greece, religion seems to impinge on work practices. The Greek Orthodox faith is constitutionally recognized as “the ‘prevailing’ religion in Greece” (Triandafyllidou & Gropas, op.cit.: 13) whereas due to the autochthonous Muslim minority in Northern Greece (region of Thrace) Islam’s recognition is limited to that area where one could find several mosques. On the contrary, harsh debates have unfolded regarding the construction of a mosque, for example, in Athens, which in turn have triggered public and political disputes about Greece’s recognition and accommodation of diversity<sup>10</sup>.

What this means is that in other parts of Greece, when, for instance, a working Greek Muslim citizen wants to practice his religion, he faces obstacles from his/her employer, as his/her religious practices are not accommodated for (e.g. labor law does not make provisions for stopping work to pray) nor are Islamic holidays grounds to be considered for time off work. In contrast, Canada’s policies have allowed for these cases where one can take time off work and, even in an academic setting, students can defer their final exams due to religious holidays or celebrations. Another example is Canada’s equal labor rights which is also reflected in the fact that the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) decided that he would amend the regulations to allow turbaned Sikhs to enter the force despite the lack of uniformity with the traditional RCMP attire.

## **Conclusion**

It is incumbent on policy makers to take note of the need to research the status quo not from above but from the grass roots and upon this foundation to design, implement and enact legislation that will serve the interest of all those concerned. Canada, to a large extent, has fulfilled this requirement as it has had a long and standing affirmation towards cultural diversity, and in connection to, for example, work opportunities, it seems to have successfully tackled discrimination. Greece has made steps forward in recognizing cultural diversity and implementing policies to accommodate this diversity, but big strides still have to be made to reach the levels of fostering and accommodation reflected in the Canadian policies. These efforts are needed if it is to reach the goal of achieving effective integration and an awareness of the promise of cultural diversity in a multicultural Greece. For the time being, Greece needs to concentrate its efforts on recognizing all facets of diversity and create the requisites for it to be expressed. Greece will come

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<sup>10</sup> These distinctions and the imposition of restricted religious freedoms do not conform to European human rights and provisions. Consequently, Greece’s state on laws and practices that relate to the rights of religious groups has been condemned by the European Court of Human Rights Greek (Psychogiopoulou 2007).

a long way if diversity related to migration and religious minorities is further addressed and dealt with in institutional terms.

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## Immigration, ethnicity and Hong Kong's unacknowledged multiculturalism

Kerry J Kennedy, Research Chair Professor of Curriculum Studies and Director of the Centre for Governance and Citizenship at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. [kerryk@eduhk.hk](mailto:kerryk@eduhk.hk)

### **Abstract**

*The fluidity of borders in a globalized age has meant that immigration has become a major issue for many societies. Considerable attention has been paid to immigration flows in Europe but this paper will be concerned with immigration and identity issues as they affect Hong Kong, often referred to as 'Asia's international city' that is a special administrative region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China.*

*Hong Kong is often referred to as an 'immigrant society' but more often than not this is a reference to the flow of Chinese migrants from Mainland China. Yet in this dominant Chinese society ethnic minorities are a growing number but rarely recognized, marginalized in many cases and without rights and rarely accepted or designated as citizens.*

*The purpose of this paper is to make a preliminary assessment of the implications of Hong Kong's diversity for the development of social identity amongst ethnic young people who grow up in a society dominated by Chinese cultural norms and in which there is significant pressure for integration, conformity and stability.*

**Key words:** immigration, diversity, multiculturalism

Writers often point to Hong Kong as an immigrant society (Chou, 2013) but by this they usually mean the city has acted as an end point for successive immigrant flows from Mainland China. Given that since Hong Kong's return to China in mid-1997, 150 Mainland Chinese per day have been eligible for entry permits, this view of immigration is understandable. Writing in this vein, however, Sui (2009) has argued that even though these immigrants were historically related to Hong Kong Chinese their reception was not always amicable:

*Although Hong Kong has been a land of immigrants and emigrants, a new social ethos emerged in the 1980s that centered on discrimination toward this population influx. Those who identified with urban Hong Kong society perceived the newcomers as rural and desperately poor. For example, the media popularized the images of "Ah Chan," (a country bumpkin from the mainland), and Sheng Gang qibing (criminal mercenaries from Guangzhou). As these newcomers arrived in overwhelming numbers, symbolizing a China reeling from decades of isolation and deprivation, anxious Hong Kongers labeled them as xin yimin (new immigrants) to mark their differences in cultural orientation, social status and economic well-being from people like themselves*

Despite this negative social attitude, these new arrivals in Hong Kong were at least recognized as both Chinese citizens and immigrants, although called 'new immigrants' to mark them out from early waves of Chinese migration. The same cannot be said for other 'immigrants' who have come to Hong Kong, immigrants of non-Chinese ethnicities. Both historically and presently, such 'immigrants' have rarely been viewed as such in the same way as those coming from Mainland China; and in the post-1997 period they have certainly not been considered as citizens. It is with

this group that this paper is concerned - those groups and individuals in Hong Kong who are neither immigrants nor citizens and the 'civic regime' that governs them.

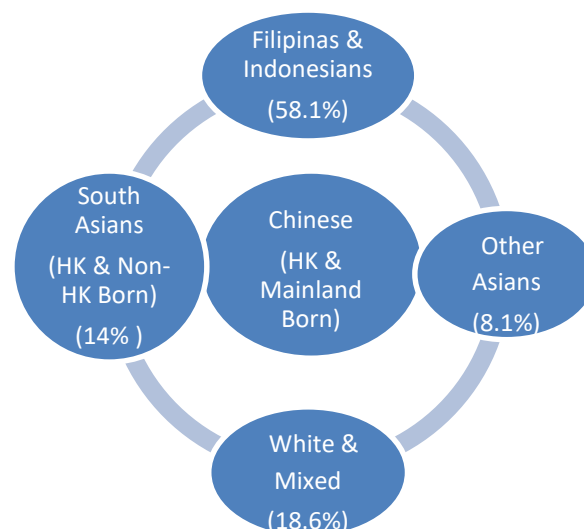
### **Theoretical framework – the new institutionalism**

Individuals are nested in social political and economic contexts in any society and these contexts differ from society to society. How such contexts influence individuals has been the concern of sociologists who have argued that such contexts are not benign –they influence individuals directly. Weldon (2006) talked about the “civic regime”, or combination of institutional influences, that potentially impact on individuals on a daily basis. A growing body of research indicates the influence of such contexts on the attitudes of ethnic minorities groups across different societies (Shrag, Hero & Tolbert, 2001; Guigni & Passy, 2004; Hero & Tolbert, 2004; Weldon, 2006). These contexts might seem like distal influences but institutional researchers have argued that such contexts act like “independent variables” shaping attitudes for different actors (Roland, 2004, Weldon, 2006). This is a basic tenet “of the new institutionalism” –“institutions matter.” They have the potential to shape individual attitudes and can be potent influences both for those on whom they confer power as well as those they exclude. This institutional perspective has been missing in research conducted with ethnic minorities in Hong Kong and was used in the present study.

### **Ethnic minorities in Hong Kong – current trends and issues**

Kennedy (2015a) recently made the point that Hong Kong’s “ethnic” minorities should not be essentialised – they are at the very least distinct groups within a broad ethnic minority community and in reality, each person labelled as an ‘ethnic minority’ is an individual who may well have allegiance to a group but whose identity may also be influenced by a variety of factors both within and outside the group.

Figure 1, based on data from the Census and Statistics Department (2012), shows the distribution of groups that are in addition to the majority Chinese. It is worth making a



**Figure 1.** *Distribution of Ethnic Minorities (N=451,183) according to the 2011 Census*

number comments about these groups and to supplement Figure 1 with information of other groups that do not get counted in the official census. Following this supplementation and analysis of the “civic regime” affecting these groups will be provided.

### **Filipinas and Indonesians**

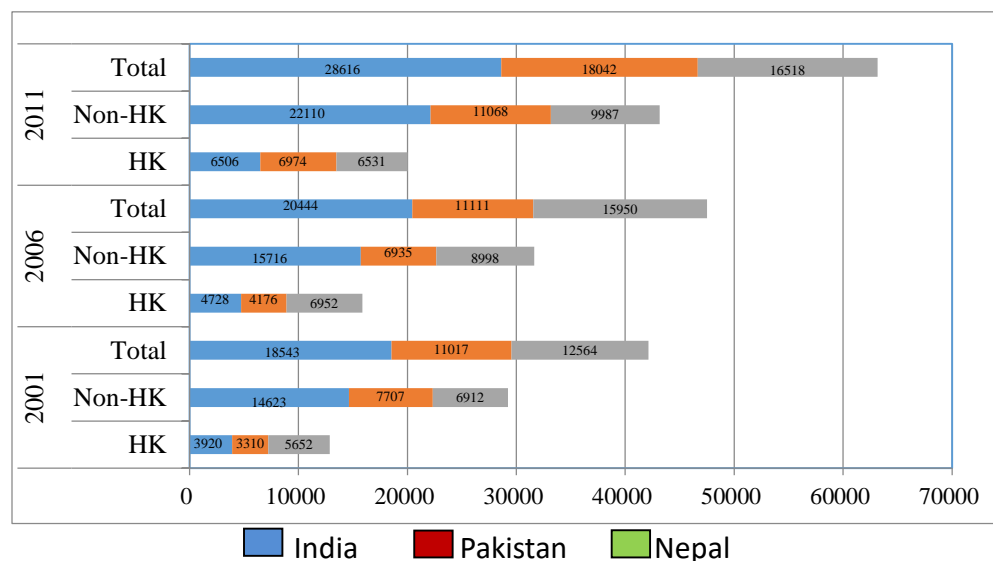
These are by far the largest ethnic minority groups in Hong Kong composed largely of domestic helpers employed locally under strict employment and immigration conditions. These characteristics would be well recognized within the broader Hong Kong community. Yet Gube (2015) has recently shown that Hong Kong was a destination for migration from the Philippines before the domestic helper programme was initiated. This shows the danger of stereotyping ethnic minority groups. Those who come as domestic helpers must live with their employers, are subject to a government determined wage, their work is not regulated by the usual employment ordinances, they must return home once their contract of work has finished, unless they secure a new contract within two weeks of finishing the old contract, and no matter how long they stay in Hong Kong they can never become permanent residents.

### **South Asians**

South Asian immigrants from India and Pakistani were part of the British colonial administration of Hong Kong. This has resulted in a South Asian community in the city in which some 13.4% were born in Hong Kong (Census and Statistics department, 2012, p.39). This group, of course, cannot be classified as ‘immigrants’ since their birth place is Hong Kong. At the same time migration processes, both before and since Hong Kong’s return to China in 1997 has witnessed considerable mobility between South Asia and the city. The fastest growing group according to the latest Census is Pakistanis. Yet very rarely, if at all, in the literature are South Asians who come to Hong Kong referred to as ‘immigrants’. A summary of the current distribution of South Asian ‘immigrants’ and local born can be seen in Table 1.

An important point to note about Hong Kong’s native born South Asian population is that the resumption of Chinese sovereignty has had significant implications for their status as citizens. They did not become Chinese citizens as did the Hong Kong Chinese. With the departure of the British, ethnic minorities also lost their status as British subjects. Under the Basic Law that governs Hong Kong a new category was invented – “permanent residents”. This category was for those who has been in Hong Kong for more than seven years. But it was not a category of citizenship? Hong Kong born ethnic minorities were neither immigrants nor citizens. They and had to rely on their family citizenship from the original country of origin. The extent of this category of resident can be seen in Table 1.





**Table 1.** Indian, Pakistani and Nepalese Populations, Local Born and ‘Immigrants’, 2001, 2006 and 2011[Based on respective Census Reports]

### White and Mixed

Hong Kong as major international financial and business hub attracts specialists from Europe, North America and Australia. Internationalisation has also resulted in numbers of such immigrants in the city’s universities as well. Unlike domestic helpers and many South Asian immigrants, this group is usually highly paid, in steady employment representing a somewhat elite group within the community. As a group, it is not so much a colonial residue, although some British remain and continue to come, but represents a broader group from different Western countries.

### Other Asian

This group is composed largely of Japanese, Thai Korean and Filipino immigrant and some are even native born in Hong Kong (although very few). This group is generally well off, professional and contributing to some aspect of Hong Kong’s business life.

The percentages shown in Figure 1 are related to the total number of non-Chinese groups in Hong Kong. In relation to the total population, these groups make up just 4.5% meaning that Chinese, both local born and those who have immigrated from Mainland China, make up 96.5%, representing by far the dominant group. Yet these are official census figures recoded in 2011. In addition to the groups referred to in Figure 1 there is one more group that deserves mention in the context of this paper.

Hong Kong currently is home to about 10,000 asylum seekers who have applied for non-refoulment and assessment to be designated officially as refugees. The actual number is difficult to determine because there are no publicly available records. Asylum seekers come from South Asia, Africa and Egypt among other countries (Justice Centre, 2014). Support is available from the Hong Kong SAR Government (HKSARG) in terms of rental allowance and food vouchers. Children, once approved by the Director of Immigration, may attend local schools but asylum seekers are not allowed to work.

By every account asylum seekers lead a precarious existence and there is no chance of resettlement because the HKSARG is not a signatory to the UN Convention on Refugees and has a declared policy of not settling any refugees in the city. Thus the best asylum can hope for is to be officially designated as refugees and transferred to a receiving country. This process itself is complex and some would say inefficient in Hong Kong (Justice Centre, 2014) so often asylum seekers stay in the city for many years.

The city's 10,000 refugees do not add greatly to the total number of non-Chinese speakers or ethnic minorities in Hong Kong but they do reinforce the multicultural element in the city. What has been the response of the HKSARG to this element in its population?

### **Institutional contexts influencing Hong Kong's ethnic minorities**

This section of the paper will examine three broad institutional contexts – lack of a policy on multiculturalism, citizenship status and poverty for many ethnic minorities.

This review has so far established the diverse nature of Hong Kong's population. While the dominant group in the city is ethnically Chinese – either locally born or immigrants from Mainland China – 6.4% of the population have ethnicities other than Chinese. This number does not include refugees who are not registered in the local census. Yet there is no general policy on multiculturalism for the society at large and no specific policy on multicultural education for schools (Kennedy, 2011). While it is true that many Hong Kong schools do not have ethnic minorities as part of their number it is equally true that in other schools there are high levels of ethnic density. Instead, the policy discourse is one of integration as shown particularly in school's policy where the focus is on teaching Chinese to ethnic minorities and where, in Chinese medium schools at least, all subjects will be delivered in Chinese.

The lack of an official policy on multiculturalism has not stopped individual schools from adopting multicultural policies to reflect the composition of their school and the priority they give to diverse cultures. Yet such policies are usually confined to schools where there are large numbers of ethnic minority students. This means that monocultural Chinese schools very often do not see the need for such a policy. Yet as Chan (2016) has shown such schools are perhaps in need of helping their students understand and appreciate the benefits of Hong Kong's multicultural society.

### **Ethnic minorities and citizenship status**

Citizenship status in any society is a legal status linked to the nation state signalling the way individuals are regarded by the state and the rights and benefits attached to that legal status. In terms of Hong Kong's ethnic minorities as described above, legal status varies:

- Ethnic minorities are, in general, not citizens of China although the process for them to apply is always open;
- Ethnic minorities who were in Hong Kong at the time of the return to China in 1997 became permanent residents;

- Those who have come to Hong Kong subsequently may apply for permanent residence status after being in Hong Kong for 7 years where their intention is to reside permanently in Hong Kong;
- This does not apply to Filipina and Indonesian domestic helpers who must return to their home country if they have not secured further employment after finishing their current employment and who are ineligible for permanent residence;
- Refugees have no legal status in terms of the Basic Law (e.g. human rights) or other legal instruments.
- Kennedy (2015b) used Sautman's (2004, p.104) typology to show Hong Kong was "a semi-ethnocracy" in which "an ethnic hierarchy exists in terms of access to substantive citizenship rights and social status". In this typology, there are:
  - **Citizens** who have substantive citizenship rights [Chinese]
  - **Denizens** who are Permanent Residents with some social & political rights
    - [Ethnic minorities who have been in HK for seven years]
  - **Margizens** who are not citizens and have no social or political rights [Imported domestic helpers, ethnic minorities without PR, refugees]

Sautman (2004) was very critical of this structure seeing it as much a class structure as a structure concerned only with citizenship status. He referred to it as a "system of racial inferiorization" (p.104):

*Semi ethnocracy arises from the interrelated hegemony of Hong Kong's tycoon elites who abhor democracy and the exercise of civil liberties, the fusion of their world-view with that of the PRC rulers, and Hong Kong's imbrication in a globalization that generates gaps in the political power and living conditions of nations, ethnic groups, classes and genders.*

This ethnic stratification has implications for the rights accorded to different categories (for example citizens and permanent residents can vote in local elections but those without PR cannot), benefits (for example citizens and permanent residents have access to public hospitals but those without PR do not) and only Chinese citizens can hold high political office such as Chief Executive or Minister of State. There are also barriers in the civil service for high office that also requires Chinese citizenship. Access to Chinese citizenship by people of non-Chinese ethnicity is possible but in practice is rarely sought and even more rarely given.

### **Poverty and ethnic minorities**

Kennedy's (2015a) concern that ethnic minorities should not be essentialised is particularly relevant when it comes to the issue of poverty. Groups such as Japanese, Koreans and Whites (as classified by the Census) will have incomes and jobs that rank towards the top of the income ladder in Hong Kong. Yet Indonesians, Filipinos, Pakistanis, Thais and Nepalese are likely to have incomes at the very bottom of the ladder and working conditions unregulated by length of the work day, minimum pay levels or free from employer demands. For some ethnic minorities, therefore, poverty is a daily experience and intergenerational poverty a growing reality. The Census and

Statistics Department has undertaken a household survey of the socioeconomic characteristics of South Asian families with school children the results of which will provide much finer grained data on poverty and ethnic minorities (Census and Statistics Department, 2014, p.6).

The above analysis is based largely on census data that, of course, does not include the city's asylum seekers. There is a general consensus, however, that poverty is the hallmark of the existence of this community in Hong Kong (Justice Centre, 2015). Having to exist on moften forced into illegal work arrangements with accompanying unregulated pay and conditions and unable to return home, the lives of Hong Kong's asylum seekers have little stability and little hope. Yet, ironically, their precarious existence in Hong Kong is very often an improvement on what they can expect at home and, if successfully assessed for refugee's status, what they might expect in the future. Nevertheless, asylum seekers need to survive a very precarious existence.

Poverty is not confined to these groups referred to above. There are many Chinese people who also live in poverty with a city-wide poverty rate of around 14.5% in 2013 (Census and Statistics Department, 2014, p.vii). Without minimizing this situation for Chinese citizens, at least they have access to services in their own language, to public health facilities and an institutional environment that explicitly recognizes the problems that confront them. The same cannot be said for many ethnic minorities living in poverty.

## **Conclusion**

Crabtree and Wong (2013, p.3) referred to the "multiple oppressions" suffered by Hong Kong's ethnic minorities. They did not include asylum seekers in this category, as has been done in this article, but when they are included this anti-racist construct seems even more appropriate. The "margizens", as defined above, are the most oppressed group in Hong Kong with no formal rights and subject to harsh and repressive living conditions. The "denizens" have improved conditions and benefits but are still barred from some aspects of Hong Kong's civic and political life. The Chinese majority, of course, are at the top of the ladder and there is very little sign that as the dominant majority they recognize in any way the benefits to be derived from developing a broader multicultural society. Yet the future must surely be one of broader perspectives. It will require a view of the world where no one is oppressed and all can contribute in a constructive and productive way for the benefit of all and not just a few. This is the hipe for Hong Kong's future.

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## Ethnic identity and the Polish migrants in Athens

Monika Rerak-Zampou University of Patras - [monika.rerak@gmail.com](mailto:monika.rerak@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*Nowadays it is necessary to examine various aspects of migration since it has become a common choice for people who want to exercise their right of free movement within the EU. In the present paper we focus on the ethnic identity which is considered central to the functioning of the members of minority groups. Yet, research on the topic is far from being complete. This paper looks at the identity of a group of Polish migrants in Athens in two qualitative researches: one undergone on the school and social integration of Polish pupils attending the Polish and Greek schools in Athens (2010) and one on the educational and migratory strategies of Polish families residing in the capital of Greece (2015). In our research on the Polish adolescents those young Poles who were attending the Greek schools gave evidence of being involved in the new society while still retaining their ethnic heritage. The group of pupils from the Polish school exhibited an ethnic profile with strong ethnic identity. In both studies we have noticed that Poles often displayed the desire to keep their ethnic identity intact. One motivation for doing this was the feeling that Polishness had to be kept safe for when or if it was taken back to Poland. That is why a part of parents we spoke to were determined to educate their children in the Polish school - so that youngsters could slot back into the Polish school system when necessary. In both studies our respondents found several ways of preserving their Polishness. In the present paper we pay attention to the complexity of identity formation of Polish migrants living in Greece in the times of economic crisis.*

**Keywords:** *Polish Migrants, Identity, Polishness*

### **Introduction – Mobility and the concept of ethnic identity**

The process of social, political and economic globalization is related to the mobility of the population all over the world in every possible direction. Contemporary migrations are a common process for people who want to improve their living conditions and to provide better economic security for themselves and their families. Nonetheless, people leave their countries not only for economic, but also political, demographic, cultural and social reasons, such as wars, political and religious discrimination, love and family-related issues, and unemployment. Except from seeking a better life they desire to ensure a brighter future for their children. This trend is especially evident in the case of the Poles. Poland is a country with a rich emigration tradition: migration processes have always been closely connected to the political and economic situation of this country.

Relevant developments in the recent years with regards to globalization within the framework of the European Union have been the free travel, the opening of borders between countries and the removal of trade hindrances. Geopolitical events have influenced the cultural and ethnic composition of many societies forcing development of new values and skills that have in turn affected the way in which children are socialized and learn new skills (Spinthourakis & Katsillis, 2004: 11). Globalization reduces differences between home and host societies, spreading a global culture. The international circulation of people, goods, and ideas creates not only spaces, but also new cultures and identities. Currently, cross-border mobility in Europe is characterized by situation when people establish and maintain activities and connections in both: the country they come from

and the new state where they live. Migrants who keep in touch with their homes in the sending countries live between two social spaces: they become embedded in the host society, but also keep close connections to the life in their homeland.

In economic research ethnicity is often conceptualized as *a permanent and static social characteristic of an individual, measured in terms of country of origin, nationality, citizenship or race* (Constant, Gataullina, & Zimmermann, 2009, p. 1). Ethnicity remains a permanent characteristic of the country of origin (Zimmermann, Gataullina, & Constant, 2006). On the other hand, identities are not static but continuously being (de- and re-)constructed (Valsiner & Salvatore, 2014, p. 314). Identity formation is not simply a process by which one passes through a variety of stages on the way to achieving a stable identity. Various scholars, e.g. Constant, Gataullina and Zimmermann (2006, 2009), approach ethnic identity and ethnicity as two distinct, but closely related concepts. According to them, in contrary to ethnicity ethnic identity is a dynamic concept - it can change, adapt, and evolve after arrival to the host country. *Ethnic identity* depicts individual's sense of belonging and commitment to the group of people who share a common ancestry and culture while they are in a heterogeneous host society which needs to be also considered (Constant, Gataullina, & Zimmermann, 2009). Similarly, to Constant, Gataullina and Zimmermann (2006, p. 4, 2009) in the present paper we address ethnic identity as the *balance between commitment or self-identification with the culture and society of origin and commitment or self-identification with the host culture and society, achieved by an individual after migration*. We do not restrict ethnic identity to what people are since they were born in their home country.

Madsen and Van Naerssen (2003, p. 62) indicate that in the process of identity construction people are not just passive receptors, but (both at the individual and collective level) they rather play active roles: they navigate social networks with diverse structures and varying degrees of hierarchy and equality: families, local communities, institutions of religions, etc. Scholars emphasize *that the more frequent and intense the relations with parents, friends, and colleagues in the country of origin and within the host country, the more the migrant will preserve traits of his original community. Nevertheless, migrants live and work in another community, so in time they develop their identities on the basis of discussed earlier dual attachments to both the host country and the country of origin* (Madsen & Van Naerssen, 2003: 68).

The notion of migrant ethnic identity has a great relevance for migration research. Immigrants' relations outside their own ethnic group, to include members of the receiving society, are considered an important feature of the newcomers' adaptation and orientation toward the new country (Veglery, 1988). Then again, lack of participation in the institutional and social activities of the receiving society is viewed by some researchers as an indicator of the maintenance of a separate social identity and the absence of integration. Possessing access to institutions, goods and services on the same basis as nationals is suggested to be an essential element for successful immigrants' social integration.

Participation in a series of ethnic activities as well as the dominant culture's activities and social practices allows individuals to keep their ethnic identity from the country of origin and, at the same time, take up the host country's identity. Regular and sustained contact, various communication opportunities available nowadays and visits to the homeland are necessary to maintain a sense of affinity with one's culture of origin.

Subject literature implies that facing spatial dispersion modern technologies are relevant in constructing and maintaining migrant identities as they enable simultaneous engagement in sending and receiving countries. Also, the relevance of religion in identity formation is underlined in the subject literature. Religion impacts both: the way in which migrants are connected to their countries of origin, but also the ways in which they are incorporated into receiving societies.

It is relevant to emphasize that situation of the first generation of migrants is different from those of the second generation. The first group basically focuses on surviving and adjusting to the new context after arrival to destination country. The path for the second generation may differ from feeling comfortable in their homeland, accepted by the 'native-born' of the host country. Their sense of identity might be rooted "here," "there," everywhere, or even nowhere (Vandeyar & Vandeyar, 2015, p. 3). On the other hand, putting together into a flexible sense of self, elements of the parent culture, the new culture they are navigating along with an emerging globalized youth culture may become a challenging task for the children of immigrants.

The concept of ethnic identity of immigrants has been so far rather undervalued therefore the current research needs to continue investigation of its fundamental aspects since the multidimensional integration into the receiving and attachment to sending countries have a direct impact on the lives of thousands of immigrants all over the Europe.

### **The Polish community in Athens**

The Polish migrants in destination countries are well-organized minorities. They create allotonic societies - ones opened to civilization changes that show big activity in the new place of settlement, but are rather not interested in local tradition, rules and social life. In contrary, they want to cultivate their Polish identity. This group of migrants is slowly resigning from narrow-specializations that are adjusted to needs of labour market along with personal predispositions. Big percentage of Polonia participates in out-of-school educations (e.g., various courses, trainings, distant learning) that are organized mainly by public and religious institutions, or even by sub-cultural circles (Chodubski, 2003). Still, the Polish migrants are focusing mainly on satisfaction of material needs.

Poles in Greece are well-organized group of people with the same backgrounds, problems and needs. They have created many Polish organizations to cultivate their Polish identity. These are mainly economic migrants, with narrow-specializations adjusted to needs of the Greek labour market. They were of productive age: 20 to 50 years old at the time of their arrival to Greece.



Peculiarity of the Polish migrants in Greece lies in the fact that these people finding themselves in an alien country, with difficulties in the language create a social niche where they inform themselves about the homeland, socialize and create a microcosm on the periphery of the Greek society - a protected environment of solidarity and friendship that assists them in the search for employment where all the socializing is done. At the beginning of their stay most Polish migrants lived with friends and relatives of the same nationality which was cheaper and more convenient for them. Networks have in general a pivotal role in rendering Polish immigrants autonomous from the Greek society.

Decrease in the Polish in Greece population can be noticeable after 2008 crisis. Entire families started to re-emigrate to other EU countries (UK, Germany, Denmark), some chose more distant locations (Canada) or returned to Poland. Currently, it is very difficult to estimate the exact number of Polish citizens residing in Greece partly due to their mobility and partly for the lack of reliable statistical calculations. Polish residents remain an “invisible community” (Romaniszyn, 1996): their presence in Greece is not easily discernible in the material space of the country, as there are only few Polish shops and restaurants in specific districts of the major cities in Greece, and rare Polish cultural events organized by the Polish School, Embassy, or some Polish societies and the church.

Cultural centre of *Polishness* is in Michail Voda Street, where the Catholic Church of Christ Saviour is located. Around that district an informal network of Polish private services is organized (including everything starting from child care, shops, restaurants finishing with legal offices, surgeries, etc.). This area is a meeting place for Polish citizens. In her study Moskal (2011) has explained that Poland has a complex history in which strong Catholic church has always played a relevant part, and even successfully coexisted with the communism for 40 years after World War II. Another characteristic of this country is that traditional family values have been maintained and family ties remained strong, and even many people from younger generations remain attached to traditional practices.

### **Presentation of the studies**

This paper looks at the ethnic identity of a group of Polish migrants in Athens in two qualitative researches: one undergone on the school and social integration of Polish pupils attending the Polish and Greek schools in Athens (2010) and one on the educational and migratory strategies of Polish families residing in the capitol of Greece (2015). The main objective of the first study was to determine the degree of social and school integration of Polish adolescents (17-18 years old). Additional objective was to find out factors influencing the process of their social integration. We spoke to 12 Polish pupils: six boys and six girls from the last grade of the Polish and Greek high schools, who mainly represented the second and one-and-half generation of immigrants. Students from the Greek high schools were sampled through their status as pupils attending the Polish school on weekends. The main research problem of this study was investigated on the basis of qualitative perspective, inductive approach using semi-structured, in-depth interviews as research instruments.

The second research investigated the negotiation of migratory and educational strategies of Polish families residing in Athens. The research sample consisted of 32 participants: seven Polish families and nine additional participants to include the Polish priest and representatives of the Polish Embassy and school in Athens. 14 people took part in the four focus groups and we spoke to all the participants during in-depth interviews. Adults represented the first and children mainly the second and one-and-half generation of immigrants. Similar to the first study, the main research problem of the second research was investigated on the basis of qualitative perspective, inductive approach using focus groups, semi-structured, in-depth interviews as research instruments.

### **Ethnic identity of the researched Polish migrants in Athens**

In the present paper six groups of attributes, frequently used in previous research on ethnic identity are employed: (i) linguistic; (ii) cultural habits (food, media, music and mode of dress); (iii) ethnic self-identification; (iv) education; (v) social interaction; and (vi) migration history combined with future mobility plans.

### **Language**

In both studies we have noticed that the Poles generally do not speak Greek that well. Fluent in this language were only kids that attended the Greek schools and two adults: a dentist and a nurse who worked and studied in Greek. Majority of kids from the Polish regular school spoke Greek rather poorly; they only knew how to communicate. Adult respondents knew Greek better, since they needed the language for work. Still, they were far from being fluent. Majority of our adult respondents came to Greece with no knowledge of the Greek, only few attended courses of the Greek language. The Poles in our research spoke exclusively Polish at home.

### **Cultural habits**

A common saying among respondents was that they live their lives in a Polish way. They watched Polish TV, some read books and magazines in Polish, they listened to Polish online radio. As to music we have not observed any pattern: few listened to the Polish and Greek, majority to international, few only to the Polish. Interesting was only the attitude towards Greek music: for some of the respondent's Greek music was "foreign", whilst for others - native. This shows the attitude towards Greek culture, which might be seen both as something unknown and distant or, the contrary: something familiar and close. The Poles cooked Polish and Greek food, bought part of their products in Polish grocery stores, celebrated all the religious feast in a way they did in Poland. Still, they also "borrowed" a couple of Greek customs, just to mention the first of May and making floral crowns, flying kites 40 days prior to Easter – on clean Monday, or barbequing during Easter.

Interviewed Poles often referred to cultural differences between Poland and Greece, Poles and Greeks. They talked about different mentality, various attitudes that were sometimes difficult to accept or understand. In case of few respondents it seemed like these contrasts made life in Greece more difficult for them.

Religion has already been proved as an important part of lives of the Polish immigrants settling in various regions, including Greece (Marchlewski, 2008; Marouf, 2009; Rerak, 2010; Romaniszyn, 1996; Ryan, Sales, Tilki, & Siara, 2008). The Polish church was mentioned when families were speaking about places relevant for the Poles, it is a center around which entire “Polish district” was created. Church organizes different initiatives, for example Christmas Fairs, lotteries, blood donations; it gathers money for the homeless, the poor and the sick. The Poles take part in activities organized by the church, attend masses every Sunday and, in case of one family, two sons served as altar boys there.

### **Ethnic self-identification**

Ethnic groups are often motivated to keep aspects of their native cultures rather than to assimilate into mainstream society (Van Oudenhoven, Prins, & Buunk, 1998) and this was noticeable in case of those Poles we spoke to. Polish parents hand down values and traditions of their culture of origin and try, often hard, to retain them in the Greek environment. Often values of Polish parents were different from ones held by the Greek society (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006, p. 167).

Existing research has assumed that, unlike their parents, immigrant children lack meaningful connections to their home countries and, thus, are unlikely to consider Poland as a point of reference (Zhou, 1997a). Unlike those studies, our young participants referred to Poland often, they have spent some time back there, especially during their summer vacations and, thus, were in the constant process of comparing and contrasting their lives between Poland and Greece. Ethnic minority identity was important to adolescents we spoke to. Adolescents’ own ethnic group offered social support required to lessen the negative effects of discrimination they might experience.

In the both researches we were informed that the Poles name their children *Greko-Pole*. It is a term referring to those kids who were born in Greece, attended Greek schools, spoke Greek fluently and had Greek friends, but also to youngsters from mixed marriages.

### **Education**

Subject literature suggests that adolescents are more likely to be friends with those whom they see most often; and similarly, because these young people tend to befriend others with whom they feel they share characteristics. This is of particular importance when discussing school choice, as children spend much of their time precisely at school. Thus, school characteristics can promote or hinder opportunities to develop friendships (Vaquera & Cunningham, 2010) among specific social groups in the sense that Greek schools create possibilities to meet more Greek youngsters and eventually befriend them, and Polish school does the same but with Polish youth. Education, and especially school type (Polish or Greek) seemed to be relevant for the formation of ethnic identity of Polish youngsters in Greece.

### **Social interactions**

Poles we spoke to tended to socialize with other Poles in Greece or within transnational European space. Almost all respondents: adult and young ones had same-ethnic networks and connections: family members, friends and acquaintances. Difficulties in befriending Greek peers were noticed especially for the adults and the students from the Polish School. Cross-ethnic networks and connections were observed among adults mainly with regards to employment and kids – in case of schooling (for children attending the Greek schools). Polish-based, transnational ties proved relevant for researched group.

### **Mobility history/plans**

Part of adult respondents had mobility experiences prior to coming to Greece; they worked in various, mainly European countries. They came to Greece because they had a family member or a friend already in the country. Our respondents were not sure how their future would look like, whether they would stay in Greece, go back to Poland or re-migrate to another country. Economic crisis complicated things for the Poles in this matter. Men were willing to re-migrate to another country whilst their family would stay in Greece. Respondent families found it rather difficult to relocate entire family due to schooling, mortgages, or the fact that one of the spouses still worked in Greece. The sense of identity and cultural and lifestyle expectations and the extent to which these changes or are changed by the experience of living in Greece also impact on decisions whether to stay or return.

### **Summary**

The Poles in our researches often displayed the desire to keep their ethnic identity intact. One motivation for doing this was the feeling that *Polishness* had to be kept safe for when or if it was taken back to Poland. That is why a part of parents we spoke to were determined to educate their children in the Polish school - so that youngsters could slot back into the Polish school system when necessary. Our respondents found many ways of keeping their *Polishness*: some took part in formal organizations, others went to the Polish church, bought Polish products and cooked Polish meals, but they also celebrated Easter, Christmas, baptisms, confirmation ceremonies and weddings in a traditional manner, and accessed the Polish media such as the Internet, satellite television, newspapers and radio. Our respondents spoke about “Little Poland” that Polish migrants created for themselves in the heart of Athens. Families tended to visit their relatives in Poland once a year, mainly for the summer vacation. Children loved going to Poland, they had their cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents there who took care of them in case they would go on their own. The Poles keep in touch with relatives in Poland on a regular, often daily, basis via Skype (very popular are video chats), Viber, Facebook, Messenger or phone. This kind of transnational contact and support is recognised in the migration literature and has been termed ‘caring at a distance’ (Moskal, 2011, p. 40 after: Baldassar et al. 2007). Researchers on the international migration emphasize that currently technology interferes with network dynamics: people have better access to information and assistance via various sources, especially Internet, which makes individuals less dependent from local networks.

Not every migrant had such conscious identity-preserving strategies; nonetheless, for most, migration was provisional and temporary. Only rarely were interviewees definitely planning to stay in Greece for their entire lives. Similar observations were made in the context of Greek immigrant children in Germany in 70s: many Greek parents were afraid that they would lose their children to the new country. To ensure the Greek identity of their children those parents were establishing or supporting so called 'national schools' (Grigoropoulou, 2011).

One of the characteristics of Polish emigration is that it is very close to Catholic Church. The Poles tend to participate actively in the life of the Church, and it is one of the things that keep them close to homeland. Existence of the Polish community and the church in Athens seems to enable Poles to keep their sense of national identity and to bring up their children to feel Polish.

At this point we want to emphasize on the relevance of school choice in identity formation. Those Poles who were attending the Greek schools gave clear evidence of being involved in the new society while still retaining their ethnic heritage. These youngsters spoke both Polish and Greek languages, and generally described their lives in Greece in positive context, planning to stay in this country for good. The group of pupils from the Polish school exhibited an ethnic profile with strong ethnic identity, high ethnic language proficiency and usage, and low Greek language competency, as well as social contacts primarily with their ethnic peers and not with the national group. It might be due to the fact that when immigrant parents arrive to a new country with the values of their home culture, they strive to preserve them in their new culture, and teach them to their children. Thus, we found many adult immigrants holding onto their language, food, music and TV and mode of dress, with the aim or hope, of passing them onto their children. Our research confirms the presence of this cultural transfer mostly in case of adolescents attending the Polish school, but also partly in the group from the Greek high schools. In our study girls from both groups reported higher involvement with the host-national culture and lower involvement with the ethnic culture than boys which agrees with previous studies (e.g., Berry et al., 2006). The Polish school does not contribute to social integration of young Polish migrants in Greece, but seems to isolate pupils from Greek society and culture, keeping them in closed (Polish) community.

Regarding the Greek language proficiency among the Polish community we have observed that fluent in Greek were only kids attending the Greek schools and those parents who studied in Greece and worked with Greeks every day – a nurse and a dentist, both women. The rest of the respondents spoke Greek on a communicative level. The adult respondents knew Greek since they worked with and for Greeks. Few kids from the Polish regular schooling did not know the language that well.

It is relevant to underline the importance of social networks and the Polish church in identity formation. Peculiarity of the Polish immigrants lies in the fact that these people finding themselves in an alien country, with difficulties in the language and the customs, and even religion, have created a social niche where they inform themselves about the homeland, socialize and create a microcosm on the periphery of the Greek society. They create for themselves a protected

environment of solidarity and friendship, a social network that assists them in every aspect of their lives. At the beginning of their stay most Polish migrants tended to live with friends and relatives of the same nationality which was cheaper and more convenient for them. These networks had a pivotal role in partly rendering Polish immigrants autonomous from the Greek society but also, to a certain extent, in acting as places of contact between the Poles and the Greeks. Polish networks are a kind of community seeking to preserve its cultural and ethnic identity.

Existence of vivid Polish community seems to enable the Poles to keep their sense of national identity and to bring up their children to feel Polish. Almost all our respondents found many several ways of connecting to their *Polishness*.

Even though we have started the research with an idea that there is a Polish community characterized by an intense sense of *Polishness*, as pointed in the research of such scholars as Marouf and Romaniszyn as well as our own previous projects, in the end we have noticed that a small part of our research group showed something like a hybrid identity. These were mainly kids attending the Greek schools but also few adult Poles who had lived and worked among Greeks for many years. The Poles live within and between two cultures – their ethnic heritage and the culture of their new country and interact in a transnational space. They speak Polish and Greek at homes, watch the Greek TV, have Greek friends and acquaintances, or even chose Greek friends as godparents. They love Greece, want to live in that country and do not plan to go back to Poland. The influence of the Greek culture and tradition were noticeable in all our respondents. Transnational perspective that our studies refer to, privileges notion of hybridity when capturing migrants' lived realities as embedded in more than one nation state (Binaisa, 2011, p. 6 after: Basch et al. 1994; Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Hannerz 1996; Portes et al. 1999). It is relevant to notice that the hybrid ways of life are various from both: those in the place of origin and those in the place of destination since the Polish migrants need to bridge the differences between receiving and sending countries.

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## Identity building and school history: an intercultural approach

Fotini Patinari, Teacher MA Pedagogy and Intercultural Education, Aristotle University Thessaloniki (Greece) [fotini.patinari@gmail.com](mailto:fotini.patinari@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*This paper focuses on matters related to identity building within the History Curriculum of the Greek primary school and its aim is to discuss the results of a research that was conducted in 2013 regarding an intercultural approach to school history. Thus, we attempted to connect the term 'identity' with the History Curriculum and to examine it from an intercultural perspective. According to the theory of intercultural education school should aim at developing students' intercultural identity and awareness and at forming multicultural personalities, namely people who have been socialized in a particular cultural context, but who are able to adopt and accept aspects from diverse cultural contexts and to communicate with people with diverse cultural backgrounds. The study explores the extent to which the History Curriculum of the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade of the Greek primary school contributes to this direction, taking into account the political role and ideological use of the History subject in general and the traditional and ethnocentric orientation of the subject in the Greek educational system. The theory of Intercultural Education and History Teaching constitute the theoretical background of the research. For the purposes of the study qualitative research methods were used and specifically the method of Curriculum analysis. The paper argues that despite the efforts to focus on historical thinking, to adopt an ostensibly neutral perspective of the historical facts and to promote European identity and citizenship, the History subject remains mainly ethnocentric and monocultural. As a result, it functions as a means of building the national identity and contributes to forming a closed and insecure identity which is not in line with the modern sociopolitical developments and with the principals of intercultural education.*

**Keywords:** intercultural education, History teaching, Curriculum, identity

### **Introduction**

The aim of this paper is to discuss the results of a study that was conducted in 2013 regarding intercultural education and History teaching. The rise of nationalism, racism and xenophobia in Greece, as well as the appeal of the extreme right-wing forces in the recent years constitute the subject very relevant and raise questions regarding the role of school and the kind of identity that is being promoted within the Greek educational system. The choice of the History subject was made due to its special role and its frequent use as a means of building the students' national identity. Consequently, we will shortly present the theoretical background of our study and we will continue by analyzing the research and the key findings.

### **Theoretical background**

#### ***Intercultural education and official Curriculum***

Modern societies are multicultural due to the process of globalization, technological progress and massive migration. This multiculturalism affects the educational systems and imposes critical changes. The school of the 21<sup>st</sup> century should meet the needs of all students regardless of their diverse cultural background and should function as a place of cultural interaction and inclusion

(Diedrich, 2006: 53). In this context, the basic aim of school is forming 'multicultural personalities', namely people who have developed a certain cultural identity due to their socialization in a certain environment, but on the other hand are able to adopt aspects from different cultural contexts and to communicate effectively with people with diverse cultural backgrounds (Kesidou, 2008: 22). Furthermore, teaching aims at developing students' intercultural awareness and at forming an open pluralistic identity.

In order to achieve these goals, school should overcome monocultural and assimilation approaches and adopt a pluralistic logic based on mutual respect towards the different cultures, identities and languages, on interaction, equality, solidarity and equal participation in democratic processes. This logic is determined by the theory of intercultural education. But what does this shift mean in practice? First and foremost, it means an intercultural opening/broadening of the official Curriculum. This is why it is necessary to disseminate interculturalism in all structural components of the Curriculum: goals, teaching contents and methods. The Curriculum transformation cannot be superficial, but it should involve multicultural contents, student-centered and cooperative teaching methods, development of critical skills and empathy and should promote taking action for social change and equality. Thus, we do not refer to a *contributions* or *additive* approach, but to a *transformation* and *social action approach*, according to Banks's typology (Banks, 2004: 61-67).

### ***History Curriculum and identity***

Taking these aspects into account the question that arises is how can these changes influence and transform the History Curriculum. First of all, we should briefly present some aspects of the History subject, which constitute it very relevant and important regarding identity building. History is considered as one of the most controversial subjects within the Curriculum, since it has often been used for political and ideological purposes and for the construction of national identity. The choice of goals, contents and teaching methods in History constitutes a political action, since it determines what view of the past, of other cultures and of their own culture children will develop and what kind of identity they will form. In most countries in the world, despite the differentiations, ethnocentrism and promotion of a common national identity are the main goals of History teaching (Avdela, 1998: 63). For this reason, emphasis is placed on the idea of the continuity of the nation in space and time, of homogeneity and uniqueness and on the promotion of an ideal image of the 'national' self. Diversity, cultural influences and interactions, the history and contribution of minorities, as well as multiperspectivity are excluded. As a result, the History Curriculum, as national discourse that aims at 'transmitting' the national useful knowledge to the new generations, contributes significantly to building a closed national identity (Dragona & Fragkoudaki, 1997: 14-15; Flouris & Passias, 1997: 255-257; Mavroskoufis, 2007: 230). Especially regarding the Greek case the promotion of the national self as an eternal homogeneous entity prevents students from developing historical awareness and constraints them into a strict ethnocentric context (Gatsotis, 2006: 616). Furthermore, there is a strict, non-flexible national Curriculum which makes it more difficult for the teachers to take initiatives and form the Curriculum by themselves (Kokkinos & Gatsotis, 2008: 374). As Kokkinos (1998: 357-

372) concludes, the History subject has an ideological character, since it is used as a means of constructing and reproducing an imaginary collective self.

In recent years, due to globalization, multiculturalism, establishment of supranational structures and action of international organizations (as the Council of Europe), there has been an extended discussion about the role of History teaching in a diverse society. As a result, nationalistic elements in the subject of History have been reduced and, regarding Europe, there has been an effort to adopt a European perspective in History teaching (Alavi & von Borries, 2000: 65-67). In Greece, a new national Curriculum for the subject of History was designed and published in 2003, but it was actually implemented in 2006 when the new History textbooks were available. Especially regarding the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade of the Greek primary school the textbook was withdrawn after a year due to political reasons and a new one was published and is used since 2012. This incident and the discussions that followed also show and pinpoint the role and the position of school history in the educational, political and public discourse. The question that arises is: To what degree is the new Curriculum in line with the current sociopolitical developments and the discussions in the field of History teaching and intercultural education?

The basic principal of an intercultural approach to the History Curriculum is that it should enable students to interpret the historical events, to present and analyze historical arguments and to discuss with others on the grounds of common understanding and respect towards diversity and towards multiple perspectives (Nakou, 2006: 287-290). This way school history can contribute to promoting emancipation for individuals and social groups and to forming active citizens of the world with open pluralistic identities (Council of Europe, 1997: 19). In this context, the aims of the History Curriculum should focus on promoting multiperspectivity, mutual understanding, knowledge about different cultures and their interactions, global citizenship, intercultural awareness and deconstruction of stereotypes (Council of Europe, 2008: 29-30). The change in goals imposes changes in teaching contents, as well. The contexts should foster cultural understanding, present an inclusive and diverse view of the past, include the interactions between different cultures and engage with sensitive issues. On a European level, there are a number of common topics among the states, which can also be used for the promotion of a common European identity (Harris & Clarke, 2011: 172; Stradling, 2001: 16-21). Furthermore, local, Balkan, European and world history, as well as history of the immigrants and minorities, cultural, social, economical history and microhistory should be included in the contents (Council of Europe, 2008: 6). Taking all these aspects into account we formed the research question and conducted the research that is presented below.

## **The research**

### ***Objective and methodology***

The main objective of the research was to examine the extent to which the History Curriculum of the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade of the Greek primary school attempts an intercultural approach and contributes to developing students' intercultural awareness and pluralistic identity. The research focused on

the subject of modern history, because on the one hand it deals with many issues that are related to nation and identity building and on the other hand it can be examined through an intercultural perspective and be linked with current developments.

Regarding the research methodology, we used qualitative research methods and specifically the method of Curriculum analysis (Posner, 2004), in order to analyze the official national Curriculum for the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade. In particular we used a context of key questions/categories, in order to find out if and to what degree specific elements and aspects that are central elements of intercultural curricula were included in the Greek History Curriculum. In this specific paper, we put emphasis on the questions concerning identity building and we focus on the *general aims, specific goals, objectives* and *contents* of this specific Curriculum.

### **Main findings**

*Does the Curriculum consider an intercultural approach critical, taking into account the modern multicultural reality?*

Despite the fact that in the introduction of the national Curriculum are described the multicultural character of today's societies and the necessity to redesign education taking these new developments into account, in the History Curriculum there is no relevant reference regarding this direction. "*Responsible behavior in presence and future*" is set in the centre, but learning to live and act in a multicultural and pluralistic society is not determined as a goal of the History subject.

*Does the Curriculum focus on promoting intercultural awareness and intercultural communication?*

Intercultural awareness and communication are two of the most crucial goals of an intercultural History Curriculum and they set the basis of a secure and pluralistic identity. Regarding the analyzed Curriculum, it is a fact that intercultural awareness and communication are not in the centre. Nevertheless, we can detect references that are in line with this direction, especially in the specific goals. For example, there are goals that promote peace, freedom, cooperation between countries and human rights and stress the importance of these principles in students' lives. The above-mentioned principles constitute a very positive step towards developing intercultural awareness, but on the other hand they do not focus on interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds and on developing a sense of belonging together in a context that exceeds the national boarder. Furthermore, there are also goals that focus on the process of nation building. If we relate those goals to the contents of the Curriculum that focus on the Greek history and on the Greek Revolution, we can assume that they function within the national context and are used to promote national awareness and identity and not historical thinking and awareness. Moreover, according to the specific goals of the History curriculum, children should develop a national awareness and love for their country, together with the will to live, coexist and cooperate with the neighboring countries and to accept cultural

differences. This means that national identity building is still in the centre, whereas there are also some references that indicate a different orientation.

*Does the Curriculum place emphasis on the interactions between different countries and people with different cultural backgrounds or is the nation presented as a unique unchangeable entity?*

This question openly deals with matters of identity. From an intercultural approach it is important that the students understand that every culture was influenced by other cultures and that it did not develop separately. This point is contradicting the traditional perception of History that promotes the idea of the one and unique nation that is homogenous and “clear” of foreign influences. The analyzed Curriculum, though, seems to be in line with this traditional orientation of History, since not much focus is put on the interactions between countries. Moreover, if we also take the contents into account, we realize that the main interactions that are included in the Curriculum refer to war conflicts. As a result, the national ‘others’ are presented as ‘enemies’ of the nation and this consequently leads to forming a closed national identity, since the line between what is ‘ours’ and what belongs to the ‘others’ is extremely clear. The only positive aspect is that there are not apparent negative references for the national ‘others’, since there is an effort to use neutral language. Furthermore, it is a fact that the contents mainly focus on Greek history and on the Greek Revolution and as a result there are very limited references regarding European, Balkan or global history and a European, Balkan or global perspective are missing. The Greek perspective is dominant.

*To what extent does the Curriculum promote the deconstruction of stereotypes?*

Basic step for the building of an open identity is the deconstruction of stereotypes and an intercultural History Curriculum contributes to this direction. The above-mentioned image of the national ‘self’, the national ‘others’ and the interactions between them sets clear that deconstructing stereotypes is not one of the central goals of the History Curriculum. A positive aspect of this direction on the other hand is the emphasis in the specific goals in accepting cultural differences, since it is directly related to the deconstruction of stereotypes.

*Does the Curriculum promote multiperspectivity?*

Multiperspectivity is considered as one of the most central principals of an intercultural approach to school history. Regarding the identity building process, it contributes to the deconstruction of ethnocentrism and of a strict, closed and insecure identity, since it allows us to examine the historical events from different perspectives and not only from the national one (Alavi & von Borries, 2000: 61; Stradling, 2003: 13-15). Despite this important function multiperspectivity is totally overlooked within the History Curriculum both in the goals and in the contents. Therefore, we can conclude that the national perspective and consequently ethnocentrism are in the centre of attention and the subject continues to function traditionally as a means of building a closed national identity.

*Does the Curriculum put emphasis on developing students' empathy?*

Empathy is a central and crucial term and aim regarding intercultural education and it is directly related to the deconstruction of stereotypes and to multiperspectivity. It means the ability to put yourself in the position of another person and understand his/her perspective. It is also connected to the development of an open and secure identity which is not defending and does not view the national others as a 'threat' for the national self. It is a fact, though, that empathy is not considered as a goal of the History Curriculum. The only relative reference deals with understanding the behavior of people and the different life styles, but this is only indirectly connected to the development of empathy.

*Does the Curriculum promote global citizenship?*

In the current multicultural context contributing to the forming of global citizens is one of the most significant goals of History teaching, since History is considered a citizenship education subject. In this context global citizenship means that a person is able to think globally, act locally and use his/hers critical thinking, in order to take decisions and actions in a local, regional and global context. In this History Curriculum we detected many references regarding the term 'citizen', both in the general aim and in the specific goals. Nevertheless, the emphasis is not placed on the concept of the world citizen, but on the concept of the responsible citizen in general. A positive aspect is that one of the specific goals focuses on students' positive attitudes towards solving national, European and global problems. Thus, we could assume that the action field of the 'responsible' citizen exceeds the national context. On the other hand, though, the objectives of each teaching unit and the contents in general focus by far and almost exclusively on the Greek history. This aspect constraints the possibility of achieving the goal of global citizenship that was mentioned above.

*What kind of identity is promoted by the History Curriculum?*

It is a fact that the History subject has been used for non-historical purposes and as a means of building the national identity, which is often supposed to be the only one, closed and unchangeable. From an intercultural approach main goal is the forming of a pluralistic, open and secure identity. In this specific Curriculum in the general aim the emphasis is put on the development of the students' self-awareness and personality and on the development of historical thinking and not on the development of the national identity. These aspects are considered positive, since they can mark a detachment from the traditional use of the History subject. Nevertheless, the objectives of each teaching unit and the contents in general subvert this approach, since they focus mainly on Greek history and on the Greek perspective. Therefore, they promote and contribute to the construction of a traditional national identity, and not of a pluralistic one.

## **Discussion**

The Greek educational system and its ideological and political orientation are said to be based on ethnocentrism. Traditionally through the History Curriculum a national identity is promoted that is based on the ideas of homogeneity, cultural preservation and unchangeable national characteristics that draw a line between 'us' and the 'others'. As Fragkoudaki stresses (1998: 139-140), racism and xenophobia in the Greek case are related to the construction of an ambivalent and fragile identity that is enhanced by the educational system in general and –among others- by the History subject specifically. This ethnocentrism stands in opposition with a critical intercultural approach which aims at an educational transformation and at a pluralistic History Curriculum. In this context forming a pluralistic identity, developing intercultural awareness, realizing the cultural interactions, deconstructing stereotypes, fighting against racism, promoting multiperspectivity, empathy and global citizenship belong to the central goals of the field and for this reason constituted the central poles of our analysis.

Through the Curriculum analysis we attempted to examine if the History Curriculum of the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade of the Greek primary school remains mainly ethnocentric and promotes a closed national identity or if it has developed towards an intercultural approach in the light of the modern sociopolitical settings, the construction of supranational structures, the action of organization such as the Council of Europe, the developments of multicultural societies and the discourse regarding the unification of Europe.

It is a fact that effort was made for a less ethnocentric approach within the History Curriculum which was marked by setting as a general aim of the History subject the development of historical thinking and awareness, instead of the construction of national identity. Positive aspects are also detected in the specific goals of the Curriculum, but we cannot support that they are set in the centre or that they are given enough attention. Furthermore, the goal of national identity building is still present within the specific goals, whereas the objectives of each teaching unit and the contents almost exclusively focus on Greek history approaching it from a Greek perspective. This point obviously reverses the positive aspects described above and makes clear that the goal of building a pluralistic identity is not attained. In general, we could say that despite the efforts to focus on historical thinking, to adopt an ostensibly neutral perspective of the historical facts and to promote citizenship, the History subject remains mainly ethnocentric and monocultural. As Mavroskoufis (2007: 231) stresses, the changes that occurred in the History Curriculum did not succeed in dissociating it from the traditional Greek-Christian ideology and in adopting multiperspective approaches. As a result, the subject- as far as the official Curriculum is concerned- still functions as a means of building the national identity and contributes to forming a closed and insecure identity which is not in line with the modern sociopolitical developments and with the principals of intercultural education. For this reason, more changes need to be implemented in the direction of intercultural education, in order to promote a pluralistic identity, a European and global perspective, as well as active citizenship and to integrate these aspects successfully into the History Curriculum (Alavi & von Borries, 2004: 65-67).

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## School violence, diversity and family background: Greek primary school teachers' views.

Goula Glykeria, Pagouna Olga, Eleftheria Tsironi, Marianna Galaziou, Georgios Nikolaou - *University of Ioannina (Greece) / University of Ioannina / University of Ioannina / University of Ioannina / Associate Professor, University of Patras (Greece)*

[goulaglyk@windowslive.com](mailto:goulaglyk@windowslive.com) | [olgina\\_91@yahoo.gr](mailto:olgina_91@yahoo.gr) | [eritsironi9@gmail.com](mailto:eritsironi9@gmail.com) | [mariannagl91@yahoo.gr](mailto:mariannagl91@yahoo.gr) | [gnikolaou@upatras.gr](mailto:gnikolaou@upatras.gr)

### **Abstract**

*This paper looks into the matter of how the occurrence of school violence phenomena among students is affected by the social, economic and educational family background in light of diversity. The specific aim is to present and discuss our findings on whether the family background affects the frequency and the types of school violence in which students are involved. Moreover, we investigate whether teachers feel ready to control school violence phenomena. The qualitative study's findings reveal that the lower the family's socio-economic and cultural background is, the more intensely the students are involved in school violence incidents. As a result, it appears that children from lower social classes are experiencing inequalities capable of triggering violent behaviour, a fact that is supported by the paper's theoretical framework. As one teacher remarks: "families with a good socio-economic and cultural background are closer to their children, they teach them to behave appropriately so as to avoid involvement in such incidents".*

**Key-words:** school violence, diversity, family background, teachers' education, primary school teachers' views, academic teachers' education

### **School violence and the Greek reality**

Nowadays, violence can be seen as an integral part of the society. Violent behavior is increasingly considered to be a universal part of the human behavior. At the same time, the people unconsciously legalize in their minds some incidents of violence, mainly because of their excessive exposure in them through the media. Meanwhile, the distinction between the members of a multicultural society into groups of high and low status can produce feelings of superiority that are being expressed through aggressive behavior. The school constitutes a miniature of the society, and as a result there we can see examples of aggressive behavior, distinction and inequality in the form of school violence.

In particular, Greece since the decade of 1970 became a host country of displaced people and as a result the contemporary Greek society is now a multicultural one (Νικολάου, 2010). A reflection of this multiculturalism can be also seen in Greek schools since many students from different ethno-cultural backgrounds attend them. During the school year of 2003/2004 the number of those students in the Public Education almost reached the 130.000, while half of them were attending public schools (Κάτσικας, Πολίτου, 2005). Therefore, we are talking about a new school reality for which educators have not been sufficiently prepared. Thus, the exacerbation of incidents of violence and hostility was linked to the presence of the different ethno-cultural students in the classroom.

But what do we mean by the term “school violence”? To begin with, violent behavior has to do with the person who seeks to cause physical or psychological damage to himself or to another person (Νικολάου, 2013). So, “school violence” is violent behavior that is being expressed within school limits and has as a purpose the imposition of the will or the damage of a part of the educational process (Αρτινοπούλου, 2001). It is important to mention here that school violence should not be identified with school bullying since they have many differences regarding their characteristics. Specifically, bullying requires the victimization of a student or a group of students from one or more students (Olweus, 2009· Τρίγκα-Μερίκια, 2011), while it is characterized by the will of the perpetrator, the repetitiveness and the duration of the violent behavior, and also by the difference in stamina between the victim and the perpetrator (Olweus, 1994).

School violence does not concern only the directly involved persons, but also the entire school community and especially the teachers. For this reason, this paper will approach the matter of school violence from the educators’ perspective and it will investigate their opinions on whether the terms of “school violence”, “family background” and “diversity” are linked or not.

### **Teachers’ education and school violence**

Teachers’ education constitutes a critical issue not only for Greece but also for the rest of the European community. For many decades, the European Commission (1995) acknowledged the necessity of expanding the teacher’s role. As a result, teachers do not only have instructional and educational responsibilities but are also equally responsible for promoting lifelong learning, students’ environmental awareness, recognition of heterogeneity, participating in intercultural educational and continuing education programs (European Commission, 1995). But, to what extent are future educators trained to recognize and successfully deal with incidents of school violence?

More specific, regarding Greece, a research in the recent Study Guides of the Departments of Primary Education demonstrated that students and future teachers do not attend relevant courses. However, courses like “Psychopedagogical Interventions in the School Community” (University of Ioannina, 2015), “Effective Communication in Interpersonal Relationships” (University of Patras, 2012-2015), “Emotional and Behavioral disorders in school age” (University of Crete, 2014), etc are noteworthy. It is very important to say though that those courses are not part of the obligatory ones, and as a result it lies in the choice of the students if there are going to attend them or not. Even though the last few years school violence awareness is increasing, this was not the case in the past. This is why many of the present teachers have not received the adequate college training regarding the confrontation of such cases. The Ministry of Education acknowledge the situation and thus arrange educational and specialized actions, like a recent one which had to do with the “Development and Network function, prevention and treatment of the phenomena of School Violence and Bullying” during the school years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 (ΥΠΕΠΘ, 2014).

### **Sociological approach**

The present research investigates Pierre Bourdieu’s sociological theory of “cultural capital”. According to Bourdieu, there are three types of capital in society that define the relations of power

and the social inequalities: *economical capital*, that commands over the existing economic resources, *special capital*, that regards the acquaintances that people make for their own benefits and *cultural capital*, that refers to the general cultural background, forms of knowledge, skills and tendencies that are being transmitted through osmosis from one generation to another (Λάμνις, 2002· Smith, 2006).

Specifically, during the socialization inside a family's and a social environment's borders, the child acquires the "master patterns" which will guide him/her in all social contacts and activities (Blackledge, Hunt, 2004. Νικολάου, 2009). The "master patterns" act like instructions that are given to the child in order to shape his/her status in society and they are being reflected in the way of thinking, the behavior, the use of language, the dress code and in a more general aspect in the gained culture. Therefore, since the different castes have different cultures, behavior patterns, values, cultural stimulus, etc., they also have different "master patterns".

Particularly, Bourdieu, having done much research, concluded that school as a mechanism reproduces social inequalities by legitimizing school educational inequalities (Bourdieu, Passeron, 2014). This is the result of the privileged background offered to some children, who they inherit more knowledge and skills, which are perceived as natural gifts by the school (Φραγκουδάκη, 1985. Bourdieu, Passeron, 1996). So, it seems, that those children outweigh the rest of the children as the cultural capital which they have appropriated by their families is similar to the one used at school (Bourdieu, 2002). As a result, high performance is easily attainable for these children, in contrast to children of lower social backgrounds who are forced to make long and hard efforts to gain what the students of higher social background acquire through "osmosis" (Λάμνις, 2002). Therefore, educational institutions reproduce social inequality, because they translate the social to natural gift scorning the cultural capital of students who occupy subordinate social positions.

Likewise, the Greek educational system is reproductive and students are characterized as either "good" or "bad" based on their performance. Especially different ethno-cultural students suffer multiple discrimination because, on the one hand, they have a different cultural capital, and on the other, it is reasonably difficult for them to communicate with the specific language code their families are able to produce. The question that arises here is whether school violence is related both to student's cultural capital and to the existence of different ethno-cultural students in the school environment.

### **Methodology**

This study attempts to investigate teachers' views on whether the students' family background affects the occurrence of school violence incidents among them. The specific aim is to present and discuss our findings on whether the frequency and the types of school violence in which students get involved, are affected by their family background. Moreover, it is important to state that this research includes teachers' views about both native born and different ethno-cultural students that attend the Greek school.

Semi-structured interview was selected as the most suitable data collection method, as part of the qualitative study that was conducted. We have chosen the qualitative research because our intention was not to generalize the findings, but to achieve in-depth investigation of the phenomenon's complexity (Creswell, 2011). Moreover, we used the semi-structured interview as the data collection method, as it is a flexible tool, from which perceptions, thoughts, attitudes and beliefs can be raised (Robson, 2007).

Educators were chosen as a sample mainly because they live from the inside the school violence phenomenon between students, while the investigation of their opinions on the matter is quite interesting. Furthermore, the chosen teachers work in various urban, semi-urban and insular areas of Greece (Ioannina, Igoumenitsa, Crete, Karditsa, Karpathos, Corfu, etc.), and this affords a wider and complete interpretation of the topic (Κυριαζή, 2004). At the same time, all twenty primary teachers that were part of the research, have students either native or with different ethno-cultural backgrounds in their classrooms.

### **Presentation of results**

All the research participants had everyday contact with students from different ethno-cultural backgrounds. Those students occupy a significant percentage of the classroom's total amount. The majority of them were from Albania, while there were also students from India, Bulgaria, Pakistan and Palestine and from the former republics of the Soviet Union.

The majority of educators accept the existence of school violence phenomena among students in the schools they work, claiming that such issues arise every day since "every child fights now and then". Also, the involvement of students from different ethno-cultural backgrounds in incidence of violence is very evident, since sometimes they became targets of teasing because of their origins.

According to the majority of the respondents, most incidents of school violence have to do with foreign students' isolation, their removal from the group and the racial slurs regarding their diversity, like for example "you are Albanian", "you are Indian", and "Why did you come here? Just go back to your country", "I do not want to work with him because he is black". But there are also many incidents of school violence from the part of the students from different ethno-cultural backgrounds. Those students not only exhibit violent behavior towards the native ones but they also exhibit delinquent behavior (small thefts). We should focus on the case of an Albanian student, who suffered because of school violence when he attended the first class of primary school and now he, himself, reacts violently against a student from Pakistan.

The majority of teachers, though, consider that both native and different ethno-cultural students provoke each other. Regarding the native ones, they state that because of their unacceptance of the diversity, they use racial slurs towards foreign students. On the other hand, foreign students react trying to defend themselves and this leads to school violence. One educator mentioned: "They challenge each other, one thing leads to another. Many times when foreign students are

*being challenged they will also react, they will try to defend themselves or they will also react violently either physically or verbally."*

The main forms of violence between native and foreign students are the physical and verbal ones. Verbal violence involves characterizations about someone's nationality and it is the one that appears more often, while the physical one, according to educators, appears to a smaller extent.

Concerning the families of students with different ethno-cultural backgrounds, the parents, according to the majority of respondents, express an interest in their children's progress and performance in school, even though they don't have much free time since they work: *"... just because of many hours of work, a student's parents visit school less frequently, but their interest in the child is clearly evident", "they demonstrate enough interest for school, they come to all parents meetings that we make and every time I call them they are present"*. There are, however, teachers that mention that foreign parents are not interested at all in school affairs and their children's schooling: *"there is no cooperation, even the day we give children's grades the parents don't come, the student takes them by his/her own, so basically they are not being informed about their child"*. At the same time, the majority of teachers mention that the parents cannot help their children, mainly because they face difficulties with the Greek language and they are away from home for many hours for financial reasons: *"they cannot help their child, he/she stays at school till 16:00, but later in the house is basically all by himself/herself because the mother has to work two jobs in order to support her family"*.

Most of educator's report that parents speak the Greek tongue in a sufficient level, but there are families that in home speak the Albanian one. However, there are also families that don't speak at all the Greek tongue. Characteristically, is mentioned: *"they know the language as much as they need it to communicate with the teachers, at home though, they speak Albanian", "the parents of the child with high grades speak the Greek tongue really well, while the other's not so well"*.

The vast majority of teachers mention that both the educational and the socioeconomic level of foreign parents are low. They work part-time, mainly in manual jobs, like labors, builders or farmers, while in many cases they haven't finished compulsory education: *"Parents are poor; they are trying very hard to make a living"*. In many cases, according to teachers, the mothers are occupied with domestic work or they are working as cleaners, while there are families that both parents are unemployed: *"the educational capital is low, they are not educated people, they have finished Primary school in Albania and some classes of Secondary school, the socioeconomic capital is also low, parents, mainly, are employed mostly in the construction industry, they do manual work"*. Few educators stated that the parents' socioeconomic and educational level of the students with different ethno-cultural background is high. More specifically, a teacher mentions: *"I think the family stand quite well financially, since the parents are educated and they have the ability to work, without facing any livelihood problems"*.

In the question if they think that school violence is connected to the foreign students' origins, teachers' opinions vary. Most of them believe that native students' prejudice towards anything different plays an important role: *"there were schools that didn't want foreign students because they come from foreign countries". "I believe that there is a kind of prejudice against them. Prejudice maybe because young children by nature are afraid of anything different or anything they are not used to"*. Part of them mention that foreign students, because of the difference of their origins, they experience racist attitudes, and that has resulted in school violence because they strongly feel different and they try to defend themselves: *"I think it is because they are in a foreign environment and they are trying to survive, when they are involved in difficult situations and are treated badly, they are made to behave such way as a defense, but in other cases they do not cause any problem", "they try to defend themselves and this is why they can be involved in phenomena of violence"*. Some of them claim that it is truly the different origins of the foreign students and different culture the ones that make their perception of violence also different: *"some of them react differently. Let's say that Albanians are more short-tempered, many times they attack. I generally notice that Indians let's say are not so short-tempered. They are more reserved than the Albanians"*. However, there are also educators that claim that origin has nothing to do with the existence of school violence and that if school violence exist it is being expressed between any kind of student: *"it doesn't have for a student to be from a foreign country in order for them to fight. Children fight, even those who come from the same country"*.

The socioeconomic and educational background according to the majority of teachers, affects not only native but also foreign students in their involvement in incidents of violence, while they also claim that the lower the family's socioeconomic and educational capital, the more the children will be involved in phenomena of violence: *"a less educated parent, like usually those parents are, will advise and motivate his child towards violence instead of fruitful discussion... for the dispute resolution. It is, after all, known, it is statistically noticed, that the less educated people have a tendency towards violence", "families with good socioeconomic and educational background are being closer to their children, they teach them how to behave properly and so they avoid their involvement in such incidents", "it is logical that when you have a better economic background you will also have a better intellectual and cultural one, more educational opportunities, which means better knowledge, widen horizons and so, an equivalent confrontation, so I believe that those two are directly correlated", "there are differences, the lower the family's social strata and cultural level, the more short-tempered the children are", "the lower the level the more the incidents of violence in which children are being involved"*. However, some teachers believe that the students are not under the influence of the socioeconomic and educational background but they are under the influence of the idiosyncrasy and values embedded in them by their parents: *"We cannot be absolute, all this has to do with the person's type; I cannot be sure that the good economic level creates 'sensitive' people. There are also other factors involved, and it has to do with temperament, values and principles that every family has"*. At this point an example of a native student can be mentioned. The student was from a family of high status and every time he was experiencing situations of emotional pressure, he reacted violently and specifically he vandalized school property.

Many educators think that different cultures lead to student's different perceptions about violence: *"maybe in some cultures it is considered more acceptable, I think that lets say the more undeveloped a society is, maybe violence is considered acceptable, is considered an acceptable way to solve your problems"*.

However, they believe that parents play the most important role since their perceptions and values are embedded in their children: *"it is also the parents perception about the confrontation of some phenomena, generally, regardless of their origin, their home country", "I believe that when children are trained at a young age to accept anything different and foreign, regardless of their family's financial affluence or education, then the incidents are minimized, just when someone has made an effort from a young age to accept anything different, to coexist and be open to others"*.

Ultimately, regarding teachers' readiness for the confrontation of incidents of violence, they state that their college education has not offered them enough knowledge to react properly. On the contrary, their information upon the matter is due to personal efforts from their own experience in the classroom or due to Ministry's of Education efforts through specialized educational programs: *"whatever you learn is on a theoretical level and so you cannot easily apply the theory into practice", "due to the fact that I have finished college many years ago we... this phenomenon wasn't as frequent and we were dealing with it as a fight between children when they play", "now I feel that I am quiet informed. Not from my college studies but from my experience"*.

### **Findings' discussion**

According to the findings, school violence is closely correlated not only to a student's cultural capital but also to his/her family background. Specifically, from the educators' answers we see that school violence involves native and students with different ethno-cultural backgrounds and is expressed either verbally or physically, with the verbal form to be the dominant one. The forms of violence that were observed are racial slurs, foreign students' isolation and also their removal for various groups. However, it was also observed that students with different ethno-cultural backgrounds behave violently towards native or non-native classmates because of the fact that many times they feel disadvantaged mainly because of their difficulty to communicate, if they don't know the language sufficiently, or because they are in defense. Also, it is believed that they are highly prejudiced by their families.

Regarding the families and how they affect school violence, which was the focal point of the research, we found out that educators believe that the lower the parents' socioeconomic and educational background is, the greater the violence. The educational level of foreign parents is low and most of them work occasionally. Their jobs are actually manual and most of them work as farmers, builders or workers. At the same time, even though most of the foreign parents are familiar with the Greek language and they are interested in their children's education and school progress, they state that because of their jobs they don't have the adequate time to dedicate it to their children. So, it is more likely for those children to behave violently since their parents will



either encourage them towards that behavior or they will not have time to advise them, contrary to more educated parents that will choose as a solution a fruitful conversation instead of violence. Here, Bourdieu's theory is confirmed. According to Bourdieu, school legalizes social inequalities (Bourdieu, Passeron, 2014), since the children that come from a high social stratum inherit additional knowledge and skills (Φραγκουδάκη, 1985. Bourdieu, Passeron, 1996). Thus, those children are de facto defined to conform to social norms, contrary to children that come from lower social stratum, in our case the ethno-cultural different ones, and because of their family background, they cannot have the necessary equipment to either develop a healthy social behavior or to obtain those skills and knowledge that are necessary for them to equally evolve into the Greek society and reality.

Also, the teachers think that different culture and origin lead to different perceptions about violence. That was mostly evident in the Indian student example, where he was more reserved and calm than the student from Albania, who was more short-tempered. Their country's culture and of course their family's culture define their behavior in the school environment. On the contrary, also native students behave violently towards the ethno-cultural different ones because they seem to adopt their parents' prejudices, like strangers are not good and they shouldn't be accepted. As a result, every culture has its own norms, values and communication codes within the society and all the above seem to be adopted by the next generations. Those facts confirm Bourdieu's theory of "cultural capital" mentioned above.

Finally, from our research, it also appears that educators correlate school violence with family background and heterogeneity. However, something like that cannot be considered as dogmatic, since some of them claimed the exact opposite. Also, there were students that perfectly coexist without any bias. Therefore, it is important for the parents to realize that the reproduction of the various stereotypes and discriminations infect students' relationships and negatively affect a school's climate. At this point, teachers' contribution on an actual democratic and multicultural education is highly important and critical since first of all they should be sufficiently informed and ready to cultivate the tomorrow citizens and infuse them with values like empathy, solidarity and respect of the other and his culture.

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## Perceptions and attitudes of pre-service teachers about bullying

Christina Ntokou, University of Patras [www.meredith@hotmail.com](mailto:www.meredith@hotmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Bullying is a phenomenon that has grown rapidly in recent years and directly or indirectly affect the whole school community. The teacher plays a key role in identifying and dealing with bullying, as being an important person in the life of the child, so he/she must be sufficiently prepared with knowledge and strategies to handle bullying episodes correctly or even prevent them. Since this preparation should take place primarily at the undergraduate teacher education level, it is necessary to examine what prospective teachers know about this phenomenon and how would they face such incidents. So, this study aims to examine the attitudes and perceptions of undergraduate teachers about bullying and possible ways in which they would face the phenomenon. The research tools used were two questionnaires with a closed questions scale Likert, which were administered to third and fourth-year students of the Department of Primary Education in Patras. The participants had undergone practical/supervised training in schools and probably have come up against bullying. The first questionnaire was examining the views and perceptions of pre-service teachers about bullying and the second their reactions and attitudes in a potential bullying episode. The results showed that most students know the basic characteristics of bullying and can successfully deal with one bullying episode. Also, it has been found that factors such as gender and previous experience with school bullying as a perpetrator, victim or observer greatly influenced the answers of the respondents.

**Keywords:** bullying, teacher education, attitudes, university students

### **Introduction**

Bullying is defined as the deliberate, repeated violence and aggressive behavior, which cause physical or mental pain to students from their peers, within and outside the school. It is a phenomenon which, according to the research data, it was found in many countries of the world.

As a social phenomenon that takes place in the school environment bullying is one of the issues which teacher must face. He/she must have knowledge and skills that are appropriate and helpful in this work, mood and interest to help students, but also abilities to recognize bullying and decide how and when to intervene in a bullying incident. Due to the fact that teacher's role today is not only to transmit knowledge but also advise, guide children to encounter any difficulty, his/her academic studies are of a great importance. Active participation, continuous training, constant updating and readiness of undergraduate teachers in bullying issues may be helpful in order to prevent and address effectively such phenomena. Also, Bauman and Del Rio (2006) emphasize that the preparation of teachers to develop methods and strategies to prevent violence and bullying in educational departments are a necessary part of an effective response to bullying. Because of the seriousness and difficulty of this role of the teacher and the fact that he/she must not only face, but even prevent bullying, there have been many studies that examine what are the attitudes and perceptions of teachers about this phenomenon.

Firstly, about the forms of bullying, Birkinshaw and Eslea (1998) report that teachers tend to believe that physical bullying is the most serious and most painful for the victims and also found that the acts and behaviors of boys towards girls are more likely to be considered bullying from their

teachers than those of girls against boys. Despite the fact that teachers recognize that bullying can be both physical and emotional (Siann, Callaghan, Lockhart, & Rawson, 1993), with the majority believing that the physical violence is the most frequent form, Boulton (1997) found that 25% of them didn't recognize rumors, theft of personal belongings, social exclusion and the use of nicknames as forms of bullying and specifically when they were asked to distinguish bullying from teasing, behaviors such as the use of nicknames assigned to the second category (Hawker & Boulton, 1997).

One explanation for the above teacher's view may be the following: the effects of physical bullying is immediately visible, perceived by all and especially by the parents, who will request explanations from the teachers when their child show signs of violence on it. Finally, recognition of direct bullying as more serious, might be the cause for which teachers consider boys as the most frequent bullies and not girls, who mainly use indirect bullying (spreading rumors, emotional violence and social exclusion).

But many studies have been conducted about whether and how teachers intervene in a bullying incident in general. In 2000, Craig et al. found that while 91% of teachers were aware that bullying is within their class, 25% of them declared that the best approach is ignorance from their part, while O'Moore (2000) in her research found that about 60% of teachers are actively trying to stop an episode of bullying.

On the other hand, some studies with similar thematic, not sampled active teachers but future teachers. For example, Tanya Beran (2005) conducted an extensive research on the views and attitudes of undergraduate's students in departments of education about bullying. The sample was 514 students of first and second year in a university in Canada, who had to answer a questionnaire with closed questions. She found that 84.7% of respondents concerned about this phenomenon, 80% believe that bullying is a major problem today, 41.9% that are able to recognize a bullying episode and 23.3% that are able to manage it. Beran, also found differences between the answers of men and women, for example the last express more concern about bullying and feel more responsible for identifying and dealing it than men. Despite this, women said they feel less capable and confident to face a bullying incident. Finally, participants appeared sensitive to the problem of school bullying and expressed their desire to support their students.

Sheri Bauman and Adrienne Del Rio (2005) conducted a research about the perceptions of future teachers on bullying. When the participants were asked about how they would react on an episode of bullying, 40% of respondents said that they encourage the victim to resist to the bully and 20% that they suggest to the victim to remain impassive. Also, they found that most undergraduate teachers wouldn't contact with the parents of the bully in cases of emotional bullying, nor with the parents of the victim. In contrast to the 25% found by Stephenson and Smith (1989) in a similar research, in this study only 3.7% of respondents said they would ignore a bullying episode

Furthermore, Bauman and Del Rio in another research (2006) investigated the views of future teachers on forms of bullying and found that the emotional, relational bullying is believed to be the least important and for that reason they wouldn't interfere in such cases, which agrees with the findings by Craig et al. (2000a), who found that the future teachers in Canada were less likely to intervene in an emotional bullying incident than in a physical.

### **Research Purpose**

The aim of this research is to explore the attitudes and perceptions of undergraduate students of the Department of Primary education in Patras on the phenomenon of bullying and their attitudes in a possible bullying episode.

### **Research questions**

This research has two research questions. The first is: "What are the beliefs of future teachers about bullying?" and the second: "How would these students face a possible bullying incident in the school environment?"

### **Research Sample**

The survey population was 500 students of the Department of Primary Education in University of Patras. The sample consisted of 140 students from the Department. Of these, 65 were third-year students and 75 fourth year students and the average age of the sample was 21 years. 31 of the participants were men and 109 were women. A prerequisite to participate in this research was the participants have undergone practical exercises in elementary schools of Patras, where probably have faced the phenomenon of bullying.

### **Research tool**

Two research tools were used for this research. For the first research question, it was created a questionnaire with 31 closed questions, which were rated based on a 5grade Likert scale with the following options "5 = strongly agree", "4 = agree", "3 = don't know", "2 = disagree", "1 = strongly disagree." The questionnaire is divided into 4 sections. The first was about the definition and characteristics of school bullying and it was consisted of 10 questions related to how the participants define bullying and what it includes. The second part concerned the characteristics of the victim of bullying included 8 questions about the views of future teachers on the victim's profile. The third section concerning the characteristics of the bully was consisted of 6 questions on the views of participants on the profile of bully. Finally, the fourth section included 6 more personal questions about the ability of the participant to recognize and deal with the phenomenon of bullying.

For the second research question, a second questionnaire was used, which resulted from the modification of the questionnaire «The Handling Bullying Questionnaire» (HBQ) by Olweus. It included 21 closed questions, which were rated based on a 5grade Likert scale with the following options' 5 = definitely would do it, " 4 = probably would do it, " 3 = don't know ", " 2 = probably wouldn't do it ", " 1 = definitely wouldn't do it. » It contained questions with possible responses to

an incident of bullying and the students were asked to answer to what extent would choose out each of these actions.

In order to understand better the results and export more specific conclusions the answers of the participants were rated as following: in the first questionnaire “1-2” = disagree, “3”= don’t know, “4-5”=agree, in the second questionnaire “1-2”= wouldn’t do it, “3”= don’t know, “4-5”= would do it.

### **Procedure**

The survey was conducted in March 2015. 150 questionnaires were shared randomly to third-year and fourth-year students of the Department of Education in the University of Patras and of these 140 were returned.

### **Statistical analysis**

The processing and analysis of the data collected was carried out with the help of the SPSS system (statistical package SPSS version 21.0). Research data were investigated with 3 ways. The first of these was with frequency distributions and graphs illustrating the frequency responses of students in each statement. Then it was used the technique Crosstabs. The intersection was chosen because it is a simple and easy way to show if there is a relationship between two variables, where one set the subsidiary and the other as independent. Finally, control  $\chi^2$  used, which is a measure of the degree of correlation between two variables and shows the statistical significance of the relationship in a contingency table. It was chosen for this research to determine if a relationship between two variables can be explained by chance factors or whether it can be generalized.

### **Results**

#### **Answers of the participants about the first questionnaire**

Answers of the participants about the bullies (in percentage)			
	Disagree	Agree	Don't know
The bullies are usually older than the victim.	17.8	66.4	15
Bullies usually have more physical strength than their victims.	19.3	65.7	15
Most bullies are boys.	20	66.5	13.6
The bully has not developed the ability of empathy.	12.1	70.7	16.4
The bully usually come from a bad family environment.	20	60	20
The bullies are usually not good students in school.	31.4	47.2	20.7

**Answers of the participants about the victims of bullying (in percentage)**

	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
The victims are usually introverts.	15.7	70	10.7
The children that been bullied, often do not confess their teachers to be intimidated.	11.5	84,2	4,3
The victims are usually bad students at school.	67,1	18.6	12.1
Most victims of bullying are girls.	50.7	19.3	28.6
Often the victims of bullying have psychological problems.	15.7	67.9	16.4
The children report bullying to their peers more often than their teachers.	14.3	62.2	23.6
Victims of bullying often have low self-esteem.	10.8	76.5	10.7
Children with overprotective parents are more likely to be victims of bullying.	21.4	45.7	32.9

**Answers of the participants about the forms of bullying (in percentage)**

	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
The physical bullying is the most common form of bullying.	35.7	41.4	22.1
The cyberbullying is a common form of bullying today.	6.5	72.1	20
Social exclusion of a child is a frequent way in which bullying occurs.	14.9	78.6	12.9
To give "nicknames" one child to another is not bullying.	49.3	25	24.3
Bullying is not frequent in primary school.	66.7	11.4	16.4
The theft of personal property is a form of bullying.	11.4	63.5	24.3
Bullying is a normal teenage behavior.	70	19.3	8.6
Emotional bullying is not frequent in primary.	70	15	15

**Answers of the participants about recognition of bullying (in percentage)**

	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Don't know/ Don't answer</b>
I am able to recognize a bully - perpetrator of bullying.	17.2	43.6	38.6
I am able to recognize a bullying episode.	5.7	75	19.3
I am able to come up against one episode of bullying.	16.4	37.1	46.4
I am informed of the phenomenon of bullying.	22.9	62.8	14.3
I am able to recognize a victim of bullying	14.3	57.9	27.1

## Answers of the participants about the second questionnaire

Answers of the participants about their attitude towards bullying (in percentage)

	I would let someone else to handle this situation	I would ignore the episode	I would blame abuser's parents for this situation	I would say to the children that involved in the incident to behave with maturity	I would approach the victim and the abuser to find out what happened	I would collaborate with the victim's parents
Disagree	61.4	92.1	60	9.2	6.4	7.1
Agree	22.8	3.5	18.5	80.7	88.5	82.8
Don't know	15.7	4.3	21.4	10	5	10

Answers of the participants about their attitude towards bullying (in percentage)

	I would blame myself	I would urge the victim to defend himself	I would blame the abuser for his bad behavior	I would took care of the bully in order to stay away from the victim.	I would punish the bully	I would ask help from my colleagues
Disagree	58.5	7.1	43.8	20	20.7	6.4
Agree	18.5	80.7	38.8	48.9	51	81.4
Don't know	22.9	12.1	17.3	30.2	27.9	17.3

Answers of the participants about their attitude towards bullying (in percentage)

	I would provide support to the victim	I would discuss with the observers of the incident	I would try to find out the cause of the behavior of the abuser	I would search for information about school bullying	I would discuss with all my students about bullying	I would collaborate with the bully's parents
Disagree	6.4	7.9	4.3	5.7	7.1	8.6
Agree	88.5	85.6	91.3	85.7	87.7	79.1
Don't know	5	6.5	4.3	8.6	5	12.2

## Conclusion- Discussion

The results of the first questionnaire showed that the majority of students believe that bullying is a common and serious phenomenon in primary schools and that it isn't a normal teenage behavior, it mustn't be tolerated but it should be taken very seriously. Also, a large percentage of students recognize and other forms of bullying, beyond the physical, which they consider to be the most frequent and serious, like cyberbullying, social exclusion, emotional bullying, the theft of personal property and "nicknames".



Then, about the characteristics and profile of the victims, most future teachers believe that victims are introverts, with low self-esteem, who have psychological problems. They don't consider that the victims are usually girls, nor that are bad students at school. Finally, they believe that victims don't confess their teachers that they been victimized, but instead prefer to report the victimization to their peers.

Regarding the profile of the bully, the majority of the students consider that he/she is older and with more physical strength than the victim and haven't developed the ability of empathy. Also, many of the participants believe that boys are the most frequent perpetrators of bullying and that the bullies are bad students at school and that they come from a bad family environment.

Finally, about their own ability to recognize and deal with bullying most of the participants declare able to recognize such a bullying incident and a bully. Also, 62% of the students said that they are well informed on this subject, and almost all participants reported that they feel compassion for the victims of bullying. On the other hand, fewer students declared able to identify a victim and even less that can address successfully an episode of bullying.

These findings agree with the findings of other surveys on the attitudes of undergraduate teachers about bullying. Yoon and Kerber (2003) found that almost all participants in their survey (96%) feel compassion for the victim. Then, in surveys with undergraduate teachers as sample (Juan L. Benitez, Ana Garcia -Berben & Maria Fernandez- Cabezas, 2009, Beninez et al., 2006), about their views about the bully and the victim they were found similar results to those of the present investigation for example the participants believe that the perpetrators are people with difficulties in learning, with great physical strength, stress or anxiety, and other researches with a similar sample (Laukkanen, Shemeikka, Notkola, Koivumaa-Honkanen & Nissinen, 2002) report that prospective teachers characterize victims of bullying as individuals with low self-esteem, few friends, low levels of popularity and high levels of anxiety and stress.

A difference that was detected between our own research results and the existing literature is that while Bauman and Del Rio in their research (2006), which explored the views of undergraduate teachers on the forms of bullying found that the majority of participants didn't consider emotional bullying as severe or frequent, here it was found that 69% of students believe it.

Regarding the attitudes of future teachers towards bullying, it was found that most would actively be involved in the management and treatment of the episode, and 92% of them said that they wouldn't ignore this fact.

The majority of the participants would try to learn the cause of the abuser's behavior, would approach both the bully and the victim after the incident in order to hear both sides, while would discuss about that not only with observers of the incident but with all the students in the classroom. Also, almost all them would provide support to the victim and urge him/her to defend himself/herself. Furthermore, half of the prospective teachers would punish the abuser for the

bullying incident, while few would be accusing him for bad behavior and would send him to the principle. Finally, the majority of the respondents would search for information about school bullying and would cooperate with both the parents of the victim and the abuser in order to resolve this problem.

Overall, these findings agree with those of the existing literature [Yoon and Kerber (2003), Dake, Price, Telljohann and Funk (2003), Nicolaides et al. (2002)]. A difference that was identified is that while Bauman and Del Rio (2005) in their research on the attitudes of students toward bullying found that 40% of respondents wouldn't encourage the victim to resist to the abuser, in the present research the 80% declare that they would do it.

Furthermore, it was examined if the answers of the participants are affected by factors such as gender and the past of them as bullies, victims and observers of bullying. Firstly it was found that gender indeed influence prospective teacher's attitudes and views. Initially regarding the abuser, the results showed that more girls (70.6%) than boys (53.3%) believe that the bully is older than the victim, but fewer girls (60.6%) than boys (83.9%) think that bullies have more physical strength than their victims

About the forms of bullying, more girls (77.8%) than boys (58.1%) recognize not only the cyberbullying, as one of them, but also social exclusion (81.7%) and emotional bullying (73.1%) compared with the boys (67.7% and 58.1%). Furthermore, fewer boys (38.7%) than girls (53.3%) recognize "nicknames" as a form of bullying and the same happens with the theft of personal belongings since the percentage of boys who agrees with this statement is 43.3%, while the percentages of girls is 69.7%.

Then, regarding the victims of bullying, 64.5% of the boys disagree with the statement that girls are the most frequent victims of bullying, in comparison to the 47.7% of girls who disagree with that. Also, more girls (81.1%) than boys (67.7%) believe that victims have low self-esteem, and that the victims are facing psychological problems, with the percentages for both to be 71.6% and 54.8%.

Finally, on the self - efficacy of the two genders towards bullying, it was found that girls (67%) declare more informed about the phenomenon than boys (48.4%), but they believe that are less capable (42.6%) to identify a perpetrator than boys (48.4%). The last research finding that girls feel less able to identify a bully agrees with data found by Tanya Beran (2005) in her research about the self-efficacy of female and male teachers. Also, Harun Yilmaz (2010) in his research about the views of prospective teachers about cyberbullying found that more girls (85.2%) than boys (69.3%) believe that cyberbullying is a serious problem at school, research fact that is was also found in this present study.

On the other hand, as shown by the research results the attitudes of the two genders towards an episode bullying would be also quite different. In a possible bullying incident, more girls (91.7%) than boys (77.4%) reported that they would approach the bully and the victim in order to find out

what happened and 88.1% of them would discuss about the episode with the observes in comparison with the same percentage of the boys (76.7%).

Furthermore, regarding the preservice teacher's actions towards the bully and the victim, more girls (54.1%) than boys (41.9%) reported that would punish the perpetrator, although almost half of them (in percent respectively 46.8% and 44%) wouldn't blame the bully for his behavior nor they would send them to go to the director, in comparison with the same percentages of boys that are 33% and 29% for these actions. Also, almost all the girls (89%) would cooperate with the parents of the victim, while a smaller percentage of boys (61.3%) would. Fewer boys (71%) than girls (84.4%) would ask for help by their colleagues. The percentage of girls (91.7%) who would discuss with their students in the classroom about bullying was significantly larger than the percentage of boys (74.2%), while a similar difference between the two genders was observed in statements about whether they would ignore the bullying incident, as the 95.4% of the girls and the 80.6% of the boy's answer that they wouldn't. Finally, more girls (63.3%) than boys (38.7%) would send both the victim and the abuser to the school counsel and about 90% of the girls would urge the victim to defend himself/herself, something that only 58.1% of boys would do.

Secondly, it was examined if the answers of the participants is influenced by the fact that they have been themselves bullies or victims or not. Initially, regarding the attitude of future teachers who have themselves been bullies, against the abuser, the research results showed that they use special treatment". Specifically, only 37.5% of participants who have been bullies would punish the abuser, something that would do more than 50% of those who haven't been. Also, 56.3% of the first wouldn't send the abuser to the Director, in comparison with the 38.7% of the last. While only 2.4% of those who haven't been bullies wouldn't try to learn the cause of the behavior of the abuser, 20% of those who have been would.

Then, when the future teachers were asked to answer whether they would leave someone else to handle the bullying incident, only 37.5% of those who have been perpetrators disagreed with this statement, in comparison with the 64.5% of those who haven't been. Also, while only 2.4% of the last would ignore the incident, 12.5% of the first would do it.

About the participant's attitude towards the victim there are also some differences between those who have and those who haven't been bullies themselves. While less than 1% of those who haven't been perpetrators of bullying wouldn't provide support to the victim, 26.7% of those who have been, declared that they would do it. Finally, 82.3% of the first would encourage the victim to defend himself, something that 68.8% of the last would.

Also, it was found that 31.3% of students who have been perpetrators of bullying, would accuse the bully's parents for this situation, which would only do 16.9% of those who haven't been. Only slightly more than half of the participants who have been perpetrators would cooperate with the parents of the victim, as opposed to 85.5% of those who haven't and who responded positively to the above statement and 68.8% of the first wouldn't ask the help of their colleagues in the

management of the episode, something that would make 83.1% of the last. Finally, while 89.4% of those who have been perpetrators would discuss with all the students in the classroom about bullying, only 75% of those who have been would do it. The most interesting finding here is that 37.5% of those who have been perpetrators would blame themselves for not being good teachers for their children, something that only 16% of those who haven't been would do.

Concerning the existence of a more favorable attitude of participants who have been bullied towards the victims was not confirmed, as no significant differences were found between those who have been themselves victims and those who haven't in their attitudes towards victims. On the other hand, we found some differences on how they would face the abuser. First, 54.2% of those who haven't been victims would punish the abuser, while only 42.4% of those who have been would do it. Also, 54.5% of the last wouldn't send the abuser to the Director, in comparison with the same percentage of those who haven't (36.4%). Finally, a higher percentage of those who have been victims (30.3%) would accuse themselves for not being good teachers for the children in comparison with the percentage of those who haven't be (15%).

### **Limitations of Research - Difficulties**

The main limitation to this study is that it wasn't examined whether the views and attitudes of future teachers about bullying are affected by the personal information of victims and bullies, for example if the participants have different attitudes towards girls and boys, or if origin and age of victims and bullies affects the opinions and reactions of the teachers.

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## Identity Construction in Greek Community Schools in London: The Teacher's Role

Efstathia Pantazi - Corfu, Greece [artounab@hotmail.com](mailto:artounab@hotmail.com)

### Abstract

*This paper explores the complex reality of the Greek community in the U.K. and the hybrid nature of the students within this community. It also examines the contribution of the Greek supplementary community schools to the construction of the cultural identity of these students, and the role the Greek teachers play in this process. I have employed a qualitative approach within the tradition of critical ethnography, using participant observation, and semi-structured interviews with the teachers, in which they are guided to reflect on particular experiences in the classroom rather than talking generally about their approach to teaching. The analysis has been conducted within a broadly discourse-analysis frame, but one employing aspects of narrative analysis and conversation analysis. Community school practices are placed in the theoretical framework of multicultural –intercultural education and Giroux's concept of the classroom as a "forum" where students' cultural identity is co-constructed with the assistance of the teacher. The potential of the teacher as culturally literate, sensitive and responsive agent is also stressed. The findings of the research indicate that the community schools provide a space in which the value of students' cultures can be recognised – even celebrated, and 'correct' the omissions and distortions of the mainstream and give the students the opportunity to explore the Greek / Greek-Cypriot side of their cultural identity. As to the approach of the Greek teachers to issues of culture and identity, the study shows that they develop practices which emphasise sensitivity concerning the complexity and dynamic nature of cultural identity. The teachers help students to negotiate their identities and draw on students' cultural resources. They place an emphasis on the facilitation of communication, the aim being to build mutual understanding and respect.*

**Keywords:** Greek community schools, supplementary schools, bilingualism, teachers' theories, multiculturalism, cultural identity, interculturalism, critical multiculturalism

### Introduction

At the heart of the debate on multiculturalism lies the challenge for multicultural societies of how to reconcile 'our belonging to different communities of values, language, [and] culture ... with our common belonging to a political community' (Mouffe, 1995).

Schools are sites of identity construction and negotiation: there is the question of the importance of the home culture and/or the dominant culture for students' identities, and how this relates to teaching approach, curricular content, and so forth. Moreover, the home culture of students – i.e. what their learning styles are, what cultural assumptions they have – can affect their performance in the class. Thus, culture and identity bear on *how* and *what* we teach.

In order to evaluate approaches taken to issues around identity construction in schools, we can ask:

- How successfully do schools cater for the 'identity needs' of their students?
- Is the dominant or minority culture presented in an open and reflective manner?

- To what extent is the hybrid nature of students' identities examined and catered for?

The site explored in this study is that of the community schools – locations which play a vital role in the landscape of multicultural education. Specifically, I focus on teachers in the Hellenic Community Schools in London. The context within which the teachers work comprises both the physical context, the Hellenic Community Schools, as well as the discourses within and through which they operate. Such discourses are co-ordinators of practice: teachers are given a particular role by discourses of multicultural pedagogy, through the imposition of a set of expectations as to how they ought to act in the classroom. Discourses act to 'position' teachers (without necessarily determining their actions). One focus of this research, then, is *how policy is negotiated* by teachers in the light of their local knowledge, and in the light of their assumptions and explicit theories concerning multicultural pedagogy.

### **Methodology**

I have adopted a qualitative methodological approach, mainly based around interviews with teachers. Teachers stand at the intersection of policy and practice; they are well placed to comment, as most of the Hellenic Community School teachers work in several different schools on different days of the week, and can provide information about a large number of schools. I have analysed the data in the context of discourses derived from the field of multicultural pedagogy. I am sensitive to the details of teachers' apparent use of such discourses, and the degree to which they construct a 'local discourse'.

There is also a *narrative* in that the teachers move from initial assumptions, through a reflective process, towards more developed understandings. This shift in understanding takes place as a result of a shift in position from Greece to the UK: new experiences in the Community School classroom form a basis upon which they can reconstruct their theories. So through a narrative form I try to show teachers' theories in a more dynamic light. I have tried to see where their talk connects with *dominant and marginal discourses of multicultural pedagogy*.

The research draws on certain texts, such as policy documents, legislation, other studies of the Hellenic community schools, mainly to use them as material to contextualise interview data and as a form of triangulation. This contextualisation from texts includes information about the teachers' training, the curricula of the schools and so on.

### **Discourse & Identity**

Four broad discourses regarding education in multicultural societies can be identified (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1997):

- assimilationism
- integrationalism
- cultural pluralism ('multiculturalism')
- intercultural / critical approaches



While these approaches can to an extent be seen as stages of a historical progression within multicultural societies, at present all these positions are still 'alive and well' - in the theories and practices of a range of actors: teachers, academics, policy-makers, and so on. The reality is for these to 'blend and blur' into one another (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1997). There are discourses and practices which marginalise minority students, their cultures and languages, and which assign to teachers what could be described as the role of 'clerks and technicians' (Giroux and McLaren, 1992).

Within the assimilationist discourse (Watson & Maguire, 1997, p. 79), the language and cultures of minority-community children are thought to be the cause of their own educational underachievement (the 'disadvantage' model). Within the curriculum, minority students find that their history and culture is not included. This kind of 'cultural imperialism' (Govareis, 2001) melds with an unreflective nationalism, concerned firstly with the nation's own history and literature, and secondly with that of the West.

In the National Curriculum for England and Wales, introduced through the 1988 Education Reform Act, culture is thought of as a homogenous way of life or tradition, not as a sphere of difference, relationships, or power. A selective version of a national culture is installed as an absolute condition for any social identity at all. The borrowing, mixing and fusion of elements from different cultural systems, a commonplace everyday practice in societies, is unthinkable within this framework (Johnson, 1991). The model is one of 'cultural transmission' (Bottery, 1992; Johnson, 1991; Watson, 2000, p. 163): teachers are viewed as *transmitters* of knowledge and accompanying values.

In integrationalism there is an emphasis on tolerance, on the rights of the individual and on national unity - on creating loyal citizens: the state should not interfere in the private sphere unless strictly necessary, so one has the right to adhere to any culture or religion, to speak any language *in one's private life*. (This expresses a structural/functional understanding of society, within which the school is seen as an instrument of social cohesion). Minorities are seen as having a problem which teachers can help them with locally, rather than society having problems (ignorance, racism, etc) requiring a national strategy (Tomlinson, 1996, p. 29).

In the UK, teachers' own reaction to the integrationalist policy agenda included a grass-roots movement 'aimed at the elimination of negative presentation of other races and cultures in the curriculum' (Tomlinson, 1996, p. 30). The advent of the National Curriculum in the late 1980s 'turned the clock back'. With an overriding emphasis on teaching to exams (which in themselves can be seen as culturally biased), teachers have less scope to respond to students by drawing on their culture (Watson & Maguire, 1997, p. 81), resulting in the 'blocking [of] ... certain forms of pedagogy' (Moore, 2000, p. 45).

With the school supporting the 'habitus of the dominant group (Bourdieu, 1991), minority children often feel alienated, since 'the habitus is likely to affect the individual's notions of what, for them,

is *achievable* within any given field [e.g. school, workplace, etc], thus setting very clear parameters for the individual in terms of personal ambitions and expectations' (Moore, 2000, p. 94). The conflict between minority values and the school can then lead to disaffection and dropout. Alternatively, (the strength of dominant cultural values) can have the effect of turning children against their home cultures: they may resent having to use the heritage language at home, and reject this culture in an attempt to 'fit in'.

Failure to support home languages in the mainstream school can accelerate 'language shift' within a minority community (Paulston, 1977). The failure to 'recognise' a student's culture has negative implications for their sense of identity (Taylor, 1992). In fact, academic success is often achieved at the expense of the maintenance of the community language or knowledge of the culture. Even worse is 'psychological captivity' - the lowest level of 'ethnic identity development': having 'internalised the negative beliefs about her/his ethnic group... then [s/he feels] ... low self-esteem and is ashamed of his/her identity' (Mushi, 2004, p. 184).

Cultural pluralism embraces diversity and attempts to bring minority cultures into the public sphere: to provide public recognition. In education, this means that the school is a public forum for the acknowledgement of diversity (Kalantzis & Cope, 1999, p. 250). However, extreme pluralism, if put into practice, runs the risk of 'Balkanising' society: the breaking down of common bonds which may actually diminish prejudice and inequality (Mouffe, 1995).

In the UK, the classic statement of the cultural pluralist vision is found in the Swann Report (1985), which states:

We would regard a democratic pluralist society as seeking to achieve balance between, on the one hand the maintenance and active support of the essential elements of the cultures and lifestyles of all the ethnic groups within it, and on the other the acceptance by all groups of the set of shared values distinctive of the society as a whole. (DES, 1985, p. 6)

In the UK mainstream, this 'weak' form of cultural pluralism is essentially rhetorical, with the reality being a pressure on students to assimilate. With reference both to the UK mainstream and to the community schools, the community school teachers note ethnocentric discourses concerning culture and history. As one comments:

They say on paper and in their programmes, that they value the experience of the students. But they can't really acknowledge, really understand what the experiences of these groups are.

### **The Role of the Community Schools**

The confinement of diversity to the private sphere has meant that communities have had to *fight* for the survival of their languages and cultures partly through the creation of community schools. In fact, the existence of such schools across a range of communities serves as an index of the inadequacy of official education policies in catering for the needs of minorities, not only in the

historical period associated officially with integrationalism, but up to the present, since many of its essential traits still linger on in the UK educational system. Furthermore, community schools have tended to fall outside the gaze of official policy connected with multicultural pedagogy: the mainstream educational establishment generally knows little about this voluntary, alternative educational provision, while academic research on community schools is sparse (Readhead, 2005).

Of particular note has been the study by Martin et al (2004) on complementary schools and the communities in Leicester revealing thirteen different languages being taught in community schools, as well as a more in-depth ethnographic study of two schools. Martin summarises the results as follows:

Complementary schools widened participants' choices and uptake of identities [so that] ... students may see themselves as 'successful learners' as well as 'multicultural' and 'bilingual'. The findings also suggest that children seem to value the flexibility required to move between languages and cultures and recognise it as a sign of sophistication. (Martin, P.W. quoted in Readhead, 2005)

There is a 'growing recognition in educational circles of supplementary and mother-tongue schools and classes' (Jon Snow, Forward to Kempadoo & Abdelrazzak, 2001).

The part-time community schools can be described as 'supplementary' schools – implying that they provide schooling in areas that are not covered by the mainstream. They tend to focus on teaching the community language, but also often focus on religious instruction, and/or on other aspects of culture (history, music, dance, cookery, etc). There are a very wide range of such schools in the UK, reflecting the complex linguistic and cultural makeup of the country and the 'variety of possible contexts for language teaching and minority education' highlighted by Hornberger (2002).

In the case of the Hellenic community schools in the UK the number has now grown to around a hundred, most of which are in or around London. Greek speakers are concentrated mostly in North London (for example Greek / Greek Cypriots represent around 5.8% of the total population of the London Borough of Enfield in 2012 (London Borough of Enfield, 2014)). In the Greater London area there are numerous Community schools and a handful of full-time schools. They are often held in properties owned by the Greek Orthodox Church, which is heavily involved in the administration of these schools. There are also a number of secular 'Independent' schools (Constantinides, 1977, p. 284). The main subject is Greek language, which is taught up to A Level. History, religion, music, dance, and other culturally relevant subjects are also available in a number of schools.

Today the schools are still generally well-organised, but most of the children are second or third generation so there is some tension between the original aims, embodied in the curriculum, and the present needs of the students. The church plays an important role in the running of the community schools (with the Independent schools as an exception) and real power is seen to lie with the school committees. Parents do value the community, and therefore the schools as one of

the most important meeting places. There are points at which the desires of the parents intersect with those of the students: both value friendship opportunities afforded by the schools.

The Greek government's policy in respect to the Greek Diaspora is that, traditionally, where there is a significant Greek population, Greece sends qualified and experienced teachers for a period of time to support the language and culture abroad, as well as distributing materials to these communities. The existence of the Greek Diaspora meant that there is an appreciation that cultural and 'national' membership did not necessarily accord with residence within the geographically-defined state. The schools receive no funding from the British state, and the main sources of support from Greece and Cyprus comes in the form of provision of teachers, and of textbooks. These textbooks fail to understand the *hybrid* nature of minority-community cultures: 'Greeks' in Athens, London or Melbourne, for example, clearly don't have the same cultures.

### **The Role of the Teachers**

The teachers in the study come to the UK for three to five years. When they are in the UK these teachers not only teach minority students, but are actually put in the place of a minority themselves. This experience (of teaching a minority as well as actually shifting position into being a minority) gives teachers a critical distance from many of the expectations they brought with them from Greece, about the nature of minority communities and approaches to teaching them. In addition to teaching in a foreign country, the Greek teachers also experience a shift from the mainstream to the supplementary sector. The shift in location and role, and the radical change in teaching environment, produces critical incidents and therefore promotes reflective practice.

Teachers realise there is a huge mismatch between the assumptions encoded within the locally dominant discourse, about a largely homogenous community, relatively secure in its Greek identity and the reality of the students' actual linguistic ability, motivation and cultural identity, and that Greek culture is presented in an extremely positive light. They become aware of the cultural heterogeneity within the community and they feel they have a *moral obligation* to right the wrongs of the school and curriculum. They come to a deeper understanding of problems facing, and issues relating to minority communities in general, begin to understand their need for recognition, the complexity of minority-community identities.

### **Affirming students' identities**

Teachers see language and culture as intrinsically linked and language-learning as contributing to identity formation. They respond to students' cultural/identity needs, on the one hand in the face of assimilationist pressures in the wider society, and on the other, in response to an 'artificial' view of Greek culture in the Community Schools. They move beyond stereotypical representations of minority cultures, by sensitively encouraging students to bring their *unique*, individual, cultural knowledge and experience into the class (drawing on students' cultural resources). By utilising their background in the lesson, students maintain a secure sense of self: they feel a central aspect of their identities is validated.

There is a degree of *freedom* and *flexibility* in the community schools which allows teachers to draw on these cultural resources. They are able to try out a range of approaches in the classroom such as project-work, drama, communicative approaches to language-teaching, the use of visual stimuli, etc.

Teachers bring issues of *power* into their teaching, helping students to interrogate dominant discourses of culture and identity, and to critically examine national identity. Additionally, the teachers open spaces for the students themselves to reflect on their cultural identities. They develop a pedagogy where students try to reconcile the Greek-Cypriot and British aspects of their identities, to define themselves, who they are, and what constitutes their identity.

The following comments by the teachers illustrate this perspective:

“What the students *feel, think and know* ... helps them to be themselves, to accept themselves, and be proud of themselves.”

“Start from students’ own questions as a jumping-off point for investigations of the culture.”

“You can show respect for what these children carry from their environment and use ... the experience of living a hybrid existence.”

### **The classroom as a forum**

In the words of one of the teachers:

“There is a theme that takes substance from what they say. And there is a synthesis. Encouraging them to express all these emotional experiences afterwards creates a comfortable and natural atmosphere within which they have this interaction between them. The learning comes from this process of interaction.”

Teaching here is about the *collaborative construction of meaning* (Wells, 2000, p. 67) in which teachers and students develop shared understandings (Conteh, 2003). The students are encouraged to explore their own identities in *collaboration* with the teacher. Exploration of identity through interaction with the teacher can uncover personal stories of the students which can promote a new sense of belonging. Here the classroom becomes a ‘forum’, within which cultural identities can be negotiated by both the students and the teacher (Giroux, 1998).

This stress on *exploration* and on the acceptance of complexity could be said to be ‘transformative’ (Cummins, 2003) or ‘critical’ (Giroux, 1998) in that it creates a ‘space’ for the exploration of identity within the classroom: it does not attempt to impose a unitary understanding of culture.

Drawing on knowledge of home-life or community life is an important skill for teachers in multicultural settings, as it can serve the role of affirming the student's cultural identity (Marshall, 2002, p. 20).

### **Conclusions**

On the one hand, the teachers see the 'home culture' as a resource for the students, providing a stronger, more secure sense of self. At the same time, they acknowledge that the students have complex, hybrid identities and they try to affirm the sense students have of who they are.

The teachers critique the prevailing local discourse and its approach to Greek culture. They stress that this culture changes across space and time, and they see their role as interpreting the culture in its 'living' forms: discussing culture in Greece today; bringing students' own 'lived culture' - into the classroom (the importance of dance, drama, music, poetry and so on being stressed).

There is a critical/transformational dimension to their treatment of culture. Teachers provide a space for the exploration of cultural identity which is absent in the mainstream school. But in addition, these spaces permit a critique of received notions of cultural identity - both from the mainstream (such as the significance of Britain's imperial history), and those concerning Greek culture.

Pedagogically the teachers emphasise co-construction of knowledge. They draw on students' experiences as a starting point for discussions of cultural and historical issues, working from students 'real questions', engaging in dialogue, employing methods such as project-work.

The approach that the teachers develop coincides with a number of *strong* (Watson, 2000) understandings of multicultural pedagogy: their concern for the negotiation of identity and building mutual understanding is characteristic of *critical* and *intercultural* discourses.

The intercultural approach may be understood as consisting of two key elements: first, to help students to participate actively in society, while at the same time maintaining their own cultural identity; second, to promote exchange among students and thus to enrich their knowledge and experience through a constant process of interaction. A further key objective is inclusion (Mushi, 2004).

The aims and goals of critical multiculturalism include:

- *Content integration* - from a variety of cultures and groups in a variety of subject areas
- *Knowledge construction* - knowledge is open to critical questioning; the classroom is treated as a space where identity can be *constructed* (Giroux, 1998, p. 188; McLaren & Torres, 1999)
- *Analysis of ethnic identity*, rather than treating it as a given, to reveal heterogeneity within such groups
- *Prejudice reduction* - giving students strategies to help develop more democratic attitudes and values;

- *Equity pedagogy* - to facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, ethnic and gender backgrounds
- *An empowering school culture and social structure* - a reorganising of the culture and structure of the school so that students from diverse backgrounds will experience equality (Banks, 2001)

We can note here that these key elements for a critical multicultural pedagogy – developed by the teachers – do not just have relevance to the community schools in the UK, but could usefully form part of teacher education for the mainstream in the UK, in Greece, or elsewhere. These are also the kinds of critical understandings that educational policy makers across a range of multicultural countries – if they listened to teachers with experience in such settings – could and should be taking into account. As bell hooks comments (1994, p. 44 – adapted), it is:

... by allowing our pedagogy to be radically changed by our recognition of a multicultural world, that we can give students the education they desire and deserve.

### **Problems of the ‘Parallel’ system**

The experience of the Greek teachers is that the state allows difference to be confined to the private sphere, and fails to recognise minority cultures, limiting the time and energy students have to give to the community school classes. In addition, many schools are not able to afford to have their own premises and must rent rooms in mainstream schools (although some Church schools have been able to use rooms on the Church site). From my own experience, I can confirm this feeling of *displacement*: when you are kept waiting for the building to be opened, told not to use the staff-room - you are made to feel a stranger, rather than a partner in the children’s education. A metaphor employed by one of the teachers is telling, with respect to attempting to educate the children through the parallel system: ‘[putting] together the pieces of this puzzle’. One aspect of teaching multicultural children implies bringing together the disparate elements of their identities into a unified whole. While the schools may be separate, the objective is not.

There are advantages in the present ‘parallel’ system, but also in the possibility of integration with the mainstream. The teachers value some of the freedoms of the parallel system. There is a tension between the desire to create an autonomous space in order to maintain the Greek language and culture (the supplementary community schools), and the integrated model, (i.e. bringing provision for minority students language and culture needs into the mainstream system) which would provide recognition, resources, efficiency and effective communication with other teachers.

The model of the community schools is one exclusively devoted to a particular community. This model poses the *problem of segregation*: if minority communities have their own schools, the students will not mix with those of different backgrounds and so achieve common understandings. The teachers stress the dangers of racism developing through an ‘*emphasis on difference*’, and a ‘mindless cosmopolitanism’ (Gundara, 2000, p. 71) arguing *for* a sense of common identity, formed through a more genuine dialogue between different groups in which identities are constantly being negotiated and reinvented. (Giroux, 1998, p. 189)

### **The importance of the Community schools**

While the Greek-community students are 'invisible' in the mainstream schools, it is in the community schools that they are actually receiving support for their language and culture. When we consider multicultural educational policy, such schools have to be seen as an important component.

In the case of the Greek / Greek Cypriot community in the U.K significant questions exist as to the future of the language (and aspects of the culture), and so a major challenge exists for the community schools in terms of the appropriateness of their policies and practices. *There is a need* for the courses, school culture and teaching approaches can become more relevant to the students. In my view, the teachers' own knowledge is critical in any project to revitalise these schools.

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## A record of majority and minority students' views on language choice and identity construction

Spyros Bouras, Eleni Grivas, Anastasia Stamou University of Western Macedonia [egriva@uowm.gr](mailto:egriva@uowm.gr)

### **Abstract**

*In the Greek educational context, with large numbers of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, the stances of students from the dominant culture towards their immigrant classmates seem to be critical in affecting classroom dynamics. On the other hand, immigrant students' views of 'themselves' seem to affect their smooth inclusion and their educational success. In the present study, an attempt was made to record: a) the majority of students' views on the identity of their immigrant classmates and on their L1 development and use; b) immigrant students' views regarding their L1 development and use and their attitudes towards their home language and culture. 90 students of Greek origin and 146 immigrant students of Albanian origin attending the 5th and 6th grade of state primary schools in two areas with high population of immigrants of Albanian origin (Florina and Arta) participated in the study. Data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews and analyzed through the Miles & Huberman's analysis framework. The results the study indicated a quite stereotyped way by which Greek children talked about their immigrant classmates, since the majority of them perceived immigrant children as "foreigners", who differ from the Greeks because of the "other" language and culture. However, they avoided using highly negative stereotypical expressions to describe their classmates, probably as an attempt to distance themselves from the dominant racist discourse. On the other hand, the immigrant students declared that their home language is used as a private code for interpersonal communication in the family environment. However, they expressed a positive attitude towards learning their home language at school in order not to distance themselves from their home language and culture. The findings suggest that school and families should cooperate in order to promote a better understanding of multiculturalism and greater sensitivity to the "other".*

**Keywords:** majority students, immigrant students, culture and identity, views

## Reconsidering Self: A Teacher-Researcher's Reflection on Experiences with Transnational Youth within the Frame of an Educational Project

Anastasia Karagianni\*, Vasiliki Brouskeli, Georgios Mavrommatis, Efthimia Penderi -  
Department of Education Sciences in Early Childhood, Greece, Democritus University of Thrace

### **Abstract**

*The present paper discusses a teacher-researcher's narrative on an educational project, based on the socio-cultural animation philosophy and methodology, addressed to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and youth in a non-formal educational setting in Greece. Seeking to enhance the reflexivity of her work during her postgraduate practicum, the teacher-researcher discusses these narratives within the context of an autoethnographic approach, based on data drawn from her journal. The paper emphasizes on the process of the negotiation of the participants' identities during the programme. In a broader perspective, the paper aims at pointing out the importance critical reflection on identity development might have for the people involved with unaccompanied minors, in a wider effort to promote children's agency and well-being.*

**Keywords:** unaccompanied minors, autoethnography, reflection on practice, identity development

### **The Field and the Circumstance**

In the beginning of 2015 my colleagues and I decided to contact, within the context of our post-graduate studies practicum,<sup>11</sup> a 'shelter' for unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors in a Greek border town. This place, which operates as a 'transitional home', accommodates unaccompanied children and youth until they are reunified with their families, already settled in another European country. In this multicultural environment, we attempted to apply a non-formal educational project which would take place during the children's leisure time. During the planning phase, our programme aimed at promoting their agency, resilience and well-being, since in existing literature unaccompanied children are generally described as a particularly vulnerable group, as suffering loss, being uprooted, separated from their parents and traumatized (Wernesjö, 2012). Within such a perspective of vulnerability, they appear to be regarded as "unsettled, transitional, unintegrated, and therefore potentially risky, bodies" (Sirriyeh, 2010, p. 215).

We observed that within this discourse, the children's perspectives tend to be overlooked and that they are, more or less, constructed as passive dependents; findings which actually are in line with those indicated by the relevant international bibliography (Hopkins & Hill, 2008; Kohli, 2006; Wernesjö, 2012; White, Ní Laoire, Tyrrell, & Carpena -Méndez, 2011).

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<sup>11</sup> The practicum constitutes an integral part of the Post Graduate Studies Programme titled "Innovative pedagogical approaches in multi-cultural educational environments" operating in the Department of Education Sciences in Early Childhood of the Democritus University of Thrace (Alexandroupolis – Greece). The specific educational programme was planned and implemented during the academic year 2014 - 15.

Taking all these under consideration, during our project we would encourage the children to take part in participatory processes, so that they would be given chances to be heard and space to express their own perspectives, as suggested by researchers and activists (Hart, 2008; Kauko, 2015; Zeitlyn & Mand, 2012). So, we planned and went on to implement an educational programme, based on Socio-Cultural Animation (SCA) philosophy and methodology. Our choice is justifiable, since according to the humanist perspective of animation, SCA is connected to the pedagogy of discovery, of creativity, invention and innovation, goes far beyond the exclusive sector of leisure and free time, promotes emancipation and liberation, and encourages individuals and groups to move forward to the aspired and motivated social change. SCA supports groups and individuals to develop, by giving them the opportunity to express their will and transform it into a draft action, based on freedom of thought, from which all others depend (Foth, 2006; Freire, 1983; Gillet, 2006).

Taking under consideration all the aforementioned, my colleagues and I started elaborating our thinking on the formation of our educational programme. Given, though, the short period of time that the programme would be held (twenty hours), we decided to focus on the children's present situations and immediate (educational) needs, and avoid dealing with their traumatic past and/or uncertain future. In this perspective, one of the primary needs of unaccompanied children pointed by Kohli (2007) is the provision of "...a safe network of friends and community to hold them in place and in mind." (p. 155) Following this argument, we picked out 'friendship' to be the central theme for our educational programme. We hoped that this theme would serve as a 'platform', on which children could build projects, using elements from their 'here and now' lives, beliefs and experiences.

In practice, the children were asked to deliver a media production about peer relationships. By exploiting the creative potential of digital media, children would overcome the barriers which are probably posed by language capacity and they would be given an opportunity to represent their own accounts about peer relationships. As deBlock & Buckingham (2007) underline, referring to children who could be seen as socially and politically disempowered, such as migrants and refugees, the opportunity of representing themselves in their own right, carries particular weight (p. 142). Last but not least; methodologically, we hoped that the participatory processes of production would encourage the children to involve in negotiation with others, working as a group, and to consensually make decisions about the final products (de Block & Buckingham, 2007).

What is important to mention here is that, during our practicum, our questions and thoughts were brought to discussion before the group of professors who were supervising our team. They provided us with theoretical and empirical perspectives, which set the frame for deeper reflection on subject positions, social locations, interpretations and personal experiences.

### **"The Problem"**

However, as the intervention started to be implemented, the children did not get actively involved as we expected. They did not want to talk about any aspect of their lives or share any of their

experiences. This reaction blockaded the implementation of our initial planning, obliging us to re-examine many aspects of the project. Most importantly, it obliged us to reconsider our 'reading' of the children's interests and to rethink of the children's will to share elements of their lives; actually, the children's behaviour/reaction drove us to rethink why the basic elements of the children's identities remained obscured.

Needless to be said that, this reaction destabilized us; in a way, it challenged our professional identity. That brought us before the questions: Could we ameliorate our project? In which directions do we need to change our -professional- selves? What does it take in order to do so?

An answer would be that we needed additional skills and knowledge, since we might lack confidence and competence in supporting the specific 'group' of children. But we did not have the time to gain them, since our programme would be held for a short period of time. The other choice would probably be a different way to observe, a new way to see old things. So, new types of questions started coming in our minds. What about trying to get a new perspective by opening up a wider lens on this experience? Why not live it through and then critically reflect on it?

### **Thinking on How to Solve "The Problem"**

I chose to do the second one. And I tried to read 'their' world and 'our' / 'my' world, 'their' identities and 'our' / 'mine' multiple identity in a different way. In order to achieve a better understanding and awareness on the -changing- aspects of my professional identity, I focused on specific critical incidents, which I wanted to analyse and to further reflect on. These incidents are considered and discussed as "epiphanies" that helped me get further insights on the identity negotiation processes taking place.

Here, I focus on three of these incidents, which I cite in chronological order. After each of the stories, I comment on my participation in multiple levels; I reflect on my roles, my practices, feelings and thoughts. These accounts attempt to outline the ways I perceived the children and their perspectives, and the way in which they were gradually differentiating during the practicum.

Starting with a rather stereotypical thinking on unaccompanied children (first story), I subsequently moved on to a description on how my professional identity was being reconsidered and reframed, while and/or after negotiating with the children (second and third story). The point I want to make is that, as long as my professional identity was changing, the children started responding differently.

#### ***First story: "the vulnerable children" (January 15, 2015)***

*It was the first time I visited their home. By the very first moment, I felt that now, I was the stranger. I walked into the office to meet their service providers. We got introduced, we talked and in a while, I came up with the question:*

*"Could I have some further information about the children? Could you indicate their strengths or point out any special needs that I have to consider?"*

*A woman suspiciously answered:*

*"We cannot give you any further information, except for the children's age and gender, as their privacy must be protected. Though, we generally propose that the children should be supported to build up their functional vocabulary knowledge and, furthermore, that it is important to them to engage in leisure time activities, through which they will come to contact with other same-age youth."*

What I observed here, was that aspects of the children's past were concealed and we were urged to focus on the children's present situation. In the name of privacy and safety, big parts of the children's identity that I considered essential, had to remain silenced, a phenomenon widely spread and observed in such structures (Kohli, 2007). If so, do these parts of their identity exist? Do the service providers want them to exist? Do the children want them to exist? Besides, I started thinking on the ways the persons in charge of the house understand the whole situation. Does their perception move beyond stereotypes? If yes, towards where? And how such a thing can happen?

So, what I tried to do was to search for ways to invite the children participate actively in the educational process, and at the same time, to leave 'room' for them to talk about themselves in specific ways, since we were indicated that most aspects of the children's lives should remain in silence. By doing this I understood that I adopted the specific adult-centric view, existing, as a rule, within the relevant policies and practices, which constructs unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors as passive, vulnerable, dependent, asexual and apolitical victims (Crawley, 2011).

What I soon realised was that the adoption of this view challenged what I used to understand, until then, as normal (childhood). Actually, by observing them from this point of view, I regarded 'unaccompanied minors' as 'strangers', as 'others', as being 'out of (my) place'. Reflecting on this perception I recognised that, I focused on differences and set boundaries by positioning myself as an adult among children, as a visitor at the 'shelter', as a student-researcher and educator among participants, as an ethnic/religious 'insider' among newcomers. All these were supposed to help me feel safe in my professional identity and, in terms of power relations, were also supposed to help me gain a sense of authority/control over the whole situation. I did what many researchers do in similar cases, not realizing where this positionality might drive me/them to (Zeitlyn & Mand, 2012). Finally, if unaccompanied children are not 'in place', where do they belong? This was the first time I felt uncertain and confused. I could not figure out what 'good practice' for unaccompanied children might be.

***The second story: "Where are you from?" (February 11, 2015)***

*"Where are you from?" I asked a boy, as I noticed that he had been talking with his friends in a language unknown to me, probably his mother tongue.*

*"I come from the same place as you do," he replied. I thought that he might have misheard the question. So, I asked him politely to clarify his statement, in order not to make him feel embarrassed about this misunderstanding.*

*"I come from the same place as you do," he repeated, circling the air with his finger. Puzzled, I was trying to figure out what he was talking about. And I finally came up with an interpretation! "Do you mean that you now live in this house, which is set in the town where I live?" "No. I mean that we come from the same planet," he answered, leaving my thoughts and feelings disrupted.*

Well, I considered this moment as a significantly transformative one regarding the way I perceive and understand the specific children and, generally, the formation of the identities. During this conversation, the boy and I negotiated our identities, actually by reconfiguring the frame and the lines separating 'them' from 'us', the 'in-group' from the 'out-group' (Marcus, 1995; in Zeitlyn & Mand, 2012). I experienced (emotional) transitions, which led me to question the boundaries I had unilaterally set, before I actually had the chance to talk with the children.

During this dialogue I started realizing what Kraus (2006) has pointed out, that 'belonging' was actually a concept "negotiated, tested, confirmed, rejected or qualified again and again and not simply shown" (p. 109). Before that time, I described 'belonging' and 'home' as tied to origin and single fixed places, actually not differentiating myself from the 'traditional' researchers' approach, as Sirriyeh (2010) and Wernesjö (2014) have established. Hence, I tended to disregard any of the children's alternative views on making meaning of 'home' in the host society. Instead, consciously or not, I was imposing on them my perceptions. After this realisation, I started thinking how I could even imagine or attempt to foster cultural recognition and provide conditions to promote the children's empowerment, according to Cummins (2000) perception, since my reading of their lives was biased. It was this stereotypical understanding that hindered any attempt of building rapport with the children, and which strengthened the existing dichotomies instead of promoting cooperation.

Thinking with binaries, I was ignoring that children at times belong to many and different categories, and that they move within and between them according to their needs in the current moment. In fact, what I actually realized was that identities are far from being stable; they may constantly be re-formed and re-shaped, as Ryan (2014) points out. So, instead of searching for the 'essential' characteristics of their identities, I shifted my focus on exploring how identifications between the different parts and within different contexts were constructed, negotiated and performed.

***The third story: "The super-(hero)-models" (7 March, 2015)***

*A team of girls made a photo-story, in which they were represented as models. During their presentation of the product, I felt upset. Should the girls have been prevented from being recorded as models, as this may contrast with (what at least I understood being) their Islamic identity? Then, I told myself that by intervening I would impose on the girls the stereotypical ways I understand 'their' religion, 'their' values, and 'their' beliefs. Since "becoming a model" seemed so important to them, I decided to take a step back and carefully observe the girls during their presentation, so that I can gain further insights on what "being a model" could mean to them.*

*But, while I was taking a better look at the photos, I noticed that one of the girls systematically avoided showing her face. Discussing with my colleagues, they informed me that before the photo-shooting started, this girl had expressed her unwillingness to participate. After negotiation with the rest of the team, she decided to join in, with the condition that her face would not be depicted.*

Reflecting on this incident, I understood that firstly, I scrutinized my initial thoughts and applied self-censorship. The 'second thoughts' I had, actually indicated that I displayed a more reflexive stance, as I didn't want to impose on the girls my perception on their world. Wearing a more critical lens, I stepped back and let them perform their story. I accepted their thoughts and their value system, and actually this specific part of their (present-group) culture, instead of imposing my convictions.

As for the girl who did not want to take part in this process, she had declared from the very beginning that she would not join, as she did not want her face to be depicted in the photos. At that time, I thought that her reaction was probably due to Islamic religious rules, which generally forbid the depiction of humans (see also Zeitlyn & Mand, 2012). Despite her initial resistance, the rest of the team attempted to take into account her perspectives and views, and incorporate them into the process in a meaningful way. So, after negotiating, the team reached to an agreement and the girl took an alternative role, which was adjusted to the circumstances and was in accord with the values her stance implied.

With this reaction the other team members showed sensitivity to her needs and supported her decision. They did not reject her, but instead were open to negotiation and showed flexibility by modifying the storyline so that the girl would be included. In other words, the team of the girls negotiated and made decisions about how to alter their (current) group culture in order to be more responsive and inclusive. The way they dealt with this incident within such a short period of time, might imply that during their cohabitation they have developed certain coping strategies to deal with similar situations. So, it seems that even if they wish to retain elements of their home cultures, they also try to adapt to their new circumstances, as unaccompanied children do in many similar cases (Ní Raghallaigh & Gilligan, 2010; Ní Raghallaigh & Sirriyeh, 2014).

### **Re-thinking on How to Solve "The Problem": Towards a Metamorphosis**

Soon after the practicum was over, it was clear to me that I needed to reflect on certain critical incidents, which previously in this paper I described as epiphanies, and document the ways my professional identity was negotiated and changed as a result of these experiences. In order to do so, I chose to use the means of autoethnography, as this is "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience, in order to understand cultural experience" (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). Through autoethnography, I was able to produce a narrative that acknowledges and accommodates my subjectivity, emotionality, and, finally, my influence on the educational process, taking under consideration the work of Coia and Taylor (2006), Chang (2007), Ellis, et al. (2011) and Pitard (2016).



I chose to focus on, actually to re-construct within a text, “intense situations” and “effects that linger -recollections, memories, images, feelings- long after [the] crucial incident[s] [were] supposedly finished” (Bochner, 1984, p. 595, in Ellis, et al., 2011). As a method, autoethnography provides the researcher the space and the time to embed into those critical moments. Autoethnography gradually leads him/her to the recognition of the multitude and the value of different realities and knowledge, and of each (educational) context’s inherently complex political, social and cultural impact. At the end of a thorough self-examination within a cultural context, autoethnographers hope to gain a cultural understanding of self and others (Chang, 2007, p. 209).

In fact, in this paper autoethnography is considered as a constructive method for researching the relationship between the unaccompanied children who took part in the educational programme and me. By writing down and sharing my stories with others, I attempted to shed light on how different aspects of my identity impacted the educational process. As Coia and Taylor (2006) have indicated, by doing autoethnography “we ask ourselves not only what we know, but what the enterprise of education is all about, who we can be as a teacher, who the students are, and how to connect students with knowledge” (p. 35) Additionally, as Chang (2007) has indicated, through autoethnography we aim at making our teaching philosophies and practices more inclusive and sensitive to other’s needs (p. 215). And it is the self-transformative potential of autoethnography, which benefits particularly those who work with people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Chang, 2007, p. 215).

### **As an Epilogue**

Through all these, I realised that identities are mutually constructed when we narrate ourselves in a specific context. Identities are constantly reformed. Certain identities are constructed in a certain time, within a certain place, and through a multilayer negotiation. In our case ‘unaccompanied children’ are persons whose origin, nationality, language, religion, family history, beliefs, and so on, remain obscured or hidden, since many of the persons and the agents who ‘deal with them’ are convinced that this is essential for their survival.

Working with these children I gradually changed my perceptions on how identities are formed. In fact, what I perceived was totally different from what I used to understand. The turning point was when I decided to start talking *with* the children, instead of talking or searching *about* the children from an adult-centric point of view. Before that time, I was searching for regularities and certainties in order to safeguard my position as a professional/teacher, I was drawing solutions that I believed would empower the children in order to overcome their problems, I was setting or building up boundaries and rigid rules in order to assure that no aspects of their traumatic past came up.

Through autoethnography, I understood that the children’s situation cannot be described as a simple negotiation between two conditions -one ascribed in their past and one in their present. On the contrary, a multilayer negotiation takes place within each child, among the children, and between them and the adults; a different set of rules and boundaries is set every time and in every

different context; these rules and boundaries, though, are never rigid. What actually happens, is that they temporarily create a sense of sustainability and balance, until something or someone new arrives, disturbs the existing equilibrium, incites negotiation processes... until new balance points will be achieved.

### **Acknowledgments**

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## Identity through Intercultural Competences in EFL and FFL

Monica Oprescu & Cosmina Lungoci, West University of Timișoara, Romania [monica.oprescu@e-uvt.ro](mailto:monica.oprescu@e-uvt.ro)

### **Abstract**

*Identity as a social construct has become of great importance nowadays due to the changes of our world, entering the language classroom through the development of intercultural competences. As Hall (1996) states, we live in a modern world in which individual identity is fragmented and dispersed, giving rise to new identities. The link identity – language has been profoundly analysed by Kramsch (1993), who observes that we are profoundly shaped by our language and connected to it by the culture of that specific language. Starting from this assumption we want to identify whether in English and French language classes these intercultural competences that focus on identity issues are developed. Therefore, we will analyse the CEFR/common European Framework for Languages, the national syllabus and the textbooks used in upper secondary classes in Romania in order to identify topics and activities that lead to the development of intercultural competences. Because, as Byram (1997) observes, these aim at developing what we now call 21st century skills – communication, cooperation, intercultural awareness, active and lifelong learning.*

**Keywords:** identity, intercultural competence, documents analyses.

### **1. Theoretical background**

Identity is a shifting concept, an ambiguous one, one that transcends subjects, a product of the social as regarded by sociologists like Bourdieu (1992), cultural theorists Hall (1996), Weedon (1997), concept adopted in language education, as well – Kramsch (1993), Byram (1997), Norton (2000).

Hall (1996) is the cultural theorist who asserts that old identities are in decline, “giving rise to new identities, and fragmenting the modern individual as a unified subject” (Hall 199-6:59), introducing the idea that nowadays people do not identify themselves only through one identity, but through various, diverse identities. The knowledge of different languages, the living and learning conditions, our multicultural and multilingual societies are the factors contributing to these.

The cultural element is given more and more importance, people being “shaped and formed by their “culture” (Block, 2007: 12) and in modern times the cultures they come in contact with. Connections between language, the cultural dimension have been developed by Kramsch (2001), who inquires about the creation of new identities that the teaching of English promotes, stating that one of the new directions for English teachers will be the “social and historical conditions of teaching intercultural communication through English” (Kramsch 2001). The aim of teaching a language, teaching English and/or French in our case, is to develop learners as intercultural speakers. Therefore, the linguistic competence will be doubled by the intercultural competence.

Byram (1997) is another researcher in the area of language teaching who focuses on the importance of what is called ICC – intercultural communicative competence, linking theory and practice and focusing on the practical aspects of our global multicultural world which requires learners to develop such skills that will be useful in practice, in the educational system and workplace, as well.

## **II. Case study**

The study focuses on the analyses of the CEFR / Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, the national syllabus and several textbooks for teaching English and French. The aim is to identify whether in English and French language classes these intercultural competences that focus on identity issues are developed, starting from general documents (European framework and the syllabus) and looking at the content (subjects and types of activities) that can be found in textbooks.

### **1.Documents**

#### **1.1. CEFR / Common European Framework of Reference for Languages**

*1.The knowledge of the world* is represented by topics related to our everyday lives, both concrete and abstract: everyday living, living conditions, interpersonal relations, values, beliefs and attitudes, body language, social conventions, ritual behaviour).

*Sociocultural knowledge* is another aspect that is related to our topic. This subject is correlated to intercultural awareness, one of the most important competences that teachers want to develop in the classroom: knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the ‘world of origin’ and the ‘world of the target community’ produce an intercultural awareness. It is, of course, important to note that intercultural awareness includes an awareness of regional and social diversity in both worlds. ([http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1_en.asp))

#### *2. Intercultural skills and know-how*

These are represented by social skills, living skills, vocational and professional skills, leisure skills. Here are some examples that we considered important, that refer to cultural and intercultural elements:

- “the ability to bring the culture of origin and the foreign culture into relation with
  - each other;
  - cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for
  - contact with those from other cultures;
  - the capacity to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary between one’s own culture and the foreign culture;
  - to deal effectively with intercultural misunderstanding and conflict situations;
  - the ability to overcome stereotyped relationships.”
- ([http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1_en.asp))

#### **1.2. The Romanian syllabus for modern languages (English and French) ([www.edu.ro](http://www.edu.ro))**

*Competences:*

- showing flexibility when exchanging ideas and working in teams with different communication strategies;
- becoming aware of the role of the modern language as means of reaching universal culture;

- becoming aware of the differences between cultures and becoming tolerant towards cultural stereotypes;
- developing interest for specific cultural aspects.

### Values and attitudes

These refer to understanding the role of the English language as means of accessing the work market; disponibility for accepting differences, becoming tolerant and critically accepting cultural differences and cultural stereotypes; raising interest in aspects related to the target culture, through texts in the taught language.

### Contents

The activities suggested by the syllabus are divided into the following categories: personal domain, public domain (contemporary life, democracy, human rights), occupations, education (cultural life, European cultural patrimony).

### 1.3. Textbooks

The textbooks analysed are the ones in use for 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade for English and French and which were approved by the Romanian Ministry of Education.

#### English textbooks

<b>Gateway - contents</b>	<b>Going for Gold - contents</b>	<b>Mission - contents</b>	<b>Cambridge English. Objective - contents</b>
<b>Cross curricular elements:</b> <i>History</i> -sailing around the world, history mysteries. <i>Geography</i> hurricanes, Switzerland.  <b>Science</b> – robotics. <i>Sports</i> -modern marathons. <i>Literary pieces</i> - (The London Eye by Siobhan Dowd, I, Robot by I. Asimov, The Picture of Dorian Gray by O. Wilde),  <b>Art</b> - vocabulary on arts, arts in Ireland. <i>Economics</i> - English national identity, city life, London, consumer society, food – American style, Thanksgiving Day, university life in the UK.	<b>Entertainment</b> - David and Victoria Beckham, superheroes, Oprah Winfrey show, shopping.  <b>Different cultures</b> - Machu Pichu, Masai tribe, land of the pharaohs, info on Thailand, Cuba, Sri Lanka.  <b>Science</b> - inventors,  <b>Behaviour culture</b> - rites of passage.  <b>Literature</b> - Shakespeare.	<b>Entertainment</b> - Audrey Hepburn, television. <b>Different cultures</b> - winter in Venice, monuments, museums in Wales, the Egyptian pyramids.  <b>Behaviour culture</b> - children qualities, models/politicians. <b>Social issues</b> -unemployment in Europe, terrorism.  <b>Hobbies</b> - camping, football.  <b>Science</b> - technology, best cars.  <b>Environment</b> – pollution, hurricanes.  <b>Literature</b> - book reviews.	<b>Behaviour culture</b> - culture shock, keeping in touch, change, children discipline.  <b>Entertainment</b> - Hollywood actress Kate Beckinsale.  <b>Politics</b> - Marin Luther King, the queen s speech.  <b>Food</b> – feeding the mind.  <b>Painting</b> – Francis Bacon.  <b>Nature</b> - natural wonders.

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***French Language Textbooks - contents***

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**Personal life:** relationships, free time, friendship.

**Public life:** social behaviour, digital technologies, social protection, life in the city/life in the village.

**Education & culture:** European capitals, school, cultural stereotypes, Paris, schools seen through the eyes of the French, holidays in France, French provinces, Morocco, French gastronomy, European symbols, European educational projects, intercultural projects.

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The texts used for teaching these contents are generally authentic ones, written or oral, adapted to the level of the students (press articles, advertisement materials, interviews, literary texts) and the activities proposed aim at a global or detailed understanding of the meaning. These are most of the times followed by suggestive images, therefore training students for decoding images as well.

## **2. Findings**

The structure of the CEFR and the national syllabuses are similar and can also be correlated to the content of the textbooks. Within the European document and the national syllabuses, the focus is on content and competences, which prove to be similar. The CEFR is the more general document on which the national syllabus is based, also a starting point for the textbooks (English textbooks being published in the UK, while the French ones in Romania).

The competences focus on (inter)cultural awareness, intercultural communication, trying to bridge conflicts and cultivate tolerance and openness towards other cultures. These are also competences that are correlated to the contents to be transmitted in the textbooks.

The teaching of language focuses on teaching the language, developing the linguistic competence, and also on the teaching of culture, not only the one of the target language, but also world cultures. Therefore, students learn to place their culture within a wider context, by making comparisons and state their identities in relation to other cultures.

All topics in textbooks teach issues related to identity indirectly, by focussing on characteristics connected to the target culture and making implicit comparisons to the native culture, as well. However, some topics address them directly: there are texts about the specific of the English/French, elements that belong to behaviour culture.

Nevertheless, most activities lead to the two nations that primarily speak these languages – English and French. Most of the content is approached in a contrastive manner, showing the similarities / differences between English/American/French cultures and other cultures, as well.

There is some content, even if scarce, that makes reference to other cultures that use the target language as official language (e.g. Marrocco). Still, English textbooks try to offer a more complex image of the world, by addressing different spaces, different cultures, that have no implicit connection to English (e.g. Switzerland, Peru, Thailand, Cuba).

Most subjects used in the textbooks address achievement culture, referring to the elements of history, geography, literature, domains of public life, few contents mentioning more subtle elements related to behaviour culture (stereotypes, culture shock), dominated by the vast majority of the Big C. Addressing issues such as stereotypes is helpful in providing openness and tolerance, teaching students not to generalise and to approach situations critically. Therefore, we may say that inner culture is dominated by outside culture, some topics tending to become stereotypical.

Amongst all English language textbooks, the best one from the perspective of teaching competences related to culture is *Gateway*, as it covers many topics from different subjects, a cross-curricular perspective which is quite actual, seemingly similar to a CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) approach, with topics from history, geography, science, literature, economics. *Cambridge English. Objective* is the textbook that covers most topics related to behaviour culture, therefore being the one that focuses more on developing students' intercultural competences and also *Mission* is focussed on social issues, even though at a small scale.

However, the general focus is on positive aspects. Students are invited to learn about the world of entertainment, the English/American/French culture and some others, different aspects of reality, geographical, scientific, literary contents being prevalent. There are few issues of social injustice addressed (e.g. unemployment, terrorism), the general image of the world being a positive one, we may even say glamorous and superficial.

### **3. Conclusions**

Learning a foreign language contributes to developing an intercultural personality in which attitudes (openness, interest towards new experiences and cultures, the wish and ability to transgress cultural differences), motivations, values, cognitive styles and personality traits play an important part. (Un Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues: apprendre, enseigner, évaluer, 2000, p. 84) Therefore, the cultural dimension in teaching foreign languages aims at forming learners as intercultural mediators, able to communicate in a complex environment, by avoiding the stereotypes that hinder the perception of the other. This approach focuses on the respect of individuals and human rights equality. (BYRAM et al, 2002: 9)

We argue that the competences, values and contents proposed by the CEFR and the national syllabus are great tools to work with, leaving teachers a great range of options. However, textbooks seem to limit these options, through the content chosen (see the list of contents and cultures they refer to), therefore limiting students' development and their chances of evolving diverse identities. As Byram (1997) observes these activities aim at developing what we now call 21st century skills – communication, cooperation, intercultural awareness, active and lifelong learning, helping students to integrate in the global world and show respect towards other cultures.



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## Fusing an L1 identity into an L3 context: Implications for foreign language pedagogy in Greece.

Evangelia Papalexatou, Dr. Vasilios Zorbas - (BA, M.Ed) Ph.D Candidate, University of Patras / (BA, MA, Ed.M, EdD) Research Associate, University of Athens  
[vzorbas@enl.uoa.gr](mailto:vzorbas@enl.uoa.gr) | [evelpap@upatras.gr](mailto:evelpap@upatras.gr)

### Abstract

*In recent years, there has been much research in the rapidly expanding fields of bilingualism and multilingualism and as a result various issues of multilingual phenomena, trends and practices are in the spotlight worldwide. In light of this, it is imperative that we understand how bilingual learners - who belong to a mixed classroom - think of themselves and how they manage to come to terms with their own identity in times of crisis, globalization and diversity. This article aims to examine the relationship between bilingualism and cultural identity development regarding two Albanian second-generation immigrants who attend the fourth grade in a Greek primary school and learn English as a third language. Based on a conducted case study, conclusions are drawn as to the interplay among identity and all the distinct languages (L1, L2, L3), as well as the potential underlying reasons affecting and influencing the development of their bicultural / bilingual identity. Moreover, through in-depth interviews light is shed on those factors which not only contribute to the learners' sense of who they actually are, but also define the multifaceted nature of their identity in the culturally and linguistically diverse environment they belong to. Findings show that there is a relationship between the languages and their identity and each of the languages takes on a functional role depending on given situations and interactions. Moreover, the role that each language plays in each context reveals conflicting needs on the part of the bilinguals: their need to be accepted in the wider community on the one hand and the desire to display and assert their uniqueness on the other. The paper also outlines implications for foreign language pedagogy in Greece and looks into ways of forming and promoting school environments where identity is of prime concern and each individual feels valued and respected.*

**Keywords:** bilingualism / Trilingualism, identity, diversity, educational equity

### Introduction

Undoubtedly, all languages – along with their implications for educational, personal and social development - are of vital importance when it comes to intercultural communication, the development of cultural identity and preserving one's cultural heritage. In this respect, it is imperative that educators understand how bilingual learners - who belong to a mixed classroom - perceive themselves and how they manage to come to terms with their own identity **in times of crisis, globalization and diversity**.

The present article aims to identify the bilingual/bicultural identity of two Albanian second-generation immigrants who attend the fourth grade in a Greek primary school and learn English as a third language. Based on observational and interview data, the relationship between bilingualism and cultural identity development is stressed and conclusions are drawn as to the interplay among identity and all the distinct languages (L1, L2, L3), as well as the underlying reasons affecting the development of their bilingual identity.

Findings show that each language takes on a functional role depending on given situations. Moreover, the role that each language plays in each context reveals the bilinguals' conflicting needs: their need to be acceptable members of the wider community on the one hand and their inner desire to assert their uniqueness on the other.

The paper also outlines implications for the foreign language pedagogy in Greece and looks into ways of forming and promoting school environments where identity is of prime concern and each individual feel valued and respected.

### **Theoretical landscape**

The hyphen between *language* and *identity* especially with respect to bilingual speakers has been probed into extensively by a variety of researchers in a multitude of studies within the greater vicinity of language pedagogy (e.g., Achugar, 2006; Berard, 2005; Block, 2007; Crawshaw, Callen, & Tusting, 2001; Norton, 2000; Norton Pierce, 1995; Pietikäinen & Dufva, 2006; Ros i Solé, 2004; Valdés, 2001; Wallace, 2004; Weiyn He, 2006). In their work, *identity* – both individual and social – is mediated through language: the language features constitute the link that binds individual and social identities together. Identity is also viewed as “dynamic and socially constructed” which is normally construed as a result of *negotiation* in discourse where *language* assumes a pivotal role (Belz, 2002; Crawshaw, Callen, & Tusting, 2001; Djité, 2006; Joseph, 2006; Ros i Solé, 2004; Shi, 2006; Warschauer, 2000).

It is also argued that depending on the *social category* one subscribes to (e.g., gender, ethnicity, nationality, cultural heritage, age, occupation, and social status), as well as the manifold *negotiation processes* involved in these contexts, a bilingual speaker's *identity* can assume multiple positions within each of the above social categories (also known as *subject positioning*) affecting both *language choice* and *fluency*. In return, this reality may impact the manner with which bilinguals a) position themselves within the society they dwell in, b) view themselves as belonging to one group versus another and c) grapple with the demands of both their *heritage language community* as well as the *mainstream culture*.

Furthermore, if we consider attitudes to language as markers of group identity, we should introduce the concepts of *convergence* and *divergence*, from the work of social psychologist Howard Giles. *Convergence* occurs when an individual adjusts his speech patterns to *match* those of people belonging to another group or social identity, whereas *divergence* occurs when an individual does not adjust his speech patterns in order to be *distinct* from people belonging to another group or social identity. Both of these are best understood as local, conversational, temporary and individual phenomena; that is, they are creative choices made by individuals to reflect their feelings at a particular time in a particular situation.

To this end, Wallace (2001) delineates several ways with which bilinguals identify themselves with respect to *heritage* and *mainstream cultures*: In the *home base/visitor's base model*, one culture (whether that be the speaker's *heritage community* or the *mainstream culture* and includes both

language and cultural practices) is branded as the *home base* culture while the other is merely the *operative* one where many affairs are conducted but no aspect of this culture registers with the speaker on a personal level. In the *feet in both worlds model*, the speakers maintain affinities with both worlds balancing their identity out in both cultures in almost equal portions. They are equally at home and feel quite comfortable in both cultural settings when speaking both the dominant and the heritage language. In the *life on the border model*, the speakers find themselves in borderland cultural terrains where both worlds are concerned, and this becomes quite a challenge since the process of identity negotiation fares mostly on the edge of both cultures and requires a balancing act on the speaker's part. In the *shifting identity gears model*, bilingual speakers manage to vacillate between both worlds with relative ease, and, regardless of the linguistic and cultural context at hand, they can adapt to and function pretty well in both realms.

## **Research design**

### **Purpose and significance of the study**

In general, in our day and age population is becoming increasingly diverse and Greece has been facing dramatic shifts in its student population – due to the change of immigration patterns - which consists of individuals who embrace several cultures, identities, beliefs and practices.

Given that in the last few years there have been a number of various studies examining the adaptation of immigrant children in Greek schools and considering that a great number of educators experience recurrent phenomena of bilingual learners, acquiring English as an third language in various contexts, the present paper is oriented towards:

1. Investigating the general notion of 'bilingualism' in the teaching and learning of English as a third language (L3) in the public primary education context in Greece and examining its role in the learners' cultural identity development.
2. Identifying the interplay among identity and all the distinct languages (L1, L2, L3), as well as the factors which define the multifaceted nature of the learners' identity.
3. Outlining implications for the foreign language pedagogy in Greece and putting forward suggestions conducive to the development of a multicultural educational environment in which identity is affirmed and both linguistic and cultural identity are highly valued.

### **Selecting the study participants and the research instruments**

The study was addressed to two second generation immigrants who were chosen *purposefully* (Patton, 2002 quoted in Glesne, 2010, p. 44) and comprised a homogeneous sampling (Clark, 1999 quoted in Glesne, 2010, p. 45), since they both attended D class in a Greek state primary school and were the same age.

Regarding the techniques employed to gather data, the particular paper constitutes a small part of a longitudinal case study and as such, the researcher incorporated a wide range of methods

so as to approach and analyze the phenomenon in detail. The particular paper though, was confined to interviews and instances of observational data that were indicative of the learners own perception of identity, when it comes to third language learning.

## **Data analysis**

### **The Interviews**

The target population was interviewed so as to gain more insights through a real ‘face to face’ interaction and “stimulate verbal flights from the respondents who know what you do not (Glesne, 2010, p. 102)”. Both interviews were semi-structured in nature and the questions dealt with the learners’ personal details, linguistic practices, general ability and choices regarding their bilingualism as well as general attitudes towards various parameters of education.

What could be inferred through the interviews is that both children are positively predisposed towards the country they were born and live in and they both vividly expressed their favoritism towards Greece. Regarding their *linguistic ability, knowledge and choice*, both children seem to regard their L3 as the most difficult of the three languages acquired and they report to know Albanian mostly for communicative reasons; yet, the boy mentioned that he had a better grasp of the Albanian language and not the Greek.

→ Interviewer: *αυτά ok++ Ποια γλώσσα θεωρείς ότι την κατέχεις πιο πολύ;*  
(which language so you think you master the most?)

Interviewee: *αλβανικά+ (Albanian)*

Interviewer: *αλβανικά μάλιστα+ ποιά βρίσκεις πιο δύσκολη; (Albanian + which one do you consider the most difficult?)*

Interviewee: *τα αγγλικά+ (English)*

Interviewer: *ωραία + πόσο καλά νομίζεις ότι γνωρίζεις την κάθε γλώσσα; Ποιά θα έβαζες πρώτη; που την ξέρεις καλά; (how well can you speak each language? which language do you know the best?)*

Interviewee: *πρώτη τα ελληνικά + μετά τα αλβανικά + μετά τα αγγλικά + (first Greek, then Albanian and finally English)*

Second learners’ samples:

Interviewer: *ποια θεωρείς την πιο δύσκολη γλώσσα από όλες; (which one do you consider the most difficult?)*

Interviewee: *αγγλικά + (English)*

Interviewer: *τα αγγλικά ε; + (English?)*

Interviewee: *ναι (yes)*

Interviewer: *γιατί;(why?)*

Interviewee: *γιατί δεν τα έχω μάθει ακόμα και είναι δύσκολα (I haven’t learned it yet and I find it difficult)*

It also seems that the Greek language prevails not only in the school context- as a means of interaction- but also in the wider society in order to be “acceptable members”. Children have

probably developed a kind of ‘*social framework*’ within which they manipulate their bilingualism according to the interlocutors and the given situation; both learners have developed multiple *identities* based on the given context each time – they are pupils, a son, a daughter, classmates, friends and they adapt - culturally and linguistically – accordingly, by making use of L2 as a common ‘*public code*’ and L1 mostly as a ‘*private code*’ and as a desirable linguistic practice, confined to people of the same nationality. The different role that each language plays in various contexts represents the conflicting desires of many bilinguals which are inextricably linked to identity: a desire to be included in society's ‘mainstream’ culture on the one hand and a need to assert their own uniqueness, on the other.

→ Interviewer: *περίμενε + πού χρησιμοποιείς αλβανικά; + στο σπίτι + Ok + you only speak Albanian+ μόνο αλβανικά at home? + (where do you use the Albanian language? Only at home?)*

Interviewee: *στους φίλους μου που είναι Αλβανοί σε αυτά+ (I speak Albanian with my friends who are Albanians)*

Interviewer: *μάλιστα+ που χρησιμοποιείς Ελληνικά; (ok, where do you use Greek?)*

Interviewee: *στο σχολείο + στους ανθρώπους +έξω++ (at school and with other people outside school)*

*(nodding positively)*

### **Second learner's samples:**

Interviewer: *+ αγγλικά λουπόν εδώ στο σχολείο μαζί και στο φροντιστήριο + ok + ελληνικά; (so, you use English here and at the language school. What about Greek?)*

Interviewee: *στο σχολείο και όταν μιλάω με κάποιους Έλληνες και αλβανικά όταν μιλάω με κάποιον αλβανό και στο σπίτι + (at school and also when I speak with some Greeks; I use Albanian when I talk to someone who comes from Albania or at home)*

Interviewer: *στο σπίτι δεν μιλάτε ελληνικά; + (don't you use Greek at home?)*

Interviewee: *μιλάμε+ (yes, we do)*

Interviewer: *μιλάτε+ ok + πολύ πιο λίγο από τα αλβανικά να φανταστώ (ok, but you use it less than the Albanian, right?)*

Interviewee: *ναι (yes)*

### **The Parents' Questionnaires**

An additional questionnaire was forwarded to the learners' parents in order to gain insightful comments regarding vital parameters of the children's trilingualism. The questionnaire contained open ended questions focusing on background information, the parents' bilingualism, attitudes of both the parents and children towards L3 acquisition and personal aspirations related to their children's development.

The parents' questionnaires revealed that both learners' parents are ‘economic’ immigrants who have been living in Greece for about the last fifteen years. Therefore, they have a fairly good command of Greek. They also have a positive attitude towards the country of origin but it seems that although they maintain ties with it, they would like their children to stay permanently in

Greece. This is reinforced by their ideas on the living conditions – which they mentioned were really good, with no signs of the children having been undermined or offended in any case.

The *language issue* seems to be of great concern for the parents. They would like their children to be fluent in all three languages – although they make mostly use of their L1 at home- and at the same time they express respect about the children's personal language choices.

Concerning the *linguistic choices*, both parents preserve their L1 in the domestic environment mostly in everyday activities, but when it comes to studying, both make exclusive use of the L2. This choice manifested the importance they give to schooling and educational success as a means towards securing their children's future. This linguistic distinction of theirs provided meaning to their children's well being as well as motivation to work hard. Therefore, by making simultaneous use of both L1 and L2, they not only succeed in maintaining their children's L1, but also help them immerse in the Greek culture more smoothly. Finally, although they do not speak English whatsoever, they acknowledge the significance of speaking as many foreign languages as they can, added to English, mostly for employability reasons.

Generally speaking, both learners attest to exclusively restricting their L1 to their family domain or among them in various other cases. What is evident is that they appear to use their mother tongue not only as a means of communication but also as a “means of identity” trying to conserve their own culture. Children are provided with ample opportunities within the family- where specific language policies are put into practice - to expand on their L1, without receiving formal education, and build their ethnic identification, cultural continuity and pride. Nevertheless, there is the sense that both students' identities cannot be labeled via nationalities; they feel they are both part of all worlds and they don't identify more with a community over the others; it is a matter of striving to mold and remold their bicultural identity.

Moreover, although there seems to be a kind of close relationship between their heritage language and ethnic identity and given that research has shown that the more highly developed the skills in L1, the better the results in L2 (Cummins, 1999, 2000), their L1 is not valorized in the school setting and it is therefore pushed aside by the dominant language (L2).

Along with the above comments, code switching instances have been recorded during the observational process, through which learners denoted their status, showed solidarity to people of the same ethnicity or simply attracted attention, indicating once more that each language takes on a functional role.

→Observation 12# (20/12/12): «καμαραφτού», meaning ‘I'll hit you’, a Roma child was heard saying to the Albanian boy. “Τσα ση κόν?” the boy answered, laughing ironically. I didn't really understand what had happened, but I asked him to stand up and write that for me so as to remember it. (The Albanian word written by him was misspelled, but after looking it up on the net I found out that it meant: ‘how are you?’)

→ Observation 8# (11/12/12): The Albanian girl told me: “kohte este flori miss” which can be translated to “all that glitters is not gold”. I asked her to stand up and write it for me, so as to



*retrieve later on. However, I looked it up on a dictionary and only the word “flori” was translated to “gold”, which means that she could not express herself in Albanian correctly either.*

Irrespective of their competency in L3, they also did not express mastery in either L1 or L2 (since they attribute different deficiencies to either language) and they therefore could be defined as ‘double semilinguals’. According to Hansegard (1975 quoted in Baker, C. & Jones, S.P., 1998, p. 14) ‘semilinguals’ or ‘double semilinguals’ are described as people who have deficiencies in both languages or no reasonable competence in either language when compared to monolinguals. Finally, these two learners seem to be typical examples of the “*shifting identity gears model*”, since ‘they vacillate between both worlds with relative ease, and, regardless of the linguistic and cultural context at hand, they can adapt to and function pretty well in any realm’.

### **Concluding remarks**

Considering that it is becoming increasingly common for individuals from different cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds to coexist in a mixed society, it is out of the question that the foremost goal of Foreign Language Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century would be to gain insight into the politics of multilingualism and the distinct identities of students in today’s mixed classrooms. Regarding Greece, Mouzelis (1998, quoted in Palaiologou, 2004) claims that integration of foreign students is hindered, since Greek schools do not cultivate critical dialogue between cultures. Therefore, the question that arises is whether the Greek educational context is conducive to developing bilingual students’ identities: Do teachers employ culturally responsive practices that affirm students’ home culture and language? Do schools or institutions play an active role in encouraging and supporting the maintenance of heritage languages? Are bilingual students given the opportunity to voice their opinion and develop a sense of pride not only for their own language and culture but also for their life and experiences?

All these plausible queries should not only be confined to primary education; they could extend to secondary or even tertiary education, given that “Educational Equity” and “Identity Affirmation” which is strengthening and promoting somebody’s culture in a globalizing world – when referring to multilingual educational environments- are topics that can apply to any educational field. These two terms, along with the structuring for integration and the promotion of additive multilingualism, are used by De Jong (2011, quoted in Weber, 2014) in order to make multilingual education more effective. “Educators who apply the Principle of affirming identities validate diverse cultural experiences in their school policies and classroom practices. They purposefully create spaces for diverse students” (De Jong, 2011:184). These key terms stress the need for flexible multilingual education that provides learners with high-quality learning opportunities.

### **Shaping a dynamic identity for the future**

It seems that the use of a language other than the school language can surely have no adverse effects in the classroom. On the contrary, it can help build dynamic *identities* and the whole class can not only enjoy diversity but also benefit from borrowing traits from another culture. Given that bilingual learners are almost ‘invisible’ in Greek mixed classrooms and their L1 identity is not

valorized, educators should re-examine their instructional practices and evaluate possible adjustments so as to validate students' identities, build on their prior knowledge and treat their cultural identity as a resource, as something to be discovered, negotiated and embraced.

In this respect, it is vital that the teaching of heritage languages also be promoted and praised in an attempt to cultivate the sense of belonging. Bi/multilinguals' diversity should be tackled with the appropriate amendments within the school environment regarding both materials and specialized teacher training so that minority groups do not isolate or alienate themselves from the mainstream culture.

Unfortunately, despite the well-meaning intentions, neither specific training programs for foreign language teachers have been put into practice nor specialized material has been noticed in the Greek school units yet, meaning that a collective effort towards raising 'multilingual awareness' still lags behind. It is high time the teaching system in Greece took its point of departure in issues relevant to the mixed classes that go hand in hand with our era, by taking serious action, welcoming specialized textbooks or dictionaries for trilinguals, while simultaneously keeping an eye on other international examples of efficient trilingual education.

It is therefore urgent to take action to promote international commitment to promoting linguistic diversity, including the maintenance of heritage languages. This will lead to great benefits such as a general sense of ethnic identity and strong family values and bonds.

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## The role of identity and its impact on foreign language teaching in Greek secondary education during the 19th century

Alexandra Diamantopoulou University of Patras [alexadiama@gmail.com](mailto:alexadiama@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*Foreign language teaching has become one of the main concerns of the European Commission and the Member States. According to the Barcelona European Council, pupils in secondary education should be encouraged to learn at least two foreign languages (Eurydice, 2005). Languages contribute to a better knowledge of other European cultures and to a deeper understanding among European citizens. They also contribute to keeping xenophobia and intolerance at bay. Understanding the role foreign language teaching plays today requires an understanding of what it has been in the past. Has the position of foreign languages in Greece always been the same over the years? What was the position of foreign languages in the curricula of public secondary education in Greece during 19th century when the Greek Educational System was organized by the Regency after Otto's arrival? The present study looks at the Royal Decrees concerning foreign language teaching in the 19th century and examines language diversity within schools of secondary education, the amount of time spent teaching them and the number of languages taught in secondary schools during 19th century.*

**Keywords:** foreign languages, secondary education, understanding, diversity

### **Introduction**

This paper examines the curricula of public secondary education in Greece during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The curricula of the 19<sup>th</sup> century are published under the form of decrees, circulars or laws.

After Otto's arrival in Greece in the beginning of 1833, the Regency organised the Greek Education System according to the Bavarian model. Therefore, secondary education comprised the following types of schools:

1. Greek Schools, also called *Sxolarxeia* (duration 2-3 years)
2. Junior High Schools (duration 4 years)
3. A Senior High School in Athens, also called *Varvakeio Lycee* (because it was maintained with money from the *Varvakeio* legacy), created with the Royal Decree No 277 in 7<sup>th</sup> October 1886. It is equivalent to Junior High Schools (duration 7 years).

Foreign language teaching in Greece began in 1833, with the founding of the modern Greek State and the organisation of the education system by the Regency. This integration of foreign languages in the Greek Educational System is easily explained by the fact that, due to the Turkish occupation, many Greeks went abroad to study in European Universities. Moreover, foreign languages were necessary to all those who were engaged in commerce (History of the Greek Nation, 1977, Tome 11; Kyprianos, 2004). Later on, the development of commerce and industry resulted in the increase of transactions between Greece and European countries. That is why such an emphasis was given to the knowledge of foreign languages (Persianis, 2002).

It has to be mentioned that the only language taught in Greek Secondary Education throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the French Language. It is quite surprising that only the French Language was taught in all levels of Greek Secondary Education during 19<sup>th</sup> century and not the German one, as someone would naturally expect (Bavarian Regency governed Greece and the Greek Education System was organised according to the Bavarian model). This adherence to the French Language is explained by the influence of the ideas of the French Revolution (1789) on Greeks (Persianis, 2002; Kyprianos, 2004). After the preponderance of the Romanticism, the influence of the French Language and culture became even greater (Persianis, 2002). The French Language was mainly used by the Greek intellectuals for the promotion of national issues, for example in 1878 during the International Fair in Paris. The French language was also the language of diplomacy and politics (Eurydice 2001; Natsiopoulou, 1994).

This priority of the French Language in comparison with the other European languages is also due to the existence of French Language teachers whereas there was a lack of teachers of other European languages during 19<sup>th</sup> century (Moskov, 1985; History of the Greek Nation, 1977, Tome 11).

The “French” Party (Party attached to France) and the French Embassy in Greece played an important role in the promotion of the French Language in Greece (History of the Greek Nation, 1977, Tome 13; Bouzakis, 2002; Mosxopoulos, 1997).

However, the Royal Decree No 277 in 7<sup>th</sup> October 1886, Chapter 5, Article 17, gives the possibility to the students of the Varvakeio Lycee of Athens to choose one of the languages: French, German and English. This school has a more practical orientation and gives its students the possibility to continue their studies in Trade and Naval Schools. During this period, the urbanization of the Greek society and the increase of transactions due to the development of the industry and of the merchant shipping makes it necessary for employees who speak many foreign languages (History of the Greek Nation, 1977, Tome 13; Bouzakis, 2002).

### **Purpose of the present study**

The present study looks at the Royal Decrees concerning foreign language teaching in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and examines language diversity within schools of secondary education, the amount of time spent teaching them and the number of languages taught at secondary schools during 19<sup>th</sup> century.

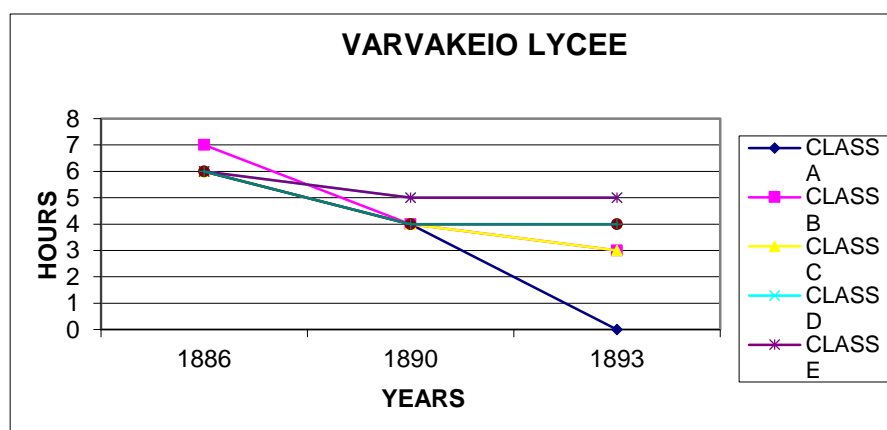
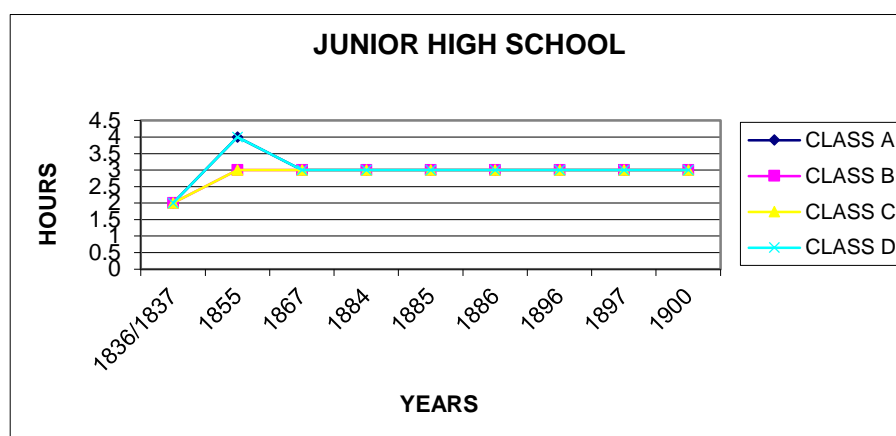
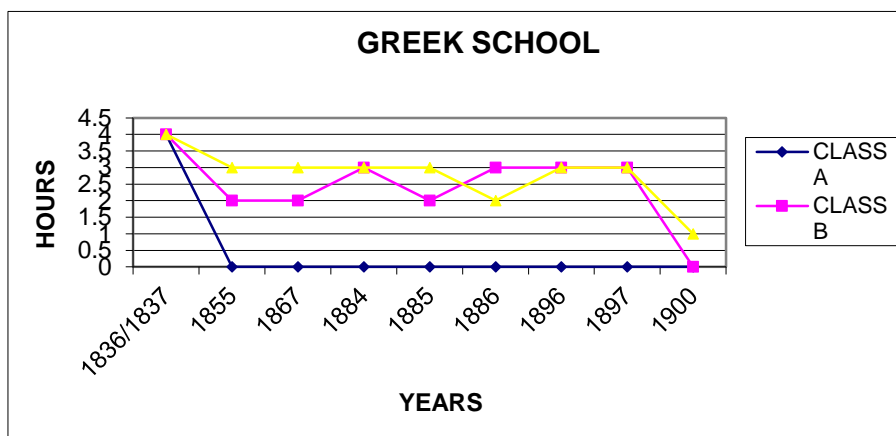
### **Criteria - Parameters**

For the analysis of the data, we used the following criteria – parameters:

1. The number of hours (per week) the French Language was taught at the different levels of secondary education.
2. The absence of the French Language in some grades of secondary education.

3. Comparison of the number of hours (per week) dedicated to the French Language, to those dedicated to other subjects.
4. The order in which the French Language appears in the curricula as compared to the order of appearance of the other subjects.

### 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Criteria



### 3<sup>rd</sup> Criterion

According to the Royal Decree No 41 on 16<sup>th</sup> / 28<sup>th</sup> December 1833:

GREEK SCHOOL (SXOLARXEIO)			
	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C
Greek	12 hours	12 hours	12 hours
Synthesis	-	-	3 hours
Holy History	2 hours	-	-
Catechesis	-	2 hours	-
Principles of Anthropology or of Ethics	-	-	2 hours
History	-	3 hours	3 hours
Geography	3 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Geometry and Physics	-	-	3 hours
Arithmetic	3 hours	3 hours	-
Calligraphy	2 hours	2 hours	-
Natural History	3 hours	3 hours	-
Latin	-	-	3 hours
<b>French</b>	<b>4 hours</b>	<b>4 hours</b>	<b>4 hours</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>29 hours</b>	<b>31 hours</b>	<b>32 hours</b>

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL				
	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C	CLASS D
Greek	8 hours	6 hours	5 hours	4 hours
Latin	4 hours	6 hours	5 hours	4 hours
Theory of Science	-	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Greek Writing	2 hours	-	-	-
Catechesis	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	1 hour
History and Geography	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Mathematics	2 hours	2 hours	-	-
Mathematics and Mathematical-Natural Geography	-	-	4 hours	4 hours
Science, Natural History and Principles of Chemistry	-	-	-	3 hours
Logic and General Introduction to Philosophy	-	-	-	2 hours
Physics and Natural History	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	-
<b>French</b>	<b>2 hours</b>	<b>2 hours</b>	<b>2 hours</b>	<b>2 hours</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 hours</b>	<b>24 hours</b>	<b>24 hours</b>	<b>24 hours</b>

According to the Circular 4168 on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1855:

<b>GREEK SCHOOL (SXOLARXEIO)</b>			
	<b>CLASS A</b>	<b>CLASS B</b>	<b>CLASS C</b>
Greek	9 hours	9 hours	9 hours
Grammar and Writing Activities	6 hours	6 hours	-
Repertoire and Syntax	-	-	6 hours
Composition	-	-	2 hours
Arithmetic	4 hours	4 hours	-
Principles of Geometry applied in Arithmetic	-	-	4 hours
History of Old Testament	3 hours	-	-
History of New Testament	-	2 hours	-
Natural History	2 hours	2 hours	-
Ancient History	-	3 hours	-
Recent History	-	-	3 hours
Geography of Greece	3 hours	-	-
Geography of Europe	-	2 hours	-
Geography: Asia, Africa and America	-	-	2 hours
Calligraphy	2 hours	-	-
Drawing and Calligraphy	-	2 hours	-
Holy Catechesis	-	-	2 hours
<b>Principles of French</b>	-	<b>2 hours</b>	-
<b>French</b>	-	-	<b>3 hours</b>
Latin	-	-	2 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>29 hours</b>	<b>32 hours</b>	<b>33 hours</b>

<b>JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL</b>				
	<b>CLASS A</b>	<b>CLASS B</b>	<b>CLASS C</b>	<b>CLASS D</b>
Greek	12 hours	12 hours	12 hours	12 hours
Scientific Arithmetic and Algebra	5 hours	-	-	-
Algebra	-	4 hours	-	-
Plane Geometry applied in Algebra	-	-	3 hours	-
Stereometry and Plane Trigonometry	-	-	-	3 hours
Ancient History till 5 <sup>th</sup> century A.C. with geographical introduction	3 hours	-	-	-
History (5 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup> century) with geographical introduction	-	3 hours	-	-
Recent History with geographical introduction	-	-	3 hours	-
History of Greece	-	-	-	2 hours
<b>French</b>	<b>4 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>4 hours</b>
Latin	4 hours	4 hours	4 hours	3 hours
Empirical Psychology	-	-	2 hours	-
Experimental Physics	-	-	2 hours	-
Catechesis of Platon, Metropolitan Bishop of Moscow	2 hours	-	-	-
Catechesis of Platon	-	2 hours	1 hour	-
Logic	-	-	-	2 hours
Geography mathematical and natural	-	-	-	2 hours
Catechesis	-	-	-	1 hour
<b>Total</b>	<b>30 hours</b>	<b>30 hours</b>	<b>30 hours</b>	<b>29 hours</b>



According to the Decision 7071 on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1867:

GREEK SCHOOL (SXOLARXEIO)			
	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C
Greek	16 hours	15 hours	15 hours
Arithmetic	4 hours	4 hours	2 hours
Geometry	-	-	2 hours
Holy History	3 hours	2 hours	-
Holy Catechesis	-	-	2 hours
Political Geography	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Calligraphy	2 hours	2 hours	-
Ancient History	-	3 hours	-
History	-	-	3 hours
<b>Principles of French</b>	-	2 hours	-
<b>French</b>	-	-	3 hours
Reading	3 hours	-	-
Latin	-	-	2 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>30 hours</b>	<b>30 hours</b>	<b>31 hours</b>

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL				
	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C	CLASS D
Greek	12 hours	12 hours	12 hours	12 hours
Latin	4,5 hours	4 hours	4 hours	4 hours
Mathematics	4,5 hours	4 hours	3 hours	3 hours
History	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
Philosophy	-	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
<b>French</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>
Holy Subjects	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>29 hours</b>	<b>31 hours</b>	<b>30 hours</b>	<b>30 hours</b>

According to the Royal Decree No 267 on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1884:

GREEK SCHOOL (SXOLARXEIO)			
	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C
Greek	8 hours	9 hours	9 hours
Religion	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Mathematics	4 hours	3 hours	3 hours
Natural History	-	2 hours	2 hours
Geography	2 hours	2 hours	1 hour
History	-	2 hours	2 hours
Latin	-	-	2 hours
<b>French</b>	-	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>
Calligraphy and Drawing	3 hours	-	-
Drawing	-	1 hour	1 hour
Gymnastics	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>22 hours</b>	<b>27 hours</b>	<b>28 hours</b>

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL				
	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C	CLASS D
Greek	10 hours	10 hours	10 hours	10 hours
Religion	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	-
Latin	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
Mathematics	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
Experimental Physics	-	-	2 hours	2 hours
Chemistry	-	-	-	1 hour
Cosmography	-	-	-	1 hour
Philosophy	-	-	1 hour	1 hour
Natural History	2 hours	2 hours	-	-
Geography	2 hours	2 hours	-	-
History	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
<b>French</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>
Gymnastics	3 hours	3 hours	-	-
Army Manoeuvres	-	-	3 hours	3 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>31 hours</b>	<b>31 hours</b>	<b>30 hours</b>	<b>30 hours</b>

According to the Royal Decree No 302 on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1886:

GREEK SCHOOL (SXOLARXEIO)			
	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C
Greek Language	8 hours	9 hours	9 hours
Religion	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Mathematics	4 hours	3 hours	3 hours
Natural History	-	2 hours	2 hours
Geography	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
History	2 hours	2 hours	3 hours
<b>French Language</b>	-	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>2 hours</b>
Latin Language	-	-	3 hours
Calligraphy and Drawing	3 hours	2 hours	-
Calligraphy	-	-	1 hour
Gymnastics	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 hours</b>	<b>28 hours</b>	<b>30 hours</b>

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL				
	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C	CLASS D
Greek Language	10 hours	10 hours	10 hours	10 hours
Religion	2 hours	2 hours	1 hour	-
Cosmography	-	-	-	2 hours
Mathematics	3 hours	4 hours	4 hours	3 hours
Experimental Physics	-	-	3 hours	3 hours
Latin Language	3 hours	4 hours	4 hours	4 hour
<b>French Language</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>	<b>3 hours</b>
Natural History	2 hours	2 hours	-	-
Geography	2 hours	-	-	-
History	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	-
Philosophy	-	-	1 hour	1 hour
Army Manoeuvres	-	-	3 hours	3 hours
Gymnastics	3 hours	3 hours	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>31 hours</b>	<b>31 hours</b>	<b>32 hours</b>	<b>29 hours</b>

According to the Royal Decree No 97 on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1896:

GREEK SCHOOL (SXOLARXEIO)			
	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C
Greek	4 hours	4 hours	5 hours
Grammar	3 hours	2 hours	1 hour
Spelling Exercises	1 hour	-	-
Poems	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour
Modern Greek	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour
Composition	-	2 hours	2 hours
Syntax	-	2 hours	-
Concise Syntax	-	-	2 hours
Religion	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Mathematics	2 hours	2 hours	1 hour
Problems	1 hour	-	-
Arithmetic Problems	-	1 hour	2 hours
Geometry (2 <sup>nd</sup> semester)	-	-	2 hours
Geography	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
History	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Latin	-	-	2 hours
Latin Grammar	-	-	2 hours
<b>French Language</b>	-	<b>3 hours</b>	-
<b>French</b>	-	-	<b>2 hours</b>
<b>French Grammar</b>	-	-	<b>1 hour</b>
Natural History	-	2 hours	2 hours
Calligraphy and Drawing	3 hours	2 hours	-
Drawing	-	-	1 hour
Gymnastics	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>25 hours</b>	<b>31 hours</b>	<b>36 hours</b>

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL				
	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C	CLASS D
Greek	4 hours	4 hours	8 hours	4 hours
Pausanias	-	-	-	2 hours
Syntax	4 hours	2 hours	-	-
Compositions of Ideas	2 hours	2 hours	-	2 hours
Repertoire	2 hours	1 hour	2 hours	-
History of Literature	-	1 hour	2 hours	2 hours
Religion	2 hours	2 hours	1 hour	-
Mathematics	3 hours	4 hours	4 hours	3 hours
Experimental Physics	-	-	3 hours	3 hours
Cosmography	-	-	-	2 hours
Latin	2 hours	-	-	2 hours
Reading	-	-	-	1 hour
Latin Language	-	2 hours	2 hours	-
Grammar	2 hours	1 hour	-	-
Syntax	-	1 hour	1 hour	-
Repertoire	-	-	1 hour	1 hour
<b>French Language</b>	<b>2 hours</b>	<b>2 hours</b>	<b>2 hours</b>	<b>2 hours</b>
<b>Grammar</b>	<b>1 hour</b>	<b>1 hour</b>	-	-
<b>Syntax</b>	-	-	<b>1 hour</b>	-
<b>Repertoire</b>	-	-	-	<b>1 hour</b>
Natural History	2 hours	2 hours	-	-
Geography	2 hours	2 hours	-	-
History	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
Philosophy	-	-	2 hours	2 hours
Gymnastics	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>34 hours</b>	<b>33 hours</b>	<b>35 hours</b>	<b>33 hours</b>

According to the Royal Decree No 130 on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1897:

GREEK SCHOOL (SXOLARXEIO)			
Subjects	CLASSES		
	A	B	C
Religion	2	2	2
Ancient Greek	9	9	9
Modern Greek	3	3	2
Mathematics	4	4	3
History	2	2	3
<b>French</b>	-	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Physics	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	2
Latin	-	-	3
Drawing	2	1	1
Gymnastics	3	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>33</b>

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL				
Subjects	CLASSES			
	A	B	C	D
Religion	2	2	2	2
Greek	12	12	12	11
Latin	4	4	4	4
<b>French</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Mathematics	4	4	3	5
History	3	3	3	3
Physics	2	2	3	3
Philosophy	-	-	1	1
Gymnastics	3	3	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>

According to the Royal Decree No 227 on 23rd September 1900:

GREEK SCHOOL (SXOLARXEIO)			
Subjects	CLASSES		
	A	B	C
Religion	2	2	2
Ancient Greek	7	8	8
Modern Greek	2	2	2
Mathematics	3	3	3
History	2	2	2
<b>French</b>	-	-	<b>1</b>
Physics	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	2
Latin	-	-	1
Calligraphy, Drawing	3	2	2
Gymnastics	5	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>30</b>

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL				
Subjects	CLASSES			
	A	B	C	D
Religion	2	2	1	1
Greek	10	10	10	10
Latin	2	3	3	3
<b>French</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Mathematics	3	3	3	3
History	3	3	3	3
Physics	2	2	3	3
Philosophy			1	1
Gymnastics	5	5	5	5
Cosmography				2
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>34</b>

According to the Royal Decree No 277 on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1886, the Senior High School (Varvakeio Lycee) is founded in Athens:

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (VARVAKEIO LYCEE)							
Subjects	CLASSES						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Greek	11	10	10	9	9	9	6
Religion	2	2	2	-	-	-	-
Geography	2	2	2	1	1	-	2
History	2	2	2	3	3	3	2
<b>French Language</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
Arithmetic	3	3	3	4	-	-	-
Geometry	-	-	-	2	4	4	7
Descriptive Geometry	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Algebra	-	-	-	2	4	4	-
Natural History	-	2	2	2	2	-	-
Physics	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Chemistry and Mineralogy	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
Calligraphy	3	1	1	-	-	-	-
Drawing	2	2	3	3	3	2	1
Gymnastics and Arms Drill	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>

According to the Royal Decree on 3rd October 1890 / Decision 14454:

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (VARVAKEIO LYCEE)							
Subjects	CLASSES						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Greek	12	11	10	10	10	10	8
Religion	2	2	2	1	2	-	-
Geography	2	2	2	2	2	-	2
History	2	2	2	3	3	3	2
<b>French Language</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
Arithmetic	3	3	4	5	-	-	3
Geometry	-	-	1	2	3	4	3
Descriptive Geometry	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Algebra	-	-	-	-	3	3	-
Natural History	-	2	2	2	2	-	-
Physics	-	-	2	-	-	3	3
Chemistry and Mineralogy	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Calligraphy	3	3	-	-	-	-	-
Drawing	2	2	3	3	3	2	1
Gymnastics and Arms Drill	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>33</b>

According to the Royal Decree No 166 on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1893:

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (VARVAKEIO LYCEE)							
Subjects	CLASSES						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Greek	12	11	10	10	10	9	8
Religion	2	2	2	2	1	-	-
Geography	2	2	2	2	2	-	-
Cosmography	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Empirical Psychology	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Logic	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
History	2	2	2	3	3	3	2
<b>French</b>	-	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
Arithmetic	3	3	3	4	-	-	1
Geometry	-	-	1	2	3	4	1
Analytic Geometry	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Descriptive Geometry	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Algebra	-	-	-	-	3	3	2
Trigonometry	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Natural History	-	2	2	2	2	-	-
Chemistry and Mineralogy	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Physics	-	-	2	-	-	3	3
Calligraphy	3	3	-	-	-	-	-
Drawing	2	2	3	3	3	2	1
Gymnastics and Arms Drill	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Criterion

Order of the French Language in the Curricula of:

	Greek Schools	Junior High Schools	Senior High School (Varvakeio Lycee)
1836/1837	Second	Fourth	-
1855	Sixth	Third	-
1867	Fifth	Fourth (with History)	-
1884	Fourth (with Religion)	Second (with Latin, History, Mathematics and Gymnastics)	-
1885	Fifth (with Geography and Calligraphy / Drawing)	Second (with Latin, History, Mathematics and Gymnastics)	-
1886	Sixth	Fourth (with Gymnastics)	second
1890	-	-	second
1893	-	-	second
1896	Fourth (with Religion, History, Geography and Calligraphy / Drawing)	Fourth (with History and Gymnastics)	-
1897	Sixth (with Religion, Geography and Physics)	Third (with History and Gymnastics)	-
1900	Sixth (with Latin)	Third (with History and Mathematics)	-

## **Conclusions**

From the above tables, a stability in the weekly hours, dedicated by the curricula to the teaching of the French Language in each level of secondary education throughout 19<sup>th</sup> century, becomes apparent. However, the French Language is absent from the 1<sup>st</sup> class of Greek Schools (Sxolarxeia). This may be due in part to the fact that Greek Schools constituted a sort of transition between primary and secondary education. The majority of children did not continue their studies in secondary education. Instead, they started working as soon as they finished elementary school. Towards the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century there was a decrease of the weekly hours dedicated to the teaching of the French Language. This is explained by the introduction of new subjects in the curricula and the greater specialisation of subjects. The frequent exchange of political parties in power also had an impact on the curricula (hidden ideology) (Tsoukalas, 1992; Bouzakis, 2002).

The order of the French Language in the curricula reveals that it was considered to be more important than subjects such as history, geography and science. This is due to the perspectives offered by the knowledge of foreign languages (Bouzakis, 2002).

The different names under which the French Language appears in the curricula are due to the wills of the political parties, the influence of the French Educational System, which lays emphasis on grammar rules and spelling, and the syllabus, which is determined in detail by the curricula (Tsoukalas, 1992; Bouzakis, 2002).

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## Multiculturalism and beyond: social and educational inclusion of the Roma population

Parthenis Christos National and Kapodistrian University of Athens [parthenis@ppp.uoa.gr](mailto:parthenis@ppp.uoa.gr),  
[keda@ppp.uoa.gr](mailto:keda@ppp.uoa.gr)

### **Abstract**

*The aim of this paper is to demonstrate that, in the context of the economic crisis in European Union, the management of multiculturalism reflects a broader political discussion on European Union's identity and social policy.*

*There is a timely and obvious need to develop a progressive re-thinking of multiculturalism. For many reasons, not all of which are fair, the multicultural description has become problematic and corresponds little with the political insight. However, it is not just about renaming it. Multicultural policies were developed in the 1960s and, though suitable for that time, have failed to embrace the current period of globalisation and super diversity.*

*Roma, as one of the groups facing the worse discrimination and prejudice in the largest number of countries in the EU, should be given more prominence in the EU unity and diversity movements and be particularly targeted in such awareness movements. Education is identified as a most important area where action can be taken to foster tolerant and respectful behaviors towards diversity.*

*In this context, interculturalism applied through the Programme "Education of Roma children" presents a new set of policies and approach. It seeks to replace multiculturalism and provide a new example for dealing with race and diversity. Multiculturalism may have had some progress in the past but it has simply not adapted to the new age of globalisation and super diversity.*

*Interculturalism is about changing attitudes by forging new opportunities across cultures to support intercultural activity and it's about thinking, planning and acting interculturally. Perhaps, even more prominent is to envision the world as we would like it to be, rather than be determined by our and separate past histories.*

**Keywords:** diversity, multicultural society, educational inclusion, Roma population

### **Introduction**

Active migration management and the strong presence of different minority groups are gradual processes, which put the notion of a national trunk to the test.

The upheavals in the global community, especially after the collapse of the Soviet regime both economically, politically and culturally are regarded as instants of the wider context of globalization. Many argue that similar transformations and processes have taken place in the social sciences as well, distinguishing two main trends:

The first trend is detected at the level of general social theories. As early as the 1980s large theoretical formulations began to dominate, such as those of Habermas, Giddens, and different variants of Marxism, which try to reconstruct the theoretical space 'beyond' traditional demarcations.

The second trend is distinguished by a shift of research interest in individual themes and special research areas, such as strong migratory flows and complex multicultural environments as they arise, given the current conditions throughout the world.

Social environment is no longer considered as closed and controlled by national states. In the contrary, it's characterized as open and in many cases, global. A phenomenon, which is successfully expressed through the concepts of "compression of space and time".

The borders are ignored, while the concept of time as we perceive it, no longer exists. The future perspective is not determined by the forces and trends existing within social objects, it does not depend on their history and present form, but on the position of social objects in the grid of external relations, interdependencies and interests. With globalization as a fact, the organization of the world begins to obey two different standards:

- A. the well-known vertical organization model of geographical area in nation states
- B. a new horizontal model, that permeates all countries and is not subject to review by national states.

Therefore, a tendency is recorded, regarding the detachment of the state from its territory, which leaves social space free in globalized links and activities to contribute to its organization.

The questions that arise are:

1. The world is in a process of upheaval and change. What impact can these changes bring in conceptual and methodological constitution of the sciences?
2. The continuous social space and time which ensured the nation state and stands as a prerequisite for social sciences is challenged or even –in many cases- ceases to exist. The objects are in relative interdependence and interaction with agents and mechanisms outside the boundaries of the nation state
3. Does this sense of change or the change of the object itself, set new requirements on the objectives and means through the scientific practice that has been formed?
4. Is the redefinition of relations of social sciences and social reality required?
5. Is the redefinition of the very structure of social sciences imperative, in order to achieve better responsiveness to changes brought about by the globalization process?

In the recent times, the integration and accommodation of ethnic and religious minorities, and their special needs or claims have been an important concern for the European Union. In some countries challenges relate more to immigrant groups while in others they concern native minorities.

The question that has often been posed, in more or less politically correct terms, is how much cultural diversity can be accommodated within liberal and secular democracies.

Have European societies become more or less tolerant during the past twenty years? What does tolerance mean in different countries and under different circumstances? Do we really tolerate specific practices or specific minority groups or indeed specific individuals?

### **Diversity in a globalized setting. Trends and challenges**

As a consequence of the mass movement of people at a global level, host immigrant countries experience continuous changes to the demographic synthesis of their societies. They are now being transformed into societies with a rapidly changing multicultural character. The question is to what extent these societies can create new models of social relationships that would prevent conflict and foster the creative interaction of cultures (Govaris, 2004, p.12).

Official education has long been acknowledged of the significant role it plays in the development of those processes which promote social and cultural inclusion (Markou, 2010). In the Greek context, the response of the educational system to the new reality of cultural and linguistic pluralism presupposes the abolition of its traditional monocultural and monolingual nature. Until this occurs, the possibilities to create a truly democratic and multicultural society are restricted (Govaris, 2004, pp.12-13, Parthenis, 2013). The monocultural and ethnocentric nature of the educational system (see Tsoukalas, 2010) is not essentially a Greek phenomenon, but can also be noted in other countries, even in those with a long tradition in interculturalism (Parekh, 1997).

Globalization and the phenomenon of migration, intensified particularly in times of crisis such as that currently unfolding in the Middle East and Asia constantly changes the demographic nature of nation-states.

Greece, due to its geographic position, is the main gateway of the migration streams heading towards Europe. Hence, contemporary societies constantly experience great social changes which often lead to the development of a cultural mosaic. The “closed” and “solid” cultural bodies give way to increasingly open and “liquid” forms of social organization and aggregation (Tsoukalas, 2010). The production of values and meaning is no longer subject to local restrictions. Nevertheless, the same does not apply to the human condition that should be signified from these values and meanings (Bauman, 2004, p. 12).

In this new era of globalization, nation-states that traditionally were defining the meaning of concepts such as “culture” or “development” expressing the desire to improve the living conditions of their people, seem to be deprived of opportunities and resources for autonomous policy development (Bauman, 2004, pp. 86-96). Globalization does not mean the end of policy. However, policy develops beyond the national borders and nation states can no longer implement social policies (Beck, 1999). Beck raises the question whether modernity is threatened under these new conditions, reminding the argument of postmodern philosophers for the end of reason and rationality.

Despite the fact that cultures have come closer at least technologically and that there is an increase in the awareness of the variety of lifestyles and values which could in turn lead to mutual understanding, what seems to occur sometimes is the accentuation of difference. The acknowledgement of the "other" does not imply in any way his acceptance (Held and Mc Grew, 2004). In a fluid global scene, those characterized as "different" often find themselves in a precarious position. As Giddens (Giddens, 2001) points out, democracy and acceptance of cultural diversity are closely related. Ethnic and racial differences though, often become accentuated when the "others" come closer (Hall et al, 2003). As Bauman points out, the arrival of a foreigner has an impact equal to an earthquake. The newcomer destroys the stability and the secure environment of everyday life and questions almost all the assumptions of the dominant group. The problem seems to be consistently related, either explicitly or implicitly, to the degree of "adaptation" of the foreigner to the host country (Sayad, 2004).

### **The debate around interculturalism**

The philosophical debate around interculturalism and minority rights has changed dramatically in recent years. Today, the issue of interculturalism returns at the center of political theory for several reasons. The most obvious is the collapse of Soviet regime which unleashed a wave of ethnic nationalism in Eastern Europe. Also, the reaction of natives against immigrants and refugees in many Western countries, the resurgence of political mobilization of indigenous peoples, which resulted in a draft declaration about their rights at the United Nations. All these factors, which intensified mainly in the early 1990s made it clear that Western democracies had neither solve nor exceeded the tensions arising from the ethno-cultural diversity.

Interculturalism is closely associated with "identity politics", the "politics of difference", and the "politics of recognition". Interculturalism is also a matter of economic interests and political power; it demands remedies to economic and political disadvantages that people suffer as a result of their minority status.

As rightly pointed out by Kymlicka (Kymlicka, 2012, p. 90-91), excessive optimism about the predominance of Western liberal interculturalism in Western or not countries gradually began to decline, while according to a widespread perception in Western Europe, interculturalism has proceeded far enough and in this respect, has gained important advances. As a result, the efforts of the international community to formulate new rules and mechanisms for minorities have slowed down. On the other hand, although Western nations have rescinded their positions in relation to indigenous peoples and sub-national, ethnic groups, this is not the case with the Muslims, mostly immigrants, who constitute the vast majority –amongst ethnic groups- in Europe (Kymlicka, 2012, p. 174-182).

The tendency recorded in the stronger countries of the European Union is indicative of the objections raised more in terms of interculturalism, which is also the result of an acute financial crisis that threatens the cohesion and stability of European integration. Starting with the attack on

the twin towers on 2001 that led to the strengthening of a feeling regarding a global Muslim threat, we now face constant violence and political unrest in the Middle East.

As early as 2001 in Great Britain a strong public discourse has been developed against interculturalism, which is supposed to have led to the drawing of dividing lines between the different communities. The terrorist attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005) led to a new upsurge of public discourse against interculturalism which came to be regarded as a threat to the security and democratic ideals (Modood, 2013, May, 2009).

The issues of national and political identity were re-negotiated in many European countries, leading to new discussions about the shift from interculturalism policies to integration policies, in a national body and a political community whose members share common values, principles and ideals basis and the principles of universal, human rights. The fragmented national identity along with the lack of social trust, the inability to integrate various ethno-cultural groups in social and economic life of the dominant group, (as a result of the multicultural policies adopted particularly from the 1980s and 1990), are supposed to have threatened the very foundations of the welfare state.

Through the second decade of the 21st century, the situation seems to deteriorate further as the stronger European countries now raise questions on interculturalism. In late 2010, the Prime Minister of Germany declared in an outmost official way, his conviction that the establishment of efforts of a multicultural society in Germany ultimately failed.

Leaders of other powerful European states, hastily took up the same lines. Former French Prime Minister Nikola Sarkozy, referring—to Muslim immigrants, states that "the French national community cannot accept changes to its lifestyle and fundamental values. He stressed the failure of policies to encourage religious and cultural diversity, adding that although diversity must be respected, a society where different communities merely coexist, are just not desirable. James Cameron, the Prime Minister of England also stressed that government spending in favor of national minorities who do not accept British values should be discontinued (Daily Mail, 2011).

As an example, the public thesis of the Prime Minister of France in 2013, is that Roma should return to the countries from which they departed to France (mainly Romania and Bulgaria), as their way of life is opposed to the sovereign. The European Commission's reaction does not negate the importance of putting the socialist prime minister essentially be expressing a dominant belief: that the Roma populations pose a risk to public health and safety (Daily Mail, 2013). The prevalence of anti-European and xenophobic political formations in Britain and France in the 2014 European elections, was a strong message for the new correlation of forces. Significant events at national level are the climbing to third place with 13% of the far-right party in Sweden, while Chrysi Auge caused shock in Greece occupying the third position in the national elections of 2015. In the meantime, Bauman (2014) wonder if the increase in right-wing (or extreme right) conservative political forces in Europe mark a political movement within the traditional bipolar left-right, or

whether by contrast, express emotions of misery and uncertainty by a large number of European citizens.

Recent events in January 2015, with the terrorist attack on the offices of the satirical newspaper in Paris, on the occasion of the publication of cartoon images of Muhammad, goaded European public opinion and provided new arguments on conservative European governments to restrict migration. Once again, typical is the thesis of the Prime Minister of Hungary, who directly identified immigration as a threat to European countries.

But how did we finally come to the point of questioning the multicultural structure of Western societies themselves? Why is it now clearly being discussed in the main European capitals and the European institutions the imposition of restrictions on the free movement of persons? The argumentation which has been developed regarding the causes of failure of interculturalism, is characteristic of the inability to identify its causes. Has interculturalism gone too far and therefore, failed, or has it never been incarnated through the right policies? What is the effect of the discussion on rights, developed in international and European institutions and the broader scientific discourse in politics and daily practice?

The answers to such questions cannot be common to all forms of diversity and regardless to context.

Hobsbawm (Hobsbawm, 2008, p.109) wonders what would be the meaning of rights and civil obligations in states where a significant part of permanent residents have fewer rights in relation to indigenous citizens. The really difficult question and a practical one, is how to strengthen the social integration of all individuals and groups and to ensure the free access to services of the state. Another factor that we feel indirectly play an important role in the construction of diversity as a threat is the failure of European migration policy and the structure of the relationship between European institutions with nation-states. National states, particularly the weakest seem deprived of the opportunities and resources to determine their fate. Many times they can no longer know neither the number of people living within the national territory. At the same time the EU institutions are not able to implement or monitor the implementation of policies they promote (Hobsbawm, 2008, p. 68-69). Many times, decisions are taken on the basis of the power of states and not of solidarity.

Apart from a few basic principles that are found in all the proposed models of interculturalism, the only way to understand how interculturalism is implemented is through specific cases. One of these cases is the Roma population.

**The case of the Roma in Greece: Their cultural identity: Assimilation, inclusion or social exclusion?**

Roma, do not raise issues of autonomy as do "national" groups and they often live in extreme poverty. They usually face extreme forms of discrimination, racial prejudice—and exclusion and endure political marginalization and residential isolation (Kymlicka, 2012, p. 293). European Union exerted pressure mainly on the post-communist countries wishing to be part of the Union, in order to improve the living conditions of Roma. However, the ultimate goal of EU policies was mainly to prevent a massive movement of Roma to the western countries in search for better living conditions. One can note the indifference of EU about the living conditions of Roma in countries such as Spain, Italy and Greece (Kymlicka, 2012, p. 294).

In Greece, the Roma population is estimated to be at least 150000, although it is difficult to establish accurate numbers (Moraitou, 2013). In the Greek context, the issue of Roma is not confined to individual or collective rights and to the recognition of their difference. Greek Roma are citizens with statutory civil rights and most of them embrace the same religion as that of the dominant cultural group. Social rights of Roma, such as access to education, are secured and they are not considered a threat to the security of the country. Furthermore, Greek state has not implemented assimilation policies towards Roma. On the contrary, Roma are recognized as a group with distinct cultural characteristics, living in isolation, with their own codes and practices, not least due to their desire to "protect" their cultural identity, but more so as the only alternative left by the dominant group (Kymlicka, 2012, p. 147). The stereotypical views held by the dominant group have led to their complete social exclusion. Thus, most Roma live outside the residential zones in extreme poverty.

The stereotypical perceptions of Roma (Bhopal and Myers, 2008) are an almost unique phenomenon in terms of stability and resistance in time. The practices that could lead to the lifting of such stereotypes were thought as a dominant issue.

The Greek state has not implemented either assimilation or inclusion policies regarding the Roma population. The only exception is the implementation of university programs funded to a large extent by EU over the last 15 years, regarding the education of Roma, migrant and Muslim students. Until the mid-1980s, there was no reference to the education of Roma in any official document. Act 2413/1996 introduced intercultural education in Greece. Despite the radical changes that Greek society has experienced over the last 20 years, the Act 2413/1996 has not been updated yet.

Hence, Roma in Greece, as well as in most European countries, experience socio-economic and educational marginalization and exclusion, a reality that stigmatizes modern democratic societies. It is argued that the stereotypical perceptions about Roma that have been constructed over a long period time, are produced and reproduced through state policies and everyday practice of the members of the dominant group, including the school community. Teachers are also products of an education system that produces "good" and "bad" students, thereby incorporating and legitimizing early in their school life the belief that some students are condemned to fail. These deep-rooted stereotypical perceptions about Roma constitute a major obstacle for an intercultural education that should not only seek to promote the respect and acceptance of all



cultural groups, but also create those conditions that will permit all people to claim their right to improve their living conditions and to freely construct their identity.

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## Monitoring the Physical Object of the Programme Education of Roma Children - Qualitative and Quantitative data 2010-2015.

Eirini Tseliou Research Assistant of the Programme Education of Roma Children, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens [e\\_tseliou@yahoo.gr](mailto:e_tseliou@yahoo.gr)

### **Abstract**

*The Programme Education of Roma Children focuses on the realities of school integration, educational exclusion, school failure and the drop out rate of Roma children throughout its actions. With regard to the interventions at school units, planning involves nine actions related to the increased enrollment of Roma children and their continuation. This plan is closely related to the creation of conditions which favour and reinforce the circumstances of integration and continued attendance of Roma children at school and secondly reassure the acceptance of these children by the whole of the educational community so as to avoid exclusion both at school and in society in general. The achievement of these goals was accomplished through Programme's nine actions.*

*The Programme Education of Roma Children in Greece which is operated through the vehicle of intercultural approach rests on the following characteristics: a) to promote social cohesion and national unity, in order to reflect the cultural diversity in the context of rule of law that aims at integrating all citizens from which it draws its legitimacy; b) to instill to all students the principles of tolerance, intercultural dialogue, respect, elimination of racist and nationalistic perceptions, democratic socialization, by assuming their obligations and claiming their rights, stemming from the values of equality of law of citizenship, and c) to systematically teach the second language to students from a different national and cultural origin.*

*Going through the analysis of the Actions, it remains undeniable that the support of Roma people as members of the Greek society is not only a political obligation, but also an undoubted social right.*

*Finally, despite the theoretical foundation of the paper, the power point presentation is going to resemble the qualitative (nine actions) and quantitative data of the Program until today.*

**Keywords:** Roma children, implementation actions, qualitative data, quantitative data.

### **Introduction**

This paper focuses on the realities of Educational Integration and Social Cohesion of Roma Children throughout the projects of the Programme: "Education of Roma Children". Monitoring the Physical Object of the Programme Education of Roma Children, we succeeded in highlighting the extent to which the support measures within the Programme have reached improvement on an educational level and particularly within the school environment. The achievement of this goal was accomplished through its nine projects (pp. 5-14 of this text) (see Parthenis & Tseliou, April 2013, pp. 2-13). With regard to the interventions at school units, planning involves actions related to the increased enrollment of Roma children and their continuation.

This is a pursuit we tried to implement by encouraging Roma to enroll in school and continue attendance, advocating school enrollment and regular attendance in order to decrease the drop-out rate, ensuring acceptance of children by the members of the educational community and the

elimination of their social exclusion. The main goal of the Programme's associates regarding the Project's Actions continues to be the integration of Roma children into the mainstream school via intercultural education.

Intercultural Education: a) covers social institutions, diverse cultural groups and society as a whole, and b) goes beyond equality of cultures, equality of the educational capital of aforementioned students and the provision of equal opportunities of learning and living (Damanakis, 1997). Furthermore, intercultural approach emerges from the linguistic and cultural plurality and the recognition of diversity in school with educational programmes that not only include so-called linguistic and ethnocultural groups, but all social groups (Markou, 2010). Schools also cater for children of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, marginalized in school and in society in general. Therefore, it has become necessary to develop a new integrated pedagogical approach in school -one which will not limit the children's possibilities for advancement (Parthenis, 2013).

### ***The Programme Education of Roma Children***

The Programme Education of Roma Children started in 2010 through various interventions in schools, aims at benefitting Roma children as well as indigenous students with the intention of addressing school based issues in preschool, primary and secondary education. Furthermore, it covers the entire period of implementation focusing on areas of educational priority, where high percentages of school failure and dropouts were identified.

The development and implementation of the above Programme has been administered by the University of Athens and the Ministry of Education and has been extended geographically to a large part of the country. The regions of the Programme are: Attica, Central Greece, Southern Aegean, Peloponnese, Crete, Northern Aegean, Ionian Islands, Thessaly, Epirus, and Western Greece.

During the school period 2010-2015, its nine basic actions had provided assistance to 1.860 schools benefiting about 46.000 pupils.

### ***The Monitoring of the Physical Object of the Programme for the school years 2010-2015***

The monitoring of the Physical Object of the Programme was carried out through a variety of Web application tools which were used by the programme's collaborators and user groups. Some of them were designed for educational purposes and others for professional use or for our every day needs. But all of them were used in a way which certainly gives additional pedagogical value to the project (Kynigos, 2006). There are endless applications which allowed us to record, classify, organize and analyze information in numerous ways (DiSessa, Hoyles & Noss, 1995).

The most suitable tool for the inventory and the classification of the programme's quantitative data is *spreadsheets* by «Google Drive» because is effective, fast and we can use it for free.

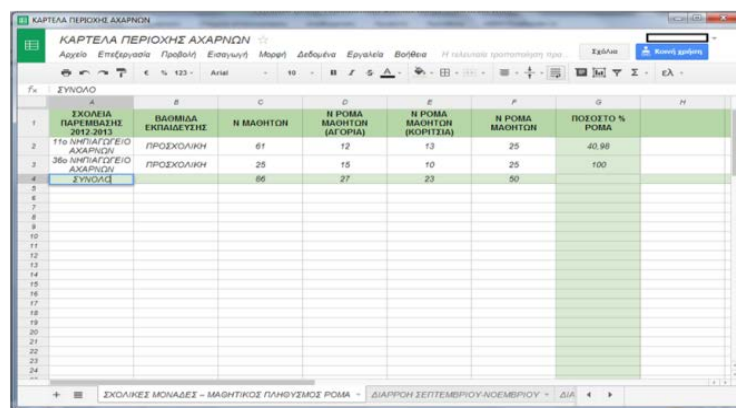
During the implementation period of the Programme, we have succeeded in digitalizing these tools and easing the work of the coordinators of the programme.

Firstly, spreadsheets by Google Drive have been chosen because of their ability to improve team work. Google Drive lets us store up our files online for free, accessing them from anywhere (the internet, our hard drive, tablet or mobile phone) and collaborate with others without any time or space restrictions and by giving information faster and better than any other means. The most important thing, of course, is that we can store up to 15MB for free and this allows us to synchronize or distribute our files with other users at the same time when we are online. Working with the spreadsheets, gives us the possibility to effectively use excel files and convert them to Google Sheets or vice versa, in order to ease our work and make it more efficient. In addition, we can use mathematical calculations to work out data. Finally, there is a special chat room for users that have access to the same file.

Using this tool, we managed to create: numerous spreadsheets of a quarterly report, each one by using Google Drive, Annual journals written by the coordinators, to support approximately 100 coordinators and to summon the total quantitative data of all intrusive measures, which are incorporated into tables.

The aforementioned tables are: i) school units involved in the programme, ii) Roma students involved in the programme, iii) departments and number of teachers of preschool education intervention, iv) tutorial classes – host classed of primary and secondary education, v) summer courses, vi) creative employment workshops, adult education centers, vii) second chance schools, viii) parents schools, ix) training, x) number of trainees, xi) psychosocial support for schools, xii) settlements – Roma camps, xiii) moderators – Roma mediators.

In this way, the academic supervisor, of the Programme can have access to the annual journals and the reports at any time in order to supervise every action and locate omissions.



ΣΥΝΟΛΟ	ΒΑΘΜΙΑ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ	Ν ΜΑΘΗΤΩΝ	Ν ΡΟΜΑ ΜΑΘΗΤΩΝ (ΑΥΤΟΝ)	Ν ΡΟΜΑ ΜΑΘΗΤΩΝ (ΦΟΙΤΗΤΕΣ)	Ν ΡΟΜΑ ΜΑΘΗΤΩΝ	ΠΟΣΟΣΤΟ % ΡΟΜΑ
1	ΣΧΟΛΕΙΑ ΠΑΡΕΜΒΑΣΗΣ 2012-2013					
2	1ηο ΝΗΠΙΑΓΩΓΕΙΟ ΑΧΑΡΝΩΝ	61	12	13	25	40.98
3	36ο ΝΗΠΙΑΓΩΓΕΙΟ ΑΧΑΡΝΩΝ	25	15	10	25	100
4	ΣΥΝΟΛΟ	86	27	23	50	
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**Figure 1.** Spreadsheet by Google Drive

### **The Targets, the Methodology and the Implementation of the Programme**

The targets of the Programme (op. cit. Parthenis & Tseliou, April 2013, p.2) were chosen since it was felt that they substantially contributed to its major goals. These are: a) the increase in the number of Roma students enrolling in school (mainly in pre-primary and primary school levels) b) the increase of the expected school attendance time (reduction of school dropout primarily during the first years of schooling; i.e., in primary school) c) the increase in the number of Roma origin students completing basic education d) the increase in the number of Roma students moving on from Primary Education to Secondary Education e) information and awareness of Roma parents convinced of the necessity to facilitate and support enrollment and continuation of school attendance of their children and f) the increase in acceptance level of Roma origin children by the educational administration, local government and local communities.

Attainment of project targets and expected results held through the elaboration of an integrated and systematic intervention and action plan. In order for us to achieve the above goals, a plan of nine intervention projects has been designed and developed. The intervention projects of the Programme for the Education of Roma children are customized to their specific needs, in order to create a positive learning environment at school, pursuing the upgrading of school practices, enhancing the learning process and enriching the educational techniques of Programme's partner schools (Parthenis & Tseliou, December 2013).

The adapted methodology of the Programme rests on the combination of theory, practice, research and policy formation, as a process of accommodating the immediate educational needs of Roma students at school and supporting several measures which aim at fulfilling the emerging needs of changes that took place in Greek society. This purpose has been fulfilled via intercultural education. The Programme has basically focused on the support of schools by providing models of effective and diverse teaching and learning practices, by using specialized teaching media, by offering training and professional development opportunities to teachers and by creating new teaching and learning materials, etc.

The implementation of the Programme "Education of Roma Children" was based on a) data collected both by research and in-school practices and b) the assumption that all of the Programme's actions and activities must be interventional and practice oriented; thus, emphasis was placed on measures like flexibility, continuation and sustainability.

### **The Nine Action Plans of the Programme**

The Program's Action Plans are nine and are outlined below (Parthenis et al., May 2015):

#### ***ACTION PLAN 1: Reinforcing Access and Attendance to Preschool Education***

This action plan concerns encouraging the access of Roma children and the attendance to preschool education, the planning of related actions, so as to encourage Roma parents for the participation of their children in primary school, enrollment of toddlers and management of related issues, such as vaccination and transportation of young Roma students. To achieve these goals, members of the scientific team and scientific partners including moderators and social

workers, in cooperation with the Roma mediators, are in close contact and communication with the parents of toddlers in order to raise awareness for the pedagogical value of the Preschool Education. At the same time emphasis is given on the learning outcomes of education in Preschool Education through remedial teaching and appropriate tools for the detection of student's language and communication capacity.

ACTION PLAN	INDEX	TOTALS
<b>ACTION PLAN 1:</b> Reinforcing Access and Attendance to Preschool Education	School Units (Preschool Education)	507
	Registered Preschool Education Roma Students	4.184
	Attending Preschool Education Roma Students	3.286
	Classes of Preschool Education	346 <sup>1</sup>
	Teachers in Classes of Preschool Education	275
	Roma students participating in Classes of Preschool Education	2062
	Communicative Competence Tests in Preschool Education Units <sup>3</sup>	23 <sup>2</sup>
	Students' Portfolio <sup>4</sup>	1.007

1. The number refers to classes of preschool education supported by a teacher of the Programme

2. 111 Students

3. School Units - The test was applied on a pilot basis

4. This tool addresses both Roma and non-Roma students participating in the classes of Preschool education

### ***ACTION PLAN 2: Intra-School Actions on School Integration and Support of Regular Schooling***

This action plan focuses on immediate and easy access to school through motivation and sensitization programmes with parallel linguistic and learning support practices for Roma students in remedial teaching classes, within and beyond the school curriculum; implementing collaborative teaching programmes, organizing departments of creative employment workshops and summer schools for the smooth transition of children from Primary to Secondary Education. Among the aforementioned interventions, various activities, various activities in the Roma camps/settlements, as well as the transportation of children to and from school facilitate the action.

Each sub-action concerns separately the following:

#### ***SUB-ACTION PLAN 1: School Integration***

Sub-action plan 1 is associated with the facilitation of the access and the integration of the Roma camp children into the school community, through the utilization of moderators, social workers and Roma mediators, the encouragement and sensitization of Roma parents, as to the enrollment of their children in school, the facilitation of Roma families, when they are in contact with the school units and the elimination of their school exclusion with interventions in the local and the educational community.

**SUB-ACTION PLAN 2: Support of children through educational intervention**

Sub-action plan 2 concerns the operation of linguistic and learning support classes with interventions, such as the configuration of remedial and summer classes, the use of teachers with documented experience in intercultural education, the formulation and implementation of qualified language tests, the portfolio, the utilization of specialized educational and teaching material, and the assessment of class function, through the collection of student assessment tools. The aim of the intervention is to improve both the institution of remedial teaching classes and the prospect of student reintegration in their normal class.

**SUB-ACTION PLAN 3: Increase of school activities inside and outside school.**

Sub-action plan 3 refers to the design and the operation of Student Creative Employment Workshops with parallel emphasis on creative animation activities. The immediate goal is to create awareness and a sense of acceptance among students towards the institution of education, the consolidation of educational and cultural practices of students, by focusing on incorporating elements of language and artistic interests of Roma children in the educational process. For this purpose, the workshops are enriched with artistic interdisciplinary and multicultural activities, students' amusement activities and creative thinking inside the school units.

**SUB-ACTION PLAN 4: Organization and enrichment of school libraries.**

Sub-action plan 4 supports the libraries of intervention schools with diverse literary and intercultural character material, such as: books, films and posters which cover the interests and experiences of Roma students. On the other hand, educational staff needs new learning materials in order to enhance the support of schools teaching in Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education.

ACTION PLAN	SUB-ACTION PLAN	INDEX	TOTALS
ACTION PLAN 2: Intra-School Actions on School Integration and Support of Regular Schooling	SUB- ACTION PLAN 1: School Integration	Primary Education Schools	1.157
		Registered Primary Education Roma Students	37.201
		Attending Primary Education Roma Students	31.156
		Secondary Education Schools	204
		Registered Secondary Education Roma Students	4.639
		Attending Secondary Education Roma Students	2.817
	SUB- ACTION PLAN 2: Support of Children through educational intervention	Tutorial Classes - Host Classes of Primary and Secondary Education <sup>1</sup>	885
		Roma Students of Primary and Secondary Education participating in Tutorial Classes - Host Classes	7.781
		Teachers of Primary and Secondary Education in Tutorial Classes - Host Classes	832
		Summer Courses for Roma Children	268
		Roma Children attending Summer Courses	5.111
		Communicative Competence Tools (tests)	1.870
		Lingual Tests	1.009
		Primary and Secondary Students Portfolio	4.341



Cont'd

ACTION PLAN	SUB-ACTION PLAN	INDEX	TOTALS
<b>ACTION PLAN 2:</b> Intra-School Actions on School Integration and Support of Regular Schooling	<b>SUB-</b>	Creative Employment Workshops	265
	<b>ACTION PLAN 3:</b>		
	Increase of school activities inside and outside school	Teachers in Creative Employment Workshops Roma Students participating in Creative Employment Workshops <sup>2</sup>	265
	<b>SUB-</b>	School Libraries	88
	<b>ACTION PLAN 4:</b>		
	Organization and enrichment of school libraries	Books for the School Libraries	951

1. Remedial Teaching Classes are divided into tutorial classes which operate at the end of the official school programme and host classes which operate during the official school programme
2. The activities are related to the entire student population of Primary and Secondary Education Schools
3. Except from the books for the enrichment of school libraries, educational material which was forged by the Centre for Intercultural Studies and certified by the Ministry of Education is also under use. For further information see <http://www.keda.gr/roma/index.php/material>

### **ACTION PLAN 3: Reinforcing Access to Adult Education Centres and Second Chance Schools**

The primary goal of the Action Plan is to detect the interest of adults and Roma parents for education, the identification of their training needs and the encouragement of their participation in Literacy Programmes. In particular, it concerns the following: a measure to boost adult participation in literacy programmes of Adult Education Centres (AEC), enrollment and attendance in Second Chance Schools (SCS) and easy access thereafter. Moreover, the creation of Parent School classes is foreseen with the aim of creating understanding and awareness and familiarizing parents with the value of school and its environment.

ACTION PLAN	INDEX	TOTALS
<b>ACTION PLAN 3:</b> Reinforcing access to Adult Education Centers and Second Chance Schools	Parent Schools	174
	Roma Adults Participating in Parents Schools	2.222
	Second Chance Schools	52
	Roma Adults Participating in Second Chance Schools	276
	Adult Education Centres	29
	Roma Adults Participating in Adults Education Centres	394
	Summer Courses at Parent Schools	35
	Roma Adults Participating in Summer Courses	449

### **ACTION PLAN 4: Training for Teachers**

Through this action plan teachers of preschool, primary and secondary education benefit from specialized training, sample teaching and innovative teaching issues in education which aim at reinforcing teaching, educational and multicultural practices in the school environment. Indicative subjects of training are the following: the methodology applied for the implementation

of basic educational school goals, the cultivation of interculturalism and the promotion of pedagogical, psychological and teaching knowledge, in correlation with the curriculum.

Each sub-action concerns separately the following:

***SUB-ACTION PLAN 1: Intra-school teacher training***

Intra-school training, taking into account the training needs and interests of each school unit separately, is formed on the basis of a number of subjects which are accessed primarily through experience. Indicative subjects and issues are the following: school and delinquent behavior, teaching methods and practices, language assessment, presentation and use of the Programme's teaching material.

***SUB-ACTION PLAN 2: General training***

General training taking into account the reality of school, the interventions of the Programme participation and their inclusion in the school curriculum as well as the solution of any problem encountered through their implementation. For this purpose, general training addresses Education Staff, Education Directors, School Advisors and Directors, and Headmasters of school units.

***SUB-ACTION PLAN 3: Distance learning***

This sub-action plan, supported both technically and operationally, relates to the distance learning service whereby an online availability of teaching materials as well as the organization of online courses are available. At the same time, it includes an integrated electronics course management system.

ACTION PLAN	SUB-ACTION PLAN	INDEX	TOTALS
ACTION 4: Training for teachers	SUB-ACTION 1: Intra-school teacher training	Trainees of Primary Education	18.123
		Trainees of Secondary Education	4.920
		Trainees of Intra-School/Inter-School Training	21.386
		Introductory Training	214
		Regular Training	316
		Trainees of Introductory Training	3.112
		Trainees of Regular Training	18.274
		General Training	139
		Trainees of General Training	1.657
		E-Courses	2011-2012: 06
	SUB-ACTION 2: General training		2012-2013: 12
			2013-2014: 27
		Distance learning	2011-2012: 24
			2012-2013: 35
			2013-2014: 41
	SUB-ACTION 3: Distance learning	Distance Learning Trainees <sup>1</sup>	
		Distance Learning Trainees <sup>2</sup>	

1. For further information see: <http://www.keda.gr/eclass/>

2. Online courses were open to free access and material. For this reason the trainees cannot be counted

### **ACTION PLAN 5: Psychosocial Support**

The Action Plan includes the psychosocial support of Roma students and parents, the supporting of teachers, the psycho-pedagogical training programmes aimed at improving the functionality of communication, as well as the understanding of diversity. The action plan focuses on the acceptance of diversity and cultural differences of Roma students and at the same time examines the socioeconomic context in which the specific population grows and develops.

ACTION PLAN	INDEX	TOTALS
<b>ACTION PLAN 5:</b> Psychosocial Support	Preschool Education Schools	128
	Primary Education Schools	360
	Secondary Education Schools	84
	Psychologists	97
	Roma Students <sup>1</sup>	

*Psychosocial Support benefited not only Roma students but also non-Roma students, teachers, Roma parents, non-Roma parents, etc.*

### **ACTION PLAN 6: Connection among School, Family and Local Community**

This action plan refers to the efforts of ensuring communication and cooperation between school units, where Roma students attend, their families and their local community. The collaborators of the Programme with the support of social workers undertake interventions in settlements and Roma camps in order to raise awareness and familiarization of Roma parents with the value and the environment of school and to facilitate their access to it. An integral part of the Action is the health promotion interventions focusing on primary care support and collaboration with collective organizations and Roma organizations.

ACTION PLAN	INDEX	TOTALS
<b>ACTION PLAN 6:</b> Connection among school, family and local community	Roma Camps	2011-2012: 88
		2012-2013: 99
		2013-2014: 80
		2014-2015: 82
	Settlements	2011-2012: 106
		2012-2013: 159
		2013-2014: 127
		2014-2015: 118
		Moderators <sup>1</sup> 145
		Roma Mediators 223
		Social Workers 16
		Roma Students Transportation 29 <sup>2</sup>
		Vaccination of Roma Children <sup>3</sup> 2.081
		Health Card Check and Medical Examination of Roma Children <sup>3</sup> 2.538
		New Health Certificates of Roma Children <sup>4</sup> 540
		Personal Health Booklet for Roma Children <sup>3</sup> 927

Cont'd

ACTION PLAN	INDEX	TOTALS
	Programme's Cooperation with Collective Organizations and Roma Organizations <sup>5</sup>	
1.	<i>The moderators, Roma mediators, social workers, psychologists and other specialists were utilized horizontally in all actions of the Programme</i>	
2.	<i>It concerns number of bus routes for Roma student's transportation</i>	
3.	<i>0-18 years</i>	
4.	<i>Damaged or lost child health booklets that replaced</i>	
5.	For further information see: <a href="http://www.keda.gr/roma">http://www.keda.gr/roma</a>	

### **ACTION PLAN 7: Networking of Schools**

Networking of schools is about using Information and Communication Technologies in Education for the planning and elaboration of a website to present the Programme's application data, to plan and set the parameters of social networking (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter), to empower communication and cooperation, to upload digital educational material and give information on actions and events regarding the Programme. For the most effective support of the Networking of schools action, a suitable web space of cooperation has been designed and installed: <http://www.keda.gr/synergasia/>.

ACTION PLAN	INDEX	TOTALS
	Networked Schools	1868
	.. Programme's Main Site for all regions: <a href="http://www.keda.gr/roma/">http://www.keda.gr/roma/</a>	
	!. Blog for the region of Central Greece: <a href="http://educationroma.wordpress.com/">http://educationroma.wordpress.com/</a>	
	!. Site for the region of Crete: <a href="http://roma.cretanguide.eu/">http://roma.cretanguide.eu/</a>	
	!. Site for the regions of Southern and Northern Aegean: <a href="https://sites.google.com/site/romarodos/home">https://sites.google.com/site/romarodos/home</a>	
	i. 5. Site for the region of Western Greece: <a href="https://www.romaedu.upatras.gr">https://www.romaedu.upatras.gr</a>	
<b>ACTION PLAN 7: Networking of schools</b>	Website	
	Social Networking	<b>Facebook:</b> keda-roma <b>Twitter:</b> <a href="http://twitter.com/#!/kedaroma">http://twitter.com/#!/kedaroma</a> <b>Youtube:</b> <a href="http://www.youtube.com/kedaroma">http://www.youtube.com/kedaroma</a>
	Platform's Electronic Address	<a href="http://www.keda.gr/synergasia/">http://www.keda.gr/synergasia/</a>

### **ACTION PLAN 8: Project Publicity**

Project Publicity aims at disseminating the results of the Programme's actions results with the aim of informing and raising awareness in society and public opinion through a selected range of communication and promotion actions. The action includes a series of activities, such as: organizing workshops and conferences, publication of reports in newspapers and electronic media, the targeted interventions of awareness of local communities and the Programme's publicity actions at local and national level, cultural events, articles, leaflets, posters and regional events.

ACTION PLAN	INDEX	TOTALS
<b>ACTION PLAN 8:</b> Project Publicity	Conferences	3
	Cultural Events (Artistic, Roma Student's Symposia <sup>1</sup>	15
	Theatrical Performances	4
	Articles in Journals (Greece and Abroad) <sup>2</sup>	22
	Posters (copies)	965
	Short Film-Documentary on the Roma (copies)	10.000
	Reports and Interviews in newspapers and electronic media	80
	Leaflets <sup>3</sup>	13

1. During the implementation of the nine action plans, parallel activities were also carried out in Roma camps by the Programme's cooperators (animators, teachers, moderators, Roma mediators, etc.) on the occasion of celebrations (Christmas, Mother's Day, etc.), Global Roma Day, etc. For further information see: <http://www.keda.gr/roma/index.php/mmedia/confevents>
2. Interviews in newspapers and electronic media: 20 (approximately). Reports in newspapers and electronic media: 60 (approximately). For further information see <http://www.keda.gr/roma/index.php/mmedia/typos>
3. For further information: <http://www.keda.gr/roma/index.php/mmedia/formspublications>

### **ACTION PLAN 9: Evaluation of the Programme's Operation**

The assessment of the Programme's operation aims at giving the full image of the educational needs of both students and teachers, as well as the recording of intervention methods in the Roma families in order to highlight the structural measures to be undertaken by the State towards access of Roma children. Crucial is the depiction of conditions in areas where there is irregular or incomplete schooling, identifying and recording endogenous and exogenous factors that cause it.

### **Conclusion**

So far, it has been ascertained from the Programme's implementation that political interventions in favor of the improvement of living standards and integration of Roma origin individuals into Greek society partly succumb to simplified interpretations of the complex and multifaceted dimension of the social reality of Greek Roma, people characterized by fragmentation, because they are not part of a comprehensive and multilevel national strategy (Parthenis & Tseliou, 2012). The demands from schools which require assistance and guidance in meeting the educational needs of children from different backgrounds, have initially created a response from the Ministry of Education in Greece, which however, could not cover the full spectrum of the needs of Roma children and could not envisage the long term needs of a changing multicultural and multilingual society, as well. And, it's exactly this lack of structured support that the Programme "Education for

Roma Children” has come to fill, by incorporating innovative strategies and actions to bring about the desired improvements and changes.

The intervention measures of the Programme have been designed to adapt to the specific needs of children and to the particular conditions of school and social environment in which they live. These measures include the ongoing nine actions addressed primarily to school units with the purpose of upgrading their practices. These actions involve special support measures to cater to the needs of Roma students and to assist teachers in applying new teaching methods in mixed classes. Thus establishing, the conditions for intercultural education and a positive learning environment at schools. At this level of planning and implementation, we pursue the upgrade of school practices, building up the learning process and enriching the educational techniques of schools that participate in the programme (Parthenis & Tseliou, December 2013), eliminating racist practices and stereotypes and promptly coping with problems which arises in the school units of all education levels in Greece due to the presence of Roma students.

This purpose has already been fulfilled via intercultural education. Schools with an intercultural curriculum help in restoring social cohesion and solidarity by reviving the democratic values of justice, civil and social equality, thus developing thus knowledge, skills and attitudes they will need to survive and function effectively in society (Banks, 1999). And what is the most challenging in intercultural education, is that it should not be considered to be an awakening towards diversity. If we want to have a successful intercultural education, teachers and pupils should not focus on the acceptance of differences, but on the acceptance of the individual by the others and vice versa (Parthenis, 2010).

Despite certain expected and unanticipated difficulties that surfaced from the above educational endeavor, one may conclude that the Programme “Education for Roma Children” has been successful in promoting the issues of inclusion in school education, respect of linguistic and cultural differences, and recognition of the rights of all students in granting them equal opportunities for educational integration and social cohesion. After five years of implementation, the Programme’s successful operation and coordination aims at becoming a source of information and inspiration for other countries with a high Roma population facing similar challenges in their school communities.

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## Students' values for citizen's identity building in the context of globalisation

Laima Ruibytė, Vaiva Zuzevičiūtė Faculty of Public security, Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania  
[laimaruibyte@mruni.eu](mailto:laimaruibyte@mruni.eu)

### **Abstract**

*Today students experience earlier exposure to globalization and are already typical representatives of a modern generation, it is important to analyse their values in order to find out the extent to which and whether or not the newly changing existential space influence the nature and tendency of values. The purpose of this study was to clarify existing personal values of students during different periods (years 2006-2007 and 2015) and to identify changes in values system of young people in the context of building up an identity of a citizen. In order to fulfil our research objective a questionnaire by R. Ullrich and R. deMunich 'My recent values' (1998) was used. During the period of 2006-2007, 422 students were invited to participate and 226 students took part in the study held in 2015.*

*The results show that the most important values for the students are related to self-realization and independence, stimulation, benevolence – caring and security – personal and achievement values. The least important are the values of being alone, peace, getting loose, power-resource and power-control. We found some slight differences in values after ten years from the first study and the differences in male and female values as well.*

**Keywords:** *values, personal values, students, globalization*

### **Introduction**

Though it would seem that globalisation is a phenomenon of contemporary times, its roots can be traced back to the beginning of humankind. However, due to intensive travelling and communication (due to expansion of technologies), subjectively it seems as a recent phenomenon. It is not. It is just much more intensive and experienced by much more people than ever more intensively during the life time of each individual.

Values determine and explain a direction of human behaviour, perform a function of behaviour regulation and human relations. Values may be defined as personal beliefs and are derived from the psychological needs; thus, they can produce states of psychological tension, which lead to cognition, affect and behaviour (Rokeach, 1973, 1979).

Values can influence the way an individual perceives and interprets a given situation and importance he or she gives to it, react as well as the manner with which he/she behaves in given circumstances (Swartz et al, 2000). Values occupy a central position in person's cognitive system; they influence our attitudes, decision-making processes and all human behaviour. Many experiments and field studies support the notion that values can predict specific attitude and behaviours (Bardi, Schwartz, 2003; Roccas, Sagie, 2010). That is why it is so important to know basic values orientation of persons in order to understand what attitudes they can adopt.

Lately, the most common concept of universal values system is suggested by Swartz (1992, 2000; 2004) - he identifies ten universal values and the difference of people in the priority they give to



each value (Swartz, Boehnke, 2004). In refined version of Schwartz Theory of Basic Individual Values (1992), Schwartz and colleges (2012) define the following basic 19 values (instead of former 10) and motivational goals:

Value	Motivational Goals
Self-direction –thought	<i>Freedom to cultivate someone’s own ideas and abilities</i>
Self-direction-action	<i>Freedom to determine someone’s own actions</i>
Stimulation	<i>Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life</i>
Hedonism	<i>Pleasure or sensuous gratification for oneself</i>
Achievement	<i>Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards</i>
Power-dominance	<i>Power through exercising control over people</i>
Power-resources	<i>Power through control of material and social resources</i>
Face	<i>Security and power through maintaining someone’s public image and avoiding humiliation</i>
Security – personal	<i>Safety in someone’s immediate environment</i>
Security – societal	<i>Safety and stability in a wider society</i>
Tradition	<i>Maintaining and preserving cultural, family or religious traditions</i>
Conformity – rules	<i>Restrain of actions, inclinations and impulses likely to upset or harm</i>
Conformity - interpersonal	<i>Avoidance of upsetting or harming other people</i>
Humility	<i>Recognizing someone’s insignificance in the larger scheme of things</i>
Benevolence – dependability	<i>Being a reliable and trustworthy member of the inside group</i>
Benevolence – caring	<i>Devotion to the welfare of inside group members</i>
Universalism – concern	<i>Commitment to equality, justice, and protection for all people</i>
Universalism – nature	<i>Preservation of natural environment</i>
Universalism – tolerance	<i>Acceptance and understanding of those who are different from somebody</i>

It should be acknowledged that values are one of many factors influencing behaviour, and it is difficult to evaluate relation to specific behaviour. It has generally been assumed that values guide behaviour, although evidence of strong relationships between values and behaviour is virtually non-existent. Nevertheless, it could be stated that values are influencing human behaviour because individuals want to keep a balance between their convictions and behaviour.

Social factors have a large impact to the formation of values orientation of an individual. First of all, it is social environment, in which personality lives and matures. Values, as well as other attitudes, form not only under initiative of personality itself. Adults transfer values statements to new generation by teaching and educating it as well as influencing others. This way, individuals take over a system of values of that culture and society, in which they grow. Every personality forms a distinctive complicated values system. On the other hand, people of the same age group or generation have certain common values related to the peculiarities of person’s development or social, cultural, economic and technological environment. In this respect, it is useful to mention the concept of two distinct values orientations – modern values and post-modern values (Inglehart, Welzel, 2005), which represent some changes in value orientations in globalized society. Modern values reflect such values like hard work, achievement, determination, responsibility, security and prosperity, and post-modern values are such like tolerance, free choice, appreciation of social contacts and self-actualization, satisfaction, and leisure (Inglehart, Baker, 2000). Post-modern values do not replace modern values but their coexistence creates tension and motivational

conflicts in some areas of human life – such as educational and working area. From the other hand, we can find developmental reasons for forming specific values at different periods in person lifespan. For example, it is widely known that youth (20-30) is identified by development theorists (Erikson, 1968) as a period when people search for intimacy or, in contrary, if developmental conflict is not solved, it can lead to loneliness. The inner conflict is about seeking the love of the other person, intimacy and, on the other hand, fears of identity loss. If the conflict is solved successfully, a person becomes strong enough and capable to commit to ideals or objectives of other people and look for self-realization. Thus, this can create specific values orientation in young people.

It is quite difficult to identify distinct value differences between representatives of different generations; however, though they appear to them as typical personality characteristics and behaviour tendencies, it can be presumed that such differences exist. Consequently, the need of such comparative studies is evident, because due to globalisation the list of values, traditionally - ethnically and religiously defined – is either expanded, or shortened, and in all cases - changed. Moreover, due to geopolitical changes, change can be used by political powers for their own interests, and therefore the sensitive and careful monitoring of the situation in the field may contribute to a de-mythisation of the theme or even its abuse in pursuit of self-orientated powers. As Vaišvila (2014) puts it, individual values are sometimes of higher potential power than a well organised strategic ideological propaganda. With regard to the protection of public security that is at the core of the research-interest of the authors of this paper, this argument is a high motivating factor. It is important to know, what the values that young people think of are and consider valuable, and identify the ones which can potentially be incorporated in a young person's identity building, as the identity of a responsible, reasonable citizen, rather than an individualistically orientated egotistic consumer or radicalistic negationist.

Individual value system of students has not been properly explored in Lithuania. Researches are rather fragmented and based on different methodologies. Works, in which a structure and changes of values orientation of schoolchildren (at the age of 15-18 years) (in comparison with the data of 1996 and 2002) (Štutienė, 2003), peculiarities of students' values (Jėčiuvienė, 2003, Lekavičienė, 2005, Ruibytė, 2005, Malinauskas, 2008) have been analysed, reveal different research paradigms. Thus, it is very difficult to compare the obtained research data and provide summarizing conclusions about the peculiarities of youth values and their change. In this article, we will not probably avoid this drawback. However, the chosen researches methodology and analysed values at least partially correspond to the values concept of Schwartz and colleagues (2012) and provides a possibility to compare research data with previously made researches (Lekavičienė, 2005, Ruibytė, 2005).

In this study, our goal was to clarify the existing personal values of students in different period of time (years 2006-2007 and 2015) and to identify changes in values system of young people.

**The aim of this study** is to analyse personal values of students of Public Security Faculty of Mykolas Romeris University, to identify value system of individuals as well as to analyse data in relation to gender, working experience and different time-period in pursue to identify the values that are meaningful in building a citizen's identity.

## **Method**

### ***Instrument.***

A questionnaire by R.Ullrich and R. deMunich (1998) (adapted by R.Lekavičienė, 2005) 'My recent values' was used in order to achieve research objective. It consists of seven groups of generalized values which fit partly the description of Schwartz (2012) basic 19 values: 1) achievement; 2) stimulation; 3) personal security and benevolence caring; 4) high income and property (power-resource by Schwartz); 5) self-realization and independence (self-direction –thought and self-direction-action by Schwartz ); 6) power and influence (power-dominance by Schwartz); 7) calm and relaxation. Every group consists of six to ten values, the importance of which the researched people assessed in a scale from +3 (strictly required value) to -3 (this value is absolutely unacceptable to me).

### ***Participants.***

The survey was held in 2006 - 2007 (I time-period) and 2015 (II time-period). The same questionnaire was presented to students of the second and the third year during the classes in each period of research. In the period of 2006-2007, 422 students were questioned: 144 females and 280 males. They were divided into two groups: 186 full-time students (122 females and 164 males) and 136 students in part-time studies (20 females and 116 males). 226 full-time students (116 females and 100 males) took part in the research held in 2015. The age of full-time students was mostly 19-22 year (92%), and part time students from 19 to 29.

Empirical data was treated by conventional methods of mathematical statistics (using SPSS 12) - descriptive analysis and Pearson Chi Square index.

## **Results**

### ***Value groups priorities.***

The analysis of research data of period I (from 2006 to 2007) shows that value groups priorities of the students remain the same as in a research of the year 2005 (Ruibyte, 2005), i.e. Self-realization and independence predominate in a hierarchy of the researched students (on average 2,2 points), Benevolence – caring and Security – personal (2,1), Stimulation (1,9) and Achievement (2,0). The lowest evaluation gained values groups, generally called Calm and relaxation (1,1), High income and property (1,5) as well as Power and influence (1,5).

The research results of period II (year 2015) reveal that the most important values remain the same: Self-realization and independence (on average 2,3 points), Benevolence – caring and Security – personal (2,1), Stimulation (2) and Achievement (2,0), and the least important is Calm

and relaxation value (1,1). A little less important have been notified the values of Power and influence (1, 3) as well as material values (High income and property) (1,1).

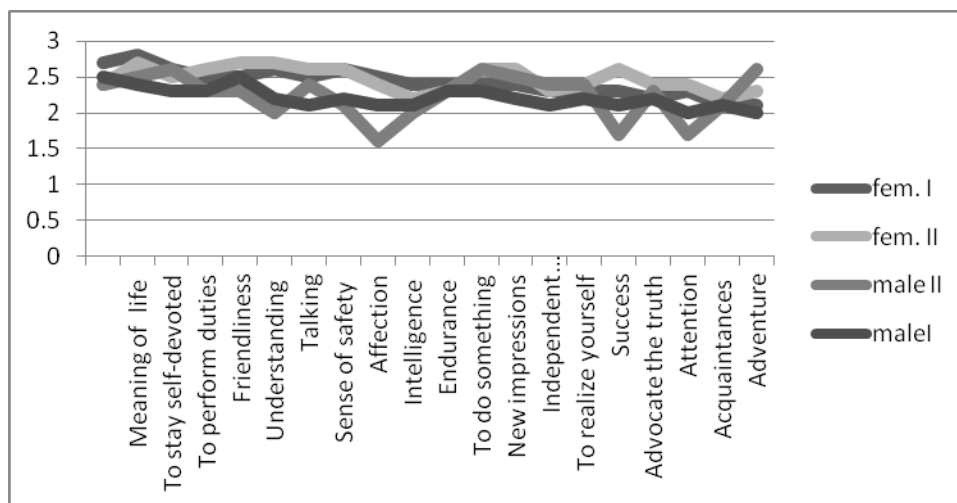
Values	Values group	Men I time- period	Women II time- period	Men II time- period	Men I time- period
To preserve self-respect	Self-realization	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.5
To give essence to own life	Self-realization	2.8	2.7	2.5	2.4
To stay self-devoted	Self-realization	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.3
To perform own responsibilities	Self-realization	2.5	2.6	2.3	2.3
Friendliness	Benevolence and assistance	2.5	2.7	2.3	2.5
Understanding	Benevolence and assistance	2.6	2.7	2.0	2.2
Talking	Benevolence and assistance	2.5	2.6	2.4	2.1
Sense of safety	Benevolence and assistance	2.6	2.6	2.1	2.2
When I experience affection	Benevolence and assistance	2.5	2.4	1.6	2.1
Intelligence	Recognition and praise	2.4	2.2	2.0	2.1
Endurance	Recognition and praise	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3
To do something	Contacts and communication	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.3
To accumulate new impressions	Contacts and communication	2.4	2.6	2.5	2.2
To make independent decisions	Self-realization	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.1
To realize yourself	Self-realization	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.2
Success	Recognition and praise	2.3	2.6	1.7	2.1
To help to find the truth	Self-realization	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.2
Attention	Benevolence and assistance	2.3	2.4	1.7	2.0
To meet acquaintances	Contacts and communication	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.1
To experience adventure	Contacts and communication	2.1	2.3	2.6	2.0

**Table 1.** *The most significant values and their groups in periods I and II*

**The most significant values in periods I and II.** We assigned to the most significant the values which were usually given by the researched people 2 and more points (i.e. positive or necessary value). 6 from 10 values of self-realization group were included in this list (self-realization-action and self-realization-thought), four of them are at the top of the list (Table 1). These values include the preservation of self-respect, giving essence to your life, remain self-devoted, performance of own responsibilities, making independent decisions, self-realization and trying to help to find the truth. Not of less importance to students are values of Benevolence – caring and Security – personal group, i.e. related to benevolent relations between people – Friendliness, Understanding, Talking, Attention as well as to personal security – Sense of security, When I experience affection. From values of Stimulation group (Contacts and communication), the following ones were included in the list of the most important values - To do something, Accumulate new experience, Experience adventures. These values were evaluated by the

researched people slightly higher in period II than in period I (Table 10), while the values of Self-realization, Benevolence – caring and Security – personal groups were assessed similarly in both periods. Intelligence, endurance and success from the values of Achievement group can be distinguished as the most appreciate.

**Values of males and females.** While analysing the values of men and women, it can be seen that since values priorities and hierarchy are similar in both periods, the assessment of the significance of the values themselves in some places differ (Table 1 and Fig.2).



**Fig.2.** Differences of the most significant values of male and female in periods I and II

Assessment of values related to self-realization is similar between males and females and in period II they are very close. The values of Stimulation group are also similar: to meet acquaintances, to do something, to accumulate new impressions and to experience adventures are important to males and females of both periods, just, if doing something or accumulating new experiences were of bigger importance only to female student in period I, the significance of these values also increased in student boys in period II, particularly the value of experiencing adventures (2,6 points). Experiencing of adventures, doing something and remaining self-devoted are valued the highest by respondents (on average 2,6) (Table 1.). The values of Achievement group, intelligence and endurance are valued similarly by all the researched people of distinguished groups; however, the value of success is the most important to females of period II. Table 1 and Fig.2 reveal that more significant differences between females and males exist in the values of Benevolence – caring and Security – personal groups. Females of both periods sense of safety (statistically big difference in both periods,  $p \leq 0.05$ ), attention ( $p \leq 0.05$ ), understanding ( $p \leq 0.05$ ), when I experience affection ((statistically big difference between males and females of period II,  $p \leq 0,05$ ) consider of bigger important than boys. In the assessment of the values of friendliness and talking, there are no such big differences, but it must be notified that in period II boys the value of talking valuate higher than in period I.

Values	M	M	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)
Achievement	female	male	
diligence	1.9	1.5	0.056
endure work	1.98	1.7	0.007**
high achievements	2.1	1.8	0.045*
success	2.3	2.1	0.045*
honour	1.8	1.7	0.056
stimulation			
events attendance	1.9	1.3	0.069
publicity	1.9	1.6	0.041*
ability to invite	2.1	1.6	0.025*
enjoy uproar and diversity	1.4	1.03	0.015*
Benevolence – caring and security – personal			
consolation	1.96	1.5	0.01**
full sufficiency	1.96	1.7	0.023*
care	1.8	1.2	0.000*
attention	2.3	2.0	0.058
understanding	2.6	2.2	0.058
Power-resource			
to provide yourself a possibility to buy new clothes often	1.6	1.3	0.02*
to stay in luxurious hotels while travelling	1.0	0.6	0.043*
self - direction			
making independent decisions	2.3	2.1	0.031*
not having what to reprove to yourself	1.6	1.5	0.055
living for something remaining	1.7	1.9	0.017*
Power-dominance			
giving directions	0.8	1.0	0.015*

\*\*. Differences are significant at the 0.01 level.

\*. Differences are significant at the 0.05 level.

**Table 2.** *Differences of the mean values of men and women (statistically significant)*

While analysing data, not only differences of the most significant values between women and men have been determined (Table 2), but the ones of less evaluated values as well. They give a possibility to reveal certain differences between genders in values approaches. Statistically significant differences between men and women of period I in Achievement values group show that women value more diligence, endure work, high achievements, success and honour; in Stimulation group - attending events, publicity, ability to invite, uproar and variety; in Benevolence and Security group – consolation, full self-sufficiency, care, attention, understanding; in Power-resource group – ability of buying frequently new clothes and staying in luxurious hotels while traveling; in Self-realization group – being able to make independent decisions and not having what to reprove to yourself. Living for something remaining (in Self-

realization values group) and giving directions (Power-dominance group) are more important to males than to females.

**Values of full-time and part-time students.** In the research of period I, we aimed to compare the values of students working (part-time students) and non-working (full-time students). The results indicate that statistically there are no many reliable differences – diligence (0.045), performance of your responsibilities (0.037) and enjoying the silence of nature (0.000) are more important to working students than to not working ones, while female full-time students value more consolation (0.003) and accumulation of new impressions (0.015).

## **Conclusions**

On the one hand, it should be acknowledged that the results of a survey can hardly be generalised to the whole population, and therefore, further investigations and analysis of different age, status, gender and cultural background groups should be carried out.

On the other hand, still some tendencies can be traced. The results of periods I and II give a possibility of concluding that the values of self-realization and independence, Benevolence – caring and Security – personal, Stimulation as well as Achievement predominate in a hierarchy of student's values of the age of 19 – 25. The least important are the values, constituting calmness and relaxation, high income and property as well as power and influence values groups. Since the research has been made in one faculty of MRU, the data obtained confirm the values priorities of students defined in 2005 by five institutions of higher education of Lithuania by using the same methodology (R. Lekavičienė, 2005). It can be stated that the identified values of students reflect the typical to their age group values related to self-realization, which correspond the data of other studies as well (Novelskaitė, 2003, Štutienė, 1999, 2003). On the other hand, the demonstrated values such as caring for another person, also being concerned with the safety potentially provide some pre-requisites for a building an identity of a citizen, who is interested in managed and safe evolution. International studies of values indicate that the broad self-realization value correlate strongly with education. Education strengthens the motivation to act independently, think and seek for self-realization. It is important to academic youth to preserve self-respect, give essence to own life, remain self-devoted, perform own responsibilities, make independent decisions, realize yourself, help to find the truth, friendliness, understanding, talking, attention, sense of safety, experiencing affection, doing something, accumulating new impressions, experiencing adventures, intelligence, endurance and success. Stimulation is also typical to this age period and, as far as the researches reveal, stimulation values correlate more negatively with age (Schwartz, 2012). At the same time, it can be state that results show the prevalence of postmodern values (conceptualized by Inglehart) what means as mentioned earlier that nowadays students value more free choice, appreciation of social contacts and self-actualization, satisfaction, and leisure (Inglehart, Baker, 2000) than hard work, future-related goals, responsibility etc. Hofer et al. (2009, 2010) provides results of researches how such kind of value orientation may influence on learning and school-leisure conflicts.

Since a period of 10 years is not long enough to make essential changes in values, though the results of period II are insignificant, some changes can still be noticed: the values of power and influence as well as material values (high income and property) became even less important. More significant changes have been noticed in such values of males in period II – in comparison to the students of period I, it became more important to them to experience adventures, to do something and to remain self-devoted, and these findings are even more encouraging with the identity of citizen being the focus. It would seem that young people became readier to act on their values, to act on what they believe is important, to take up responsibility in a more dynamic way. The fact that they are more sheltered than the youth of previous generation can form the change of values from self-sufficiency with material and power (power through exercising control over people and material and social resources) to seeking stimulation (excitement, novelty, and challenge in life) and hedonism (pleasure or sensuous gratification for oneself), self-direction and self-realization (freedom to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities and one's own actions). At the same time, universal values oriented to benevolent relationship between people (Benevolence-concern and Security groups) - friendliness, understanding, talking, attention, sense of safety and experience of affection also remain important.

While comparing the values of males and females, it can be seen that the order of values arrangement according to importance is similar in both groups – the values of self-direction and stimulation which are the most important to all researched people are valued most of all; the values of achievement group are also estimated similarly. More significant differences between females and males can be distinguished in the values of Benevolence – caring and Security – personal groups. Sense of safety, attention, understanding and experience of affection are more important for females than for males in both periods, which is in harmony with finding in other studies in the field. These results are also consistent with research data, revealing that benevolence – concern and benevolence - caring values are more important to women and across countries, the broad benevolence value correlated positively with age (Schwartz ,2012). While comparing both periods, any significant differences can be distinguished, still a tendency can be noticed that the importance of talking values has increased in males, but the values of attentiveness, success and desire to experience affection have decreased. Statistical analysis revealed more reliable differences between both genders regarding less important value groups: females find features related to achievement (diligence, high achievements, success and honour) more important than males, they aim for more stimulation and activeness (events attendance, publicity, ability to invite others to actions and diversity), but at the same time they aim for care and support as well (consolation, full self-sufficiency, attention, understanding). It would seem the emancipation of women is further taking place with them taking upon themselves more active roles in almost all spheres of life. More women estimate certain material goods (ability of buying new clothes and staying in luxurious hotels while travelling); these changes can be related to the increased role of media during the last years, also with the fact that women become more courageous in all spheres of life, also in the sphere of consumer probably explains the dynamics. As Drucker (2009) noticed, the pursuit of material achievements, if it does not overpower other pursuits, it adds to the overall



sense of achievement and the sense of making a difference both at individual and at wider (as of a professional) levels.

Males find it more important than females living for something that has a potential for history (Self-realization values group) and giving directions (Power-dominance group). Such tendency, where the motivation to control others or males' greater emphasis on power than the motivation to pursue material resources is also confirmed in other studies (Schwartz, 2012). International studies of Schwartz and colleagues (2012) reveal that being male correlated positively with the power value (if we interpret this one in a wider sense). In the present study, the values of males of Power-dominance group have been assessed higher than female; however, statistically reliable differences have not been determined except the value - giving directions.

The given study was carried out only in one university, this reduces a possibility of generalizing conclusions to all academic youth, still, a rather reasoned assumption can be made that tendencies of students of similar age are similar. Dramatic changes in values did not appear in the period of 10 years, but some changes can be still noticed. Thus, wider and deeper studies are reasonable in order to define the extent that recent events have on the values and their prioritising by youth and the potential influence for identity building of a citizen.

Since values provide certain energy influencing human behaviour, the obtained data enables us to understand better the motivational sphere of youth and focus of their activity would help to organize better an educational process and would also meet the needs of students to study effectively and benefit from studies both as students, and individuals, and citizens.

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## Understanding Student Disengagement from Student Elections Process: The Case of Greece.

Yiouli Papadiamantaki, George Fragoulis, Elena Soroliou, *University of the Peloponnese / University of the Peloponnese / National and Kapodistrian University of Athens*, [gioulip@uoa.gr](mailto:gioulip@uoa.gr) | [gfragoul@yahoo.gr](mailto:gfragoul@yahoo.gr) | [elena.soroliou@hotmail.gr](mailto:elena.soroliou@hotmail.gr)

### **Abstract**

*The paper explores student engagement in public university governance, as expressed through participation in student elections in Greece in the period 1982-2012. To this effect, we compare and analyse two different modes of higher education governance with different provisions for student participation. Drawing from Bourdieu and Habermas, higher education is viewed as one of the fields that constitute the public sphere, intricately related to other fields, while Olsen's typology is used to approach universities, as "internally organized democratic communities" or as "service enterprises". Using data on participation rates in student elections in the period 1982-2012, we discuss the reasons that have gradually led a significant part of the student body to political apathy and disengagement from university life. The paper concludes that an analysis of the mode of governance of higher education does not provide a sufficient interpretation of student disengagement from politics, which can be explained only through a mapping of the power relations in the social and political fields and their refraction in the higher education field.*

**Keywords:** student engagement, student participation, public mission, higher education field, governance.

### **Introduction**

Historically, the university has been the par excellence locus for the discussion of public issues and the formation of citizens. However, the civic dimension of higher education has not been adequately addressed, despite its importance for a fully rounded education provision and the maintenance and development of a vibrant democratic society (Taylor 2007, 3). In this paper, we argue that the conceptualisation of the civic dimension of higher education strongly relates to the current dominant discourse concerning the mission of the university and the modes of higher education governance. Universities' capacity to foster civic engagement depends both on students' agency and the opportunities provided by the civil society and social institutions for democratic participation. Drawing on Habermas (1991), we highlight the importance of universities when functioning as public spheres for the promotion of students' civic engagement and the strengthening of democracy in society.

In this paper, we discuss the development of Greek students' participation in student elections in the period 1982-2012, as an instance of student civic (dis)engagement. To explore the issue at hand, we examine the public mission of the university and how different modes of university governance foster or hinder student engagement. We argue that an institutional framework that provides for student participation in university governance and the development of a relevant institutional strategy is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for student engagement; that the formation of students as active citizens is constrained by cultural and political factors that influence the construction of the field of higher education and the position of students within it.

### **The Public Mission of the University.**

The public university for a long period of time has functioned as an institution that fulfils social demands for equity and justice and provided access to education to an expanding proportion of young people. However, a growing body of literature suggests that the state funded public university is now obsolete and in need of urgent modernization. The discussion of the public mission of the university usually makes reference on an understanding of knowledge and education as public goods. This conceptualisation of higher education as public good has been prominent in the Greek discourse. Drawing on Samuelson's analysis of public expenditure, Marginson (2006, 49-51) defines public goods as non-rivalrous, i.e. as goods that can be consumed by any number of people without being depleted, and non-excludable, since the benefits cannot be confined to an individual buyer; he maintains that higher education can be organized either as public or as private good. Universities can be free, open to all and focused on research designed to solve social problems, or they can be costly, closed and focused on the provision of privately valuable degrees and technologies sold to the higher bidder. Thus, it is the character of production that determines the nature of the goods and not vice-versa. This is a distinction that draws on the field of economics and emphasizes the politics of economic distribution at the expense of the democratic dimension of education.

From another perspective, drawing on the tradition of political philosophy, the public mission of the university is primarily related to the ways democracy is experienced in the everyday life of the academic community and expressed by the projects through which universities conduct their work 'in public ways'. Community, social awareness and a critical perspective might provide a platform for the regeneration of the public university. This meaning of the public mission of the university extends to a communication with a broader public sphere beyond the university, where public academic work is shaped by and shaping the broad public discourse and more specialized policy making by public agencies. This suggests the terrain opened up by Habermas's public sphere, which provides for a non-violent form of social integration based on discourse rather than power or money (Marginson 2006) According to Habermas (1994, 121-122), the legal order is legitimate when it safeguards the autonomy of all citizens to an equal degree. The citizens are autonomous only if the addressees of the law can also see themselves as its authors. And its authors are free only as participants in legislative processes that are regulated in such a way and take place in forms of communication such that everyone can presume that the regulations enacted in that way deserve general and rationally motivated assent.

Probably very few bourgeois societies have developed a public sphere in Habermas's sense (Kellner 2000), as Western societies were polarized by class struggle. Street demonstrations and back room, brokered compromises among private interests replaced the reasoned public debate about the common good. With the emergence of welfare-state mass democracy, society and the state became mutually intertwined; publicity in the sense of a critical scrutiny of the state gave way to public relations, mass-mediated staged displays and the manufacture and manipulation of public opinion (Fraser 1990, 59). We agree with Bauman that postmodern societies seem to have lost

areas, spaces, places and opportunities where private worries can be translated into public issues; spaces where problems can be resolved through collectively managed levers, powerful enough to lift individuals from their privately suffered misery (Bauman 1999, 2-3).

However, one could argue that the university has the potential to function as a public sphere, providing space for reasoned argument and contending values. The university has functioned in the past as a locus of debate that gave birth to the significant social and political movements of the 1960/70s, such as student movements on both sides of the Atlantic, advocating for student power and grass-roots democracy. The university as public space could overcome some of the limitations of the traditional public sphere elaborated by Habermas, given that it has a viable credentialing system that ensures that the participants in the public debate are qualified to contribute and has no requirement for homogeneity of interest or view (Marginson 2006, 52).

One might think that animating the public sphere is obviously the function of the university. Nevertheless, in the current conditions this function is difficult to be fulfilled, due to the increasing commercialisation and responsiveness of universities to market demands, government interference over academic freedom and autonomy, the deliberate erosion of public debate, the increasing scepticism about reason and rationality as the basis for public policy-making and the political polarisation and intolerance, whipped up by unscrupulous politicians and their servants in the media (Edwards 2007, 15-16). The crucial issue is whether universities are able to sustain their democratic function, overcoming dominant traits in university governance, as expressed in the vision of the university as a 'service enterprise' (Olsen 2007). The mission of the public university concerning the formation of students is subordinated to market competition and weakened by consumer subjectivities. The university in the public sphere suggests a double act. The problem is to both recover autonomy from state and market-driven heteronomy, persuading government that it is in its interests to free the university from the intrusive steering mechanisms of recent years, while reconfiguring the university in a larger democratic setting (Marginson 2006, 46- 54).

Marginson's analysis provides a direct link to Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the social world as relational. Higher education is one of the relational autonomous fields, whose complex interrelationships constitute society. A field is defined as a configuration of objective relations between positions and follows regularities that are not explicit and codified. These positions are objectively defined in their existence and in the determinations, they impose upon their agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation in the structure of the distribution of power/capital whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions. In highly differentiated societies, the social world is made up of a number of relatively autonomous social microcosms, i.e. spaces of objective relations that are specific and irreducible to those that regulate other fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 97). The relations comprising a field are not limited to interactions between agents, as agents may be positionally related in terms of lower/higher status to agents they never meet or know.

Therefore, any field, including the higher education field, must be examined in terms of its functions as a relatively autonomous field within the field of power and its evolution in time. Moreover, one must analyze the internal structure of the higher education field, as a universe obeying its own laws of functioning and transformation, meaning the structure of objective relations between positions for legitimacy (Bourdieu 1996). In this paper, the university as a public sphere is examined not only in its consensual perspective, but also in terms of potential conflicts amongst the members of the academic community in the struggle to occupy better positions or to increase their own capital. The outcomes of any conflict should not be considered as predetermined, as well as the ways the broader economic and political field relates to the field of higher education in a specific historic and socio-cultural context.

### **Modes of governance and the civic dimension of universities.**

The public mission and the civic dimension of higher education, along with related concepts, such as citizenship, community and student engagement are highly contested both in academic literature and in the public/political sphere. Although there is a growing acceptance of the importance of promoting active citizenship and student engagement, there are various perspectives on how universities can respond to this role.

The communitarian aspect of universities civic dimension appears to be prominent in the US context. The emphasis is put on institutional strategies that incorporate in the curriculum practices such as volunteering, community based research and, especially, service learning that combines community-based civic experience with systematic classroom reflection on that experience (Mac Labhrainn and McIlrath 2007, xxi-xxii; Galston 2001). Such a strategy is seen as promoting students' opportunity to experience democracy in their everyday life. Students should be involved in research projects that address important issues in a democratic, diverse society, in co-curricular activities and in for-credit service-learning courses. Simultaneously, faculty should participate in consultation and research that involves and improves communities (Checkoway 2001). The promotion of active citizenship in higher education appears to be related to what is termed "the third mission" of the university. It would make knowledge more accessible to the public, reward faculty for their efforts to draw upon their expertise for the benefit of society and build collaborative partnerships with communities. The development of strategies at the institutional level seems to fit especially US universities, since their governance system is characterised by a decentralized distribution of power and autonomy, due to the absence of a centralized (at the federal level) authority for education and a strong tradition of lay citizen governing boards. In Europe as well, several higher education institutions have adopted such a communitarian approach in order to strengthen their civic dimension and, as universities continue to shape their civic identities and define their public purposes, they adopt strategies of engagement that transform university life (Saltmarsh, Zlotkowski and Hollander 2011, 302).

In Europe, where national legislation often defines the relationship of the state with higher education institutions, the development of a legal framework that provides for student participation in university governance is advocated for by various analysts and organizations

involved in policy-making. However, the establishment of such a framework, although a necessary condition, does not guarantee *actual* student engagement. This is also indicated by the limited research that was commissioned by the Council of Europe on the issue of student engagement and affirmed in the Bologna Process, where the European Student Information Bureau highlighted the importance of student involvement in university governance. In the Prague Communiqué (BFUG 2001), Ministers of Education for the first time affirmed that students are full participants in the organization and content of education at universities, marking the official recognition of student engagement in higher education governance. In the Berlin Communiqué (BFUG 2003), Ministers noted that national legal measures for ensuring student participation are largely in place, and called on the institutions and student organizations to identify ways of increasing *actual* student involvement in higher education governance. Ever since 2003, student involvement has grown and has been unanimously accepted as a principle among all stakeholders in the European Higher Education Area (Popovic 2011).

Actual student engagement in higher education governance, as well as the potential of university to defend its public mission and to function as a public sphere depends, amongst others, on the dominant “vision of the university” to use Olsen’s terminology. Olsen distinguishes between the vision of the university as an interest group “representative democracy” and as a market-driven “service enterprise”. During the 1960s and 1970s the vision of the University as a representative democracy was reinforced by student revolts and their criticism of overcrowded universities with very limited access to professors and the repressive authority of universities and government, the younger faculty’s struggle against senior professor dominance, and democratic developments in society at large. In this ideal-type, the university is based on a scheme of internal checks and balances of power that allows representation on governing boards to all categories of employees, as well as students. Decision-making is organized around elections, bargaining, voting and coalition building with a view to accommodate multiple interests. It is linked to enhancing democracy in society at large, while internal democracy and external autonomy are justified by reference to a mix of principles and concerns. Workplace democracy and co-decision are seen as improvements compared to antiquated formal hierarchies. Giving more power to younger faculty and reducing the sovereignty of senior professors are assumed to improve scholarly competence. Giving power to administrative and technical staff is justified by their contribution to the performance of the university. Student power is related both to the significant impact universities have on their lives and to ‘realpolitik’, given the students’ ability to cause difficulties in the operation of universities and societies (Olsen 2007, 32).

This mode of governance has been criticised, as its key ideas were never fully reconciled with the commitment to intellectual excellence or with the observation that faculty historically has shown little enthusiasm for using their participatory rights (Olsen 2007, 35). It is indisputable, however, that such a vision leaves more room for active student engagement in university life, in contrast to the conceptualization of the university as market-driven service enterprise. In the latter, the university operates in regional or global markets and it is governed and changed by its sovereign ‘customers’. Research and education are commodities to be sold in a free market. Competition,

profit and the achievement of individual gain are key-processes. Information and knowledge are private strategic resources for competitiveness and survival, not a public good. Market competition requires rapid adaptation to changing opportunities and constraints, which again requires strong, unitary and professional internal leadership. The University has more freedom from the state and political authorities, as New Public Management ideas and techniques are introduced (Olsen 2007, 32). However, greater organisational autonomy also drives non-governmental stakeholders to become more scrutinizing; the response is a greater emphasis on externally monitoring output quality and performance (Salerno 2007, 120). The general tendency is towards the creation of managerial infrastructures parallel to academic ones, where students are less represented or not at all. New public management suggests a distinct organisational culture, which conceives of students as 'customers' or 'clients' and solicits student participation for the purposes of feedback for improved quality performance (Klemencic 2011, 78). The university is to be understood through the concepts of money, position, and institutional and personal gain. Public service does not sit easily with entrepreneurialism or individualism. The idea of the civic university is in difficulty, not because the university is an 'ivory tower', but because it is too much bound into society on terms that run counter to the very idea of the civic university (Barnett 2007, 25). However, if students are to play a role in governance, they need to be positioned not as clients but as partners in the academic community with a long-term commitment to democratic principles and practice (Boland 2005, 200-201).

In this paper, we argue that, although these two modes of university governance have a different potential to promote student participation in university governance, legal regulations do not guarantee their actual engagement in university life. Greek Universities, for instance, have operated for more than 30 years under a legal framework that corresponds to a vision of university as representative democracy (Act 1268/82), providing for student participation, without inspiring for a long time student engagement. Equally, when the legal framework was replaced in 2011 by an Act that hampered student participation in the election processes for decision-making bodies, no significant student protests were organized to resist the change. Thus, under both regimes, student engagement and voters turnout in student elections remained low, indicating persistent student disinterest in university life. This indicates that the root of the problem does not lie only with the mode of governance per se – or an “appropriate” legal framework.

To understand the reasons for student (dis)engagement, the role and the responsibility of universities in the democratic socialisation process should be examined, especially whether democracy is experienced through the various levels of decision-making processes. If universities are to effectively prepare students for active citizenship, democracy should be experienced from the “boardroom to the classroom” (Boland 2005, 200-201).

Student participation in student elections is (or at least should be), a crucial moment as through this process students elect their representatives in university governance. As Bergan (2004a, 18) argues, some important issues arise at this point: To what extent are students allowed to participate in governance? To what extent are “political” student organisations, affiliated with



political parties allowed? Is the general student body sufficiently active and interested to provide its representatives with legitimacy? Is student representative's effective once elected, or are they helping institutions fulfil the formal requirements of representation without having any real influence on institutional policies? The latter question relates to how students perceive their influence on university decision-making processes and to what extent abstention from student elections can be seen as reflecting disengagement with the political process. Another related issue concerns the mechanism through which student representatives are elected or appointed.

### **The Greek Student Movement: Modes of Governance and Student Engagement**

We maintain that the political context and environment of the country strongly influence the organisation and activities of universities as sites of citizenship (Plantan 2004, 93). To this effect we analyse abstention rates in student elections over the period 1982-2012 vis-à-vis significant moments in the Greek socio-political context (Figure 1 near here). The figure presents abstention rates from student elections and was compiled on the basis of articles published in the daily newspaper "Ta Nea" over this 30-year period. "Ta Nea" is one of the most reputable newspapers in Greece, it follows closely developments in education and it publishes in specific columns academic articles. The selected period is marked by two education Acts that introduced different modes of governance of higher education. Act 1268/1982 provided for student participation in university governance and the election process of decision-making bodies for the first time, while Act 4009/2011 assigned a minor role to students, by excluding them from the election process of university decision-making bodies. In Greece student organisations are "political", i.e. directly connected to and influenced by political parties and function as a major channel of political socialisation of the student body.

Act 1268/82 altered the established power relations in higher education that were based on the authority of full professors, holders of Chairs. It introduced a mode of governance that conflates with Olsen's vision of the University as internal democracy. As Kladis (2014) argues, during this period there was high social demand for redistribution of power in higher education. Thus, the educational reform was in line with the social dynamics. The Act introduced the US model of university organisation, setting the department as the basic academic unit and its general assembly as the major decision-making body at the department level. Ultimate decision-making power for academic, economic and administrative matters resides with the Senate, led by the Rector. It allotted considerable power to the students, providing for student participation in university governance through indirectly appointed student representatives. The election of the university decision making bodies, (Rector's council, Deanship and Chair of the Department) was based on the total number of the faculty whose vote had a significant weight (50%), and on the vote of the other interest groups that participate in university governance, undergraduate students (40%), postgraduate students (2,5%), administrative personnel (2,5%), technical personnel (2,5%) and lab assistants (2,5%). Thus, for the first time, students could promote their demands for equity and social justice against the arbitrariness of the professoriate. Therefore, participation in student elections became of paramount importance, since student representatives were appointed by student organisations in accordance to the votes they won. Such a mode of governance appears to

leave more room for active student engagement in university life. Indeed, the first five years after the introduction of the Act, the highest participation rates in student elections was recorded. In 1982, approximately 40% of the student body abstained from student elections. Five years later, the abstention rate dropped to 19%. This was a highly politicized phase of the student movement, as in 1981 the first socialist government was elected.

It is noted that in many European countries, higher education legislation shows appreciation for the idea that higher education should play a role in preparing students for life as active, responsible citizens in democratic society (Klemencic 2011, 74). However, while formal provision for student participation is generally assured, there is a problem with actual student commitment to participate and raising sufficient interest in the student body to actually bring most students to cast a vote (Bergan 2004b, 9). This is also the case in Greece, where the legal framework failed to sustain high participation rates. To interpret this failure, one should take into account the power structure of the higher education field, as established by Act 1268/82. The initial democratic intention to empower the subordinate student body was overridden, as what actually happened was the empowerment of students' organizations and appointed student representatives. Thus, student organisations (affiliated with political parties) were in a position to bargain with academic candidates for university decision-making bodies, by ensuring a block of favourable electors (Lamprianides 2004). The public mission of the university was undermined, as candidates antagonised each other for the support of student organisations. This would not be troublesome, if support was granted on the basis of candidates' merit or the proposed university policy. However, more often than not, these bargains formed part of petty party politics that had nothing to do with university policy and favoured the personal agendas both of student representatives and candidates for university governance. The situation was further aggravated during periods when a weak student movement or an inactive and apathetic student body couldnot hold student organisations accountable for their actions, failures or omissions (Lamprianides 2004). In contradistinction to student vote, which became of paramount importance, the importance of faculty vote in the election process diminished, as faculty constitutes a heterogeneous, not easily manipulated group, which rarely offers a block of electors to the candidates. Ultimately, the provisions of the Act led to a situation where academic and political networks were closely interwoven, allowing for a refraction of the social and political field in the higher education field. Soon enough, the dominant clientalist structure of the Greek society and economy (Mouzelis 1987, 1999) spread in university life.

Since 1989 one may note a steady decline in participation rates. It is of interest that 1989 (known as the "dirty 89") was a year of substantial political turmoil when the prime minister of the country was accused of corruption and bribery, led to trial and finally acquitted. This was an altogether exceptional circumstance that required the formation of a "special court". This period is characterized by a generalised public mistrust and allegations for corruption that led to student disengagement with and aversion to politics, as the majority of the student body realized that student leaders used their popularity and power as a springboard to pursue either an academic or a political career. However, mistrust regarding student politics is not a uniquely Greek problem. As

it has been pointed out the link of student representatives to political parties has always been a contested aspect of student politics. Ensuring the independence of student representation is paramount, not only as a value in itself, but also because perceived political bias leads to further mistrust of students and thus to further political apathy (Klemencic, 2011, 80). In Greece, a survey conducted in 1996 among 700 students of the National Technical University of Athens, concluded that 75% of the students disagreed with the affiliation of student organisations with political parties and the manipulation of their vote. It should be noted that 63% of the students expressed the opinion that the mode of student representation should change (Ta Nea 1996).

In the years 1997-1998, the abstention rates rise again at approximately 70%. The educational reform in 1997, which was never put into effect, provided for changes at all educational levels and a new admission system in higher education. The reform met with the strong resistance of the academic and educational communities. Despite a long series of rallies and demonstrations and conditions of sustained protest that lasted more than three months, student mass participation in politics was not triggered anew. Most students remained apathetic and disengaged from university life. It is worth-noting here that the period 1999-2000 was marked by a major crisis in the Greek stock market that led to a huge loss of wealth and to a breach of trust between the government and its constituency. We don't argue that student abstention rates are directly connected with the wider socio-economic and political processes however, in the long run, the lack of social trust affects all aspects of the public sphere. In the years 2000-2001, student abstention rates reached their higher level, almost 78%. In such cases, questions are raised regarding the legitimacy of student representatives in university governance (Bergan 2004b, 9). The introduction of the Act 3374/2005 concerning Quality Assurance in higher education provokes yet again student protests, this time against what was perceived a commercialization of education. Under these conditions, in 2005 student abstention rates rise again in relation to the period 2002-2004. Act 3549/2007 provided for the first time for direct universal student participation in student elections, aiming at the disentanglement of student organizations and candidates for the decision-making bodies (Sotiropoulos 2010). Despite the efforts to combat bargaining between student organizations and the candidates, student participation rates were not increased. Once again, it seems that the Greek youth is blindly protesting policies without being in a position to actively participate in order to change the rules of the game.

Act 4009/2011 introduced major changes in university governance, drawing on new public management principles. Universities are granted more autonomy from the state. Democratic organization and individual academic autonomy are viewed as hindrances to timely decisions and performance, to be replaced by strong management and inter-disciplinary organization. University Councils, comprising both internal (academics) and external (lay) members, are introduced, in an effort to bridge the gap between universities, society and economy. The authority for the development of institutional policy and fiscal management is transferred from the Senate to the Council. Accountability towards the state and society is achieved through quality assurance mechanisms, while performance is for the first time linked to budget allocation. With a view to improve university finances, incentives are provided for excellence in research, creation of spin-off

companies and patents. The Act introduced a new mode of governance in higher education, excluding students from participation in the election process of decision-making bodies (Rector, Dean, Head of the Department). It attempted to introduce a New Public Management organizational culture, conceiving of students as customers and soliciting student participation in quality assurance processes through course/programme evaluation. The underlying model of student representation tends to be characterized by a depoliticised student government which concentrates on providing student services that complement the institutional quality agenda (Klemencic 2011, 78). Student exclusion from the election process of decision making bodies did not meet again with significant student protests, thus leading to the conclusion that political apathy and indifference is the current dominant stance of the student body.

### **Discussion**

Instead of asking what universities should do, one should pose the question of how universities should be in order to promote democratic citizenship. How democratic citizenship is cultivated within existing governance structures, internal practices and processes, relationships with different stakeholders, especially students, and the wider social and political fields.

As we have stated, the field of higher education is relational to the social and political field. In the Greek context, universities refract the distortions, the clientelism and the power relations of these fields. These are coupled with a prevailing breach of trust between the members of the academic community, but also between universities and society. Such a breach is not particular to the higher education field, but is apparent in other social institutions as well, and constitutes a structural characteristic of Modern Greek society. Therefore, in any mode of governance and irrespective of the enforced institutional framework or whether education and knowledge are defined as private or public goods, we need to establish “new rules of the game” within the higher education field, as well as in its relation with the social and political field. To understand the disengagement of the student body one should be able to fully comprehend the reasons why Greek youth consider themselves incapable to intervene in the political game and how this dominant perception has been constructed.

Within the higher education field these new rules should encompass transparency and fairness in faculty-student's relations, empowering students and allowing them to occupy different (higher) positions in the field. Drawing from Bourdieu, in the Greek context students are not equal players in the field. They occupy subordinate positions in relation to the faculty and the central administration. When Act 1268/82 was introduced, the faculty was in a position to determine the academic future of students, through the arbitrary and non-explicit criteria of assessment of student achievement. They were also in position to use their academic capital to influence the positioning of specific students, sometimes of student's representatives, in the higher education and social field. Theoretically, students' position in the field of higher education was empowered in relation to their professors, as they became players in faculties' promotion through the ranks through their participation in evaluation processes. However, students' disengagement persisted even after the enforcement of Act 4009/11, which accorded them the power to assess faculty's academic ability.

Finally, of paramount importance is the strengthening of the autonomy of the higher education field in relation to the political field. Two closely interdependent aspects of university autonomy should be safeguarded; autonomy of academia from political intervention, especially regarding faculty appointment and promotion through the ranks and autonomy of academic from political networks; autonomy of student organisations from political party influence. Trust will not be restored unless the student body is convinced that its representatives defend student interests serving the common good and do not exploit their privileges to further their own personal agendas.

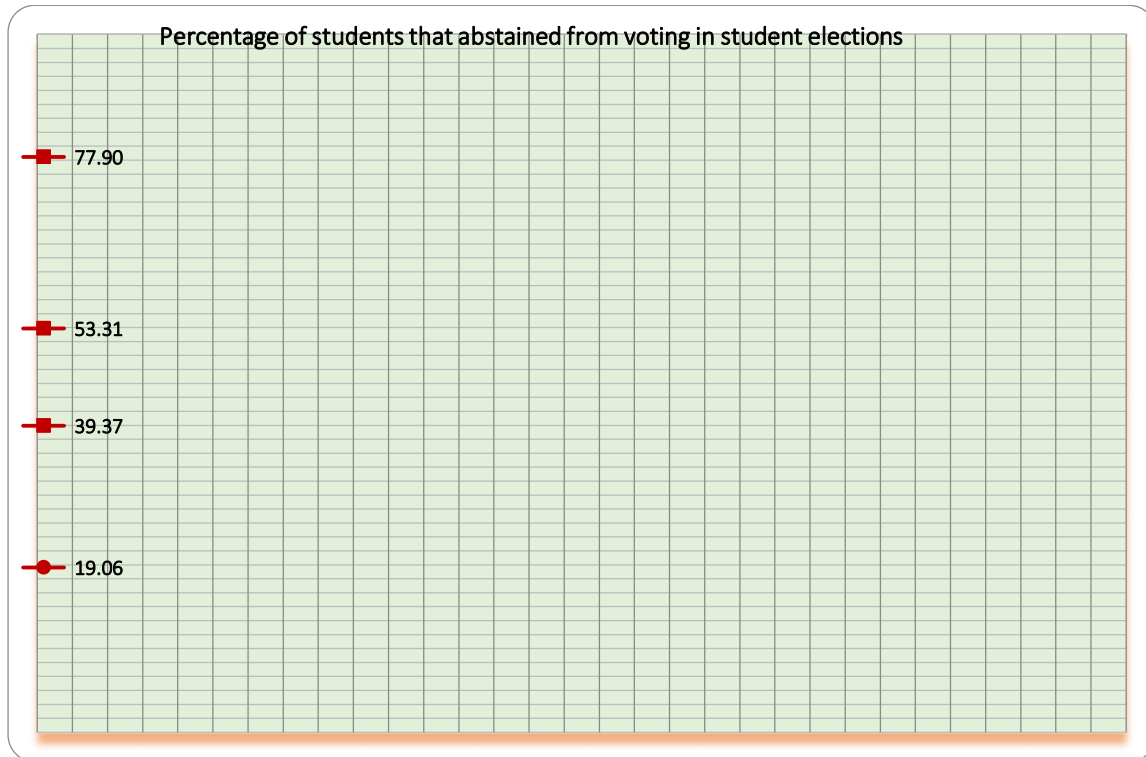
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## Appendix



**Figure 1**

## Re-regulating citizenship

Julia Spinthourakis, Georgia Gouga, & Ioannis Kamarianos - University of Patras and Higher Technological Educational Institute of Athens ggouga@teiath.gr

### **Abstract**

*In recent years, the discussion regarding citizenship has been considered as the main concern of economics, sociologists and educators as it has been seen as merely constituting a political but also an academic debate. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the position that the discussion regarding citizenship and citizenship education is not merely a historical type of epistemological research cut off from the social reality, but one that concerns our daily lives and constitutes a conscious choice. In this endeavor, we believe that an understanding of organizational change (regulation-deregulation) can enable the analysis and interpretation of phenomena and the difficulties stemming from the current financial crisis to the extent that it gives meaning and redefines the retreat of the welfare state and the emergence of new forms of regulation of the activities of social subjects. The final quality of the classroom as well as the stakes of democracy ultimately depend on this understanding.*

**Keywords:** regulation, citizenship, democracy, financial crisis.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The notion of citizenship as a means of involving social subjects in the enjoyment of public goods as well as ensuring their participation in decision making processes constitutes a dynamic process which is historically redefined. In previous years, the deregulation of institutional processes that bear strategic importance in shaping the notion of citizenship resulted in reformulating the conceptualization of the term in multifaceted ways and with multifarious meanings (both dynamic and multi-dimensional in nature) in order to allow for the understanding and interpretation of the political in consonance with the economic and the social strand. The relevant discussion today is driven essentially by the fact that for decades it has been observed that a retreat of the welfare state has significantly affected the social subjects' involvement in the political strand of society. More specifically, the process of receiving public goods as well as the participation in decisions that shape the public sphere is no longer guaranteed through the role of the welfare state. The decline of the welfare state, the rupture of the micro-narrative, the transformation of welfare capitalism to a liberal capitalist conception of the market, the invalidation of security and most importantly the consciousness of risk in societies, signified and marked its transition to a deregulation status. This paper presents thoughts on the subject that aim at understanding the quality of the stakes of redefining citizenship as a political arrangement. Specific objectives of the analysis are to begin a discourse towards understanding the impact that the management of the introduction of new technologies as well as the impact the institution of diversity practices will have on the regulation of education. That is we speak to -an institution important enough to make sense of efficiency processes as well as efficacy as the final challenge of modern educational processes that will allow for the cohesion of the public sphere within the daily life of European democratic societies.



## **A LYNCHPIN**

In 1944, Karl Polanyi, in the last part of his important work, *The Great Transformation*, pointed out that the operative moment in which market failure is combined with political paralysis has as its end product totalitarianism (Polanyi, 1944, pp. 231-244).

Today the juncture from which the new regulation is produced can be labeled as Debt Crisis.

The scientifically, socially and politically important contribution of Polanyi's theoretical framework lies primarily in conceiving and studying the change in the socio-political context and the essence of the normative reason of the social. In particular, we believe that through the analysis and the tools of Polanyi's theoretical form, it is perceived and, it is possible to analyze a process of regulation, in which the political and social field is today.

Thus, it would appear that the economic realm of the 1980s has almost to our day evoked a reason for deregulation of the institution of the public sphere. However, it has done so in a way that, as J. Habermas writes, the economy is today through its weaknesses, (that is, a lack of trust in the banking system which is the backbone of the economy of western modernity), combined with the collapse of the political (low turnout in the ballots, manipulation of electoral rules to manufacture dominance of electoral choices of the electorate, questioning the institutional political structure, main demagogic-populist rhetorical against globalization etc.) have lead to a resetting of a totalitarian type.

Finally, today's debate leads to the fact that a European debt crisis, which -due to refugee status, is transformed into a profound crisis of European politics- has a significant impact on how to determine the involvement of social subjects. A determination that is not only in the economic but mainly social and political field. It is essentially a re-arrangement of the state and the political with the Aristotelian meaning of the concept.

In conclusion, this article aims to contribute to the understanding of the redefinition of the state as the gain of the public good, participation in decision making and ultimately as regulation of the political.

## **THE EUROPEAN FINANCIAL CRISIS: THE GREEK CASE**

The European financial crisis, as well as the model of restructuring the European economy and the retreat of the European welfare state, are an important common European reference (Giroux, 2002). Thus, analysts and intellectuals such as J. Habermas will identify the issue of the debt crisis as a European problem concerning the quality and social cohesion of Western societies (Habermas, 1984; Staats, 2004).

More specifically, the analysis of the typical weaknesses of the socio-economic structure of the countries of the European South was simply confirmed by recent developments in the debt crisis (Petmetsidou, 1996). Particularly in the Greek case, the recent socio-economic developments (the

economy-refugee dilemma) are a typical example of the quality of the pressures exerted in the social sphere. A typical example is Health and Education where the resulting problems are legend. More generally, the inclusion of countries in the European region such as Greece or Ireland in the European Union and IMF support mechanism redefines the terms of discussion in terms of economic determinism of survival where the final stake is the same the democratic society (Alexakis, 2011).

The place of analysis is common: the decline of the international and European economies has highlighted a series of antisemia at the level of national economies and the overall structure of the European Union (Koniordos 2011). The debt crisis is not just an economic crisis like the refugee crisis is not just a humanitarian crisis. It is clearly a crisis of social and especially crisis politics, a crisis of democracy. Against this background, the debt crisis is increasingly threatening European cohesion while the crisis of the democratic political institutional strength of the European Union is becoming the dominant concern (Gouga & Kamarianos, 2011). The criticality of the increase in the intensity of the above structural conditions of social subjects is reflected institutionally and at the level of democratic processes (Petmesidou, 1996, pp. 324-347).

Thus, the decline of the welfare state in the strategic health and education sectors is directly linked to and impressed by the European debt crisis of western modernity. Whereby the stories of the collapse of the social and individual organizations, makes breaks with the linear evermore visible and transparent. The decline of the welfare state is directly linked to deregulation, privatization, flexibility of labor relations, elasticity of public spending, the prevalence of the stock market economy, and ultimately the establishment of a differentiated capitalist production model, the complexity of management problems and technological development (Skamnakis, 2011, p. 304; Terlexis, 1996).

### **CITIZENSHIP AND REGULATION: THE AXES OF DIVERSITY AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES**

The deregulation observed since the 1980s, based on the liberalization of the market and the economic relationship in the local and global worlds, meant that the process of gaining public goods and taking part in decision-making that shapes the public sphere is no longer guaranteed by its role as a Social State. The ever-increasing deprivation of public goods also meant a growing European-level qualitative and quantitative-economic and political inequality between the citizens of the European North and the European South.

This is why scholars such as the French thinker T. Piketty (2014) and the German J. Habermas (1984 & 2006) will identify the question of the retreat of the welfare state as a European problem that concerns the quality and social cohesion of Western societies. This is not new, for years now (Eurostat 2010), data exists on the cracks caused to the European construction by the difficulties faced by countries in the European South, such as Greece, and their ability to address major economic issues for their social and political cohesion, such as poverty, unemployment, as well as income redistribution inequality.

The decline of the Social State, the rupture of micro-admission, the transformation of welfare capitalism into a liberal capitalist conception of the Agora, the removal of security, and, most importantly, the consciousness of the risk of societies, marked and manifests the rupture with linearity and the big narratives.

Of course, the debate on European social policy and the role of the welfare state is extensive. More specifically, the debate on the role and importance of the welfare state is linked to the debate on the role of the state and the market leadership. Here, the reference to the market essentially refers to the dominance of market speech as an overriding cultural and social discourse and not to a labor market in connection with the pursuit of environmental, economic and social sustainability.

Our remark here is unrelated to the dominance of a discourse that undermines the identity of the citizen by submitting and imposing the identity of the consumer as an identity of participation. It does not do so as it deprives the right to participate in the work as a human right to co-transform the social action.

We would argue that an important part of shaping the regulation of social and political identities of social actions will be determined by the management of factors such as New Technologies and Diversity. More specifically, information and communication technologies are involved in the production of volatility, both as evangelists of continuous innovatory action, but also as the dominant tools of this transition. Linearity and data are replaced by the determinism of variability where the role of New Technologies is decisive.

Their importance is not only economic but important socially and politically insofar as digital networks become social environments. With these tools, differentiation, uncertainty, ambiguity, and, in particular, continuous change and transformation, both in subjective and structural terms, are greatly facilitated (Clark, 1996). Still introducing and managing diversity - are urgently required as the main axes of implementation, the quality of which will characterize social cohesion.

The transition to the economic, social and political management of diversity is not an economic regulation or regulation that only concerns the sphere of economic decision-making for the production of goods and the way in which subjects are involved in the sphere of production, overall affects the understanding of social relations.

We posit that it is essential to recognize the the impact that management of the introduction of Diversity and New Technologies can have. Regulation of the institution of education, an institution important for the understanding of efficiency and effectiveness processes as the final stakes of modern socio-political processes (such as education) will allow for the coherence of the public sphere in the European democratic society and, consequently, the corresponding understanding of modern state procedures.

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## Finnish pupils' views on the place of religion in school

Saila Poulter, Arto Kallioniemi, Arniika Kuusisto, Department of Educational Sciences, University of Helsinki, [saila.poulter@helsinki.fi](mailto:saila.poulter@helsinki.fi), [Arto.J.Kallioniemi@helsinki.fi](mailto:Arto.J.Kallioniemi@helsinki.fi), [Arniika.Kuusisto@helsinki.fi](mailto:Arniika.Kuusisto@helsinki.fi)

### **Abstract**

*This paper examines Finnish pupils' views on the place of religion in the public school. The religious landscape in Finnish society has changed significantly in recent years along the lines of many other Western societies. The role of institutionalized religion has diminished, increasing globalism has brought more diversity to worldviews, too, as well as the general growing interest in new religious movements and secularism. Thus, the traditionally strong position of Evangelical Lutheranism has also altered from the 'norm' into a more cultural, secular feature underlying the societal history and nationalism. In this changing situation, it is important to acquire up-to-date knowledge about how the younger generations of children and youth see the position of religion in the public education system, both as a formal part of the National Curriculum through Religious Education, and as a part of the more informal social interaction and the physical visibility of religious objects. The study utilizes a mixed methods design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative data (N = 825) reported here was collected with a survey questionnaire, and it was answered by students representing the age groups 12-13 and 15-16 (grades 6 and 9) in the Finnish comprehensive school. The qualitative data was gathered using face-to-face interviews with pupils (N = 38) representing the same age groups. The presented results include findings from basic statistical analyses alongside of qualitative content analysis on the interview data. The findings illustrate that the pupils see some significance in religious issues raised in school, and that the variance in their estimations is partly explained by their gender, their age, and their place of residence. The extracts from the qualitative data support and deepen the picture provided by the quantitative data.*

**Keywords:** worldview, religion, diversity, pluralism, school, children, youth

## Religious Organizations' Role in Times of Crisis

Maria Helena da Guerra Pratas ISEC- Instituto Superior de Educação e Ciências/ CEIA (Portugal)  
[hpratas@isec.universitas.pt](mailto:hpratas@isec.universitas.pt)

### **Abstract**

*Religious faith is often closely related to identity. Religious freedom is acknowledged and enshrined in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Council of Europe "White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue" (2008) recognizes that "part of the world's rich cultural heritage is a range of religious conceptions of the purpose of life. (...) Freedom of thought, conscience and religion is one of the foundations of democratic society" (Council of Europe, 2008, pp.22-24). Religious freedom violations are increasing all over the world (Pew Forum, 2015). Flagrant violations abound: religious freedom is often attacked in the name of other rights and values and religion continues to be used by some as a pretext for violence (Glendon, 2012, p.20).*

*Research shows that religious minorities are proliferating around the world, due to many factors such as wars, labor force movement, refugee flight, trade, education, etc. It also shows that religious freedom promotes peace by reducing inter-religious conflict (Farr, 2008). As in many other parts of the world, migrants turn to religious organizations in search of support. This happens in Portugal with religious organizations who welcome migrants, irrespective of their cultural or religious affiliation (Vilaça, 2008). Religious communities have been playing a key role in integrating new immigrants: they help to resolve emotional and other problems, such as unemployment, housing, language courses, education, advocacy, social services, as well as to establish contacts with other persons and institutions and they contribute to their social integration (Pires, 2003). This is not a process of cultural assimilation, but of reciprocal exchanges (Portes, 2000; Putnam, 2007). Religious communities work as agents able to build bridges with dimensions that are beyond the range of action of any political force (Vilaça, 2008).*

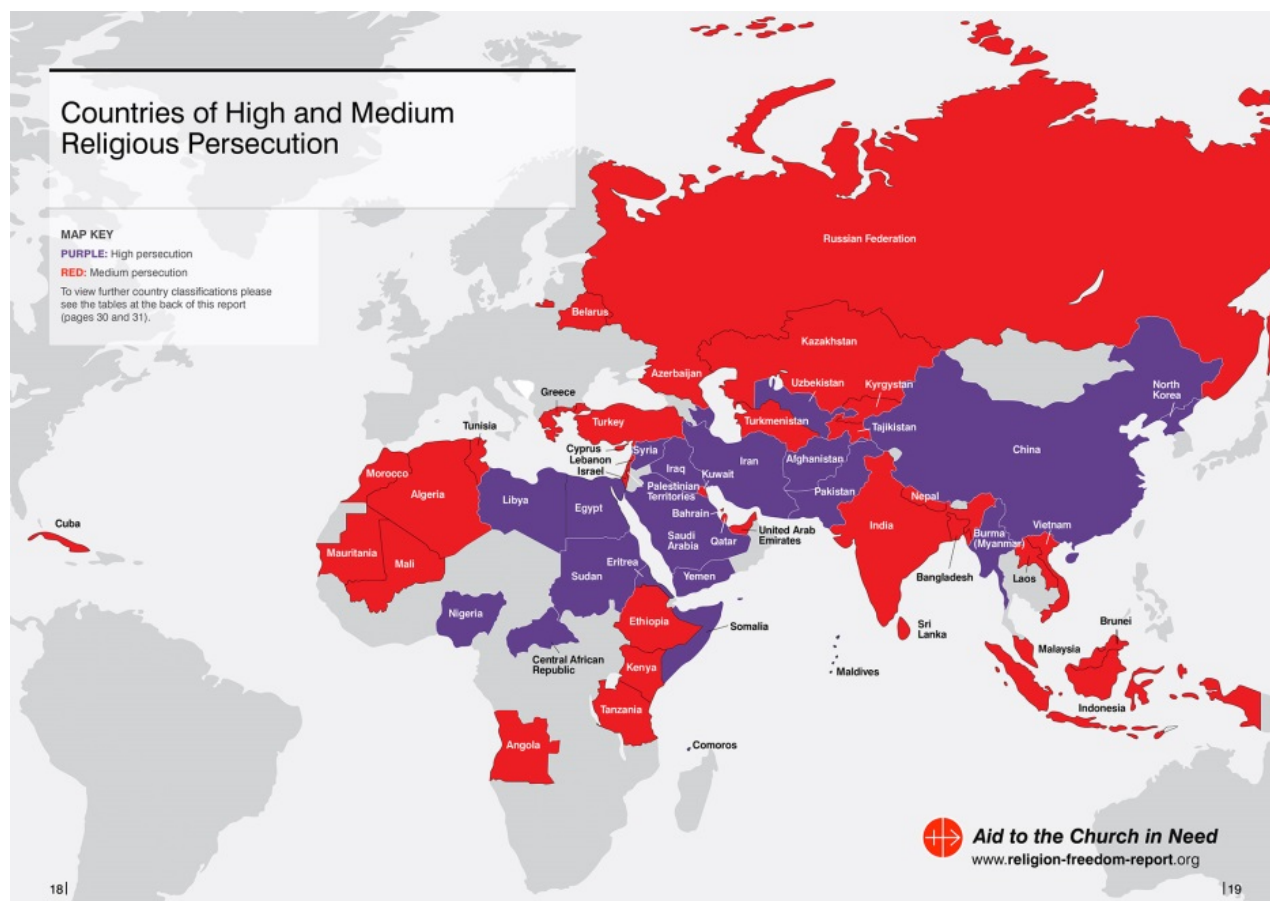
**Keywords:** religious freedom; religious organizations; identity

### ***Religious freedom in crisis***

Religious freedom is acknowledged and enshrined in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Openness to the transcendent is deeply inscribed in human nature and belongs to the fundamental dignity of every human person (Benedict XVI, 2012).

It is acknowledged that there are many religious freedom violations all over the world: 39% of the countries on earth, comprising 77% of the world's population, have high or very high restrictions on religious freedom (Pew Forum, 2015).

The Religious Freedom in the World Report (2014) published by *Aid to the Church in Need* - an international Catholic charity providing assistance to the suffering and persecuted by their Christian faith in more than 140 countries - presented us this significant picture of the Religious Persecution world map during the last year:



**Figure 1: Religious Persecution world map**

Mary Ann Glendon, President of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences - composed by many experts from diverse disciplines and regions of the world - on the occasion of the 17th Plenary Session of the Academy, on the theme of *Universal Rights in a World of Diversity: the Case of Religious Freedom* (2012), stated:

As even a cursory survey of the contemporary landscape reveals, the religious liberty of individuals, families, associations and institutions is under growing threat from many different directions. Flagrant violations abound. Tensions are mounting between the claim of universality and the diversity of practices and interpretations. Religious freedom is often attacked in the name of other rights and values. There is increasing conflict and confusion about the relations among the various bodies responsible for implementing human rights at local, national, and supranational levels. The problem of fostering habits of respect and tolerance for the religions of others remains acute. And religion continues to be used by some as a pretext for violence (Glendon, 2012, p. 20).



At the global level, no religion has a majority position, but even in countries that at one point had relative religious homogeneity, the percentage of adherents to the dominant religion is declining (Glendon, 2012).

The Council of Europe “White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue” recognizes that religious practice is part of contemporary human life, and it therefore cannot and should not be outside the sphere of interest of public authorities (Council of Europe, 2008). It considers that

part of the world’s rich cultural heritage is a range of religious conceptions of the purpose of life. Christianity, Judaism and Islam, with their inner range of interpretations, have deeply influenced our continent. (...) Freedom of thought, conscience and religion is one of the foundations of democratic society and protected by Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights (Council of Europe, 2008, pp. 22-24).

Research shows that religious minorities are proliferating around the world, due to many factors such as labor force movement, refugee flight, trade, education, etc. It also shows that religious freedom promotes peace by reducing inter-religious conflict (Farr, 2008).

### ***Identity, migration and religion in Portugal***

Portugal appeared as a nation in the 12th century and many historians have claimed that it is the oldest nation in Europe (Patrício, 2008); with old and stable borders, its’ history contributed strongly to forge a sense of national identity and cohesion (Matos, 2002). Authors stress its’ homogeneity as a country, but also claim that Portugal has always been closely linked, since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, with intercontinental boundaries: from Africa, Brazil, the Americas, Asia or India, in the last five centuries it was in a “*close connection to the global world, more than Europe itself*” (Patrício, 2008, p. 443). The Discoveries were the beginning of the Portuguese diaspora, which remains to this day (ACM, 2015).

The first institutions of social solidarity began in Portugal in the XII and XIII centuries mostly associated with religious orders from the Catholic Church. In the XV century, answering the problems of poverty in the country, the “Misericórdias” (Holy Mercy Houses) were founded and Houses for poor people were created (Carvalho, 2015).

Portugal is a non-confessional State and the Constitution defines the fundamental right of freedom of conscience, religion and worship for all religions (art.13<sup>o</sup>, 41<sup>o</sup>). In relation to the State and political power, the religious communities are autonomous and free in their organization and cults. Freedom is given to teach any religion, and to use the media for the appropriate activities (Eurel, 2015).

The great majority of Portuguese people (81%) are Roman Catholic, 3, 6% are from other religions and 6, 8% have no religion, according to a census in 2011 (INE, 2012; Vilaça & Oliveira, 2015). Other religious communities are: Orthodox, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, Evangelical, etc., formed

almost entirely by immigrants and their families (Teixeira, 2012). The data shows the overall superiority of the Christian confessions. The groups who grew most are the Orthodox - coming from various Eastern European countries - and the Muslims, mainly due to the immigration from former colonies, namely Guinea and Mozambique (Oliveira, 2013).

Interaction and exchange among people of different religious traditions can be a mutual enrichment. Inter-religious dialogue means to go beyond distrust or suspicion to respectful acceptance, hospitality and collaboration at all possible levels (Pratas, 2013).

***A case study: religious organizations' role in the integration of immigrants***

As in many other parts of the world, migrants turn to religious organizations in search of support. This happens in Portugal with catholic organizations who welcome migrants, independently from their cultural or religious affiliation, as states a recent study about 17 orthodox religious communities, all over the country (Vilaça, 2008).

Research and questionnaires applied in Portugal to immigrants from various Eastern countries - Ukrainians, Moldovans, Romanians and Russians - point in the direction that religious communities, even culturally diverse, represent a common space of identity. Religious practice improves in the situation of Diasporas, contributing to the consolidation of high levels of religiosity within the orthodoxy of their churches. Religion is, for many of those questioned (90%), more intense in exile and an essential dimension in their lives (Vilaça, 2008).

There is an intense relation between their communities and the Catholic Church - through the Work of Catholic Migrations and their Secretariats all over the country, especially with recent new comers from East Europe. Migrants are grateful to religious communities - also to the Catholic Church-, by the support received, at many levels. The degree of confidence in their own Churches and also in the Catholic Church score prominently in relation to other institutions. They have also expressed significant confidence (above 50%) in state institutions and public administration, especially those focusing on immigration (Vilaça, 2008).

Religious communities in Portugal have been playing a key role in integrating new immigrants; they help to resolve emotional and other problems, such as unemployment, housing, language courses, education, advocacy, social services, as well as to establish contacts with other persons and institutions (Vilaça, 2008) and they contribute to their social integration. This is not a process of cultural assimilation, but of reciprocal exchanges (Portes, 2000; Putnam, 2007).

***Conclusions***

In Portugal, immigrants are now major parts of the social Portuguese system: they contribute to the renewal of the population, to the economic development and to revitalizing of cultural and social behaviours. National laws have been created or developed in order to accommodate them. But still there is a journey to do (Antunes, 2009).

In an ever more pluralistic world, as a Sri Lankan theologian affirmed, at the global level, there is an increasing recognition that the world's problems are not Christian problems requiring Christian answers, but human problems that must be addressed together by all human beings (Ariarajah, 2006).

We are living in Europe a great crisis related with immigration and refugees from different countries, flying away from wars or from religious extremism persecutions. Politicians in Europe were still discussing how to solve the problem and how many refugees each European country could receive - based on its economic strength, population, unemployment and asylum applications - and several countries opposed the quota system and approved few asylum applications, or even constructed walls to avoid their entrance -. Precisely at the same time that the probable number announced by the European Commission for Portugal was 4.775 refugees, the Catholic Church announced that religious communities in Portugal would receive in their own houses 15.000 refugees. This proves that religious communities work as agents able to build bridges with dimensions that are beyond the range of action of any political force (Vilaça, 2008).

I should like to conclude, using some words from Tony Blair:

Engaging with issues of religion and conflict is not without difficulties. But their direct engagement with reconciliation efforts to provide practical tools to counter religious extremism puts them at the forefront of this debate. Their experience can help to map out our response to this crisis. This struggle will define the 21st century. There is no better cause, nor one more urgent (Blair, 2014, p. 5).

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## Education and the paradigm of tolerance

Sandra Chistolini Università Roma Tre, Italy [sandra.chistolini@uniroma3.it](mailto:sandra.chistolini@uniroma3.it)

### **Abstract**

*Living alongside one another in a spirit of acceptance evokes the concept of tolerance that, from Erasmus of Rotterdam to Voltaire to Primo Mazzolari, calls upon us to understand that the only possible choice for mankind, from time immemorial, has been to educate towards coexistence within milieus that increasingly differ by culture, customs, ways of thinking and behaviours. Beliefs and concepts sometimes refer to values that may also be quite remote from and unlike ours and, as a result, our capacity to find points of contact with other persons becomes the condition, not only for survival, but for growth itself as a human person. To know how to interpret and yet keep one's own points of reference is a constant challenge to our intelligence guided by the will to do good. The concept of free will is based precisely on the strength of the human will, driven to dedicate itself to whatever safeguards, or to turn away from the search for salvation. Freedom cannot exist if we replace it with new absolutisms and mental blocks that hinder the realisation of that growing humanisation plan, founded on responsibility and care. This paper broaches the subject of the relevance of education to tolerance: on one hand, a plan for detecting the limits within us and, on the other, the need for creating a human community, with the purpose of defining a common interest to live for and commit ourselves. So, it is a matter of choosing whether to live through another cold war or shift towards much more promising horizons of encounter and solidarity.*

**Keywords:** tolerance, coexistence, culture of peace, education

### **The roots of peace in culture**

Among the most enlightened minds, still recognised today as the progenitors of European humanism, Erasmus of Rotterdam is most assuredly to be remembered as he who raised his voice in support of freedom of intellect and a choice of peace, already in the sixteenth century, an era of great religious conflicts. As Henry Kamen (1967, p. 24) recalls, Erasmus (in 1523) maintained the inescapable choice of man, the choice of peace and harmony, overstepping any and every intolerance for religious reasons, in the expression *Summa nostrae religionis pax est et unanimitas*. During his lifetime, this great humanist showed how cultivation of the humanities was the true source of purification of the Church, which should doubtlessly be freed from the dogmas that were forcing it into confines of superstition and fanaticism. Disputes could not be acknowledged, even if they were the work of princes and, as he usually proclaimed, instead of war, one should learn to use the pen. War was a lack of search for fraternity and ideologies intensified the differences to the point where even those who talked about following the teachings of the Gospel, like the reformists, were open to behaviours that were anything but motivated towards agreement.

Nonetheless, although recognising the limitations of Luther, Erasmus did not believe he was to be persecuted and treated with force. The cities engaged in fighting should not destroy each other, but rather, and preferably, each group should stay within its own territory until there was a meeting of the minds in a healthy compromise for living without killing each other. Hence, overcoming dogmas and converging around essential truths could be the prerequisites for a peaceful life, in which religion was not the cause of hostility and intolerance. Allowing for free and open discussion

amounted to permitting everyone to express positions that might enable a path towards agreement, assuming this was the common objective.

What often happens is that, when a difference of views occurs, one opts for the view that the majority deems fairer and also true. As concerns free will, Erasmus led the discussion about this subject-matter, with respect to which it is good to confirm or deny fundamental truths. He asked the reader to evaluate the topics he proposed, either in favour or not of some theories, hereby taking into account that some thoughts came from judgements expressed by scientists, saints and theologians, while others represented judgements expressed by “any person or two” (Erasmus, 1989, p. 12). One might also wonder if it is the quantity or, rather, the quality that should guide our judgement and, thus, our decision. We question ourselves about the weight of the ideas and examine whether it is commensurate with the number of votes, or if it is founded on the correctness of what such ideas express or convey. The object of the choice is frequently neglected and we let ourselves be guided by the stance of some people who, if they are eloquent and captivating, with a certain dose of demagoguery, could persuade us towards affirmations that our reason, when calm and free, would never accept. If numbers should prevail over quality, this would not automatically mean that the better choice has been made. For convenience sake, the majority may approve something that does not correspond to the search for truth; for this reason, persons, such as teachers and educators, are required to assure an action of revelation and prophecy. If we were all informed at birth, there would be no reason to live together, meet and reach common views that allow for interpretations with meanings that may approach the plan for eternal salvation. On the other hand, if everything were so clear and easy to understand, there would be no need for discussion and education to tolerance.

### **Risks of superstition**

In his treaty on tolerance, Voltaire (1949, p. 131) showed how a single voice thrown into an angry crowd can instigate situations of negligence, even by those in authority whose task it is to dispense justice, as divine as it is human. How can one leave a majority that condemns the innocent and even governs those who should guarantee the respect for civil, human and social rights? Knowing how to distinguish between superstition and being able to choose the direction of respect and fraternity is the capacity Erasmus was talking about from another perspective. Weakness of minds, lack of culture, ignorance and prejudice, non-preparation to judgement calculated on facts and documents, and fanaticism may lead to simply considering anyone who does not think along the same lines guilty of a misdeed.

The call made by Umberto Eco (2012, 1990) to negative realism likens to a new confirmation of what is defined as a healthy search for the truth, starting from the interpretation of a fact that could repudiate some of our interpretations, from which, most probably, we could never definitely separate ourselves. Being willing to rethink and steadily adjust becomes a relevant strategy for surpassing the risks of modern absolutism that go from the intolerance of tolerance to the invariable interpretation of tolerance. One might ask oneself if the search for truth is solely a matter of interpretation or if, rather, it also requires a capacity for non-prejudicial and non-superstitious

reasoning. In truth, even in the novel *Il nome della rosa* (1980), in English *The name of the rose* (1983) we find Eco's choice to liberate a manuscript from obscurity and, with it, a bit of history, unquestionably marked by the horror of the inquisition, but also by the intellectual forces that opposed its manifestations. The story of Adso da Melk leads us by the hand in discovering truths that the wisdom of the teacher, William of Baskerville, reveals, as if they were quite obvious, but passed unobserved by minds and feelings frozen by the inquisition. An example of intolerance masked by religious belief and the conviction of being the sole, eternal guardians of knowledge meant for only a few. And so, while the Abbot explains the divine mission that consigns custody of the word of God to the monks, William ingenuously concludes with a pragmatic, simple question-phrase that makes one smile that can be summarised in the unexplainable prohibition to access culture in the name of faithfulness to the sacred.

"If God has now given our order a mission, it is to oppose this race to the abyss, by preserving, repeating and defending the treasure of wisdom our fathers entrusted to us. Divine Providence has ordered that the universal government, which at the beginning of the world was in the East, should gradually, as the time was nearing fulfilment, move westward, to warn us that the end of the world was approaching, because the course of events has already reached the confines of the universe. But until the millennium occurs definitely all, until the triumph, however brief, of the foul beast that is the Antichrist, it is up to us to defend the treasure of the Christian world and the very word of God, as he dictated it to the prophets and the apostles, as the fathers repeated it without changing a syllable, as schools have tried to gloss it, even if today, in the schools themselves the serpent of pride, envy, folly is nesting. In this sunset, we are still torches and light, high on the horizon. And as long as these walls shall stand, we shall be the custodians of the divine Word." "Amen", said William, in a devout tone. "But what does this have to do with the fact that the library may not be visited?" (Eco, 1980, pp. 44-45).

Going beyond the textual narration, what dominates the subject is the strong opposition between those who deem themselves guardians of great missions and impose them on others, scrupulously and violently, and those who humbly follow the will of God, choosing the path of poverty and doubt. We would not seem to be faced with a problem of interpretation, but rather, we sense the depth of that inner question that is attempting to understand what frees from fundamentalisms and what opens the mind to the truth that shapes the human person.

### **The limits of tolerance**

Voices have been raised to defend the limits of tolerance. As Philippe Sassier observes (1999, pp. 166-169), the distinction between tolerate and leave it as is does not mean the same thing. Hunger and poverty are not to be tolerated; injustice and persecution are not to be tolerated; indifference and passiveness when faced with evil are not to be tolerated.

The path of man and philosophical thought indisputably leads to the principle of universal tolerance. However, rationality is not enough to understand many of the human problems and we regretfully note that, due to a lack of balance, feelings sometimes guide us more than reason,

without neglecting that matters given over to reason do not always render choices of death or violence plausible. Tyrannies claim to act rationally and justify interventions that end in mass murder and the privation of human rights in the name of a faith, a belief or defence of identity. Actions and interventions that would not be allowed in other contexts. What has been happening in Nigeria since 2001, caused by local groups, such as the Islamic fundamentalist organisation Boko Haram, represents the decline of religion, used to justify violent actions that reduce the human person to a state of submission, obedience and slavery, by taking advantage of the weakness of defenceless young people, abducted and forcefully removed from the safety of their families and lifelong communities, if not actually killed.

For years, Shirin Ebadi (2006), awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his commitment to defending human rights and supporting democracy, has been repeating the value of schools and education against ideologies that kill, such as what is also happening with Isis. In parallel, intolerance results in as many legal and criminal occurrences as violations of religious freedom and the dignity of being human, which reach possible reparations and even extreme consequences. There is evidence of this in both the experience of Meriam Yehya Ibrahim, accused of apostasy and then freed (2014), and the tragic end of the spouses Shama and Shahzad Masih (Pakistani Christian Association in Italy, 2014) burned alive on 4 November 2014 because they were Christians. Prior to this, the assassination of Shahbaz Bhatti, Minister of Minorities in Pakistan, on 2 March 2011, had raised indignation throughout the world (Bhatti, 2008; Milan, 2012) and made it clear that dialogue among religions was still delicate and fragile. The political use of religion for the purpose of asserting ethnic and national identity is going through a new critical phase that challenges a much-discussed relationship between politics and religion. The law makes this relationship possible on a footing of social equality and non-discrimination, for both cultural and religious reasons. In his *Letter Concerning Toleration*, John Locke abundantly describes the risks of religion becoming a “pretext” for committing injustices:

Nobody, therefore, in fine, neither single persons nor churches, nor even commonwealths, have any just title to invade the civil rights and worldly goods of each other upon pretense of religion. Those that are of another opinion would do well to consider with themselves how pernicious a seed of discord and war, how powerful a provocation to endless hatreds, rapines, and slaughters they thereby furnish unto mankind. No peace and security, no, not so much as common friendship, can ever be established or preserved amongst men so long as this opinion prevails, that dominion is founded in grace and that religion is to be propagated by force of arms. (Locke, 2005, p.19) (Translated from the Latin by William Popple)

There is no shortage of signs of the international recognition of the need for encounter, as the exercise of a universally recognised right, if one thinks that, just now, in 2014, the Nobel Prize was awarded to Malala Yousafzai (2013) for peace and the defence of the rights of children, referring, in particular, to women’s rights to education: a statement that tolerance is not exclusively a question of good sense, but also the sole reply to a civility that is vastly shared for our survival. It is an educational action for the formation of consciences towards a constitutional culture that



democratic countries choose to pursue, as a preferred path of social responsibility and participation in the continuation of our existence.

### **For an alliance between law and culture**

In schools, the study of the *Constitution of the Republic of Italy* (1948), on a theoretical level and its practical implications, constitutes a guarantee for the awareness and acquisition of the competences required for implementing those principles that represent the formalisation of national awareness and the joint focusing on common; worldwide goals of recognising the dignity of the human person (Corradini, 2014). Referred to, more specifically, is Article 3 of the Constitution that states: “All citizens have equal social dignity and are equal before the law, without distinction of sex, race, language, religion, political opinion, personal and social conditions. It is the duty of the Republic to remove those obstacles of an economic and social nature, which constrain the freedom and equality of citizens, thereby impeding the full development of the human person and the effective participation of all workers in the political, economic and social organisation of the country”, and Article 8 that emphasises how: “All religious denominations are equally free before the law. Denominations other than Catholicism have the right to self-organisation, according to their own statutes, provided these do not conflict with Italian law. Their relations with the State are regulated by law based on agreements with their respective representatives”. On this subject, and from an international standpoint, we draw on three points in Article 26 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948), which reads: “(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.” (International code of human rights, 2008, p. 51).

It can definitely be said that as much the constitutional charter as international recommendations indicate the horizon value to be followed to make tolerance a way of thinking, to be acquired through the right education to the knowledge and exercise of human rights and, among these, the right to education merits special mention.

In describing the evolution of tolerance from Erasmus to John Stuart Mill, the academic David Merli (2003, pp. 389-391), reaches the conclusion that religions tend to increase with a parallel growth of diversification, rather than unification. The multiplication could be a sign of vitality, but it could also forge a passage to new conflicts. From this point of view, the analysis is augmented by the universal message spread by the Church, which, particularly during the Second Vatican Council (1965), called for the tolerance of Catholics for everyone, even atheists, since everyone contributes to building the world in which we live and, for this purpose, dialogue is to be considered a plausible, shareable form, through which the right position for the fundamental rights of the human person

can be found. It follows that the pledge to live the right to life, the right to education and the right to peace and justice can never be considered depleted, but, rather, is to be rendered vibrant in the closest and farthest human vicissitudes. According to Gianni Manzone (2004, pp. 7-16), multicultural societies are the ones that feel problems of tolerance the most, due to both the pluralism of values and the asymmetry of the distribution of power (Galeotti, 1994). The only possible path is that of dialogue, as much interpersonal as institutional, in which taking care of the person implies interpreting his or her past experience, not limited to the historical and social contingency, but aimed at a project of universal transcendence.

### **The condition for living together**

At the end of the Second World War, Primo Mazzolari reflected on the need for tolerance that originated in the past in a Europe troubled by religious struggles. Whether due to scepticism or Christian charity, people felt that hate in the name of a creed and a profession of faith could not continue to be nurtured.

This issue was brought up again whenever the divisions caused a distancing from a common point of contact. In fact, if we were able to define a general interest around which we could all converge, without worrying about our particular passions and specific desires, the necessity to pursue and spread the culture of tolerance would drop away. The reality, however, is quite another matter. We continue to fight wars and sign treaties. It seems hostilities divide us more than friendships bring us closer. The language is the same, and yet, what we feel inside carries us to raise borders and walls. As the divisions escalate, we perceive how indispensable it is to turn to what can unite and no longer separate us. This allows us to live in our essentiality, without feeling threatened by peremptory, devastating judgements. It is where the understanding of tolerance begins, as a *forma mentis* that prepares thinking towards the other as thinking aimed at good. Mazzolari wrote that tolerance, which “could also be called ‘the effort to think good thoughts’, as Pascal put it, is the condition for living together” (2013, p. 58).

If freedom was missing before, what is now missing is tolerance, in which the principle of equality of all men is affirmed both before God and in interpersonal relations. We were created as equals, but unlike one another in personality; we are thus dissimilar. The profile of a tolerant person is a person who sees and accepts equality as much as dissimilarity. We are equal by dignity and respect, but different by emotions, feelings, thoughts and personalities. The profile of the intolerant person is a person who is devoid of a sense of equality and would like everyone to be modelled the same way, shaped with precision, making it possible to overcome the unpredictability and surprise that arise from dissimilarity.

From a political point of view, we can observe that a tolerant government recognises the equality and dissimilarity of its citizens, chooses respect for freedom, is the government of a population that actively participates in defining and observing the laws and is the government of democracy. Vice versa, an intolerant government is run by one, or a few persons, denies equality and suppresses dissimilarity, forcing everyone to conform, and abolishes creativity and spontaneity; it does not

heed the authenticity of behaviours and the value of the uniqueness of each person. The tolerant government may also not be as ordered and disciplined as the intolerant one, but it is worth more, because it is founded on human respect; it is a vital government, in which peace springs from trust and does not fall to pieces due to the consumption of a rule and the intolerability of unshared impositions.

If the States require a philosophical project for perpetual peace, as Kant hypothesised (1999), we, as people, need a natural agreement of tolerance, as Mazzolari foreshadowed (2013, p. 117).

At this point in our thinking, we can definitely say that, today, the subject, problem and choice of tolerance acquire an unbounded extension that cannot be confined to an option of resolution of religious, political and ideological conflicts. This is an option of vast proportions that entails both commonality and taking up a position against revived racisms and reiterated social injustices.

Tolerance is also what makes us compassionate with ourselves and others. It is feeling mercy and pain that makes us accept limitations so as to understand that to offer hand or ask for help are profoundly human actions in a host community. Such actions enable warding off the destruction of those who are often rejected, because they are weak and helpless, and have no say, and yet have a life to be expressed in full. Solidarity starts with a sense of charity that does not sustain situations in which persons must submit to a way of thinking that crushes them and does not free them. Mazzolari's message anticipates what the core of rebuilding the value of the person was, in a society subjected to destabilising forces, as well as human identity and the stability of being God's creature, during the years following the Second World War.

### **Our intellectual duty**

The course of reflection followed in this essay has taken moves from the proposition of the subject of choice, understanding it as the ability to distinguish between the many paths of the mind and heart, having a preference for those oriented towards the realisation of what is congenial to human nature, since they are consistent with the path of civilisation to date and with the idea of tolerance on which our coexistence is based. If the authority of the texts written by well-known academics, as Erasmus sustained, has its reasons to be in the cultural heritage that accompanies us, it is true that within that limitless mass of knowledge we find traces of acceptance of those who do not think as we do and, because of this, cannot be treated as a person condemned to death by courts of men and laws they enact, as Voltaire sustained.

The truth has been revealed on a religious plane, but it is to resurface, day after day, as a wealth of the experience that resides in the inner life of others and that my interpretation, our interpretation, is manifested by continuous discoveries and not once and for all. Along this path, Eco leads through the labyrinths of the Middle Ages and post-modern times to show both the depth of knowledge and the risks of its limitations.

Culture is the name given to those forms of social living that become the roots of our national and cosmopolitan identity. An identity, not a dogma, subject to constant reformulations, always aided by more imagination and fertile creativity, the more the better as we learn to cultivate our humanity. Within this scenario, the call of Martha C. Nussbaum (1997) can be sustained, when she writes:

People from diverse backgrounds sometimes have difficulty recognizing one another as fellow citizens in the community of reason. This is so, frequently, because actions and motives require, and do not always receive, a patient effort of interpretation. The task of world citizenship requires the would-be word citizen to become a sensitive and empathic interpreter. Education at all ages should cultivate the capacity for such interpreting (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 63).

Alongside the pedagogical meaning of education to tolerance, such as the acceptance of ideologies, faiths, systems of life different from one's own and recognition of their validity (Ricciardi Ruocco, p. 42), we must needs consider the problematic transition, which shifts the analysis from a religious plane to a secular plane. Thus, in noting the great variety of forms and expression of tolerance, we see how their vastness merges into new interpretive contexts that adopt, as binding, not so much the sharing of pluralism as the state of the multicultural society, a challenge to tolerance and promise of tolerance. This way, the subject of multiculturalism, examined by Michael Walzer (1997, pp. 147-153), as a political arena of both economic and social equality, represents an opening for the debate, so as to recognise how many obstacles there still are prior to the realisation of a project, in which we can coexist in full respect of the human dignity of each and every person. The nerve centre of this tolerance is the recognition of the differences of groups through the proposition of programmes for putting aside those possible new discriminations of an economic nature that, in the name of poverty, lead us to again give voice to our intellectual duty to choose the good and shun the bad.

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## The Role of History as a School Subject in Shaping National and European Identity

Nicolae HURDUZEU Lecturer, PhD, West University of Timisoara Roumania, Departament for Teachers Training, [nicolae\\_hurduzeu@yahoo.com](mailto:nicolae_hurduzeu@yahoo.com)

### **Abstract**

*History as a school subject can be seen as one of the most pertinent forms of collective identification, but also the link between European identity and national identity, both on a relational level and symbolical one. Teachers help students develop – exhibit responsible civic behaviour by exercising social skills, forming a positive image about the self and the others, developing sensitivity towards the aesthetical values of the culture - a series of specific values, attitudes and behaviours civically responsible, as well as the development of the capacity of active integration in socio-cultural and professionally different groups. The elements considered to form the basis of community feeling among European citizens are mostly cultural and are to be found in domains such as history, religion, economy, which develop the community's feeling towards Europe. Therefore, we can state that European identity is mostly of civic nature/ instrumental, having as source the common origins and past of all Europeans*

**Keywords:** history, European identity, national identity, civic behavior

The role of the school is to create a link between family and profession as it presents the teenager – student with a set of social experiences which have the role to familiarize him with such values such as independence, consistency, academic knowledge acquisition, tolerance and responsibility (Pruteanu, 2008, p.2). The present-day teenager lives in a world full of tensions, social-economic and political changes, evolution and redefining of professions and occupations.

The school and the family are the institutions which have as primordial task the socializing of the youth which finds in his/her family the examples and models which shape the flexible and stable structures of his personality. The social tasks of the family remain the same: to facilitate the child to acquire norms, values and habits necessary for his development as an individual belonging to a society (Pruteanu, 2008, p.2). The conscience of identity develops gradually from childhood to adulthood.

The determinant force of the community is much stronger in traditional societies, while in modern society the individual has a greater liberty to shape his/her own identity. Nevertheless, even in modern societies, the individual does not create his/her own identity. The individual is constantly creating himself/herself, also through common interpretations, criticism and self-criticism that arise from the community and the society in which the individual is born (Bujalos 2011, p. 22).

From a historical point of view, the issue of identity is a modern problem, as its appearance enables the deconstruction of the traditional social hierarchy which predetermined the place of the individual in a social construction. National identity is an important part of the conscience of identity which enables the individual to feel and consider himself as belonging to a nation. It

represents the conscience of belonging to a particular nation, of self-identifying with its traditions and system of values (Murány 2011, p. 350).

The politics of centralized linguistic assimilation generated the possibility that the concept of nation received, even unwillingly, a cultural interpretation and, at the same time, is not a social or cultural entity, but a political entity, and therefore conscious national identity is not conditioned by a common language or a common ethnic origin. All these facts underline that the spread of a common language is not necessary for a nation but to a bureaucratic and centralized nation-state (Balogh –Bernáth 2011, p. 14).

All these ensure positive clues regarding the survival of the “Europe of nations” and the creation of a strong European identity because grounded on these, the erosion of the nation state does not determine the erosion of the nation and European patriotism is not prevented (Balogh –Bernáth 2011, p. 15). Regarding the issue of European citizenship, the Constitution of EU clarifies that European citizenship is complementary with national citizenship and does not replace it (Stamatescu-Căpiță 2012, p. 54).

European identity is grounded in unity and diversity as well as on Christian tradition and on civic construction (Balogh–Bernáth 2011, p. 13). European identity, as an entity which determines self-interpretation, is possible only through cross-border civil bonding.

Some researchers believe that European identity means both cultural values and political ones, the differences are only given by the dominance of one or the other : either cultural identity or the policy is dominant, but both play a role in establishing the identity of the individual European(Horváth –Kassai 2011, p. 96 ).

In the course of strengthening European identity is the most important role is played by the citizenship status. The identification with symbols such as the flag, the anthem or the currency, can occur only after the individual considers himself a part of the “system” mainly as a citizen of Europe, both in national and political way (Horváth –Kassai 2011, p. 97).

History as a school subject - through the field of knowledge it represents - has a very strong connection with the social and the political action areas. History focused, after all, for a long time on political events, as the most visible events were (and still are) worth mentioning. (Stamatescu-Căpiță 2012, p. ii). In Romania, the reform of the education is oriented towards student centered learning. This approach leads to a better understanding of the past and transforms the teaching of history in a dynamically organized process based on different sources and opinions. (Gocea 2007, p. 15). Such an approach offers students the opportunity to go further, beyond its own set of values, and understand each other's values (Klingenberg 2010, p. 12-13).

History can give other school subjects, such as civic education, the area of analogy and concrete facts. Moreover, it can give a chronological approach that civic education, as an instrumental

subject, as well as a subject which forms instruments, often ignores. Civic education contributes (or should contribute) in its turn to the assumption of the purposeful use of history. The interest for the civic dimension strengthens the conceptual dimension of some new fields of historic research and helps ensure an empathic approach of history (Stamatescu-Căpiță 2012, p. ii).

History, as a school subject, is one of the most pertinent forms of collective identification, as well as the bond between European identity and national identity, both at a relational level, as well as symbolic level. By means of the competencies it should form in students- the development of civic behavior through the practice of social skills, the shaping of a positive image about the self and the others, the raising of awareness towards the social values of culture –a series of values, attitudes and specific responsible civic behaviors, as well as the development of active integration capacity in various social-cultural and professional groups are promoted (History National Curriculum available at [www.edu.ro](http://www.edu.ro) or <http://cnc.ise.ro>).

1. Teaching history in the democratic Europe of the 21<sup>st</sup><sup>12</sup> century (Recommendation no.15(2001)) should have the following aims:

- to occupy a central place in the education of citizens responsible and actively involved in the political life and in the nourishing of the respect for differences among nations, being grounded on the assertion of national identity and on the principles of tolerance;
- to be a decisive factor in the reconciliation, knowledge, understanding and mutual respect between nations;
- to play a vital role in the promotion of fundamental values such as tolerance, mutual understanding, human rights and democracy;
- to be a fundamental part of the free-consent building of Europe grounded on shared historic and cultural heritage enriched by diversity and which sometimes includes even dramatic and conflictual aspects;
- to be a part of the educational policy which plays an important part in the progress of the young generation, thus actively taking part in the building of Europe, as well as in the peaceful evolution of the human society in a global perspective, in the spirit of mutual respect and understanding;
- to ensure in students the development of intellectual capacities of analysis and interpretation of historical data in a responsible and critical way, through dialogue, research of historical proof and open debate. This should be grounded on the multiple perspectives on the history especially considering controversial and sensitive issues;
- to allow the citizens of Europe to form and affirm their own individual and collective identity through the knowledge of the shared historical heritage in its local, regional, national, European and global aspects;

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<sup>12</sup> Annex to Recommendation nr. 15 (2001)



- to be an instrument for the prevention of crimes against humanity.
2. *In order to shape national and European identity*, as the European constitution is both the free-will expression of the inhabitants and a historic reality, history as a teaching matter should:
- continue to present historic relations on local, regional, national and European level;
  - encourage the study of those periods and events which have a clear European dimension, especially of the historical and cultural events and of the influences which determine the formation of a European conscience;
  - use every possible means, especially modern informational means, for the cooperation and exchange between schools on themes considering European history;
  - develop the interest of the students in the history of other European states;
  - focus more on the study of the European construction process.
3. The study of history, besides the study of encyclopedic information, should as well:
- raise awareness in students on the knowledge of the European dimension, open towards the rest of the world;
  - develop in student's critical capacities, the ability to think for themselves, to show objectivity and resilience to manipulation;
  - emphasize events and moments which marked the history of Europe by some periods and deeds, studied on local, national, European and global level;
  - study each aspect of European history, not only the political one, but the economic, social and cultural aspects;
  - increase the curiosity and research spirit, especially by investigating historical inheritance, and area which can stimulate inter-cultural influences.
  - eliminate prejudices and stereotypes by emphasizing the mutual influences between countries, regions and schools of thought in a certain historical development period;
  - to research critically the forms of manipulating history, starting with the denial, falsification, omission, ignoring of historical facts or redefinition of ideological objectives;
  - to study controversial and sensitive events by researching various facts, opinions and perspectives as well as by researching historical truth.

Several aspects should be considered in the debate about European identity.

First, European identity is built through positive social interaction between the citizens of the member states of the EU in order to raise the awareness of all the beneficiaries of European integration and to identify civic and cultural resemblances among them.

Second, European identity may be represented as transmitting the success stories of the European Union, such as the story of the European integration process as a successful economic project, the story of the shared cultural past of Europe and the new social bonds which develop starting from the cultural diversity of the European Countries.

Third, European identity is defined and redefined in opposition to other communities to which it reaffirms its particularities.

And, fourth, European identity is integrated in the multiple identities theory, according to which individuals have several identities which become prevalent according to necessities, interests and circumstances. From this point of view, European identity and national identity coexist as one is civic/ instrumental and the other is cultural/affective.

Despite problems which seem unsurmountable, European identity must be developed (Biró-Kaszás 2011, p. 73). Transparency grounded on equality can be achieved by building trust and solidarity beyond national borders. This trust is not only a result of the joint process of political opinion formation and will, but a condition for it. Political citizen identity, without which Europe cannot gain the ability to act independently, can be built only in the sphere of nations (Habermas, 2006, p. 81). Identity, in European sense, means the differentiation and defending of a nation from other nations. European national identity seeks an answer for the question: who is Hungarian? who is French? who is Romanian? (Bujalos 2011, p. 79).

The elements considered to be at the heart of the sense of community among European citizens are cultural and can be found in fields such as history, religion, economy, which develop feelings of belonging to Europe.

Thus, we can state that European identity is, most of all, of civic/ instrumental nature, starting from the joint origins and past of all Europeans.

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## Teaching Strategies for Cultivating Historical Awareness during times of Crisis and Diversity

Georgia Dede, University of Patras, Greece, [georgiacondede@gmail.com](mailto:georgiacondede@gmail.com)

### **ABSTRACT**

*The course of history, ideally, contributes to the cultivation of the national consciousness and helps form the social, political, national and global identity. In the Greek multicultural society, there is an important connection between diversity and the course of history. The existence of this connection is considered to be particularly essential in periods of political, economic, social and cultural crisis. However, when demographic changes arise in a country's and in a school's profile combined with economic, social and political difficulties, one of the questions that arise is whether a national curriculum's educational goals are being redefined and additionally if the methods that teachers employ are being reevaluated. Along with this is the need to consider if and to what extent the curriculum makes clear references to multicultural teaching of history, and how teachers manage to utilize the teaching material in the context of multiculturalism.*

*In this paper, we will present the findings of a qualitative research study that examined primary education teachers' attitudes and perceptions on how the course of history effect the development of historical awareness. Our findings are based on the data collected through semi-structured interviews with practicing primary school teachers in Western Greece and the Peloponnese. We will also look at the importance cultivating historical consciousness has for the Greek multicultural class. The hypothesis of this study concerns the way that teachers understand the importance of the course of History. Specifically, this study explores whether these perceptions and consequently the teachers' approaches and the content of the national curriculum include the notion of multiculturalism through the lens of social, economic and political crisis that characterizes current Greek society, and thus the extent to which the cultivation of the historical consciousness is being achieved in today's Greek multicultural classroom.*

**Keywords:** *primary school teachers, multicultural classroom, historical consciousness, teaching strategies/techniques*

### **Introduction**

Through the last decade Greek society appears to be fragmented. The austerity program implemented from 2011 has pushed Greek people in neediness and poverty which progressively challenges the validity and stable function of basic national structures such as health and education system.

Simultaneously, the perpetual influx of refugees in Greece forms a new dynamic in the modern society. The frequent failure of accepting diversity in the context of the economic crisis and the unprecedented needs that are being shaped, has lead to phenomena like the significant increase in racist incidents, which in the long run indicate the difficulties that Greek society faces with adjusting to the recent conditions.

This situation seems to partially stem from dysfunctions of school. Specifically, as History interprets human evolution, an important question emergent is associated with the role of History as a school

subject in the process of standardizing the current issues and dealing with diversity. The implementation of the basic principles of transformative theory and interdisciplinary may be a missing piece of the puzzle, in order to envision, plan out and utilize a multicultural way of teaching History to primary education students.

### **Theoretical Considerations**

In this paper, we will examine the reasons why History and Historical Awareness, as the result of teaching school history, may be important in a multicultural classroom. To begin with, it is essential to define the meaning of the word History. We will also address some canals through which multicultural teaching of history.

#### ***History as a field of science***

History as a social science, systematically examines the past focusing on human activity (Whitney, 1889). History is not a simple chronicle of past events, but instead it is related with the analysis of the reasons and the consequences of human behavior and activity in specific situations, so as to understand the present, as it is impossible to explain how things evolved without taking into consideration the context of their evolution (Van der Linden, 2001). Ultimately, History's purpose is considered to be the configuration of national consciousness, the cultivation of sentiments of solidarity and co-responsibility for the future of humanity and the consolidation of the citizenship identity (Moniot, 2002).

#### ***History as a school subject***

Although the reason why the subject of History is considered as very significant among other curriculum subjects is multidimensional. According to Thuillier & Tulard (1993), History exercises students' memory, awakes their curiosity and stimulates the historical fiction and cultivates the historical thinking. Moreover, history contributes to the cultivation of collective values to the future citizen, as it exercises students' critical skills and shapes public opinion. On the bottom line, history strengthens students' national identity and forges their 'national consciousness (Thuillier – Tulard, 1993).

In general, History is a medium through which cultural heritage is being transmitted to humanity and aims to shape cultural and historical consciousness through historical way of thinking. According to Jean Peyrot (2002), History allows students to participate in democratic processes for decision making by shaping the consciousness of citizenship at national and global level and by cultivating feelings of tolerance and respect for democratic values (Banks, 2008). Simultaneously, History defends human rights by projecting and promoting feelings of solidarity towards other people and cultures and encourages the cultivation and designation of personal autonomy (Peyrot, 2002). Ideally, teaching of history leads to the cultivation of historical awareness.

### ***Historical Awareness: the refining of multicultural pluralism***

The course of history aims at shaping historical consciousness, as it provides students with the opportunity to understand people's behavior in specific situations and form values and attitudes that lead to responsible behavior in present and future, as it recounts and analyzes images from the past and offers a variety of stimuli that influence the formation of this consciousness, (FEK 303, 2003, 3918-3919).

According to Rüsen (2007), Historical awareness is associated with the objective knowledge of the historical process in its entirety by placing people in the center of interest and by surpassing local and national boundaries (Rüsen, 2007; Ross, 2007). As historical awareness is a focal meeting point between the past and the present, students with a view to acquire that kind of knowledge, learn how to investigate, they find evidence, argue and draw their own conclusions (The National Curriculum Handbook for Primary Teachers in England, 1999). They also learn how to interpret the historical facts through a multifaceted approach, which is not limited to national boundaries and glorious national interpretations and even misconceptions, but instead with the cultivation of Historical Awareness students are able to deal with diversity and on the bottom line respect it (Peyrot, 2002). The benefits of the research and study of history was classified by Hill and Kerber as follows: 1. Research for proposals and solutions as for current problems, 2. Designation of present and past trends, 3. Emergence of the various interactions among diverse cultures, 4. Reassessment of the facts and information that are related at the present to specific theories and generalizations about the past (Cohen & Manion, 1994). As a result, we could consider Historical awareness as a wider and more complicated concept compared to National consciousness, which includes the narrow sense of national identity (Peyrot, 2002).

### ***The need for Multicultural Education***

Global migrations among diverse racial, cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups provoke complicated issues related to citizenship, the human rights, democracy and education (Banks, 2008). The need for peaceful coexistence between multicultural populations should be interpreted through the curriculum planning and design and the educational goals. According to Banks (2007), in a pluralistic society ethnic, racial and cultural diversity should be reflected in all the structures of educational institutions, including the staff, rules and values, curriculum and students (Banks, 2007). Multicultural education is a way of thinking and provides a different perspective of the reality (Banks, 1993).

According to Gay (2002) a culturally responsible pedagogy tries to combine students' previous experiences with cultural knowledge and different attitudes in order to enhance the learning process (Gay, 2002). Multicultural education aims at a *transforming process* leading to cultivation of active members of society who are able to think critically (Banks, 1994, 2010). Furthermore, Banks' five dimensions model {1. content integration, 2. knowledge construction, 3. equity pedagogy, 4. reduce prejudice, 5. empowering school culture and social structure} (1993) of multicultural education centered to the mitigation of prejudiced attitudes, is a case where

students have the opportunity to interact and produce their own cognitive schemas and knowledge (Banks, 1993) through the maintenance of their own national cultural capital.

### ***Multicultural Education and Historical Consciousness***

Today's society consists of population from differentiated cultural environments. Therefore, the multicultural pluralism within the course of history encourages native students to respect cultural differences and at the same time enables foreign students to interact with the dominant culture gradually and reciprocally. This relationship is not established based on an intention of cultural assimilation and subordination but aims towards consolidation and gradual integration of those in the new social and cultural environment. Therefore, the education system should exceed ethnocentricity and promote multicultural pluralism in general and especially within the course of history. It is hoped that by incorporating multicultural pluralism into the subject of history may prevent students from developing sentiments such as inferiority or imaginary superiority, which potentially impact on the emergence of nationalism and racism (Kóκκινος, [Kokkinos], 2003).

According to Peyrot (2002), it's for a fact is that the people have a selective memory and emotional criteria in terms of their national history, but the teaching of history in a multicultural classroom requires efforts, settlements and subsidence on behalf of students aiming at the social integration of foreign students (Peyrot, 2002).

Therefore, school history can promote a variety of strategies for dealing with racism and social discrimination at present. Moreover, through practical applications of multicultural teaching of history racist attitudes could be alleviated and sentiments of discrimination against particular social, ethnic and cultural groups, and simultaneously values of freedom, justice and equal opportunities could be highlighted, in order to shatter fears, prejudices and stereotypes that intensify social segregation and insecurity (Peyrot, 2002).

Although, it is a matter of concern if the above conditions described, do exist and be actually applied in the Greek multicultural classroom, where Academic History and School History are deeply differentiated, due to the fact that the need for the development of national consciousness becomes the one and only goal.

### ***The National Curriculum of History: The case of Greece***

According to Coulby (2000) especially in European multicultural societies the multiple cultures represent differentiated systems of knowledge and values, which in many cases are radically are in contrast with those reflected on national curricula (Coulby, 2000). According to Coulby (2000), centralized design of curricula often leads to the institutionalization of lies, ignorance and prejudice, as to prevent any alteration of the dominant ethnocultural identity (Coulby, 2000).

The main purposes of the subject of History in Primary School refer to the acquaintance of students with the historical life of the Greek nation (through references from Mythology and Ancient to Modern and Contemporary Greek society) and their homeland, to the familiarization with the historical way of thinking and the identification of causal relations in order to acquire a positive attitude towards the historical knowledge (FEK 303, 2003, 3915-3916).

Generally, Greek students are being taught mostly Modern and Contemporary Greek History. Although textbooks do include units about associations between Greek, European and World History, but usually by the end of the school year timetable does not seem to be sufficient in order these units to be taught. In many cases teaching these units depends entirely on teacher's desire and suitable time organizing. The above situation is described in the National Curriculum of History of Primary Education, as History course refers primarily and almost exclusively in the National and Local History without any substantial references to the European and World history. Also, these correlations of both the National and Local History to World History are implemented where feasible according to National Curriculum of History (FEK 303, 2003, 3915-3916).

Since the National Curriculum of History does not include sufficient instructions as for teaching history in the context of a multicultural class, it is a matter of concern the how to teach Greek history to children from different countries of origin. Particularly in times of crisis as we are experiencing today, the collective insecurity resulting from the depreciation of the present and the fear of the future contribute to the adoption of regulatory standards derived from the idealized past. This imaginary past invested with emotions, values and norms, is constructed or invented smugly (Moniot, 2002).

### **Research Questions**

This study examines the extent to which teachers' approaches and the content of the National Curriculum include the notion of multiculturalism aiming to the cultivation of Historical Consciousness in the current Greek multicultural classroom. The innovative element of our research is that it attempts to explore teachers' attitudes and perceptions as for the didactic of History in the Greek multicultural classroom. More specifically, we attempt to answer the following questions, which formed also an interesting field of research for us and the basis of our study:

1. Why is the cultivation of historical consciousness in the Greek multicultural classroom important?
2. To what extent does the Curriculum make direct references to the multicultural teaching of history?
3. How do teachers utilize the teaching material in the context of multiculturalism?
4. Are there any effective teaching strategies for cultivating historical awareness?

### **Data and Measures**

As for our study, the sample used was limited as we managed to interview 25 practicing teachers from two primary schools in Peloponnese, Greece, in Spring of 2014. Thus, our findings can not be generalized.

The method used was qualitative research as to interpret in the best possible way teachers' attitudes and perceptions of the subject. In addition, as research tool, we utilized interviews including semi-structured questions, in order to collect a representative range of answers from the teachers participating. Moreover, as for the digital data process, they were transcribed from the



recordings, recorded in a holistic way, coded using patterns and commonalities, grouped and then evaluated.

### **Findings**

As for our survey during the interviews teachers were asked to answer in fifteen questions. We chose three of them, as these gave us more focused, well structured and solid information about the hypothesis of the Historical Awareness being cultivated in the multiculturalism classroom and the potential ways that this process takes place. The information of these three questions is followed by teachers' quotation, which contribute to the ideal capture of their attitudes and beliefs. Firstly, we asked teachers to answer if foreign cultures are being presented through the goals set by the National Curriculum and textbook. Surprisingly, all teachers answered in the negative emphasizing that either foreign cultures are not displayed in any way, or when they are presented it is not in a positive context because of the limitations imposed by the Curriculum and the textbook. Characteristically they mention that:

- Teacher A: "...Our nation is usually presented as the most worthy and moral, while the others are presented as neutral or inferior, whereas in case of a discord with our country they are presented as hostile aiming at ulterior motives..."
- Teacher B: "...No other cultures are being presented, due to the restraint to only one book, forcing the teacher to use an ethnocentric rather than an intercultural approach..."
- Teacher C: "The projection of foreign students' cultures coexisting in a classroom is very low and at the discretion of the teacher..."
- Teacher D: "When cultures of other countries are presented we mainly focus on the negatives and we study them with unilateralism ..."
- Teacher E: "The students only get familiar with foreign cultures through the miseries of the Greek people ..."

These answers could reveal the dominant culture oriented curriculum and teaching material, which tend to conceal the true but "inconvenient" facts, and thus develop gradually a well structured historical narration which contributes to the preservation and the continuation of the Greek nation. Secondly, we asked them if the cultivation of historical awareness is achieved through the goals set by the National Curriculum. The great majority of respondents, almost 88% of them, seems to be unsatisfied indicating that the target is achieved from a small to no degree.

- Teacher B: "...the amount of the teaching material in Greek Language and Mathematics, the minimum financial school's resources available, the rigid curriculum of the Ministry by teaching a series of disjointed events do not help in the multicultural teaching of History and consequently in the cultivation of historical consciousness..."
- Teacher C: "...The education system does not help the cultivation of historical consciousness, because it includes and describes only the historical events of the Greek nation, so no historical consciousness is shaped to foreign students ..."

- Teacher D: "... The achievement of the goals of history are left to the pride and the usually limited knowledge of the teacher who teaches the course, due to the fact that the Curriculum does not adequately promote the development of historical consciousness..."

These answers could reveal that according to the teachers the cultivation of Historical Awareness is not easily achieved in the Greek multicultural classroom as it seems to depend on the teaching ability and desire / preference of the instructor, since the presentation of foreign cultures through textbooks, is limited and at the same time the National Curriculum is extremely restricted.

Thirdly, we asked teachers if they feel ready to meet the challenge of cultivating historical awareness in the multicultural classroom. Despite differentiated responses we had about the cultivation of historical awareness today, most of the teachers respond that they are ready to meet this challenge, and only 20% find themselves unprepared.

- Teacher C: "... discreetly, without obsessions and fanaticism, without damaging the country of origin, but instead by forming a framework of moderation, tolerance and respect for diversity ..."

## **Results**

From this research, we surmised that the current content of the National Curriculum does not make direct references to multicultural approaches as for the subject of History. These deficiencies in curricula and the limitation in a unique manual, leads both teachers and students to a dead-end. No one is able to handle this difficult task.

As a result, the cultivation of historical awareness depends on the teaching ability and desire of the instructor. Although, due to inadequate training in the multicultural teaching of History, the approaches adopted by teachers incorporate the meaning of multiculturalism to a limited extent. The main approach seems to be developing sentiments of respect and tolerance towards diversity, compared to the dominant culture. More specifically teachers seem to utilize only superficial approaches towards diversity, which actually underline the superiority of the dominant culture undermining others cultures merit. These are considered as informal strategies which remain detached and with short effectiveness. As a result, the course of history and subsequently the process of cultivating historical awareness appear to be limited, because of deficient specialization in the educational process and the shortcomings existing in both the National Curriculum and the educational system as a whole.

Consequently, an important question emerges. Does a connection exist between the cultivation of historical awareness and multiculturalism? The lack of formal and effective teaching strategies became an interesting field of research for us. We realized that the content of National Curriculum and teaching strategies included need to be reassessed and readjusted to the necessities and requirements of the multicultural society.

### ***Theoretical and practical implications***

#### ***Implementation of Multicultural teaching of History: Transformative Theory and Interdisciplinary***

Transforming theory is about ones' psychological, cognitive, social, political and cultural transformation. This transforming process takes place through interdisciplinary, as is provided a non-conventional cross-thematic perception and understanding of the complexity of reality which is connected to the personal change process (Wilner, & Dubouloz, 2009).

Therefore, interdisciplinary includes multiple scientific fields aiming at shaping a holistic approach or forming a common field of understanding as for a complex issue, question or problem, but at the same time these areas are in a process of consolidation and integration aiming at a holistic conquest of a primary issue or question (Stokols, 2003; Klein, 2008; Wagner, et al., 2011).

According to Repko (2008), through interdisciplinary the students have the opportunity to think and process dialectically, manage and resolve conflicts between the subjects, describe thoroughly the issues with examples, create or discover common interdisciplinary fields between ideas and consolidate all of the above in order to acquire the interdisciplinary knowledge (Repko, 2008; Borrego & Newswander, 2010).

As Repko mentioned (2005), students manage to configure and acquire a new method and theory which exceeds scientific fields' strict limits (Repko, 2005; Youngblood, 2007).

### ***The challenge of Interdisciplinary***

Interdisciplinary is basically a new method including problem solving -critical thinking skills focusing on the process and not on cognitive expansion of the discipline (Youngblood, 2007). A key element of interdisciplinary is that consolidates the fragmented scientific knowledge (Goldsmith, & Kraiger, 1996).

In this way, students become familiar with connecting and synthesizing prior knowledge and experience with new complex structures, which ensures both effective memory recall skills and differentiated difficulty solving problems skills. (Acton, Johnson, & Goldsmith, 1994; Ivanitkaya, Clark, Montgomery, Primera, 2002).

### ***Interdisciplinary Effects***

The implementation of interdisciplinary leads to the development of complex cognitive abilities. According to Boyer & Bishop (2004), the application of interdisciplinary approaches affects positively on students'school performance and on their personal development. Moreover, enhances sentiments of tolerance towards peers, cultivates leadership skills, as well as cooperation skills (Jones, 2009). Among the most important learning outcomes are metacognitive skills (Paris, & Winograd, 1990), epistemological development (Schommer, 1994), lifelong learning (Duerr, 2008; Jones, 2009) and critical thinking skills, which we focus on.

***Critical thinking skills:***

Through interdisciplinary approach students do not only look for evidence, logical arguments and valid data that lead to generalizations, but analyze, compose, decompose and recompose the information in order to avoid misinformation, prejudice and biased knowledge. Exposure to different interpretations of a point of view could bring into question issues that students are used to believing in undoubtedly (Ivanitkaya, Clark, Montgomery, Primera, 2002). According to Boix Mansilla & Dawes Duraisingh (2007), critical thinking is not only a learning behavior but also is analysis method as for the strengths, challenges, weaknesses that follow an interdisciplinary approach (Borrego, Newswander, 2010).

Therefore, interdisciplinary enhances through group based learning students' school performance and through which students conquer a holistic approach for diverse scientific fields (Jones, 2009). Thus, students are able to deal with the increasingly complex and multifaceted social reality (Davis, 1995). Besides as Youngblood (2008) mentions, interdisciplinary approaches and techniques may be a starting point for action and future innovations and discoveries (Jones, 2009), which could potentially meet the demands of tomorrow by finding solutions to real world-problems (Hillary, 2005).

***Multicultural Approach of History through Dramatic Role Playing***

Teaching history, therefore, is very important as it makes students able to think historically, in historical terms, so that they can interpret situations and social issues presented at national and international level, criticize past events and predict the future (Rüsen, 2007). Dramatic Role playing is a widespread learning strategy designed to represent the circumstances in a specific period of time, cultivate sentiments of empathy and understanding of the challenges experienced by people living in different times than those that students live (Cruz & Murthy, 2006). This pedagogical method, as it is a challenge for both students and teachers, strengthens both educational attainment and performance, but also improves relations among students as long as with teachers (Meden, 1999).

Participation through dramatization to incidents that occurred in the past is a starting point for understanding and critical analysis of historical events and achieve meaningful connections between past and present (Cruz & Murthy, 2006). As a result, through personal experience students have the opportunity to understand the characters who act, the motives and purposes of action in light of historical time and historical context, through a detailed study and treatment of historical sources (Pierce & Terry, 2000), but also to improve cognitive skills, such as reading, reflection, critical analysis. At the same time, they have the ability to identify the attitudes and opinions, to even discuss and disagree on the occasion of the study of an historical event, and cultivate their social skills through interaction with their peers (Schoorman, 2012). Thus, students of different nationalities through role playing are encouraged to set aside their national identity, in order to realize that human action is a result of critical thinking and is not related to the national identity (Cruz & Murthy, 2006). On the bottom line students manage to step outside the narrow frame of their national ego.

As Banks (2004) states the main purpose of history teaching through transformative approach (interdisciplinary), is not the emergence of heroes, but instead is the designation of multifaceted perspectives from differentiated groups, which may broaden students' perception regarding to both nation's evolution and the complexity of this process (Gordon, 2012).

## **Conclusion**

The main purpose of multicultural teaching of History is not the elimination of conflicts which could lead to a censored history. On the contrary, through multicultural teaching of History students are able to learn the truth of the past, to overcome bitterness, to highlight commonalities and look beyond the borders (Peyrot, 2002). Multiculturalism is not only a theoretical construct for Greece, as thousands of refugees end up in Greece every single day. Our study suggests that there is a need for further research, programs and practices focusing on improving teachers' multicultural efficacy. As future teachers need to transform themselves into multicultural persons (Nieto, 2000) in order to become multicultural educators, it is essential that the educational system, including the content of National Curriculum and the teachers training, should be upgraded and thus to finally meet the challenges of the multicultural school.

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## The development of intercultural sensitivity in teaching historical and religious issues related to anniversary celebrations, using dramatic play

Kefalaki Maria, Karageorge Demetrios, Kindergarten Teacher, Teacher of Dramatic Play, Ph.D. candidate at the University of Crete / University of Crete, School of Education, Department of Primary Education, Assistant Professor in Social Studies - [mkefalaki@edc.uoc.gr](mailto:mkefalaki@edc.uoc.gr) | [dkara@edc.uoc.gr](mailto:dkara@edc.uoc.gr)

### Abstract

*Managing identity and diversity in the contemporary school is necessary to be accompanied by plans and practices that will help students to balance and dynamically redefine these issues with a view to social cohesion, development, collectivity and solidarity. In this research, these concepts are studied and redefined within the framework of activities aimed at creating events, relating to ethnic and religious anniversaries in Greek primary school. The main purpose for this is the development of intercultural sensitivity. For this purpose, a specially designed Dramatic Play program was implemented, which was the intervention program of the experimental design of the study. The program structure for each anniversary issue was based on the empathy development model, proposed by Bennett and follows six steps and an additional step which was added by the researcher. For the collection of the data quantitative and qualitative methods were utilized, which dealt with the measurement of the dependent variable that is intercultural competence of students, according to the functional definition of the study. Among the quantitative methods included in the Valuation Questionnaire Conscious of National and Inter-national bias, which was created for this study, and the test Interpretation of Ambiguous Situations, which is the modified test Ambiguous Situation Task. The intervention program was implemented throughout the school year 2014-2015. We will present the intervention program, the responsiveness of the students and the above two research tools designed.*

**Keywords:** intercultural sensitivity, dramatic play, ethnic & religious anniversary celebrations, intercultural teaching

### Introduction

The preservation of one's national identity and cultural heritage, along with the development of multiculturalism, is one of the main concerns in contemporary schools. These issues are important elements in forming and managing pupils' personal and social identity which are sometimes difficult in everyday teaching practice. Such cases, are the activities selected by teachers for the celebration of national or religious anniversaries. This framework, from the outset, has an ethnocentric or religious-centric dimension since the actions implemented, focus on specific national or religious events. These activities contribute to the students' socialization process and configure their national and religious identity. However, the type and the purpose of these activities and their content has been strongly challenged in recent years, among others, because of the multicultural educational and social reality.

The Arts actively involved in activities that have commemorative character. Given the multicultural educational reality, could these help to the perception of otherness, in such activities, serving interculturalism? In particular, can the meeting of theater and education, in the form of Dramatic Play, create appropriate conditions and prerequisites for the cultivation of intercultural sensitivity and competence, in the context of national and religious anniversaries?



### **The research problem**

The current reality of multiculturalism advocates an intercultural approach to education, where socialization is meant more in diversity and the creative coexistence with this diversity. However, the formation of personal and social identity is directly related to the reality of social categorization, in which people tend to generate grand totals of people as the group in which they belong (in-group) and groups out of the group they belong (out-groups), which is to compare. The social categorization has created, particularly in mono-cultural societies, various stereotypes and prejudices about the different cultures. The consequence of these is the mistrust towards groups that are outside the in-group. Indeed, research has shown that the characteristics which are attributed to a categorized social group are the dominant aspect of this group, even though it is proved otherwise. This makes clear the importance of intercultural sensitivity, as many times, the unconscious categorization and the automated stereotypes which have been created, can lead to bias, to conflict, to disbelief and destroy relationships between people with different cultural backgrounds (European Union, Intercultural learning for European Citizenship:10).

Specifically, stereotypes about ethnicity and religion are one of the main conditions to which the principles of Intercultural Education are addressed. Like any other category of stereotypes that are created through mechanisms of power that represent the dominant social group in order to strengthen an ethnocentric way of thinking, may lead to discrimination and therefore to social injustice.

Education is one of the official bodies of the state, through which it can channel ethnocentric ideas. The curriculum and books, but also teachers' attitude, as emerged from studies, are the main instruments of the development of such ideas (Flouris, Kalogiannaki, 1996). The result of such educational process is not only the sense of isolation of students who belong to different nations, but also the formation of a limited perception of the world. In such educational mainstream, the concept of intercultural is undermined and the equal interrelationship of cultural identities does not exist.

In Greek school, courses such as History, Geography, Religious and Language, along with the attitudes and values which students develop through the daily educational scene, configure the ethnic and religious identity. These collective identities, even today, are promoted in many ways through the value of the homogeneity (Androussou, Askouni, 2004:15. Papapetros, Gerogiannis, 2009), following substantially an assimilatory model regarding diversity. At the same time, of course, Greek school education has established various educational practices concerning the multicultural character, facing the Greek school the last few decades, as a new social reality in its efforts to follow the developments and parallel, to prepare students to live as active citizens with social cohesion, freedom and democracy. However, various other issues concerning its intercultural character remain negotiated, which among other, are related to its specific characteristics. One of them concerns its national-religious character, which is still strongly expressed through the

celebration of national-religious anniversaries and through, the so-called "school celebrations" events.

However, what remains to be negotiated are issues concerning its intercultural character, which, among others, relate to its specific character. One of them concerns its national-religious character, which is still strongly expressed through the celebration of national-religious anniversaries and through, the so-called "school celebrations" events. These events relate to the most general /dominant culture of the school and promote learning beyond traditional teaching, making them of particular importance. However, among other practices that Greek school apply for promoting homogeneity, these events are criticized and are a domain of change for the exponents of intercultural pedagogy (Gotovos, 2002:41). Indeed, the ethnocentric character of these celebrations has been found in a survey, through the analysis of the content of the circulars issued by the Greek Ministry of Education (Golia, 2006).

Aside from the ritual type of events that are in various circulars from the Ministry of Education, the use of the theater is a very common way for celebrations. The Theatre by the Children is a common practice of celebration and it is, almost, synonymous to such anniversaries. The school performances, as a form of practical acceptance of ethnic-religious ideology and faith still remain, although today it has been redefined, both, the role and the applications of Theatre in Education and the mono-cultural perspective which these celebrations follow.

Aiming at redefining of purposes of the activities implemented to create celebratory events for national and religious anniversaries, an investigation was held. The research included the design, implementation and evaluation of a Dramatic Play program, which took into account the principles of interculturalism, the approach from ethnocentric at ecumenical self, the concept of national and religious identity in a wider world. The Dramatic Play, which is one of the newest methods of theatrical animation with the children, was chosen because through it children can approach experientially principles of interculturalism, express prejudices and stereotypes, explore identity and diversity issues, so that through the process of empathy - "I walk in the shoes of the other" - be able to think and reflect on these, and be able to oppose ethnocentric thinking (Alcestis, 2008: 216).

The particular Dramatic Play program of research was carried out in the context of events related to Greek anniversaries celebration of October 28<sup>th</sup>, of March 25<sup>th</sup>, and Christmas. These celebrations are considered as those that involve the strongest national-religious dogmatism. The program was carried out with sixth-grade pupils of the primary school, as pupils of this age group have already developed stereotypes about out-groups (Mitilis, 1997: 88), and are at an age that can think critically and reflect on intercultural issues.

### **Purpose and aims of research**

The purpose of the study is to investigate if a specially designed Dramatic Play program may be a powerful tool in the hands of a teacher for the promoting of intercultural competence, as part of

activities where the purpose is the creation of events related to national and religious anniversaries in elementary school.

The main objective is the design, implementation and the evaluation of Dramatic Play program, which promotes the principles of intercultural education and teaching, in the context of national-religious anniversaries. Specific objectives are the students:

- Approach and understand the knowledge defined by the historical and religious consideration of these anniversaries.
- Develop an understanding and awareness of national and religious values of the Greek nation, without dogmatism, prejudice and discard of the other.
- Experience and understand the multiple facets of the historical events and religious globability.
- Realize, distinguish and comprehend the difference in the respect of every human being and the respect to the acts of people who have limits when these acts violate human rights.
- Include overlying concepts in the study of events, both on historical (e.g. social needs or circumstances leading to historical events) and on a religious level (e.g. the meaning of faith).
- Relate knowledge to life and realize it as a stimulus for critical thinking, reflection and for finding solutions to interpersonal or social problems that promote respect for human rights.
- Create, develop and express themselves through the process of empathy.
- Emerge in these events the universal values arising from these anniversaries.

### **Research methodology**

For the investigation of this research, the experimental design was followed. A "semi-experimental" design was applied, with pre-audit to equivalent natural groups" (Vamvoukas, 2002: 184-185), which is numbered among the quasi-experimental design. A number of schools were randomly chosen, and in turn, two schools from these, were randomly selected.

The main research hypothesis of the research was:

*The pupils of the sixth grade of primary school who participated in the Dramatic Play program based on the principles of interculturalism, to create events concerning national and religious anniversaries, is expected to have significant differences in their intercultural competence compared to students who do not participate in the particular program.*

The main independent variable of the study is the specially designed Dramatic Play program in the frame of national-religious anniversaries, in the sixth grade of primary school. This is defined:

- a. From the specific methodology of the Dramatic Play.
- b. The content of the actions of this Dramatic Play program.
- c. The kinesthetic and cognitive-emotional activity of students, during the program.

- d. The communicative environment in the classrooms, as it was framed by using the method of Dramatic Play, between teacher and pupils and between the pupils.

The dependent variable of the study is the intercultural competence of students of the sixth grade of primary school. In this study, intercultural competence was determined by the following three underlying factors, which form the defined variables, which have emerged from the theoretical study on the constituent elements of the intercultural sensitivity or ability. These are:

- a. The degree of prejudice related to national, racial and religious diversity.
- b. The degree of ethnocentrism of the pupils.
- c. The degree of empathy of the pupils.
- d. The independent variables, which were also checked are:
  - i. The age of the students.
  - ii. the socio-cultural environment of students.
  - iii. The students' contact with ethnic, racial and religious diversity.
  - iv. The participation of the pupils to Dramatic Play lessons in school.

### **Research data implementation**

For the collection of data quantitative and qualitative methods were used. In the quantitative methods three questionnaires were included, and in the frame of qualitative methods interviews and text production were used. The two questionnaires concern the degree of bias of the pupils, as defined functionally, as a critical component of intercultural competence. The first questionnaire is related to empathy. The analysis of interviews and of texts that pupils have produced, were used for bringing out clues of Ethno-relative or ethnocentric attitudes.

#### ***Assessment Questionnaire of Conscious ethnic and interethnic prejudices***

The questionnaire was based on the study of the literature on the measurement of prejudices in children (Tredoux, Noor, de Paulo, Aboud and Tropp, 2010 · Clark, Tale, 2008). It focuses on measuring explicit attitudes of children towards other nationalities.

This measurement refers to the conscious knowledge, which regards the controlled thought processes, which emerge after conscious endoscopy (González, et al, 2010: 169, Banaji, Heiphetz, 2010:361). The configuration is based on Multi-Response Racial Attitudes (MMR) (Doyle & Aboud, 1995. Aboud & Doyle, 1996a. Aboud & Doyle, 1996b. Tredoux, Noor, de Paulo, Aboud, Tropp, L., op.cit: 11, 17-19), and in Intergroup Attitude Measure (IAM) (Tredoux, Noor, de Paulo, Aboud, Tropp, L., op.cit: 19. Feddes, 2007).

The figures of children were taken from the study by Feddes A. (2007). They were partially modified for the needs of this study and thus, a third was created. All figures have similar body and clothing color; differ only in the facial features, the eyes and hair color. Before the modification and the creation of the third figure, an interview proceeded the small pilot sample of 15 children, 6-12 years of age, about the eye and hair color that they think, usually, every

nationality has. The figures correspond to the child's gender, to whom the questionnaire was administered. Namely, when it comes to a boy, the children in the picture are boys and when it comes to a girl the children are girls.

In the first part of the questionnaire, three children are presented, their nationalities, with respective names and the pupils write their own country of origin.

In the second part, in the following pages, each nationality is presented separately. Next to each image five positive and five negative characteristics are written.

The positive features are *good, polite, pleasant, intelligent, and friendly*. The negative characteristics are *bad, has bad manners, annoying, foolish, hostile*. Adjectives are from the Preschool Racial Attitude Measure (PRAM II) of Williams J. (1971). Those that were more easily understood by pupils were selected.

In order to confirm this, a pilot interview to a group of children in a class of the fifth and sixth grade of primary school in an urban area was conducted. In it, students were asked to explain what each adjective or phrase means. The answers were recorded, and those that the majority of children interpreted with the same or similar manner were selected.

It was asked of the children to choose as many words as they wanted, to fit each child depicted and it was emphasized that there is no right or wrong answer. In addition, the children could fill in more characteristics. In this part of the questionnaire, is assessed the cognitive bias of children in relation to each nationality (cognitive prejudice).

The next question is if they would invite the kids of each nationality to their home to play with them. This question is related to the emotional bias (affective prejudice). In the next question, the children make an evaluation regarding the generalization or not of the assessment they made, as to the positive or negative attributes they noted for each nationality (out- group / in-group evaluation). By this question is also evaluated, whether children can initially be affected by factors different from their beliefs, for the choice of characteristics that they chose.

Specifically, the questionnaire includes the following measurements (Rutland, Cameron, Bennett, Ferrell, 2005: 704-705):

1. The degree of cognitive bias towards out-group (cognitive out-group evaluation).
2. The degree of emotional bias against out-group (affective out-group evaluation).
3. The degree of generalization of prejudice regarding the out-group (total out-group evaluation).
4. The degree of preference of the group the child belongs (in-group preference).
5. The bi-national assessment (inter-group evaluation).

The evaluation is assessed to what nationality the positive or negative bias of each child is addressed and of the total sample of the group.

The time to complete the questionnaire is about 10 minutes. During the process of administering the questionnaire, and before its completion, the children were told: "Sometimes when we meet, for the first time, other people, we think some things about them that make us either want or do not want to know them up close. Imagine that today, for the first time, three children come to school. Write what you think about each child separately. There is no right or wrong answer. Write only what you really think."

During the process of administering the questionnaires, the order in which nationalities were depicted changed. In half of the pupils' questionnaires, two children of the out-group nationalities appear in the first two pictures while the children of Greek nationality appear in the end. In the other half, the pupils received questionnaires where two pictures of out-group nationalities appear inversely while the Greek nationality appears in the end. The reason for creating these two versions is to avoid probable influence by the order of appearance of nationalities.

### ***Interpretation of ambiguous situations***

The test is the Ambiguous Situation Task (McGlothlin, 2004. McGlothlin, Killen, Edmonds, 2005), was translated with the system of reverse translation, and was amended in some places. Also, a printed form was created, while the original carried out as an oral test. The purpose of the test, as mentioned above, is to assess the implicit biases which may exist towards diversity, which is here associated with race.

It includes four ambiguous situations, which appear in pictures, and include a child from a white race and a child from a black race. These situations are ambiguous because it is not clear whether it will take place a negative act. The images show the following ambiguous situations:

1. A child is standing and looking at his/her pockets (potential victim), while just next to him/her is another one leaning down to catch a banknote (possible perpetrator).
2. Two children sitting at a table, next to each other. One child has in front of him/her all the games (possible perpetrator), while the other has no game in front of him/her (potential victim).
3. Two children are sitting at a classroom desk and in front of them there is a paper, on which the addition of  $2+2 =$  is written. One child has filled in the number 4 (potential victim) while the other child hasn't filled in the result of the addition and looks toward the child next to him/her (possible perpetrator).
4. One child is sitting down and it seems to have hit his/her leg (potential victim). Behind it there is a swing and just behind the swing another child is standing (possible perpetrator).

5. In each image, the potential perpetrator has a neutral facial expression, as to enhance the ambiguity in every situation.

Each situation in the pictures has two versions. The one version presents the possible perpetrator from the black race and the other version presents the possible perpetrator from the white race. Also, a specific order is followed in the presentation of the situations, as it was presented above. Moreover, all situations correspond to the sex of the child. So, for girls, the children are presented in the images of girls and for boys, the children are presented, as boys.

The test is composed of two main parts and an intermediate questionnaire. In the first part, the potential perpetrator is depicted in the following order: First situation - black race, second situation - white race, third situation - white race, fourth situation - black race. In the second part the same situations in the pictures are depicted again, but this time the potential perpetrator is depicted in the following order: first situation - white race, second situation - black race, third situation black race, fourth situation - white race. In half of the children of the sample, the test is given as it was presented above and in another half, it is given in reverse, (i.e., the second part is presented as first and the first part is presented as second). The intermediate questionnaire, which children supplement after the completion of the first part, (i.e., in the middle of the test), is not related to the purpose of measurement and is not evaluated. The purpose of this intermediate questionnaire (filler task) is to distract the participants from the similarity of the images. For this reason, in addition, the names of the children in the first and second part are different.

In any ambiguous situation occurs the following procedure:

1. It is asked from the children to describe what they think is happening in the picture.
2. The children write what they think the potential perpetrator has done and evaluate on a five-point scale how good or bad he/she is. faces with expressions ranging from large frowning - in the "very bad", to big smile - in the "very good", with a neutral expression in intermediate - "neither good nor bad" are depicted in the scale.
3. The children write what they think the potential perpetrator will do after and they evaluate the perpetrator again on the same five-point scale.
4. Children answer *yes* or *no*, if they believe that the potential perpetrator and the potential victim are friends, and next, they explain why they are or aren't friends.
5. In this test, the names of the children in the images are from the Greek nationality when they come from the white race, and when they come from the black race, the names are from the ethnicities, which are the out-group of this study. The choice was made in order

to further enhance the diversity of the other nationalities, although it is not certain that all children will be able to understand the origins of names.

The time to complete the questionnaire is about 45-50 minutes. Before the children complete the questionnaire, the following is mentioned: *"Sometimes we may find ourselves faced with various situations that occur among people, which are not very clear. Then, usually, we give our own interpretations of what is happening. Imagine that you are looking the situations that are depicted in the images of the brochure. Give your own explanations about what might be happening. Then, write what you think about each question separately. There is no right or wrong answer. Write down only what you really think."*

### **The structural formation of the Dramatic Play Program**

The workshops were designed according to the structural formation of the Dramatic Play, with the three or four phases, according to the method of Lakis Kouretzis (1991) and as it described in Presidential Decree 132 / 04.10.1990 of the Greek State.

In the first phase, *"of the liberation"*, various kinetic, mainly games, and exercises took place for the constitution of a panel and its expressive activity.

In the second phase, *"of the playback"*, role playing was carried out, in which children experienced the concepts, the objects, and the ideas that existed in each workshop. In this phase the main theme of the program was inserted. The children were coming in contact with the central stimulus, which was processed in groups and every group played a theatrical scenario, to take place in the next phase of Dramatic Play.

In phase III, of the *"stage improvisation"*, all levels through which the children approached the issue of the program the animator put forward every time, were expressed theatrically. The improvisation, the expression, and communication predominated at this stage.

In the fourth stage, *"of the analysis"*, the children were reflecting upon the ideas, concepts and values that they elaborated in previous phases, they discussed their actions and they suggested expansions at various levels.

In total, for the three anniversaries of the program, fifteen workshops were carried out of Dramatic Play, five for each anniversary (a total of thirty teaching hours) which were distributed in five weeks for each anniversary (two hours per week).

The structure of the intervention program was based on empathy development model that had been proposed by Bennett (1998). According to Bennett, the capacity of empathy can help create a more favorable climate in intercultural communication which is based on the sensitivity towards each other and on the respect, giving impetus to mitigate ethnocentrism. The purpose of this model is the overthrow the hypothetical concept of similarity and the transition from the simple



understanding (sympathy) to empathy (empathy). Empathy regards the real understanding of the other's perspective, which may be different from ours. With empathy, the perception of the other is not through our own experiences and feelings, which can lead to situations that tend to homogenization, but the understanding of the other is done through one's own perspective, a basic condition for the perception of diversity. The model is composed of six stages, which can lead to the understanding of diversity. The steps are:

**Step A: Assuming Difference.** At this stage, the person comes in contact with different realities.

**Step B: Knowing Self.** This stage refers to the acquisition of knowledge about self, as it is formed by the values and beliefs of our culture, which have to do with the determination of our own identity.

**Step C: Suspending Self.** This step is necessary for the abolition the limits between self and the environment. The suspension of self is temporary, to enable the individual to extend his personal limits, possibly limited their views.

**Step D: Allowing Guided Imagination.** At this stage, the person having extended his personal limits is free to explore the various external realities and of course other people. So we can enter into the facts and not to stand seemingly in these, using the imagination.

**Step E: Allowing Empathetic Experience.** Through this process different feelings and thoughts emerge. Only with the experience of empathy can we leave a little accessible area of the other, of his own experience.

**Step F: Reestablishing Self.** At this stage, the person returns to his personal identity. The content of our identity emerges again.

These stages in the intervention program were associated with the historical and religious themes that are emerging from the anniversaries which were addressed in the investigation mentioned above.

### **The content of Dramatic Play program**

The intervention program contained three different topics, two historical and a religious. The titles of the topics are:

- *"In the path of time: World War II in Europe and in Greece."* Its content was designed to be applied on the frame of the historical event of the Greek national celebration day of October 28<sup>th</sup>.

- *"The Hymn of love in the world."* Is designed focusing on celebrating the anniversary of Christmas.
- *"Freedom: Supreme good, human right"*. Concerns the historical facts in the frame of the celebration of Greek National Day of March 25<sup>th</sup>.

Each topic was developed in five approaches. The four approaches were included in six steps, as presented above. However, it was judged/thought necessary, an additional introductory approach in these steps, to be added.

Regarding the national holidays, the approaches were developed as follows:

***Introductory Approach:***

The students come in contact with the historical context of the era and expressed their pre-existing knowledge and their attitudes towards the historical facts and to the national otherness of the historical reference.

***Approach A - Step A (Assuming diversity):***

The students approach the historical circumstances that led to the need of states - creating and the sociocultural circumstances that lead to claiming of other territories. Also, they come into contact with the different conditions of the countries of the historical reference to the specific time periods, in order to realize that the different historical and sociocultural conditions produce different beliefs and circumstances that create specific historical facts.

***Approach B - Step B (Knowing Self):***

The students come in contact with the timeless values and beliefs of Greek culture that have resulted from specific historical facts. They also approach the concept of human rights and identify the human rights which were violated during the war.

***Approach C - Step C, D, & E (Allowing Guided Imagination, Allowing Guided Imagination & Allowing Empathetic Experience):***

The aim is for students to experience and realize, through the processing of historical sources, the multiple facets and the relativity in the perception of concepts such as freedom, the multiple subjective and collective realities. Also, to experience empathy through the roles related to real or imaginary individuals of the historical events, from both parties involved.

***Approach D - Step F (Reestablishing self):***

Students return to the values and beliefs of experience of empathy and processing through the experiencing of a multifaceted and multilevel reality of social and historical conditions. They create their own theatrical representation, where they express their thoughts, feelings, messages, arising from the processing of historical issues.

Regarding religious anniversaries:

***Introductory Approach:***

The aim was for the students to express their pre-existing knowledge on religious diversity.

***Approach A - Step A (Assuming diversity):***

An attempt is made for the students to understand the human need of approaching the divine, the transcendental, over the centuries and come into contact with the different ways that people have given form to that need through various religions. Also, the aim is to understand that cultural diversity is also expressed through religiosity and develop positive attitudes towards different expressions of religiosity.

***Approach B - Step B (Knowing self):***

The goal is for students to come into contact with the universal values arising from the Greek religious traditions and from other religions that may exist in the classroom. Also, the aim is having students to focus on the supreme value of love and relate it to human rights. Furthermore, to approach faith as a human right.

***Approach C - Step C, D & E (Allowing Guided Imagination, Allowing Guided Imagination & Allowing Empathetic Experience):***

The goal is for the students to experience and understand the multiple facets of perception of same concepts, like the concept of love. They also experience the empathy regarding this concept.

***Approach D - Step F (Reestablishing Self):***

Students reset the values and beliefs of their own religion or belief, and they find and consolidate what new they learned on religious diversity. Also, the aim is to create a theatrical representation, which will emerge from the universal values arising from the anniversary.

**Response of the pupils in the intervention programs**

After the implementation of the workshops in each program separately, students of the experimental group participated in a group interview.

The questions were related to their appreciation for their participation in the program, the evaluation of program activities, possible difficulties they experienced and issues related to cooperation between them. In each workshop, group involvement, the sense and self-concentration of the pupils, communication between them during the workshop and their physical expression were also noted in the researcher's observations. Moreover, the researcher noted the theatrical improvisations, which were presented by groups in the third stage of the Dramatic Play as well as a general assessment of the overall response of the students.

Although these interviews and observations are subject to content analysis, a first assessment can be presented, concerning two points. The first relates to the students' assessment on their participation in workshops which seems to have been very positive.

All students stressed that they liked the process tremendously. The reasons mentioned by most students were because they acquired new knowledge, collaborated with their classmates and it was a fun and a creative process.

The second point relates to the difficulties encountered. By, almost, unanimity mentioned matters of cooperation although this considered as one of the positive points of the program.

This difficulty has been felt in both experimental groups and appears in observations of the researcher. However, in each workshop, students of both experimental groups, presented their stage improvisations, without these difficulties being apparent.

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## The impact of school excursions from Greece to other member countries of the E.U. on the formation of European Identity

Nikolaou, S.-M., Krommyda, E., Barmpa, V., Papageorgiou, Nap., *Department of Education, University of Ioannina (Greece)*

### **Abstract**

*The main purpose of this study is to examine the role of school excursions from Greece to other member countries of the E.U. in the development of European Identity. More specifically, the research is focusing on the long-lasting school excursions that take place in the senior school year in Greece, having as destination one or more member countries of the E.U. These excursions, bring Greek students in contact with other European cultural, behavioral and social characteristics, leading to the assumption that this kind of interactions form and further develop European Identity. To investigate the main question of this research, a Focus Group was conducted with the participation of six graduates that have been in such excursions. The Focus Group is a qualitative method of social inquiry that can provide quality data produced by interaction and lead to an understanding of more complex and dialectical data. The conversation was based on three general questions that concerned the meaning of European Identity, the experiences acquired in the excursions and their assessment of the impact these excursions have had on the formation and development of European Identity. The results of the study, demonstrated that school excursions, in other member countries of the E.U., amplify the primary Greek national identity through comparisons and evaluations between cultural characteristics among Greece and the visited countries. The European Identity is not formed only by the contact with the visited countries, but also via a complex combination of rejecting Greece's European profile while at the same time, Europe is perceived as a structure based on ancient Greek culture.*

**Keywords:** European Identity, Greece, School Excursion, Culture, Focus Group

### **Theoretical framework**

In this study it is being examined the impact of school excursions, to other member countries of the E.U, on the formation of European Identity. The theoretical framework of the studied matter is being formed through the conceptions of Identity, specifically the conception of European Identity, and Socialization as a developing procedure of personal identity.

Identity is not an undivided, one-dimensional and static concept. Many kinds of Identity exist which are being formed at the same time throughout a person's lifetime, such as cultural, religious, sexual, political and professional identity. For this matter, it is difficult to provide a complete and unambiguous definition of the term (Erikson, 1968).

However, we could define as Identity the "stable opinion which every person has for himself regarding questions such as: Who is he? Which are his life goals? Which position has in society? Which career does he want? Which are his religious, ethical and political believes?" (Papazoglou, 2014:178). According to this definition, Identity is a complex process of particularization of personal characteristics which concern personality, social environment, and gender and which constitute the qualitative factors of a person.

One important factor that contributes in the development of Identity that also corresponds to European Identity is culture. The cultural identity of a person often appears in the context of “nationality, ethnicity, religion and language where national identity co-exist with a special and discrete individual identity or also with a European identity” (Nikolaou, 2010:212). Identity is a person’s choice and specified procedure in an individual, social and national context. National identity constitutes a basic part of the overall Identity and interacts with the parts that compose the general context of a person’s identity.

The configuration of European Identity constitutes the final stage of the political, economic and cultural unification among countries that consist the European Union. Many political actions are aiming to the development of a mutual sense of belonging in the supranational entity of the E.U. More specifically, “the establishment of common symbols such as European flag, the anthem, various educational programs and the establishment of the Cultural European Capital form different examples of attempts towards a mutual cultural identity of the citizens of member countries of E.U.” (Papaoikonomou, 2012:189). Taking into account the above mentioned, European Identity can be defined as the sense of belonging in a multicultural political union with common historical and cultural basis. Furthermore, the European Identity encloses the acknowledgement, among citizens, of E.U.’s common problems and general aims in conjunction with the belief in a specific value system which contributes in the establishment of an undivided European Identity.

Identity, and more specifically European Identity, as an emergent process, is being formed also by socializing mechanisms. By the term “socialization” is meant this procedure in which “society fulfills its purpose, meaning the configuration of human personality in such way that it caters with society’s needs” (Nikolaou, 2009:20). Through the process of socialization, ethics, folkways, rules and ideologies are transmitted to a person as well as these skills and habits being necessary for the participation in the society which he/she belongs to. Socialization, also, refers to this procedure “in which the unprotected child becomes gradually a self-conscious and informed human being, who has acquired the skills demanded by the culture he was born in” (Giddens, 2002:76). Ultimately, through socialization, the assimilation of the behavioral standards, which are considered as acceptable by every society or social group considers, is being achieved.

Long-lasting school excursions to other member countries of E.U. are integrated in the context of the development of European Identity through socialization and embodiment of European and cultural standards. The purposes of school excursions are mostly scientific, educational, psycho-social, outdoorsy-environmental, entertaining and creative (Drougkas, 2006). The main purpose of school excursions is “the socialization, the entertainment and the education of students” (Arbatzoglou, 2014:231). School excursions promote a person’s freedom as well as, in the case of long-lasting educational school excursions abroad, the connection with other cultures. This supranational connection, in the context of European culture, contributes in the development of the European Identity (Drougkas, 2006).

Concluding, it could be said that long-lasting school excursions from Greece to other member countries of the E.U., which take place in the senior high-school year, consist a factor of socialization of participants. This kind of excursions bring into contact students with cultural, social and other characteristics of the visited countries, contributing in that way to the development of European Identity. Interaction with different European cultural milieu nourishes personal Identity, in which is included its national aspect. Therefore, school excursions in member countries of the E.U. probably affect, based on the stated theoretical framing, to the formation of European Identity.

### **Methodology**

The main purpose of this study was to examine the role of school excursions to other member countries of the E.U. in the development of the participants' European Identity. The premier research questions that were formed in order to examine the matter properly and exactly, are:

- Which are the characteristics and general meaning of E.U. and European Identity?
- Which are the main impressions of the School excursions?
- In what ways these excursions affected the European Identity?

As research method to examine the aforementioned questions it was chosen the Focus Group method. This method is affiliated into the qualitative approach of social inquiry and it permits the data production through an organized discussion between the participants. It is constituted as a group conversation with a defined thematic agenda that examines the general issue being investigated, which conversation is recorded and analyzed (Robson, 2007). The study subject demands a textual and compound data formation, in order to detect the dimensions and the context of the concepts, such as the European Identity. Social inquiries that use the methods of the qualitative approach, such as Focus Group, do not produce data which can be generalized and counted, yet they offer the possibility of an enriched, conceptually, data analysis that arises from free spoken word.

In that context, one Focus Group was conducted, formed by six people that participated in long-lasting school excursions having as destination various member countries of the E.U. The selection of the participants was made by having as a criterion the existence of males and females, as well as age and educational differences. This specific selection of the sample was made so that, through interaction, the similarities and differences between opinions relating to the topics discussed could be amplified. All the participants in the Focus Group were permanent residents of Ioannina city, Greece, and they also had participated in school excursions organized by schools of the same city.

The Focus Group was conducted on 18<sup>th</sup> of July, 2015 in the facility of the Laboratory of Social Sciences and Education, University of Ioannina. The discussion was recorded and videotaped by the consent of all the participants and it lasted about forty-five minutes. Then, the transcription of the files and the data analysis were occurred.



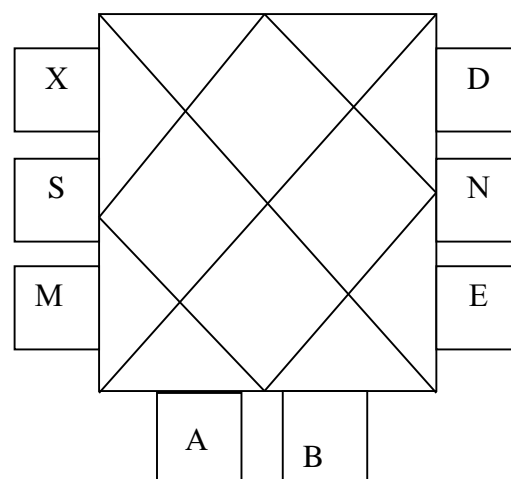
### Focus Group Description

The thematic agenda that was used on the Focus Group was formed having as a criterion the examination of the research questions and it was consisted of three main axes, in which individual questions-matters were included. More specifically, these axes were:

- European Union – European Identity
- School Excursions – Experiences
- Impacts of school excursions to member countries of the E.U. in the formation of European Identity
- In the following table, the basic social and demographic characteristics of the participants, as they were given by themselves at the end of the discussion, are presented:

First Name		Age	Occupation	Father's	Mother's	Family's
Initials	Gender			Educational Level	Educational Level	Financial Status
M	Woman	32	Employed	High-School	High-School	Moderate
S	Man	23	Uni-Student	University	University	Good
X	Man	23	Employed	University	University	Good
D	Woman	18	Student	High-School	High-School	Moderate
N	Woman	24	Uni-Student	High-School	High-School	Moderate
E	Woman	23	Uni-Student	University	High-School	Moderate

In the following figure, it is depicted the table in which the discussion was conducted. In position A was the coordinator, in position B was the assistant coordinator and in the rest positions were the participants of Focus Group.



### Results

The Focus Group, which was occurred in order for the impact of school excursions to member countries of the E.U. in the development of European Identity to be examined, produced many and

significant results. The participants were talkative and it seemed that they were interested in the theme of the discussion. The research results were arisen from the transcription analysis of the discussion, which was unfolded in twenty-four text pages. The participants' common experience as excursionists to member countries of the E.U., the small age differences among them and the possession of a satisfying average educational level helped in the production of a wide material for analysis.

The study outcomes refer to the participants' opinions for the characteristics and the general context of the E.U. and the concept of European Identity, the overall evaluation of their excursions, and finally, their opinions for the impacts those excursions had had in the development of European Identity. The presentation of the results corresponds to the order by which the thematic matters were discussed, which in their turn follows the structure of the research questions.

Firstly, the visited countries, by the participants, in the context of long-lasting school excursions are presented below. We observe that, whilst every participant visited Italia, only half of them travelled to only one destination and the other half travelled to more than one destinations. Maybe Italy was the most frequent selection in terms of school excursions due to the fact that it is easily accessible from the city of Ioannina.

Countries	Participants					
	M	S	X	D	N	E
Austria					•	
Germany				•	•	
Switzerland <sup>13</sup>				•		•
Italy	•	•	•	•	•	•
Czech Republic					•	

### **European Union – European Identity**

As far as it concerns the participants' views for the characteristics and the general context of the E.U. as well as the concept of European Identity, we observe that they vary and they are influenced by the occasional political and economic conditions. About three weeks before the conduction of the Focus Group there were intense conflicts among Greece and the other countries of euro zone and the E.U. in general, over the assertion, on behalf of Greece, of a loan for cover of its needs. The relevant negotiations created a general mood of confrontation between Greece and the E.U., that appeared to be expressed in the participants' speech.

**M:** *You found us now, in this research and on everything that's going on which, you know...*

**D:** *Specifically, with the situation we have now... we have been put aside, so it's difficult...*

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<sup>13</sup> Although Switzerland is not a member country of the E.U., the participants that visited this country have also visited other member countries of the E.U. as part of the same excursion.

The characteristics and the general content of E.U. and the concept of European Identity were the context of the first section of the discussion. The E.U. was seemed to be perceived as a union of countries, in which citizens “enjoy” freedoms and rights that occur by this union and that can be expressed in every member country separately.

**X:** *Just because of this freedom that E.U. offers in being able to have all these rights, not only in our country but also in other 20-25 countries....*

Furthermore, the participants referred to these elements on which E.U. comprises mentioning that the economical factor tends to dominate on these particular elements. Significant characteristics of the E.U. are culture and the sense of belonging in a unified political, historical and cultural context. These characteristics are considered to be superseded and no efforts are made for their development. The most essential component of the E.U. should be the cultural union of member countries, maintaining at the same time each country its own unique cultural characteristics.

**M:** *Everything else is lost. Economical cohesion outweighs a little bit.*

**X:** *The basic agenda with which the E.U. is dealing is the economy but it should be and something else, such as culture.*

The concept of European Identity entails, for the participants, characteristics concerning their national identity. Mainly, Greek national identity is considered to be special and not compatible with the European one. It is emphasized the different Greek mindset compared to the mindsets observed to the rest member countries of the E.U. Ultimately, a discrimination of European Identity itself is being made in South – European and North – European. This kind of discrimination is made having as a criterion the economical characteristics of each member countries, where the Southern countries of the E.U. are based on the primary sector whilst the Northern countries are based on industry.

**S:** *We haven't acquired yet European Identity, in my opinion, to the level we should have. It is credited, of course, and... to the Greeks' perception, in general.*

**E:** *We have the European... the South European Identity. Mediterranean countries, the way they function, economically, are based on primary sector. As you go North they are based on industry.*

### **School Excursions - Experiences**

The participants mentioned that their age and their domicile affected the way they had experienced the long-lasting school excursion to member countries of the E.U. At the time of their excursion they were 18 years old as well as senior high school students. These characteristics are believed to have attributed in the outlook of the excursion, mostly as an opportunity for entertainment, as well as a possibility of contact with big European cities and historic monuments. It was also detected that the visited cities were quite impressive and vast in comparison to the city of Ioannina, where they were living, which is smaller regarding the population.

**D:** *I was interested to see each town because they are so different. When you compare, for example, Munich to Ioannina...*

**E:** *OK, when you go on a trip, you have mostly in your mind, at least so does a teenager of 17-18 years, to have a good time in this foreign country with your pals.*

The participants, during their stay in the visited European cities, observed many aesthetic and cultural elements of those cities as well as the residents' manners. It was, mostly, mentioned the observance of the highway code and quiet hours, the meticulous image of the historic monuments and the preservation of the environment. Certainly, as far as it concerns the meticulous image of the historic monuments and generally the historic center of European cities, it has been mentioned that this image comes into contrast with the aesthetics of the regional urban center, which is not such elegant and meticulous.

**N:** *At 22:00 everything is closed and the whole city is empty, for instance.*

**X:** *I was impressed by the clean streets. Not just the streets. In Florence and Sienna, where we had travelled, the highway code was being observed.*

**S:** *Guys, these are the historic centers... I insist, if you go around them, let's say Milan, you can see tons of trash... Generally, they have just taken care of their historic centers in order to be organized and beautiful.*

Evaluating their excursions, the participants, also, mentioned different elements regarding the general organization, while they were expressing suggestions aiming to the improvement of long-lasting school excursions to other member countries of the E.U. They suggested that in the future students should not visit many countries because it is exhausting. Also, apart from the big cities, it was suggested the visits in villages, in order for a connection to be made with the countries' residents and daily culture. Finally, it was mentioned that it would be interesting the excursions to take place in countries of the E.U. that are not so featured.

**N:** *We passed many hours on the bus from one city to another. Very exhausting!*

**N:** *Here comes something interesting! We should go to the villages, to see something of the everyday life.*

**D:** *I believe the visited countries should be changed, because all the schools travel to Italy, for example. There are also other countries in E.U., such as Romania...*

### **The Impact of school excursions to member countries of E.U. in the formation of European Identity**

The European Identity seemed to be related with the experience of the long-lasting school excursions to member countries of the E.U. in various ways. Specifically, we can say that the participants, after the end of the excursion, were affected by the characteristics and the general image of the visited countries. They pursued the learning of the visited countries' mother tongue. They wanted to migrate to the visited country. Their attitude against some matters such as the street cleanliness changed to the best. Finally, it seemed that the sense of belonging to a political union in which citizens of all the member countries of the E.U. enjoy common rights was developed.

**S:** *Maybe it affected me, I don't know. I took Italian classes and I also took a degree.*

**E:** *Then, I wanted to learn Italian, to take my degree and to live in Italy.*

**S:** *I felt, let's say, we should take better care of the environment and not throw away garbage.*

**X:** *Apart from the fact that we are Greeks, we are also Europeans. I realized that based on the fact that we could travel with only one identity abroad and that we had healthcare. I, in fact, got sick.*

The contact with member countries of the E.U., in relation to school excursions, affected on one hand the related development of the activities that cultivate the European Identity, but at the same time the Greek national identity was also amplified. That happened through the comparison among the historic monuments and culture of the countries the participants visited, with the monuments and the culture of Greece. Whilst before the excursion, the big European cities were perceived as prestigious cultural and urban centers, after the excursion this perception changed and the interest was moved to the historic monuments and culture of Greece. The Greek, and mostly the ancient Greek culture was considered as superior and more important than the cultures of the countries that the participants had visited.

**X:** *That goes without saying that Greece also has (great culture), and you can't find neither Acropolis anywhere in the world, nor these ancient theaters that we have here in Greece.*

**N:** *Our country has so much culture that we may not know it... I think that we have this thinking considering abroad, that we will go there and we will see something more that we cannot see it here, whereas here there are also many things.*

The visit in member countries of the E.U. created to the excursionists the feeling of dissimilitude in relation to the rest European citizens. They felt that their idiosyncrasy and their general mindset, as Greeks, is not related to this of other peoples of the E.U. They mentioned that the cultural characteristics of the Greeks maybe are a little more similar with those of the citizens of Eastern countries. Still, Europeans and generally the cultures of the member countries of the E.U. are believed to dispose enough ancient Greek elements as well as Europe's cultural structure is based exactly on these elements.

**D:** *Yes, it is like we belong to... we are more affected by the East and it seems to us so weird the mindset of Northern Europe. It is like you travel to other continent.*

**E:** *We were seeing large buildings and they were like ancient Greek ones. I don't know if you noticed it somewhere, let's say, in Italy.*

**D:** *The ancient Greek culture was and still is vast. It has affected the whole Europe.*

## **Conclusions**

The European Identity is a complex concept that combines Identity with E.U. The concept of Identity itself includes many factors that impact and co-form its content. The political being of E.U. is multifaceted and complex in the same depth. Thus, a difficulty is created on definition and particularization of the characteristics and the context of European Identity.

For the inquiry of questions that include complex concepts, such as the European Identity, the choice of research methods that use free expression of speech and conversation was considered the most fitting. Thus, for the study of the impacts that school excursions have to other member countries of the E.U. in the development of the European Identity, the method of Focus Group was implemented. It seemed that through organized conversation the participants could express many points of view, which helped to the composition of the answer to the main research question.

Long – lasting school excursions to member countries of the E.U. seemed to have an impact on the participants' perception regarding the content of European Identity as well as that of their National Identity. Through these excursions, the participants discerned that their National Identity is not

related enough to the European one. Furthermore, their National Identity was positively amplified through comparisons among cultural characteristics of other European countries and Greece. Meanwhile, the participants mentioned that the cultures of the visited member countries of the E.U. have many ancient Greek elements and that E.U., generally, constitutes an edifice based on the ancient Greek culture. Thus, it is being formed a complex schema of conceptualization of the participants' European Identity, which includes on one hand the rejection of the relation between their National Identity and the European Identity, and on the other hand the correlation of themselves with the European Identity through the rendering of ancient Greek characteristics to it.

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## Reconsidering Self: A Teacher-Researcher's Reflection on Experiences with Transnational Youth within the Frame of an Educational Project

Anastasia Karagianni \*, Vasiliki Brouskeli , Georgios Mavrommatis, Efthimia Penderi, Department of Education Sciences in Early Childhood, Greece, Democritus University of Thrace  
[akaragia@psed.duth.gr](mailto:akaragia@psed.duth.gr), [anastkar@windowslive.com](mailto:anastkar@windowslive.com)

### **Abstract**

*The present paper discusses a teacher-researcher's narratives on an educational project, based on the socio-cultural animation philosophy and methodology, addressed to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and youth in a non-formal educational setting in Greece. Seeking to enhance the reflexivity of her work during her postgraduate practicum, the teacher-researcher discusses these narratives within the context of an autoethnographic approach, based on data drawn from her journal. The paper emphasizes the process of negotiating the participants' identities during the programme. In a broader perspective, the paper aims at pointing out the importance critical reflection on identity development might have for the people involved with unaccompanied minors, in a wider effort to promote children's agency and well-being.*

**Keywords:** unaccompanied minors, autoethnography, reflection on practice, identity development

### **The Field and the Circumstance**

In the beginning of 2015 my colleagues and I decided to contact, within the context of our post-graduate studies practicum,<sup>14</sup> a 'shelter' for unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors in a Greek border town. This place, which operates as a 'transitional home', accommodates unaccompanied children and youth until they are reunified with their families, already settled in another European country. In this multicultural environment, we attempted to carry out a non-formal educational project which would take place during the children's leisure time. During the planning phase, our programme aimed at promoting their agency, resilience and well-being, since in existing literature unaccompanied children are generally described as a particularly vulnerable group, as suffering loss, being uprooted, separated from their parents and traumatized (Wernesjö, 2012). Within such

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### **\* Corresponding Author:**

This paper, written by Anastasia Karagianni, is the result of a long lasting dialogue between A. Karagianni, V. Brouskeli, G. Mavrommatis and E. Penderi, which took place in a multi-layer rethinking procedure. The first person ("I") form used in the verbs in this narration refers to Anastasia Karagianni. However, since it was formed through this certain procedure, it reflects in a way a "team-collective ego".

<sup>14</sup> The practicum constitutes an integral part of the Post Graduate Studies Programme titled "Innovative pedagogical approaches in multi-cultural educational environments" operating in the Department of Education Sciences in Early Childhood of the Democritus University of Thrace (Alexandroupolis – Greece). The specific educational programme was planned and implemented during the academic year 2014 - 15.

a perspective of vulnerability, they appear to be regarded as “unsettled, transitional, unintegrated, and therefore potentially risky, bodies” (Sirriyeh, 2010, p. 215).

We observed that within this discourse, the children’s perspectives tend to be overlooked and that they are, more or less, constructed as passive dependents; findings which actually are in line with those indicated by the relevant international bibliography (Hopkins & Hill, 2008; Kohli, 2006; Wernesjö, 2012; White, Ní Laoire, Tyrrell, & Carpena -Méndez, 2011).

Taking all these into consideration, during our project we would encourage the children to take part in participatory processes, so that they would be given chances to be heard and space to express their own perspectives, as suggested by researchers and activists (Hart, 2008; Kaukko, 2015; Zeitlyn & Mand, 2012). So, we planned and went on to implement an educational programme, based on Socio-Cultural Animation (SCA) philosophy and methodology. Our choice is justifiable, since according to the humanist perspective of animation, SCA is connected to the pedagogy of discovery, of creativity, invention and innovation, goes far beyond the exclusive sector of leisure and free time, promotes emancipation and liberation, and encourages individuals and groups to move forward to the aspired and motivated social change. SCA supports groups and individuals to develop, by giving them the opportunity to express their will and transform it into a draft action, based on freedom of thought, from which all others depend (Foth, 2006; Freire, 1983; Gillet, 2006).

Taking into consideration all the aforementioned, my colleagues and I started elaborating on the formation of our educational programme. Given, though, the short period of time that the programme would be implemented (twenty hours), we decided to focus on the children’s present situations and immediate (educational) needs, and avoid dealing with their traumatic past and/or uncertain future. From this perspective, one of the primary needs of unaccompanied children pointed by Kohli (2007) is the provision of “...a safe network of friends and community to hold them in place and in mind” (p. 155). Following this argument, we picked out ‘friendship’ to be the central theme for our educational programme. We hoped that this theme would serve as a ‘platform’, on which children could build projects, using elements from their ‘here and now’ lives, beliefs and experiences.

In practice, the children were asked to deliver a media production about peer relationships. By exploiting the creative potential of digital media, children would overcome the barriers which are probably posed by language capacity and they would be given an opportunity to represent their own accounts about peer relationships. As deBlock & Buckingham (2007) underline, referring to children who could be seen as socially and politically disempowered, such as migrants and refugees, the opportunity of representing themselves in their own right, carries particular weight (p. 142). Last but not least; methodologically, we hoped that the participatory processes of production would encourage the children to involve in negotiation with others, working as a group, and to consensually make decisions about the final products (de Block & Buckingham, 2007).



What is important to mention here is that, during our practicum, our questions and thoughts were brought to discussion before the group of professors who were supervising our team. They provided us with theoretical and empirical perspectives, which set the frame for deeper reflection on subject positions, social locations, interpretations and personal experiences.

### **“The Problem”**

However, as the intervention started to be implemented, the children did not get actively involved as we expected. They did not want to talk about any aspect of their lives or share any of their experiences. This reaction blocked the implementation of our initial planning, obliging us to re-examine many aspects of the project. Most importantly, it obliged us to reconsider our ‘reading’ of the children’s interests and to rethink of the children’s will to share elements of their lives; actually, the children’s behaviour/reaction drove us to rethink why the basic elements of the children’s identities remained obscured.

Needless to be said that, this reaction destabilized us; in a way, it challenged our professional identity. That brought us before the questions: Could we ameliorate our project? In which directions do we need to change our -professional- selves? What does it take in order to do so?

An answer would be that we needed additional skills and knowledge, since we might lack confidence and competence in supporting the specific ‘group’ of children. But we did not have the time to gain them, since our programme would be carried out in a short period of time. The other choice would probably be a different way to observe, a new way to see old things. So, new types of questions started coming in our minds. What about trying to get a new perspective by opening up a wider lens on this experience? Why not live it through and then critically reflect on it?

### **Thinking on How to Solve “The Problem”**

I chose to do the second one. And I tried to read ‘their’ world and ‘our’/ ‘my’ world, ‘their’ identities and ‘our’/ ‘mine’ multiple identity in a different way. In order to achieve a better understanding and awareness on the -changing- aspects of my professional identity, I focused on specific critical incidents, which I wanted to analyse and to further reflect on. These incidents are considered and discussed as “epiphanies” that helped me get further insights on the identity negotiation processes taking place.

Here, I focus on three of these incidents, which I cite in chronological order. After each of the stories, I comment on my participation in multiple levels; I reflect on my roles, my practices, feelings and thoughts. These accounts attempt to outline the ways I perceived the children and their perspectives, and the way in which they were gradually differentiating during the practicum.

Starting with a rather stereotypical thinking on unaccompanied children (first story), I subsequently moved on to a description on how my professional identity was being reconsidered and reframed, while and/or after negotiating with the children (second and third story). The point I want to make

is that, as long as my professional identity was changing, the children started responding differently.

***First story: “the vulnerable children” (January 15, 2015)***

*It was the first time I visited their home. By the very first moment, I felt that now, I was the stranger. I walked into the office to meet their service providers. We got introduced, we talked and in a while, I came up with the question:*

*“Could I have some further information about the children? Could you indicate their strengths or point out any special needs that I have to consider?”*

*A woman suspiciously answered:*

*“We cannot give you any further information, except for the children’s age and gender, as their privacy must be protected. Though, we generally propose that the children should be supported to build up their functional vocabulary knowledge and, furthermore, that it is important to them to engage in leisure time activities, through which they will come to contact with other same-age youth.”*

What I observed here, was that aspects of the children’s past were concealed and we were urged to focus on the children’s present situation. In the name of privacy and safety, big parts of the children’s identity that I considered essential, had to be concealed -a phenomenon widely spread and observed in such structures (Kohli, 2007). If so, do these parts of their identity exist? Do the service providers want them to exist? Do the children want them to exist? Besides, I started thinking on the ways the persons in charge of the house understand the whole situation. Does their perception move beyond stereotypes? If yes, towards where? And how such a thing can happen?

So, what I tried to do was to search for ways to invite the children participate actively in the educational process, and at the same time, to leave ‘room’ for them to talk about themselves in specific ways, since we were indicated that most aspects of the children’s lives should remain in silence. By doing this, I understood that I adopted the specific adult-centric view, existing, as a rule, within the relevant policies and practices, which constructs unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors as passive, vulnerable, dependent, asexual and apolitical victims (Crawley, 2011).

What I soon realised was that the adoption of this view challenged what I used to understand, until then, as normal (childhood). Actually, by observing them from this point of view, I regarded ‘unaccompanied minors’ as ‘strangers’, as ‘others’, as being ‘out of (my) place’. Reflecting on this perception I recognised that, I focused on differences and set boundaries by positioning myself as an adult among children, as a visitor at the ‘shelter’, as a student-researcher and educator among participants, as an ethnic/religious ‘insider’ among newcomers. All these were supposed to help me feel safe in my professional identity and, in terms of power relations, were also supposed to help me gain a sense of authority/control over the whole situation. I did what many researchers do in similar cases, not realizing where this positionality might drive me/them to (Zeitlyn & Mand, 2012). Finally, if unaccompanied children are not ‘in place’, where do they belong? This was the

first time I felt uncertain and confused. I could not figure out what 'good practice' for unaccompanied children might be.

***The second story: "Where are you from?" (February 11, 2015)***

*"Where are you from?" I asked a boy, as I noticed that he had been talking with his friends in a language unknown to me, probably his mother tongue.*

*"I come from the same place as you do," he replied. I thought that he might have misheard the question. So, I asked him politely to clarify his statement, in order not to make him feel embarrassed about this misunderstanding.*

*"I come from the same place as you do," he repeated, circling the air with his finger. Puzzled, I was trying to figure out what he was talking about. And I finally came up with an interpretation!*

*"Do you mean that you now live in this house, which is set in the town where I live?"*

*"No. I mean that we come from the same planet," he answered, leaving my thoughts and feelings disrupted.*

Well, I considered this moment as a significantly transformative one regarding the way I perceive and understand the specific children and, generally, the formation of the identities. During this conversation, the boy and I negotiated our identities, actually by reconfiguring the frame and the lines separating 'them' from 'us', the 'in-group' from the 'out-group' (Marcus, 1995; in Zeitlyn & Mand, 2012). I experienced (emotional) transitions, which led me to question the boundaries I had unilaterally set, before I actually had the chance to talk with the children.

During this dialogue I started realizing what Kraus (2006) has pointed out, that 'belonging' was actually a concept "negotiated, tested, confirmed, rejected or qualified again and again and not simply shown" (p. 109). Before that time, I described 'belonging' and 'home' as tied to origin and single fixed places, actually not differentiating myself from the 'traditional' researchers' approach, as Sirriyeh (2010) and Wernesjö (2014) have established. Hence, I tended to disregard any of the children's alternative views on making meaning of 'home' in the host society. Instead, consciously or not, I was imposing on them my perceptions. After this realisation, I started thinking how I could even imagine or attempt to foster cultural recognition and provide conditions to promote the children's empowerment, according to Cummins (2000) perception, since my reading of their lives was biased. It was this stereotypical understanding that hindered any attempt of building rapport with the children, and which strengthened the existing dichotomies instead of promoting cooperation.

Thinking with binaries, I was ignoring that children at times belong to many and different categories, and that they move within and between them according to their needs in the current moment. In fact, what I actually realized was that identities are far from being stable; they may constantly be re-formed and re-shaped, as Ryan (2014) points out. So, instead of searching for the 'essential' characteristics of their identities, I shifted my focus on exploring how identifications between the different parts and within different contexts were constructed, negotiated and performed.

***The third story: “The super-(hero)-models” (7 March, 2015)***

*A team of girls made a photo-story, in which they were represented as models. During their presentation of the product, I felt upset. Should the girls have been prevented from being recorded as models, as this may contrast with (what at least I understood being) their Islamic identity? Then, I told myself that by intervening I would impose on the girls the stereotypical ways I understand ‘their’ religion, ‘their’ values, and ‘their’ beliefs. Since “becoming a model” seemed so important to them, I decided to take a step back and carefully observe the girls during their presentation, so that I can gain further insights on what “being a model” could mean to them. But, while I was taking a better look at the photos, I noticed that one of the girls systematically avoided showing her face. Discussing with my colleagues, they informed me that before the photo-shooting started, this girl had expressed her unwillingness to participate. After negotiation with the rest of the team, she decided to join in, with the condition that her face would not be depicted.*

Reflecting on this incident, I understood that firstly, I scrutinized my initial thoughts and applied self-censorship. The ‘second thoughts’ I had, actually indicated that I displayed a more reflexive stance, as I didn’t want to impose on the girls my perception on their world. Wearing a more critical lens, I stepped back and let them perform their story. I accepted their thoughts and their value system, and actually this specific part of their (present-group) culture, instead of imposing my convictions.

As for the girl who did not want to take part in this process, she had declared from the very beginning that she would not join, as she did not want her face to be depicted in the photos. At that time, I thought that her reaction was probably due to Islamic religious rules, which generally forbid the depiction of humans (see also Zeitlyn & Mand, 2012). Despite her initial resistance, the rest of the team attempted to take into account her perspectives and views, and incorporate them into the process in a meaningful way. So, after negotiating, the team reached to an agreement and the girl took an alternative role, which was adjusted to the circumstances and was in accord with the values her stance implied.

With this reaction the other team members showed sensitivity to her needs and supported her decision. They did not reject her, but instead were open to negotiation and showed flexibility by modifying the storyline so that the girl would be included. In other words, the team of the girls negotiated and made decisions about how to alter their (current) group culture in order to be more responsive and inclusive. The way they dealt with this incident within such a short period of time, might imply that during their cohabitation they have developed certain coping strategies to deal with similar situations. So, it seems that even if they wish to retain elements of their home cultures, they also try to adapt to their new circumstances, as unaccompanied children do in many similar cases (Ní Raghallaigh & Gilligan, 2010; Ní Raghallaigh & Sirriyeh, 2014).

### **Re-thinking on How to Solve “The Problem”: Towards a Metamorphosis**

Soon after the practicum was over, it was clear to me that I needed to reflect on certain critical incidents, which previously in this paper I described as epiphanies, and document the ways my professional identity was negotiated and changed as a result of these experiences. In order to do so, I chose to use the means of autoethnography, as this is “an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience, in order to understand cultural experience” (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). Through autoethnography, I was able to produce a narrative that acknowledges and accommodates my subjectivity, emotionality, and, finally, my influence on the educational process, taking under consideration the work of Coia and Taylor (2006), Chang (2007), Ellis, et al. (2011) and Pitard (2016).

I chose to focus on, actually to re-construct within a text, “intense situations” and “effects that linger -recollections, memories, images, feelings- long after [the] crucial incident[s] [were] supposedly finished” (Bochner, 1984, p. 595, in Ellis, et al., 2011). As a method, autoethnography provides the researcher the space and the time to immerse him/herself into those critical moments. Autoethnography gradually leads him/her to the recognition of the multitude and the value of different realities and knowledge, and of each (educational) context’s inherently complex political, social and cultural impact. At the end of a thorough self-examination within a cultural context, autoethnographers hope to gain a cultural understanding of self and others (Chang, 2007, p. 209).

In fact, in this paper autoethnography is considered as a constructive method for researching the relationship between the unaccompanied children who took part in the educational programme and me. By writing down and sharing my stories with others, I attempted to shed light on how different aspects of my identity impacted the educational process. As Coia and Taylor (2006) have indicated, by doing autoethnography “we ask ourselves not only what we know, but what the enterprise of education is all about, who we can be as a teacher, who the students are, and how to connect students with knowledge” (p. 35). Additionally, as Chang (2007) has indicated, through autoethnography we aim at making our teaching philosophies and practices more inclusive and sensitive to other’s needs (p. 215). And it is the self-transformative potential of autoethnography, which benefits particularly those who work with people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Chang, 2007, p. 215).

### **As an Epilogue**

Through all these, I realised that identities are mutually constructed when we narrate ourselves in a specific context. Identities are constantly reformed. Certain identities are constructed in a certain time, within a certain place, and through a multilayer negotiation. In our case ‘unaccompanied children’ are persons whose origin, nationality, language, religion, family history, beliefs, and so on, remain obscured or hidden, since many of the persons and the agents who ‘deal with them’ are convinced that this is essential for their survival.

Working with these children I gradually changed my perceptions on how identities are formed. In fact, what I perceived was totally different from what I used to understand. The turning point was when I decided to start talking *with* the children, instead of talking or searching *about* the children from an adult-centric point of view. Before that time, I was searching for regularities and certainties in order to safeguard my position as a professional/teacher, I was drawing solutions that I believed would empower the children in order to overcome their problems, I was setting or building up boundaries and rigid rules in order to assure that no aspects of their traumatic past came up.

Through autoethnography, I understood that the children's situation cannot be described as a simple negotiation between two conditions -one ascribed in their past and one in their present. On the contrary, a multilayer negotiation takes place within each child, among the children, and between them and the adults; a different set of rules and boundaries is set every time and in every different context; these rules and boundaries, though, are never rigid. What actually happens, is that they temporarily create a sense of sustainability and balance, until something or someone new arrives, disturbs the existing equilibrium, incites negotiation processes... until new balance points will be achieved.

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## Challenging diversity from the perspective of educational management and multicultural education

Paraskevi Chatzipanagiotou, European University & Georgios Nikolaou, University of Patras  
[p.chatzipanagiotou@euc.ac.cy](mailto:p.chatzipanagiotou@euc.ac.cy)

### **Abstract**

*Globalization allows persons to enrich themselves, to learn from each other, and an often-forgotten element, to live together more easily: exchange creates tolerances, it pacifies relationships between people, and it's the condition of cosmopolitanism. Modern societies are interconnected globally and their cultures are intervened whereby processes of globalization and identity clash with each other. The survival of local cultural identity and language has been brought into question globally. Request for the protection of independency of culture is more pronounced in response to the lower representation of culture, language, religion. The survival of the cultural integrity due to the influx of foreign cultural products is most pronounced in developing countries. Moreover, the kind of ethnic and religious diversity challenges faced by different European societies varies, that is why they need to be understood not only in their national or European framework but in the wider context of social and economic globalization.*

*At a time of global financial and European economic crisis, EU citizens feel insecure and often perceive diversity as one of the main issues that threatens their ways of life. There is a sense of powerlessness and of things being 'out of control' – national governments being unable to tame the flow of immigration, to govern religious and ethnic diversity and integrate disadvantaged groups. The challenges of social integration and the question of diversity are actually inter-dependent. What are the principles on the basis of which democracies should organize their educational system? What can European societies learn from one another? What can they learn from examples of good diversity governance? This proposal tries to answer these questions based on the fields of Educational Management and Multicultural Education.*

**Keywords:** diversity, identity, educational management, multicultural education



## Technology impact on developing virtual identity

Tamara Lobanova-Shunina and Yuri Shunin, Riga Technical University, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Transport and Aeronautics, Latvia, Institute of Solid State Physics, University of Latvia, ISMA University, Latvia [busus@inbox.lv](mailto:busus@inbox.lv)

### **Abstract**

*This paper explores significant trends in contemporary higher citizenship education including a specific focus on the role of ITs and communication technologies, as well as new emerging technologies on the development of new emerging identities, particularly, virtual identity. The purpose of this paper is to bring together various elements that represent the complex conceptuality of virtual identity within technological society. It probes into what awareness young people are now getting from new information and communication technologies and how global media may possess the potential to transform their identity and in what way educational institutions should understand and respond to this evolving virtual reality. We address these issues both from a quantitative and qualitative standpoint. The key issues under research include the Systemic approach to identity formation as a synergy of information and communication technology (ICT) and virtual reality in citizenship education at Riga Technical University, Faculty of Mechanical engineering, Transport and Aeronautics (Riga, Latvia). The Sociometry method and Optimization theory are the factors that integrate all the elements. The research results have demonstrated that the Tree-model of identity development offers a methodology for identity construction by evaluating virtual reality as the potential for the development of a creative personality. Implementation of the obtained research results can contribute to the working out of a scientifically grounded concept providing recommendations for the efficient strategy of identity formation in a computer-mediated global environment.*

**Keywords:** *identity crisis, virtual reality, virtual identity, synergy of information and communication technology (ICT) and virtual reality, new emerging identities, global media*

### **1. Identity: static and sustainable or developing and transforming?**

The concept of identity has undergone its evolutionary path alongside with the evolution of mankind. Still, there is a paradoxical dichotomy when it comes to the concept of *identity*, where there are two common, but opposite, approaches to the questions of what identity means and how it is constructed ranging from a prevalent and traditional approach when *identity* is defined as a constitution based on the recognition of familiar and shared derivations including but not limited to ethnic, linguistic, religious, historical, territorial, cultural and political attributes with other people, groups or ideals (Hall, 1994, 1996) to philosophically specific conceptualizations.

The concepts of *familiarity* and *share* in the traditional approach are closely associated with the meanings of *sameness*, *belongingness* and *unity*. From this perspective, identity is a 'one, common, shared culture', a kind of collective 'one real self,' which people with a shared ancestry and history hold in common. According to Grossberg (1996), the problematic factor in this analysis is that there is some intrinsic and essential content to any identity which is characterized by either a common origin or a common structure of experience or both. One can be deemed to be born along with his or her identity that appears to act as the sign of an identical biology. In this regard, identity is determined more likely as a naturalistic and static formation that could always be sustained. This conventional view sees individual as a unique, stable and whole entity.

On the other hand, nowadays, a number of scholars point out that human self-conceptions have a history and are constantly changing. Weinreich (2011) gives the definition of a person's identity 'as the totality of one's self-construal in which how one construes oneself in the present expresses the continuity between how one construes oneself as one was in the past and how one construes oneself as one aspires to be in the future' (Weinreich, 2011). Ideas of human nature and, ultimately, identity have always been shaped by the integrated concepts of education, science, philosophy, and technology as a never completed process, logged in contingency. It is always in the process of *becoming* rather than *being*, therefore, it is constantly changing and transforming within the historical, social and cultural developments and practices such as globalization, mobility, and new innovations in technology. It is not something to have or to be, yet a resource to use and an action to do.

Furthermore, the entity of the process, the unity of education and a person's identity development constitute the main methodological principle of citizenship education, which is especially topical at present. A person's identity relates to self-image, self-esteem, and individuality. According to this constructionists and discursive view, an individual is a socio-historical and socio-cultural product and identity is not biologically pre-determined, instead, a person develops and constructs it, and more importantly, this construction may include various and multiple identities at different points of time and contexts.

In social and cultural studies, this debate refers to a tension between essentialists (Descartes, Karl and Husserl) and constructionists/anti-essentialists (Hume, Nietzsche and Sartre) or in recent discussions, a transformation from the conception of modern identity to postmodern identity. This is how Bauman (2006) explains this transformation: 'If the *modern* problem of identity was how to construct an identity and keep it solid and stable, the *postmodern* problem of identity is primarily how to avoid fixation and keep the options open. In the case of identity, as in other cases, the catchword of modernity was creation; the catchword of postmodernity is recycling'.

## **2. Virtual reality and virtual identity**

Modern information and communications technology can affect changes in identities in a way that has not been experienced before in the history of humankind. Social changes and identities are

determined by technological innovations that can expeditiously convey information and embody social and cultural dimensions decisively shaping culture through a new communication system. Thereby, a new culture is emerging – the *culture of real virtuality* in which reality itself is fully immersed in a virtual context on the screen through which communication occurs becoming a real experience promoting the emergence of virtual identity.

There are numerous definitions given to the notions of *virtual reality* and *virtual identity*. We have adopted those given by Webster's Third New International Dictionary (2013). The notion of virtual reality comes, naturally, from the definitions for both 'virtual' and 'reality'. The definition of 'virtual' is near and reality is what we experience as human beings. So the term 'virtual reality' basically means 'near-reality'. It usually refers to a specific type of reality imitation.

**Virtual reality (VR)** – is the computer mediated simulation of a three-dimensional electronic environment (objects and subjects) that can be interacted, communicated with and visualized by means of computers and highly advanced technologies (such as a helmet with a screen inside or gloves fitted with sensors).

**Virtual identity (VI)** – is a social identity, the manifestation of one's 'self' in the computer-mediated globalized world of online communities, social networks, websites, and virtual worlds.

According to Myers (2007), the self is the most researched topic in psychology. 'Our sense of self organizes our thoughts, feelings and actions' (Myers, 2007, p. 25). When you complete the sentence, 'I am \_\_\_\_\_' you are essentially defining or describing your *identity*, how you see yourself. You could fill in the blank to describe an element of your personal identity, for example, 'I am cheerful' or 'I am athletic' or you could use terms to describe your social identity, such as, 'I am Latvian' or 'I am nationalistic'. Junglas, Johnson, Steel, Abraham, and Loughlin (2007) suggest that identity formation includes two processes: exploration and commitment. Exploration is the time period where someone questions or searches for their beliefs and goals, while commitment is when a person decides and invests in the beliefs and goals (Junglas et. al, 2007). More understanding of how and where individuals explore their identities is beginning to emerge, with the focus turning from real world to virtual worlds.

Cabiria (2008), in his research compared participants' real-world experiences to their virtual world experiences. Part of his findings suggest that the structure and design of virtual worlds allow its users to freely explore many facets of their personalities in ways that are not easily available to them in real life. 'One reason for this freedom of exploration can be attributed to the anonymity that virtual worlds provide. It gives the individual the ability to be free from social norms, family pressures or expectations they may face in their personal real-world lives' (Junglas et. al, 2007).

The Internet helps us to be where we want to be, to see what we want to see, hear what we want to hear, read what we want to read, feel what we want to feel and of course to be who we want to be in the freedom of anonymity. However, with this anonymity, other consequences come into

play when we look at the commitment aspect of identity formation. For example, if an individual creates a virtual identity that is different from their real identity, it can take a lot of psychological effort to maintain the false identity. In addition, one of the two options might occur: the identities may converge into one, making the virtual and real identities truer; or the individual may simply toss out the virtual identity, and start over with a new one (Junglas et. al, 2007).

These days it seems hard to tell which is the real 'you', your real identity or your *virtual identity*, but when you have the opportunity to be who you want to be you do not really care. Some people are fine with their reality but there are also those who prefer their virtual identity, which is easier to have control over.

### **3. Latvian social media landscape in the European environment**

Latvia is one of the Baltic states along with Lithuania and Estonia. It is an Eastern European country with a population of about 2 million (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2015). About 62% of inhabitants are Latvians, and Russian-speaking population makes up the second largest multicultural group (38%) (Vēģis, 2012). Because of the existence of the two ethnic-linguistic groups, the Latvian media landscape is also divided into parts - Latvian- and Russian-language editions.

Latvian media are pluralistic in terms of opinions expressed, which also includes some hostility toward the officially recognized basic principles of the state (Skudra, Šulmane, & Dreijere, 2014). Social media platforms have become very popular online venues where individuals communicate and collaborate while creating, discussing, and sharing media content. The spread of information through social media enables an emergent practice of information consumption, where users get information in their online social networks rather than actively seeking it out by regularly visiting a handful of external information and entertainment sources (Newman, Levy, & Nielsen 2015).

The use of the Internet has risen steadily over the last decades. In 2014, 76% of the Latvian population used the Internet, and 61% used it every day. This is a bit lower than the average among the European Union countries, which was 78% and 66%, respectively (Seybert & Reinecke, 2014), but higher than the average among Eastern and Central European countries—71% and 57%, respectively. In line with global trends (Alexa, 2015), the most popular online services are Web search, e-mail, social networking, video, and news sites (TNS, 2014a). At the same time, traditional media retain relatively large audiences (Eurobarometer, 2013).

Similar trends can be observed in social media use. For example, in 2012, 51% of Latvians used the Internet for social networking, and by 2013, the number of social media users reached 53% (TNS, 2014a). On average, social networking sites are used by 52% of Europeans (Eurobarometer, 2013), which correlates very well with the Latvian figures.

Regardless of their popularity on the Internet, many traditional media entities still have considerably large audiences. According to Eurobarometer (2013), around 92% of the Latvian

population watch television and 78% listen to the radio at least once a week. These results are similar to European averages, which are 95% and 74%, respectively. While the circulation of print media, especially newspapers, has fallen dramatically in many markets (Meyer, 2009), 65% of the Latvian population still read print media at least once a week. The European average also is 65% (Eurobarometer, 2013).

#### **4. How Latvian students' interests in social networking correlate with those of Europeans**

The increasing popularity of social networking services can best be demonstrated by the growing number of their users. Facebook, the most popular social networking site in the world, has about 890 million daily active users (Facebook, 2015). The Latvian social networking site - Draugiem.lv - is one of the few among Facebook's local rivals that still dominates its home market (Aptauja.lv, 2014; Linsell, 2011). It has about 382,000 daily users (TNS, 2014b), but the number of monthly users is above 700,000 (Aptauja.lv, 2014), which is around half of all Internet users in Latvia.

## Draugiem - Latvia

Draugiem users can send messages, upload pictures, and play online games. It is frequently used in Latvia as a communication tool instead of e-mail.

- Year of origin - 2004
- Target audience – Regional
- Current size - Over 2.6 million users

Source:- <http://www.draugiem.lv/>



Institute of Customer Experience

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**Figure 1.** Screenshot of the Latvian social networking site - Draugiem.lv

Social media are increasingly employed not only to follow current events and find relevant information but to establish interpersonal contacts (see Table 1). The most popular websites in

Latvia (TNS, 2014b) are the Google search engine (average daily audience is 43.2% of all users), Inbox.lv e-mail and entertainment service (28.6%), social networking site Draugiem.lv (25.3%), video site YouTube (25.1%), and news site Delfi (22.7%).

Website	Average daily audience (thousands)	Average daily audience (%)
Google	886	43.2
Inbox.lv <sup>1</sup>	586	28.6
Draugiem.lv <sup>2</sup>	520	25.3
YouTube	516	25.1
Delfi <sup>3</sup>	467	22.7
TVNET <sup>3</sup>	353	17.2
Facebook	315	15.3
SS.lv (classified ads)	271	13.2
Gmail	253	12.3
Apollo.lv (news site)	246	12.0

Source. TNS (2014b).

1. e-mail and entertainment service; Latvian- and Russian-language versions
2. social networking service
3. news site; Latvian- and Russian-language versions

**Table 1.** *The most popular websites in Latvia*

To get a deeper insight into the phenomenon of identity construction in times of computer-mediated global environment, we launched a pilot research to explore identity formation as a synergy of information and communication technology (ICT) and virtual reality in citizenship education at Riga Technical University, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Transport and Aeronautics (Riga, Latvia). Our research confirms that today's Latvian students are using a wide range of media technologies, with usage patterns growing steadily over the last few years.

We asked the 1-st and 3-rd year students (N=48; N=44 respectively) about five specific types of media use and compared these with the European tendencies:

- Watching television
- Listening to the radio
- Reading the written press
- Going on the Internet
- Use online social networks

The survey respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their use of the particular social networking site, their media consumption, what activities they use the Internet for, and how often. Descriptive statistics demonstrated the frequency of each answer, and correlation analysis was used to determine the participants' preferences for media they use (see Table 2).

First, the participants in the survey were asked to state how often they used any of the kinds of media on the list—every day, several times a week, once a week, several times a month, less often, or never.

Education	Every/Almost every day	2-3 times a week	2-3 times a month	Never	No access to this medium
Average in Europe	17%	23%	21%	36%	0%
Latvian students aged 18-20	14%	26%	34%	25%	1%
Latvian students aged 21-25 +	15%	16%	21%	48%	0%
	Men – 27%	Women – 21%			

**Table 2.** *Survey results. To what extent do you watch television via the Internet?*

Television is the preferred medium of Europeans: 86% watch it every day or almost every day. Although Europeans are far less likely to watch television over the Internet, this practice continues to gain ground: 20% of Europeans watch television online at least once a week (Eurobarometer, 2013).

When it comes to watching television via the Internet at least once a week, the differences between categories of Latvian students are slightly more pronounced:

- This practice is more widespread among boys (27%) than among girls (21%);
- Students in the 18-20 age group are the most likely to watch television via the Internet: 34% do so at least once a week. We note that the proportion of respondent who watch television via the Internet decreases gradually with age: 21% of 21-25 year-olds watch television via the Internet at least once a week.

Radio - is the second most widely used medium by Europeans (76% use it almost every day). But there are significant differences in listening habits between Member States (see Table 3).

Two-thirds or more of the population listen to it every day or almost every day in Germany (69%). In contrast, this practice is far less widespread in Bulgaria (29%) – which is the country where respondents are the most likely to watch television. (Romania (34%) and Portugal (34%) (Eurobarometer, 2013).

Education	Every/Almost every day	2-3 times a week	2-3 times a month	Never	No access to this medium
Average in Europe	37%	30%	18%	15%	0%
Latvian students aged 18-20	49%	27%	13%	9%	2%
Latvian students aged 21-25 +	56%	28%	11%	5%	0%

**Table 3.** *Radio listening. To what extent do you listen to the radio?*

About half of the Latvian participants listen to the radio every day or almost every day. In our talk after the survey the students admitted that they listened to the radio in the car while going to university in the morning or going home in the evening from work.

The written press is read by a third of Europeans at least once a week (see Table 4). In reading the written press, a national analysis reveals significant differences between countries: in Finland (94%) and Sweden (93%), more than nine out of ten people read the written press at least once a week. In contrast, this practice is less widespread in Greece (34%) and Romania (38%).

Education	Every/Almost every day	2-3 times a week	2-3 times a month	Never	No access to this medium
Average in Europe	30%	32%	24%	13%	1%
Latvian students aged 18-20	24%	27%	31%	18%	0%
Latvian students aged 21-25 +	34%	31%	24%	11%	0%

**Table 4.** *Written press. To what extent do you read the written press?*

Men are more likely than women to read the written press at least once a week (69% versus 62%).

Our next purpose was to find out how often our students surf the Internet (see Table 5).

Education	Every/Almost every day	2-3 times a week	2-3 times a month	Never	No access to this medium
Average in Europe	93%	5%	2%	0%	0%
Latvian students aged 18-20	92%	7%	1%	0%	0%
Latvian students aged 21-25 +	97%	3%	0%	0%	0%

**Table 5.** *Internet using. To what extent do you use the Internet?*

More than nine out of ten young Latvian students now use the Internet on a daily or near daily basis. It is dependent on the educational attainment and age. In the age group of 18-25 it is used by 95% on a regular basis as well as 100% of all pupils and students. The use of the Internet on a daily or near-daily basis is more widespread among men (59%) than among women (41%). The participants were also asked to report how many hours a day they spend on the Internet and on the social networking site. They chose from a set of answers that included various time intervals – for example, one hour or less, two to four hours, five to eight hours (see Table 6).

Internet Use (Amount of time in a 'Typical Day')	
More than 5 hours	39%
More than 3-4 hours	26%
More than 2-3 hours	27%
30 minutes – 1 hour	6%
≥ 30 minutes	2%
0 minutes	0%
N=92	

**Table 6.** *Intensity of Internet use*



The analysis has shown that the average time the students spend online daily is about 6 hours ( $SD = 2.75$ ), and the average time they spend on a particular social networking site is about 2 hours ( $SD=2.25$ ). If to add the time needed for sleep – 7-8 hours and the time spent at university/work – 8 hours and the picture appears dramatic!

Notable differences in how boys and girls used the Internet emerged: girls were more likely to endorse social networking sites, emailing, instant messaging, and listening to music whereas boys were more likely to endorse playing games, surfing the web, and buying or looking at price on websites as their most common online activities. It is the use of online social networks that has increased the most perceptibly in recent years: more than a third of Europeans use social networks every day or almost every day and 47% of Europeans now use them at least once a week (see Table 7).

Education	Every/Almost every day	2-3 times a week	2-3 times a month	Never	No access to this medium
Average in Europe	75%	16%	4%	5%	0%
Latvian students aged 18-20	78%	14%	3%	5%	0%
Latvian students aged 21-25 +	59%	15%	11%	15%	0%

**Table 7.** *Social networks using. To what extent do you use online social networks?*

There are over 1 million active users of social media networks in Latvia and the growth rate is high. The use of social media among Latvian students is high, placing the country in the second place among European countries after the Netherlands.

The data on time spent on the Internet were correlated with students' answers to how regularly they consume different types of social networking site. FaceBook and Google continue their dominant position among students surveyed, with 76 of 92 students having a membership in FaceBook. At present, FaceBook remains the social media place to be and to connect with students. Twelve students listed Google+ membership. Four students noted that they were not members of any social media web site. No student listed Instagram, SnapChat, or other 'new social media' options that are seeing strong growth in other markets (see Table 8).

Education	TV via the Internet	Radio	The written press	Internet	Social networks
Average in Europe	68%	85%	87%	100%	95%
Latvian students aged 18-20	75%	91%	82%	100%	95%
Latvian students aged 21-25 +	52%	95%	89%	100%	85%

**Table 8.** *Comparative analysis. To what extent different types of media are used (except 'never' users)*

The comparative analysis shows that both in Europe and in Latvia the situation is very similar – with the Internet occupying the leading position and very closely followed by social networks.

## 5. Virtual reality and virtual identity development based on the Theory of Graphs

With the advent of the Internet and computer-mediated environment occupying so much time in our lives, the understanding of how and where individuals explore and construct their identities is beginning to surface, with the focus turning from the real world to virtual worlds and from real identity to virtual identity.

However, individual's personal identity is not inherent or static, on the contrary, it is a story that a person keeps writing throughout his life. But our life and our behaviour is strongly influenced and shaped by social, technological and cultural changes arising from a rapidly advancing ICTs that are shaping a new emerging culture – the culture of real virtuality facilitating the development of virtual identities.

The developed model of identity construction in the computer-mediated global environment based on the Theory of Graphs (T. Lobanova-Shunina, 2015) reflects an Identity System (IS) of an individual that develops and self-organizes within a bigger organized global information-communication system never available before. An individual, as a social being, enhances, constructs, and develops his complex identities through interaction and communication as an information-based developing system.

The model is presented in the form of the so-called graphs (see Figure 2), each of which consists of vertices connected by ribs. Each vertex carries a certain meaning. Each rib indicates a certain relationship between a pair of connected vertices. Some ribs are considered in two directions.

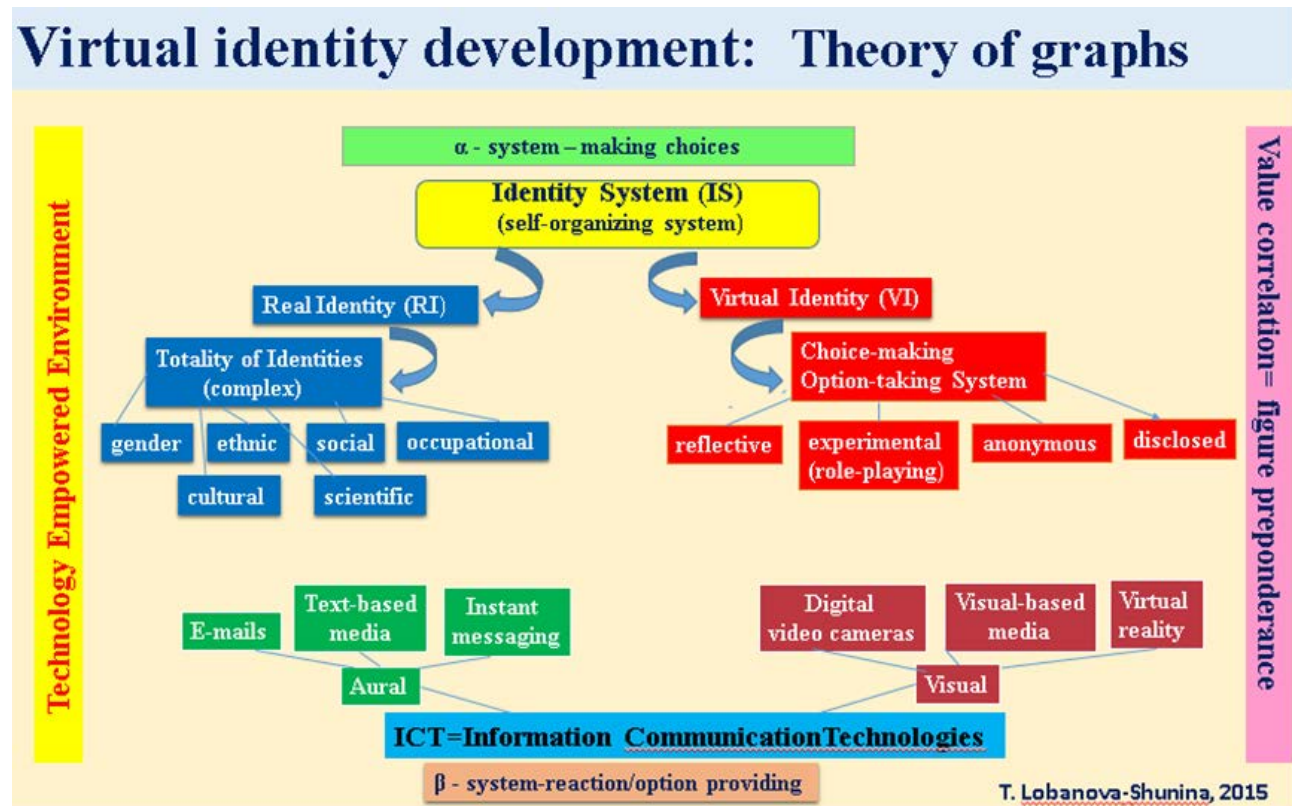


Figure 2. Virtual identity development

We use a special type of graph which is called a 'tree', where  $\alpha$ -vertex is the IS which makes choices, while  $\beta$ -vertex is the ICT-reaction system providing options. Identity System functioning is based on the investigation of the proposed options – the so-called 'tree of viewing options'.

The root vertices of such a tree present a current state/configuration, while IS - is option-taking and choice-making. Usually there is quite a big choice of variants. As a result of their choice-making, Virtual Identity expands very fast.

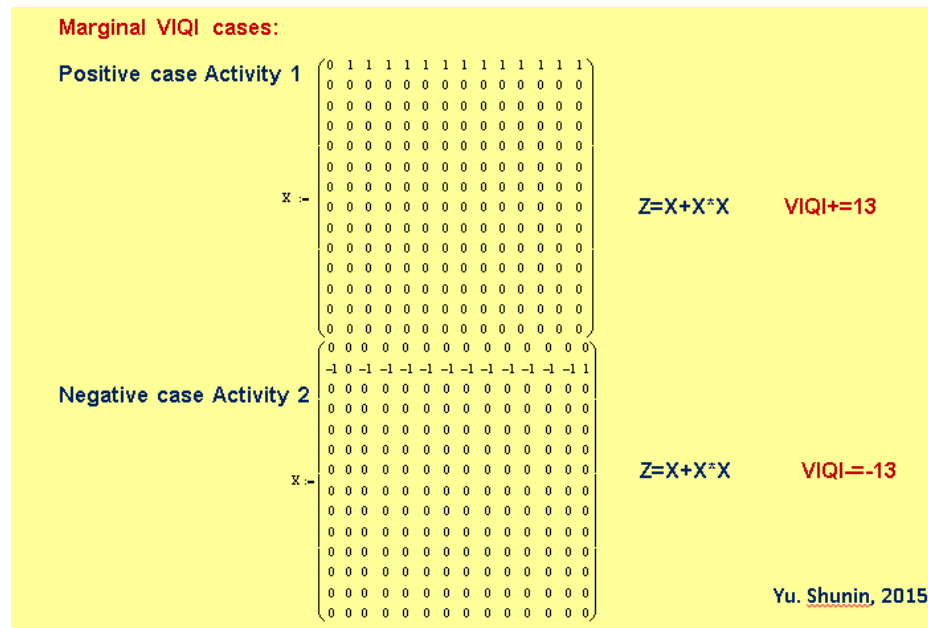
## **6. Sociometric matrices for calculating the Virtual Identity Quality Index (VIQI)**

If education professionals are to prepare for the new challenges presented by emerging media, we need to have a basic understanding of what a typical media diet looks like for today's students. We were interested in how our students use the Internet. Specifically, we wanted to know the things youth spent most of their time doing when they were online and, particularly, how the amount of time students spend on the Internet correlates with their interests. They were asked to evaluate the purposes for which they use the Internet – for studies and work, entertainment, communication, searching information and reading news, visiting blogs, etc (see Table 9).

Most Common Internet Activities		
1.	Doing Schoolwork +	31%
2.	Social Networking Websites -	38%
3.	Playing Games -	24%
4.	Listening to Music -	28%
5.	Instant Messaging -	19%
6.	Surfing the Web -	17%
7.	Emailing +	15%
8.	Something Else -	18%
N=92		

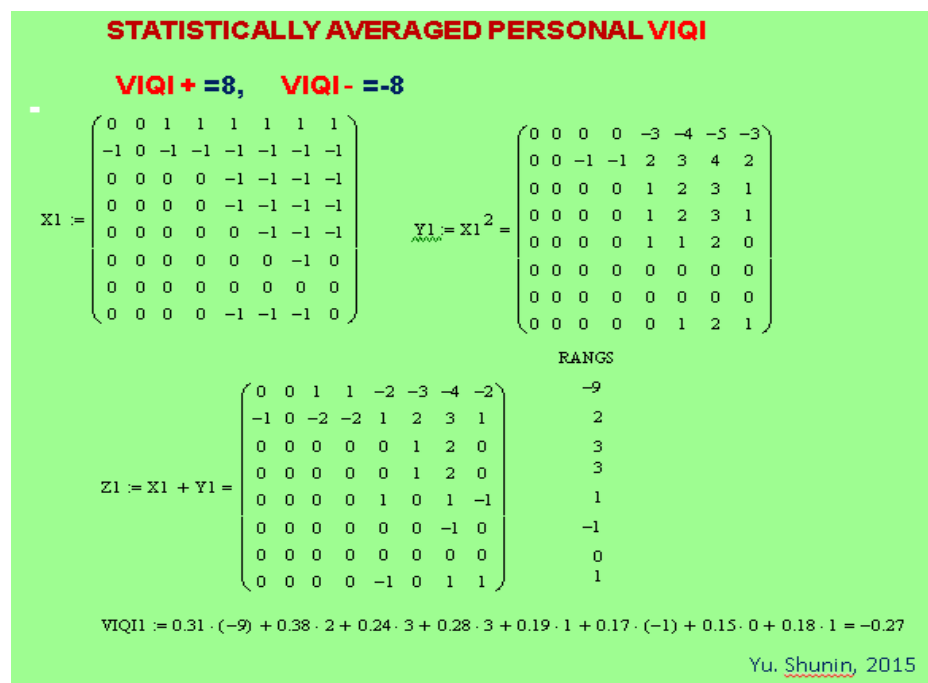
**Table 9.** *Students virtual activities*

Assuming that the virtual identity quality depends on the time spent in the electronic virtual space and the type of specific activities, we consider, from the educational point of view, the useful time spent on the Internet activities (i.e. that serving educational purposes) as positive (+) and the rest of the time spent on surfing the Internet - as negative (-) (see, e.g. Figure 10). The applied sociometric methods allow us to analyze partial contributions of a computer user activities and to introduce a *Virtual Identity Quality Index (VIQI)*.



**Figure 10.** Evaluation of marginal virtual activities: pure ‘plus’ and pure ‘minus’

The method helps to identify either positive or negative virtual identity quality index (VIQI) of every person – i.e. how efficiently a person consumes his time from the point of view of educational perspective and self-development (see Figure 11).



**Figure 11.** Evaluations of realistic VIQI

Based on these data, we can provide recommendations on how to most efficiently use contact computer time and how to help students to arrange their activities (both online and offline) with the maximum positive result for self-development.

## **Conclusion**

We are interacting in a new environment where with the facilitation of information and computer technologies, individuals may go beyond their physical community and interface, and form virtual identities by means of interactions with diverse cultural beliefs and behaviors on a global scale.

The virtual interactive spaces mediated through the synchronous and asynchronous communication tools transform traditional notions of identity and a new cultural 'hybrid' identity emerges – the offspring of real and virtual identities.

Advances in technology have created a global communication network providing humans a new and diverse habitat – computer-mediated and online virtual world. The Internet provides virtual worlds that, in turn, provide individuals an outlet for their virtual identity.

With students consuming the greatest number of hours watching television and playing video games, students between the ages of 18-22 spend an equivalent of six hours each day or 40 hours a week using media. Such amount of time devoted to media exacerbates a growing concern that media sources like television and video games have the potential to distort worldviews. This is an important concern for educators because most of the time the Internet, video film, and computer video graphics are incorporated into the curriculum. When such media are associated with youth culture, they construct representations of the world and serve as socializing agents, providing young people with beliefs about the behaviors of the world.

Schools and universities need to promote a balance way of technology diffusion that youths can properly fit to their own way of life, traditions, customs and cultural heritage at the same time they can adapt themselves to the challenges and realities of the twenty-first century in order to find their own place in the real world of globalization.

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## The student experience of ICT in Higher education

Olga Tzafea & Nikolaos Kyrgios, University of Ioannina / King's College, London [olgatzaf@gmail.com](mailto:olgatzaf@gmail.com), [nikolas.kyrgios@gmail.com](mailto:nikolas.kyrgios@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*ICT in higher education is a basic development resource that is being used to promote change in education. However, concerns are frequently raised about diversity amongst learners and inequalities in the access to and use of ICT. This paper reviews the student experience of e-learning in higher education in order to identify areas worthy of future investigation. The study is based on a research carried out at the university of Ioannina. A number of undergraduate students answered questions about their perceptions for e-learning experience that plays a big role to social and economic integration and participation in academic life and preparation for professional life of social vulnerable groups. This review highlights that these inequalities arising from the social class, discrimination based on ethnic origin the language etc. are not always diminishing over time and attempts at bridging the digital divide have often resulted in widening it. The review concludes that future research should investigate the relationship between socioeconomic and cultural background and the way students understand how students understanding of the teaching and learning process impacts on their study strategies and perceptions of online learning.*

**Keywords:** ICT, higher education, digital divide, e-learning, social class

### **Introduction**

In recent decades, European governments implement policies and spend a lot of money for the integration of Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs) in education, particularly in Higher Education. It is commonly accepted that ICT play a critical role in enabling the Higher Education to better meet the developmental needs of knowledge society and global economy. This development brings a new society that is called 'knowledge-based society' (Kozma, 2003; OECD/CERI, 2001; Resta & Laferrière, 2008). The wide use of the internet can seek or create new opportunities for achieving objectives in the economic, social, political and economic field (Ryan, 2008). ICT use in Higher Education is referred to the development of online activities: use of educative online platforms, digital devices, use of blogs, e-class, e-courses, e-learning as a result of Internet revolution. ICT has had a major impact on the university context, in organization and in teaching and learning methods. We are now at a point where almost all higher education institutions are operating at least one virtual learning environment. Moreover, ICT skills are highly valued in the job market. These skills are necessary on the professional workplace because "knowledge-based society" is based on information technology as an integral part of nearly all business. In this context, ICT are expected to improve educational outcomes and reduce educational inequalities because they offer new lower cost learning opportunities, new educational environments and innovative career prospects.

Educational policies try to promote the social dimension of higher education, the importance of which was first mentioned in the Prague Communiqué (2001) and became clear in Berlin Communiqué (2003). Under those circumstances, everyone can equal access and use the ICTs opportunities.

There is no doubt that ICT is the first innovative step to the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Nevertheless, social researchers argue that a new generation of social inequalities is being raised. An issue that has been addressed by several researches is based on the notion that ICT inequalities is a new kind of cultural capital. Even though high-speed Internet may have become more widely available across different groups, people do not seize ICT opportunities equally. Under those circumstances, ICT qualifications into Higher Education may be restricted by socioeconomic factors. In other words, socioeconomic background is likely to influence the way that students use ICT tools for learning. ICT inequalities as a result of the unequal use of ICT are rarely taken into account by educational policies. The difficulties in the effective integration of ICT in the classroom make the subject a constant challenge for modern educational systems.

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between socioeconomic status (SES) and ICT skills. As soon as students nowadays are widely perceived to be “digital natives” (Livingstone & Helsper, 2007), little academic attention has been paid on how cultural capital influence the ICT skills on higher education. There is a lack of information about how best to address this issue in academic curriculum. The research questions that are raised are 1) how students social and personal characteristics impact on their ICT skills 2) what are student’s perspectives on ICT literacy in the academic environment. The relationship between the use of ICT and student performance in higher education is not clear, and there are contradictory results in the literature. From this point of view, the study will contribute to shed light on students perspectives on ICT literacy in a Greek higher education institution and to clarify the impact of cultural capital in their development.

### **ICT Literacy**

ICT literacy is the ability to use digital technology, communication tools, and/or networks to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, create, and communicate information ethically and legally. One major issue in ICT literacy is digital divide. The term “Digital divide” is used by the 1990s, after the wide spread of the Internet, when early research on access to ICT skills have been conducted (Livingstone & Helsper, 2007). There are two level of digital divide. The first level refers to differences between those who have and those who do not have access and skills to use the internet, thus creating new forms of social inequality and social exclusion (OECD, 2001; van Dijk, 2006). The second level describes the differences between those who have access to the Internet in the ways they use and the information they get from the internet (Van Deursen, et al. 2009; Van Dijk & Van Deursen 2009).

The main question that is raised is “Do all students benefit equally from the use of ICT or there are factors that differentiate the benefits as regard the knowledge and learning through ICT?” Studies on the digital divide use different measurement tools and show that the digital divide has economic, social, political and cultural consequences. Being a proficiency ICT user demonstrate a kind of lifestyle that someone has the wealth and the competence to use technological devices as a part of personal and professional life. More specifically, people who make advanced use of ICT are likely to have a higher level of social engagement. Also, they are more possible to benefit from



the available widespread information. In other words, ICT skills may affect an individual's potential to increase or decrease his or her life chances for upward mobility.

Nowadays, in societies of knowledge and networks are growing inequalities in ICT skills among people with different social backgrounds. There are differences associated with gender, age (Bonfadelli, 2002), education (Hargittai & Walejko, 2008), social class (van Dijk, 2005), race and ethnicity. There are clear distinctions on how people with different social and personal characteristics use the ICT skills and for what reason. For example, even though men and women seem to have the same ICT skills, more recent qualitative studies, Brock, Kvasny and Hales (2010) and Daniels (2009) found that women were participating in online forums and blogs increasingly more than men and men use computer technology more as a daily hobby. Moreover, people from disadvantaged social groups (immigrants, low-income) are more likely to be unfamiliar with the ICT tools and they are less likely to have an Internet connection at home. In a similar vein, place of residence might be an indicator for identifying the frequency of ICT skills. It has been argued (Smith, 2010) that there is a gap between urban and rural ICT users. Urban population are more likely to make use of ICT skills. Last but not least, several researches show that there might be ICT inequalities in terms of traditional literacy. It is argued that traditional literacy (reading, writing and understanding text) has a direct effect on formal and information Internet skills (Van Deursen et al., 2015).

To conclude, personal and social characteristics seem to be influential factors in developing ICT inequalities. Under those circumstances, what is more important on measuring inequalities on Higher education is cultural and social capital of the family. In this study, we focus on cultural capital of the family that incorporates all those previous norms and beliefs of individuals that influence their academic and educational attainment.

### **Technical capital as a new form of cultural capital**

In 2002, a new sub-type of cultural capital has been introduced by Bourdieu. It is called technical capital. Bourdieu's theory for cultural capital (1986) explain how certain cultural tastes and styles in cultural activities influence individuals educational behaviour. Technical capital according to Brock, Kvasny, and Hales (2010),

*"serves as a as certain group mobilize around their technical expertise to gain resources and position. This form of capital accrues through education, economic means, and social networks that include others knowledgeable about ICT, and unfettered access to ICT. (p.1042)"*

Under those circumstances, ICT literacy is a new aspect of cultural capital (Sianou-Kyrgiou & Tsiplakides, 2012) in the new information-based society. Nowadays, ICT skills are of big importance for individuals to gain a successful future life. Nevertheless, there are differences in use of ICT because some students have little or no access to ICT or have little in the way of ICT skills, with the result that it is difficult for them to meet educational expectations (Broos, 2006). From this point of view, big concerns are posed about the ICT achievement of students from weak social backgrounds and of immigrant or ethnic minority students.

## **Methods**

Data collection are based on a part of an ongoing research conducted in 2014/15 aimed to examine the relationship between socioeconomic status (SES) and ICT literacy in Greek higher education. The sample is 450 undergraduate students from an urban university of Greece (Ioannina). The study advocates whether different patterns of student perceptions of ICT learning skills can be seen as differences in cultural capital. The conducted quantitative research is based on structured questionnaires. The questionnaire is consisted of two parts: firstly, questions related to students personal and social characteristics (gender, age, year of study, study program, access to computers and the Internet, education and parents' occupation, economic and social students background). Secondly, questions related to their perspectives of ICT literacy in higher education.

The term ICT literacy is generally used in this study to measure student ICT profile on HE. As a first component of their ICT profile, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they used a computer in the classroom for schoolwork. Respondents indicated their answer on a five-point Likert scale: I) never II) almost never III) occasionally IV) almost every time and, V) every time. A five-item scale was constructed namely 'ICT use' ( $M = 3.21$ ;  $SD = 1.25$ ;  $Min = 1$ ;  $Max = 5$ ).

The second component of the computer-use profile is "ICT familiarity" that gives an indication of the respondent's familiarity with ICT tools such as on-line platforms. The respondents rated their own competence on a five-point scale: I) not enough II) a little III) sufficient IV) good and, V) excellent. The scale 'ICT familiarity' reveals an internal consistency ( $M = 3.53$ ;  $SD = 1.27$ ;  $Min = 1$ ;  $Max = 5$ ).

The third component of the computer-use profile is 'ICT competence'. The respondents were asked to indicate at what extent they feel that they make proficient use of ICT. The respondents indicated on a Likert five-point scale to what extent they agreed: I) completely disagree II) disagree III) more or less agree IV) agree and, IV) completely agree. The five-item scale 'ICT competence' has an internal consistency ( $M = 2.57$ ;  $SD = 1.22$ ;  $Min = 1$ ;  $Max = 5$ ).

The fourth component of the computer-use profile is "ICT replacement". The respondents indicated on a five-point scale to what extent they agree to the replacement of traditional learning methods by ICT learning methods: I) completely disagree II) disagree III) more or less agree IV) agree and, V) completely agree ( $M = 3.53$ ;  $SD = 1.28$ ;  $Min = 1$ ;  $Max = 5$ ).

The various elements can be elaborated further social and personal characteristics such as parent's occupation, ethnicity and race aiming to assess in a more detailed analysis the impact of cultural capital on ICT performance and to identify factors associated with digital divide. This study makes a description of the components according to a number of variables namely fathers' education, family income and gender. A bivariate analysis was conducted in order to better investigate the correlation between the student perceptions of ICT learning skills and their gender and socioeconomic status. The results give a first impression of the relationship among the research variables. These correlation measures do not provide sufficient information if the other effects not

be controlled. Further research should be conducted on a bigger variety of variables in order to shed light to the effects of SES on the ICT-related variables.

### **Findings**

Table I shows that there is a statistically significant association between fathers' education and familiarity with ICT ( $r=0.20$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Students whose father is a university graduate are more familiar with ICT tools. Furthermore, the results suggest statistical significant interrelationships between 'father's education' and 'ICT competence' ( $r=0.10$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). In a similar vein, there is a negative association between father's education and replacement of traditional learning methods with ICT learning tools ( $r=-0.04$ ,  $p=0.2$ ). This means that the higher the fathers education level the less student think that traditional learning can not be replaced by ICT learning tools.

Table 1 also shows that there is an association between "family income" and "ICT use" but it is not statistically significant ( $r=0.82$ ,  $p=0.82$ ). The results also suggest that there is a positive association between "family income" and "ICT competence" with no statistical significance ( $r=0.70$ ,  $p=0.14$ ). On the other hand, there is statistical significant positive association between "family income" and "familiarity with ICT" ( $r=0.15$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Last but no least, there is a negative no statistical significant association between family income and replacement of traditional learning methods ( $r=-0.07$ ,  $p=0.1$ ). To conclude, the higher the family income the more students make use of ICT, are advanced users of ICT, are familiar with ICT and believe that traditional learning cannot be replaced by ICT learning tools. There is no statistical significance between those variables. The only exception is "family income" and "familiarity with ICT".

Table 1 shows that there is a positive association between gender and use of ICT ( $r=0.06$ ,  $p=0.13$ ). Furthermore, the results suggest significant interrelationships between gender and familiarity with ICT, but it is no statistically significant ( $r=-0.05$ ,  $p=0.2$ ). Our results suggest that both boys and girls are familiar with ICT but girls make more use of ICT for schoolwork than boys. A negative statistically significant correlation between gender and replacement of traditional learning methods ( $r=-0.17$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) give strong evidence that both boys and girls believe that traditional learning can not be replaced by ICT learning tools.

Furthermore, the results suggest that 'first generation' has a positive statistically significant correlation with 'ICT use' ( $r = 0.44$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) as though as "ICT familiarity" ( $r=.063$ ,  $p=.047$ ) but it is not statistically significant. Generally, apart from a minor correlation between 'first generation' and 'ICT competence' ( $r = 0.05$ ,  $p = 0.47$ ) or "ICT replacement" ( $r=.012$ ,  $p=0.42$ ), "first-generation" has no statistically significant correlation among the research variables. The results also suggest that there is a negative association between "place of residence" and "ICT use" ( $r=-.12$ ,  $p=0.98$ ) but is not statistically significant. In a similar vein, "ICT familiarity" ( $r=-1.51$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and "ICT competence" ( $r=-.09$ ,  $p=0.74$ ) have a negative association with "place of residence". On the other hand, "place of residence" has a statistically significant positive association with "ICT replacement" ( $r=.205$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

	ICT use	ICT familiarity	ICT competence	ICT replacement
Father's education	.029*		.200**	-.041
Father's income	.082	.070	.156**	-.072
Gender	.065	-.051	-.129*	-.174**
First-generation students	.044	.063	.005	.012
Place of residence	-.127	-.093	-.151	.205

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

**Table I:** *Pearson Correlation coefficients among the research variables (N=450)*

## Discussion

The aim of the study was to seek 'beyond the binary view of accesses of the digital divide (Tondeur et al., 2010). As soon as students nowadays are widely perceived to be "digital natives", little academic attention has been paid on how cultural capital influence the ICT skills on higher education. Since there is a lack of information on how social and personal characteristics of student's impact on their ICT skills and what are students perspectives on ICT literacy in the academic enviroment, the study tried to shed light on students perspectives on ICT literacy in a Greek higher education institution and to clarify the impact of cultural capital in their development. The findings give evidence that there is relationship between SES and different dimensions of the computer-use profile of students. ICT attitudes, use and ways of learning might be seen as contemporary indicators of cultural capital.

In this study, we measured the student perspectives of ICT literacy in higher education: "ICT use", "ICT familiarity", "ICT competency" and "ICT replacement" by means of personal and social characteristics (father education, family income, gender, first generation students and place of residence). What emerged from the analyses was that a positive relationship between SES and ICT literacy was found for this group of students. More specifically, students whose father is a university graduate are more familiar with ICT tools, they use ICT for schoolwork, they are familiar with their use, they are excellent users of ICT and they think that traditional learning methods in higher education could be replaced by ICT learning tools such as use of educative online platforms, e-class, e-courses.

What else merged from the analysis is that ICT literacy is in a strong relationship with gender. Our results suggest that both boys and girls are familiar with ICT but girls make more use of ICT for schoolwork than boys. Moreover, both boys and girls believe that traditional learning cannot be replaced by ICT learning tools. The results also show that first-generation students variable has not a close interconnection with ICT literacy. On the other hand, place of residence influence ICT literacy of students that is confirmed by the literature.

As stated earlier, this early research was orientated towards the equalization of ICT literacy in higher education. It can be assumed that in recent years, the digital divide has been narrowed: computers have become more accessible in western countries. Nonetheless, differences on the

basis of SES are still discernible in some European countries (Livingstone & Helsper, 2007). Our analysis provide evidence that all students do not benefit equally from the use of ICT. Otherwise, there are social factors that differentiate the benefits as regard the knowledge and learning through ICT. Technical capital, a new sub-type of cultural capital, is a new challenging issue on the inequalities that emerged because of the unequal use of ICT tools in higher education.

The current study contributes to the literature on the digital divide because considers ICT as an indicator of cultural capital as described by Bourdieu's theory (Bourdieu, 1986). We made observations of uses and competencies that are relevant in terms of enabling and advancing students' educational achievement. This finding confirms the conclusion of van Dijk and Hacker (2003) that the current digital divide is a very complex phenomenon. Further research should be conducted in order to better understand the digital divide.

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## The e-Reflect Project: Empowering pupils to become change agents

Sarantis K. Chelmis, Maria E. Latzaki, Grainne Conole & Charalambos Vrasidas - *1<sup>st</sup> Primary School of Rafina, Greece / 1<sup>st</sup> Primary School of Rafina / Bath Spa University, UK / CARDET, Cyprus*  
[schelmis1@gmail.com](mailto:schelmis1@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*In times of national, European and world crises on environmental, financial, societal and political levels, the e-Reflect project brings together teachers from all over Europe to collaborate and jointly design educational interventions focusing on empowering school children to fully participate in society change initiatives. The e-Reflect project is an Erasmus+ project, which embraces the European Commission's invitation towards Member States to push forward educational reforms in adult learning. Through the agency of a school (1<sup>st</sup> Primary School of Rafina - Greece), Higher Education institutions (Bath Spa University-UK, Turku University-Finland, Aegean University-Greece), and a European NGO (Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology - Cyprus), the e-Reflect project seeks to develop and implement a high quality continuing professional development e-course, fusing design thinking and multi-literacies to stimulate active citizenship education for teachers and professionals working with children. The e-course focuses on introducing school educators to a rich technological environment for the implementation of the Reflect Approach in contemporary school settings, stimulating a structured, democratic and participative learning process, which draws upon the need for reflect and action for social change. Preliminary data of the e-course evaluation are presented.*

**Keywords:** *e-Reflect Approach, MOOC, e-learning, teacher education, web2.0*

### **Introduction**

Encouraging citizens, particularly young people, to actively engage in social and political life has recently become a growing political priority both at national and European level and one of the main objectives for education systems throughout Europe as identified in the Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training (ET 2020)" (European Commission, Education and Training in Europe 2020, Eurydice Report, 2013, p. 1).

Eurydice, in *Citizenship Education in Europe Report* (2012), stresses the need of improving teachers' knowledge and skills for teaching citizenship throughout Europe. Nevertheless, Eurydice notices that while several countries have reformed their citizenship education curricula over the last years, these reforms have rarely been introduced in continuing professional development programmes (CDPs).

Taking into account the popularization of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) during recent years, that offer a great opportunity for professional development, it comes as a surprise that only a few MOOCs address the aforementioned need in preparing teachers in citizenship education, let alone active citizenship education.

A web search for the MOOCs availability or e-learning courses on citizenship education dimensions returns just a few results. For instance, the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe (n.d)

provides a framework for European co-operation designed to heighten public awareness of global interdependence issues and to promote policies of solidarity complying with the Council of Europe's aims and principles, respect for human rights, democracy and social cohesion. It offers two online courses under the title "Global Education - The Intercultural Dimension" and "Global Education – The Human Rights Dimension" designed for education practitioners. These courses explore the ways of addressing intercultural issues in theory and practice, reflecting on the ideal state considering the evidence of the reality, and developing new ways of understanding and promoting human rights education in the contexts of the participants. However, these courses cannot be characterized as "open" (a selection procedure applies) and do not appear to fit with the specific needs of a teacher training course focusing on active citizenship education.

UNESCO developed an open multimedia teacher training project under the title "Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future". Part of the programme curriculum addresses citizenship education issues and aims at (a) developing an understanding of the nature and scope of educating for active citizenship, (b) providing examples of some school initiatives in active citizenship, and (c) developing skills for planning across-the-curriculum learning experiences in citizenship education in school, community and settings (Citizenship Education, n.d). The UNESCO course provides a variety of learning activities to master concepts, but it lacks many features inherent in a contemporary MOOCs like tracking of student progress, online evaluation activities, tests and quizzes, communication forums and learning feedback.

The e-Reflect project is an ERASMUS+ project aspiring at filling in the gap of teachers' on-line training in active citizenship education. Through the agency of a school (1st Primary School of Rafina - Greece), Higher Education institutions (Bath Spa University-UK, Turku University-Finland, Aegean University-Greece), and a European NGO (Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology - Cyprus) , the e-Reflect project seeks to develop and implement a high quality continuing professional development e-course, fusing design thinking and multi-literacies to stimulate active citizenship education for teachers and professionals working with children. In this paper, we present the theoretical underpinnings, the learning design procedure and evaluation methods, we follow in order to design and develop a MOOC on active citizenship education, which is primarily targeted at teachers and young children education professionals. The course is based on the Reflect Approach, which is defined as a structured, collaborative and participative learning process that facilitates people to critically analyse their environment, construct a personal understanding of local and global reality and challenge dominant development paradigms (Archer, 1998). In the core of this process rests the need for people's empowerment as well as reflect and action for social change. The Approach was initiated by the international organization ActionAid (2001) and organizations working with Reflect won UNESCO literacy prizes in 2003, 2005, 2007, 2008 and 2010.

At the same time, it is innovative on the account that it fuses digital literacy in stimulating active citizenship. Particularly, it takes advantage of contemporary digital technology (course authoring and web2.0 tools, LMS and social media such as twitter, facebook, blogs, use of hashtags) to



cultivate democratic spaces for communication, collaboration and action, and encourage discussion so that people can develop their own learning materials, basing their analysis on the systematization of their own knowledge.

In this context, e-Reflect MOOC does not follow a content - driven, but a process- as well as a connectivist-driven learning approach which establishes horizontal, dynamic and emerging networks of teacher professionals as a means to encourage both the personalization of the learning experience and the development of collective intelligence (Conole, 2013).

## **Theoretical Underpinnings of the e-Reflect MOOC**

### **Active Citizenship Education**

Active citizenship education involves assisting children reflect on values and acquire skills necessary for taking community action. It is a process in which children (Holden & Clough, 1998:14):

#### **A. Develop an understanding of**

- the significance of individual and collective action
- their own values and the relationship of these to behaviour and action
- democratic systems and the individual's role within these
- contemporary events and controversial issues
- the causes of social and environmental problems
- recent historical events and their relationship to the present/future

#### **B. Are encouraged to**

- explore issues of justice, rights and responsibilities within the taught curriculum
- voice their own needs and concerns within a responsive framework
- develop the skills of critical reflection through discussion
- address the implications of their own behaviour with respect to social and environmental problems
- participate in decision making and action at school, community or global level.

### **Active Citizenship Education and the Reflect Approach**

The purpose of the Reflect approach is to empower and enable communities to participate actively in problem identification, analysis and to develop practical solutions to address them. The approach aims at bringing about social change and learning through providing a democratic platform for debate and dialogue at community level (Archer & Cottingham, 2012).

“Reflect” is an acronym which stands for “Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques”. It was initiated in 1992 as an innovative approach to adult learning and

social change that fuses the theories of Paulo Freire with participatory methodologies developed for Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA).

According to Freire (1970), education's mission is to help teachers and students to communicate with each other, to interact with knowledge, to amplify knowledge and to act. Freire stresses the importance of the reflecting procedure, believing that action with no inner thinking and no dialogue leads to unreasonable activism. He proposed that education allows people improve their lives through transforming society and rejecting sovereign ideology and values imposed by privileged members of society.

Participatory Rural Appraisal (Chambers, 1983; 1993) objects the western, modern worldview of development, which holds that problems can be solved through a simple, conventional, technocratic way prescribed by expert managers. PRA practitioners accept that poor communities possess a wealth of technical and societal knowledge, which act as a safeguard under adverse environmental conditions. In order for these poor and illiterate people develop and improve their living conditions, they have to become aware of this knowledge and move it a step forward.

During the Reflect process, participants, working in "reflect circles", develop collaboratively their own learning materials that fit their situation and needs. "Reflect circles" are a symbol of equal interpersonal relations that transcend traditional authoritarian discrimination between "learners" and "teachers" (Archer & Cottingham, 2012).

Participants in Reflect circles use a variety of cognitive tools in order to visualise, analyse and interpret living conditions of the community and work out solutions. These tools include maps, calendars, matrices, rivers, trees and other diagrams. However, many other participatory methods and processes are also used, including theatre, role-play, song, dance, video and photography (Participatory tools, n.d.).

The Reflect Approach throughout the years underwent many amendments in order to adapt to multiple educational needs of the adults.

As far as younger people are concerned, the Approach was tailored to facilitate and assess active global citizenship in the classroom. A school project under the title Get Global! drawing on the Reflect Approach, give students the opportunity to explore citizenship issues relevant to their lives and develop the skills of learning and social action. A range of innovative and participatory activities promote a skills-based approach rather than a content-based approach, so they can be used within different subject areas and with all ages (Get Global! n.d.).

The Get Global! activities build around six learning "steps", which are similar to the Kolbb's experiential learning cycle (Kolb,1984):

*Step 1:* Pupils explore attitudes and values towards global citizenship

*Step 2:* Pupils investigate important issues that affect their lives and choose one that will work

*Step 3:* Pupils collect more information on their subject and studying it in depth.

*Step 4:* Pupils work out ways of dealing with the problem

*Step 5:* Pupils take action while recording their actions and the results of their efforts

*Step 6:* Pupils reflect upon their learning experiences and discuss what they can do differently the next time.

### **The Reflect Approach in a Technology - Rich Environment**

Nowadays, social and participatory media tools are creating an optimal, technology-rich environment, both for implementing the Reflect Approach in school and teacher training settings. Digital technologies provide learners with access to rich interactive multimedia and provide a variety of ways in which can communicate and collaborate with peers, tutors and experts (Latzaki, 2012).

The transition to the digital era and the knowledge society constituted the computer an efficient and, therefore, a necessary tool to support and promote learning across the entire range and levels of education (Yu, Yu, & Lin, 2010). Bentley (2003) notes that education in a universal electronic environment can effectively facilitate learners build knowledge. Surveys have indicated that technology has a really positive impact on education, motivates and encourages learning and modifies the traditional way of learner communication (Johnston & Joscelyn, 1989 ; Kozma & Johnston, 1991 ; Perkins, 1992).

The effects of digital technologies in supporting and boosting any kind of learning is especially apparent in the usage of the Internet, which incorporates constantly evolving applications and tools (Hiemstra & Poley, 2007). The era of web 1.0 learning, which focuses on the use of the internet as a reproductive tool of teacher-centred teachings, has long given way to the era of web 2.0 learning, which is based around communication and collaboration (Stahl, Koschmann, & Suthers, 2013). Thus, nowadays we talk about the social construction of learning, which is realized through the interactions of learners with both the content and their fellow learners. The emphasis is not on what we learn, but how we learn together with others (Hmelo-Silver, Chinn, Chan, & O'Donnell, 2013; Korres, 2011; Stahl, 2004; 2013).

Social and participatory media, online environments and networks provide collaborative, distributed and shared construction of knowledge, opportunities for individual empowerment and civic engagement in social and political life (Bennett, Wells, and Rank, 2009; McDonald, 2008; Nogueira & Moreira, 2010). In this direction, the New Citizenship Project (n.d.) and the Nexus project (n.d.) employ new technologies in encouraging citizens to fully participate in society.

New technologies have also become the focus of many initiatives, which explore the ways in which the computer can be a critical vehicle leading to the learner empowerment in ensuring fundamental human rights, democratic principles (equality, freedom, respect for diversity, self-determination) and social justice (Latzaki, 2012; Vrasidas, Zembylas, & Glass, 2009). Among

those initiatives, the “Technology challenging poverty: Make the Link” project (n.d.) and the TechChange courses (n.d.) aim at building online teacher training courses which combine technology and education to facilitate social change.

### **The e-Reflect MOOC**

Fusing the interactive nature of the Reflect Approach in a teacher’s training course is a challenging task. Many experts in the field of e-learning note that the use of the computer as a learning and cooperation tool cannot easily reproduce the features of a successful face to face teaching, such as the sense of learning community, the emotional bondage of the participants and the flexibility of the learning activities (Latzaki, 2012). Also, students bear the burden of the cognitive interaction with the learning platform and the management of applications (Burns, 2011: 87). At the same time MOOCs are heavily criticized either as being confusing and task burdened or pedagogically erroneous (Conole, 2013).

In order to overcome the aforementioned deficiencies of the online courses we follow a systematic approach of instructional design based on the 7Cs of Learning Design framework (Conole, 2012).

The 7Cs of the Learning Design framework consists of the following elements, which guide the design, the development and the evaluation processes of a MOOC:

- Conceptualise (the vision for the course, principles and pedagogic approaches),
- Capture (a resource audit, use and repurposing educational resources),
- Communicate (mechanisms to foster communication),
- Collaborate (mechanisms to foster collaboration),
- Consider (assessment strategies),
- Combine (overarching views of the design), and
- Consolidate (implementing and evaluating the design in a real learning context).

We will take up each one of the each one of the 7Cs framework elements presenting the way it influenced the overall design of the e-Reflect MOOC.

### **Conceptualize**

Digital technologies in general, and, in particular, the use of social and participatory tools, the need for "enlargement " of the concept of community and the need for digital literacy call for adapting the Reflect Approach in a technologically supported environment.

The e-Reflect MOOC aims at introducing school educators in a rich technological environment for the implementation of the Reflect Approach in contemporary school settings.

Particularly, the course aims at helping teachers:

- Develop an understanding of the Reflect approach in supporting active citizenship education;
- Develop skills for planning learning experiences in active citizenship education, integrating Web 2.0 technologies
- Creatively fuse digital tools in the Reflect approach to meet specific citizenship education needs

The course starts with an overview of active citizenship and the e-reflect method, then an overview of Technology Enhanced Learning is provided, along with an indication of how technologies can be used to facilitate the e-reflect approach. The 7Cs of Learning Design framework is introduced and participants use the associated activities/resources to design their e-reflect sessions, around the 6 aspects of the e-reflect approach (see table 1).

<b>Goals</b>	
<b>Lesson 1</b>	Review the active citizenship literature, its value and how it can be promoted through the reflect approach.
<b>Lesson 2</b>	Develop an understanding of a range of digital technologies and how they can be used to facilitate rich interaction, communication and collaboration.
<b>Lesson 3 – 4</b>	Develop a good understanding of the e-Reflect approach through simulation activities
<b>Lesson 5 – 6</b>	Develop a good understanding of the 7Cs of Learning Design framework and associated activities/resources and how it can be used to implement the e-reflect approach to designing activities on active citizenship

**Table 1.** *The MOOC Syllabus*

The nature of course content, the instructional objectives and the need for combining learning theories for maximizing learning outcomes, opt for selective and combined use of a variety of teaching strategies (Table 2).

<b>Learning Theory</b>	<b>Teaching Strategy</b>
Behaviourism	Direct Teaching
Cognitivism	Advance Organizers Scenario Based e-Learning Synectics
Social Learning Theory/ Constructivism/ Connectivism	Group Investigation Web Quest Collaborative Writing

**Table 1.** *The learning theories and teaching strategies employed throughout the e-course*

## Capture

The main technological tool used to capture and aggregate content and activities is the Articulate Storyline course authoring tool, Articulate Engage and Articulate Quizmaker (Figure 1).

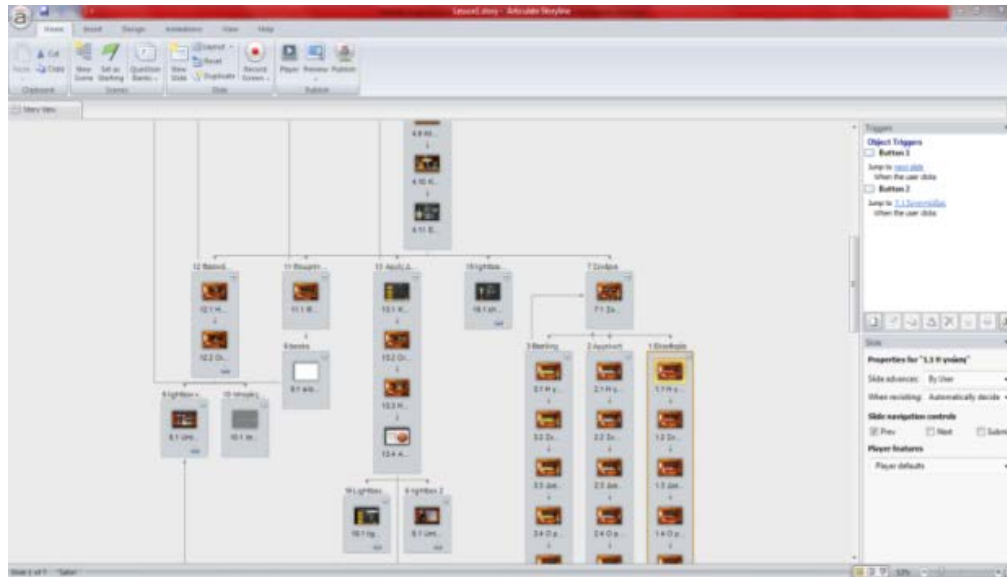


Figure 1. The Articulate Story Line environment

A wide range of participatory tools is used within a Reflect process to help create an open and democratic environment in which everyone is able to contribute. Visualisation approaches are of particular importance and play an active role in the e-learning activities (Latzaki, 2012) (figure 2).

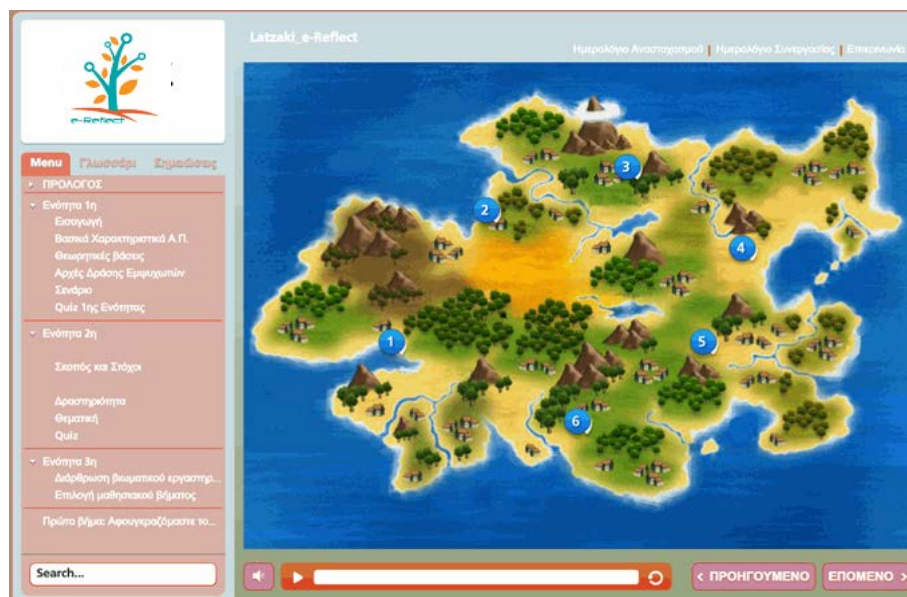


Figure 2. The image of an island represents the learning “stations” the learner follows through the MOOC.

A number of reflective thinking tools are used in activities which invite learners to analyse and to deepen in their thinking. Learners are given the opportunity to record their thoughts reflecting around topics that are of great importance to them or to the wider community (Figure 3). Texts that learners produce are stored in book format, organized into chapters and are available throughout the course.



**Figure 3.** The "reflective diary" is used during the simulation of the e-Reflect approach to help learners examine their own thinking

Apart from the screens created with the aid of the course authoring tools, open and free technological tools such as Lino.it and Google Drive are used to convey content and involve learners in course activities (figure 4).

An LMS system is also developed to host e-content, facilitate communication and record learners' behavior through the course.



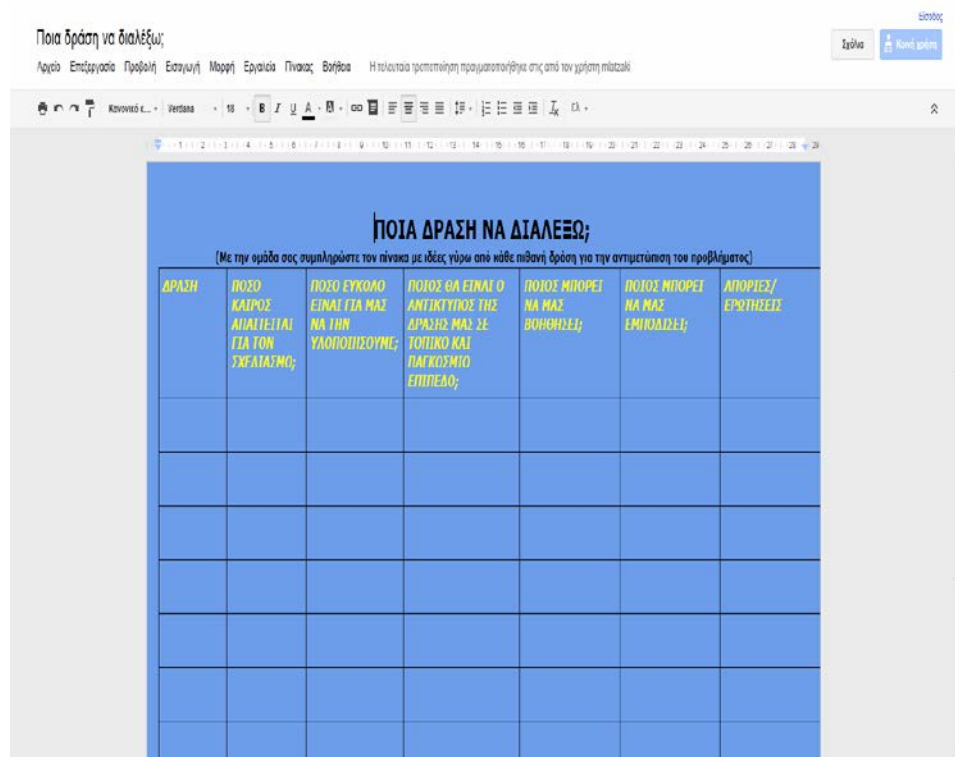
**Figure 4.** The tree Reflect tool represented in Lino

## Communicate and Collaborate

Communication and collaborative activities are also an integral part in e-Reflect MOOC. These activities mainly build around web 2.0 tools (Figures 5 and 6) while communication channels are kept open through fora, chat rooms and weekly discussions between learners and trainers.



**Figure 5.** *The Lino.it collaboration environment*



**Figure 6.** *The Google Documents collaboration environment*



### **Consider**

The consider C deals with the assessment aspect of student learning ways which can take the form of self -, peer or tutor assessment. At the end of the MOOC students are asked to design a lesson plan employing the e-Reflect approach. Lesson plans are peer and tutor evaluated using a special rubric.

At the same time, reflection is encouraged throughout the course, as a key dimension of the e-Reflect course and as a means of students revisiting their own experience, develop critical and creative thinking and design future actions.

### **Combine**

The e-Reflect consortium gives an emphasis in developing a holistic view of the e-course, aggregating in a systematic and simple way all its components in a guidebook. The guidebook, which primarily targeted to the students' trainers/facilitators of the e-Reflect course, includes a description of the philosophy underpinning the MOOC, a course map (overview of the content, syllabus, activities and curriculum mapping of four participating countries i.e. England, Finland, Greece and Cyprus), communication, collaboration and assessment issues. It also gives guidance upon the LMS functionalities and follow up activities (implementation of the e-Reflect approach in actual classroom settings).

### **Consolidate**

In order to identify possible bugs in the generated MOOC and assemble data from the first reactions of teacher participants, at an early stage we conducted a formative evaluation of our MOOC (Latzaki, 2012; see also Dick, Carey & Carey, 2008: 258). In particular, and in accordance with the general criteria laid down by Dick, Carey & Carey (2008) for the first stage of evaluation, we focused on teachers' impressions regarding (a) the clarity of programme's structure and content (design), (b) the feasibility of the individual and collective activities provided, (c) the feasibility of evaluation procedures, and (d) the satisfaction of the environment interface.

The sample of participants in the process of formative evaluation consisted of 18 teachers of primary and 4 secondary school teachers (n = 22), who had the opportunity to browse the MOOC and then complete a rubric/questionnaire.

The questionnaire/rubric designed and placed within Google Forms, while access had trainees from the platform of the seminar, following special link on the home page.

For the purposes of the formative evaluation of our program, we translated the general criteria of Dick, Carey & Carey (2008) in 55 operating questions shaping a five-scale rubric, in four areas.

Questions were organized into four sections/dimensions:

**Dimension A:**

Teaching Design. This dimension refers to the analysis of learning needs and systematic development of a Web-based seminar, in a manner that facilitates the transfer of learning and skills in learners through the use of a variety of teaching methods, adapted to different learning styles and preferences. In dimension A were evaluated: the structure of the seminar (A1), the aims and objectives (A2), the General information for learners on the seminar (A3), the selection of teaching strategies (A4), the academic integrity (A5), and the use of multimedia (A6).

**Dimension B:**

Communication, interaction and collaboration. This dimension refers to the way in which the design of the seminar, the tasks and the technology use encourage student-student and teacher-student interaction. In particular, dimension b evaluates: the opportunities that are given to trainees for communication and interaction around activities (B1), the organisation of collective processes (B2), the content and procedures of group activities (B3),

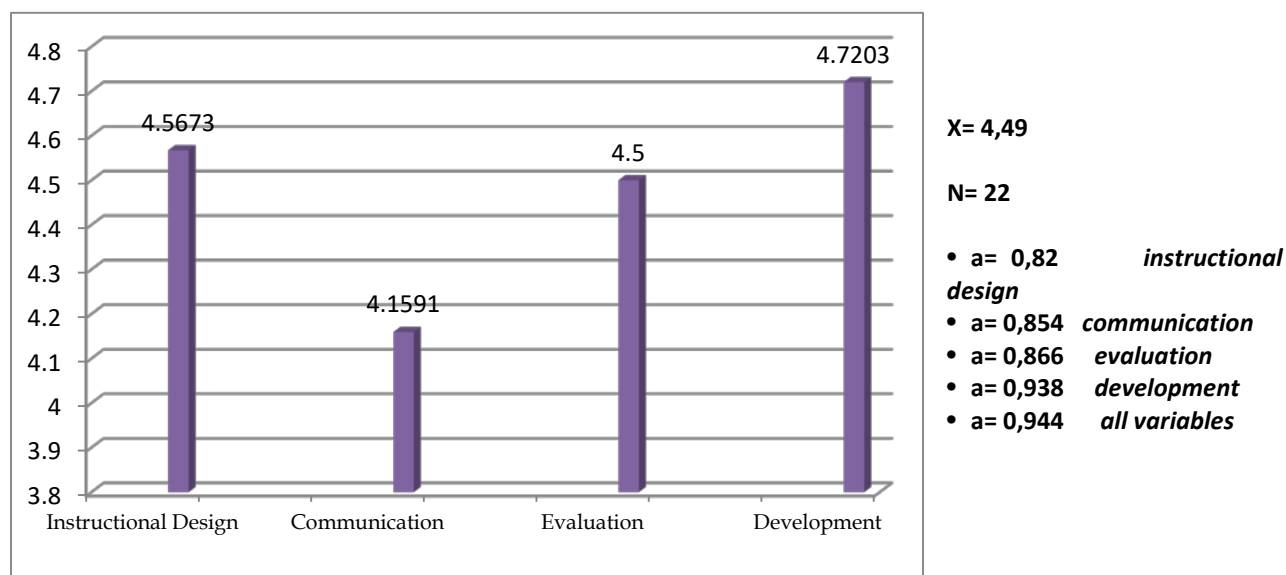
**Dimension C:**

Evaluation of trainees. Assessed valuation of work procedures for trainees during the seminar. In particular, dimension (c) evaluates: the aims and objectives of the evaluation procedures (C1), grading policy (C2) and (C3) evaluation tools.

**Dimension D:**

Interface Design. Assess the use of graphics and multimedia and, in particular: the interface design (D1), the use of icons (D2), and hyperlinks and navigation (D3).

At the end of each dimension the participants in the evaluation were able to add their own comments and reviews.



The data that we collected from the formative evaluation of express overall satisfaction of the evaluators concerning both the programme as a whole and the individual dimensions as well: the teaching planning, the evaluation procedures, the interactions and the interface environment.

Nevertheless, we have to be cautious in interpreting the data, since they represent the learners' impressions about the course (preliminary evaluation) and not the final evaluation of the course in the context of implementation. For this reason, a new, updated set of tools for the e-course evaluation have been developed which aim at aligning the project outcomes with the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework. The Framework constitutes a new reference mechanism that aims to aid authorities of EU Member States to support and monitor the upgrading of their systems of Vocational Education and Training (VET).

### **Conclusion**

The first launch of the e-Reflect MOOC is going to take place early 2016 expecting at least 100 teachers from all over Europe to join. An in-depth analysis of teaching practice will follow, with a group of teachers who participated in the MOOC to implement the e-Reflect approach in classroom settings. The analysis will take the form of interviews and questionnaires regarding participant views, opinions, and comments about the e-Reflect approach and the training. The advantage of the focus group as a qualitative method of data collection is that it allows for interaction and exchange of ideas between the participants, thus providing them with the opportunity to present a deeper analysis of their views on the topics examined.

Data collected will offer feedback for e-course improvements and adjustments for the opening of the course to a wider community that is willing to explore and discover ways in which digital technologies literacy can act as a springboard for social transformation and improvement of life on the planet.

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## Transformations of identity in the digital era

Kathy Louta, Secondary Education Teacher, Univeristy of the Peloponnese, [loutaik65@gmail.com](mailto:loutaik65@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*The notion of identity, particularly the identity of adolescents, has been transformed in the digital age radically. The rigid, uncontested identity, which was under the supervision of institutions, has been transformed in the digital environment into a novel fluid identity -both malleable and hybrid. It has been transformed into an identity always under construction, in a process, in which the final outcome is contingent. The monolithic concept of self is replaced by the multiple or "possible" selves, as digital media allow and encourage experimentation, taking on multiple roles and initiatives, often risky, but without the unpleasant consequences. The blurring of boundaries between private and public, the easy transition to anonymity, the disembodied communication, the ability to construct attractive and constantly new images of themselves and finally the participation in communities which are based on personal choices and which they can without hesitation leave anytime, make the stranglehold of traditional societies ineffective and undermine the dominant role of institutional organizations (school, church, state) in the construction of identity. The internet, Facebook and digital games now play a key role mainly in forming of teenagers' identity and put it on new base. These changes will seek to reflect this work.*

**Keywords:** Identity, digital era, possible selves, contingency

Identity is a notion difficult to interpret as its meaning is slippery and ambiguous (Bauman, 2004). It derives from the Latin root "idem," meaning "the same" (Barney D., 2004; Buckingham D., 2008). But simultaneously the idea of identity does not only mean similarity but also implies difference. Therefore, an integral part of its construction is the Other. Initially, although identity is a personal construction, it must be recognized from the social group in which the individual wants to integrate. Only this way is the individual fully acceptable by the social group. Stone argues that when the characteristics of individuals, which he delineates coincide with the ones of the social group, when the "identity announcement" and the "identity" placement" are the same, then the identity consolidates (Stone, 1981, p. 188 in Zhao Sh., Grasmuck Sh., Martin J., 2008). Except from this identification process, there is another process of differentiation. In this case, the "Other" functions as a reversed image of the self in its construction. In order to easily distinguish between the self and the other, a process of stereotyping or «cognitive simplification», which allows to define themselves in positive ways is also necessary (Buckingham D., 2008). So identity is not constructed in a void nor does it pre-exist. It is not fixed and unchangeable, as argued by the supporters of essentialism in the past. Contrary to this perspective, Goffman (1956) argues that identity is the result of interaction between the individual and the society as well as their reciprocal influence. Therefore, identity is established within a social frame, which is penetrated by power relations and marked by efforts of inclusion and exclusion. For this reason it functions as a means for consolidating the status quo, as means of subjugation and control, as a subtle and invisible form of "governmentality" (Φουκό M., 1991:81; Buckingham D., 2008:10). Simultaneously it functions as a medium of resistance and demand, as it happened during the last decades, when women and gays struggled for the recognition of their identity.

Generally, when we examine the identity and its transformations, we must not ignore the social context. Especially Agger argues that the concept of self is the product of late-capitalism, when it was necessary to invent new, more personal needs in order to create more subtle forms of consumption. He states «people only developed needs, or more accurately, wants, once capitalist industrialization had proceeded far enough that sheer survival was no longer at issue. The instant that survival was not an issue for many, capitalism had to invent the self, which would extend non-discretionary needs, necessary for survival, into discretionary wants» (Agger B., 2004:126). Although identity is formed by doing and through performance, during this period the role of institutions (such as the church and schools) proved equally important for the transitions through the various stages of life (Giddens Ant., 2000). Contrary to the past, today the digital era offers new opportunities for the construction of identity, in which the individual plays a more energetic and less passive role.

If identity is a nebulous concept, the same holds true for the concept of adolescence. Adolescence from the Latin *adolescere*, meaning "to grow up," is a period of transition between childhood and adulthood, in which biological, psychological, cognitive and physical changes take place. Its main characteristic is disturbance and psychological confusion. During this period adolescences try hard to construct their identity, so it is interesting to examine the impact of the digital media on its formation. Although adolescence is principally a psychological concept, we must keep in mind that is simultaneously a historical and social construction, which first was introduced by Hall St., in the early years of the last century (Buckingham D., 2008).

### **Forms of Identity**

Before we focus on the technological changes in the last decades and their social consequences, it is important to examine the forms of identity succinctly. In order to be clear that identity can function as an agent of change, we should bear in mind that it is permanently under construction and is an almost ongoing process rather than a fixed possession or a primordial totality. Identity is open to negotiation and re-negotiation and it is endlessly created and re-created (Yurchisin J., Watchravesringkan K., and Brown McCabe D., 2005).

The basic distinction, broadly acceptable, is between the "true" and the "false" self, between a "real" and a "fake" identity. Although Goffman argues that in each performance in front of an audience there are latent elements, which the performer doesn't want to reveal, it is an exaggeration to think that identity is divided into two parts, one obvious and one hidden (Goffman, 1956). Identity as a social product performed differently in varying contexts, so individuals can be better situated within given social environments (Zhao Sh., Grasmuck Sh., Martin J., 2008).

Markus and Nurius introduced the idea of possible selves. Possible selves are images of the self that have not yet been realized but we would like to become or are afraid of. They are representations of the self in future states, which nevertheless derive from representations of the self in the past. They are also connected to the current view of the self.

According to Markus and Nurius (1986), these are important for three main reasons. First they function as an incentive for future behavior, specifying how individuals can change in order to approach an “ideal” self. Secondly, they provide an evaluative and interpretive context for the current view of the self. They can be viewed as the “cognitive bridges,” between the present and the future self. Third the concept of possible selves is a persuasive answer to the question of self as a collection of masks. Possible selves as systematic concepts of the self allow us to conceive the self as diverse, multifaced, without being fake or incoherent. They transcend the division into authentic and inauthentic self and conceive it as fluid and malleable.

Castells (2010) presents an equally interesting view about the identity. He distinguishes identity into legitimizing, resistance and project identity. Legitimizing identity is “introduced by the dominant institutions of society to extend and rationalize their domination vis a vis social actors.” Usually legitimizing identity stigmatizes or devalues other identities. The actors of those identities resist the logic of domination and claim and promote their identity. This is resistance identity. Project identity is “when social actors, on the basis of whatever cultural materials are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their position in society and, by so doing, seek the transformation of overall social structure.” The last type of identity produces subjects that create a personal history and give meaning to the whole realm of experiences.

Although the concept of possible selves refers to the individual while Castell’s identities refer to social actors, there are nevertheless common characteristics between the two. For both of them, identity is not an essence, it is not permanent and fixed but changeable, negotiable and contingent. As Castells (2010) highlights, an identity’s value is not progressive nor regressive beyond its historical context. So it is crucial, when we examine identity, we should focus on its historical context.

### **The Network Society**

Therefore if we want to interpret the transformations of identity in the digital era, it is necessary to focus on the society network in which radical changes have taken place. First of all digital technology reconfigures the boundaries between local and global, real and virtual, human and machine.

In society’s network, space is dislocated and deterritorialized. Place and distance are almost invisible. Time is unstoppable. Castells (2010) argues that the material foundations of life (i.e., space and time) have been transformed into space of flows and timeless time. According to him these transformations are expressions of dominant activities and controlling elites. Nevertheless, they have a powerful impact on everyday life, as they offer a wider range of possibilities for the creation of new communities, based on a plethora of choices, not just about appearance and trivial issues but most about personal relations. Personal preferences about gender, politics, religion and other less important issues as food or dress code are the threshold in the creation of new communities. These communities transcend the local



boundaries and defy the stringent traditional bonds. The Other is not yet the unfamiliar, the unknown, but it so approachable and near, as our neighbors. The impassable limit between “we” and “others” becomes indiscernible. New relationships among an exponentially increasing population are created instantaneously and constantly, without an obvious end. Under these new circumstances on the one hand the power of institutions is being undermined while their influence is being impoverished. On the other, as the safety of closed societies erodes, the world becomes increasingly risky and insecure. The boundaries between private and public, work and home are dislocated while the individuals are always on the net, ready to make important choices in just a few minutes, to rapidly engage in multi tasks, to “interface” instead of converse (Agger B. , 2004).

In this new digital environment the boundaries between real and virtual are also discernible. The new communities are more “communities of the mind,” as they don’t require physical co-presence for routine interpersonal interaction. This disembodied communication acquires more significance in conjunction with the anonymity and opacity of digital media (Barney D., 2004). For many people, this is a new kind of freedom, as they try on various personas, without the fear of disapproval. For others, it constitutes a “pseudo-gemeinschaft” experience (Beniger in Buckingham D., 2008). Bauman’s (in Harley M., 2002) perspective is more radical, as he argues about “postmodern tourists,” individuals who utilize technologies in order to increase pleasure without any sense of moral responsibility toward the other. This amoral stance in virtual reality does not have less consequences in the real world. This virtual reality has tangible results for individuals, sometimes detrimental, sometimes beneficial and liberating. From this perspective, virtual reality constitutes a substantive factor in the construction of identity.

In the past, reality produced solid effects, triggered thinking and cultivated affiliations. Now machines and especially computers contest the real world. They don’t only have artificial intelligence, but they compose a second self, according to Turkle (2004). She highlights that a computer is an “evocative object that fascinates, disturbs equanimity, and precipitates thought” (Turkle Sh., 2004:19). For Turkle a computer influences how we think about our self, challenge our ideas about what is human and non-human. Calling people to participate in imaginative worlds function as a mirror, through which our mind is reflected as a machine. A computer is a “metaphysical” or a “psychological machine,” standing between the “mind” and the “not-mind,” between life and “not-life” mirroring the reflection of the nature of mind and the nature of life.

### **The construction of adolescent ‘s identity in the digital era.**

Adolescence, as a transition period, is known for its ambivalence, the wavering, experimentation, continuous effort to accept the biological, physical and mental changes. Furthermore, it is a period that sought recognition of identity, acceptance mainly by peers, and their inclusion in the respective groups. At the center stage, there is the question “Who am I?”. The attempt to create the self becomes consciously and systematically.

In this effort, the Internet may prove a valuable assistant. The internet does not create itself but helps accelerates one's work (Agger B., 2004), exposes one to multiple stimuli and opens "windows" into the outside world. "Windows" (a metaphor borrowed from the world of computers) mark not only the opening to the outside world (a world beyond the narrow and local framework) but also suggest the ability of adolescents to express themselves through multiple "windows," to express themselves in multiple worlds and to assume multiple roles. Turkle (1999) uses the term "cycling through" to describe this experience. At the same time she borrows the concept of "psychosocial moratorium" from Er. Erikson and adapts it to cyberspace. Moratorium mainly means a withdrawal period of intense activity and an inert period. Erikson sees it rather as a period of interaction with people and ideas, essentially as a period of fruitful reflection. Turkle argues that cyberspace is an ideal environment for "psychosocial moratorium" to occur. It is a social locus for the presentation and exploration of the self and to experiment with one's identity.

There is consensus among scholars that the Internet is an ideal place for experimentation. They highlight that experimentations on the Internet are safe. Anonymity disembodies communication, opacity allows adolescents to play roles which they would be reluctant to take on in real life, to experiment with existential issues, such as gender, religion, social relations (Zhao Sh., Grasmuck Sh., Martin J., 2008). These trials on the Internet have no fear of rejection, stigmatization, mocking as it usually happens in real life. Furthermore, they can interrupt the communication at any time, when it becomes disturbing and pressing. Particularly shy teens can take steps to communicate and build personal relationships (Miller H., 1995, Suler J., 2002; Bargh J.A., McKenna K.Y.A., Fitzsimons G., 2002; Boon St., Sinclair Chr., 2009). Also teenagers with unattractive appearance, with physical disabilities or from low financial or social strata or even from ethnic minorities can initially conceal this information and create sound and true relationships. On the contrary in the real world these features are deterrents not only for the consolidation of a long friendship but also for its launch.

Specifically, facebook is the appropriate place to transcend the distinction between "true" and "fake" self and to discover "possible selves." On facebook adolescents' identity is a continuous process, constantly under construction because of the interaction and feedback. By carefully selecting what to show and what to hide, teenagers create a virtual self that synthesizes elements from the real and the desired or ideal world as well as from the present self and its future anticipations, creating portraits with pictures from places they have not visited. They want to broaden and deepen their social relationships through their virtual presentations, presenting a positive, interesting and attractive image of themselves (Zhao Sh., Grasmuck Sh., Martin J., 2008). The reactions of peers toward confessions, personal thoughts, teasing, the number of likes and dislikes, tags, the increasing number of friends, all of them allow for the seamless construction of a virtual identity (Boon St. Sinclair Chr., 2009). On facebook elements of one's on and offline life (both natural and artificial) whose commentary is permanent, join together; thus, paving a suitable ground for the exploration of possible selves. Possible selves are not unrealistic, fake or not true selves. On the contrary, they express

their longing for evolution, improvement and change. So what teenagers choose to publish about themselves on facebook, is rooted in their reality. They have the ambition, however, to change, to transform, and build a desirable future.

According to Turkle (2008) and Bruckman (1992), digital games become workshops for constructing one's identity. These games afford a virtual environment where teenagers take on multiple roles which may either resemble or be far from their true nature. Often players alternate roles in order to better understand the logic of the game or choose roles that can ensure their success in this. Turkle (2008) mentions cases of men who consciously impersonate female characters in games, so that their teammates treat them with generosity and courtesy. Especially in games with multiple players from different ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds, where the voice of authority is absent and pluralism prevails, players create multiple narratives about the character. The more they penetrate the character, the more convincingly they impersonate it, the closer they succeed in the game. The simulation of the real and often risky or delinquent situations in these games are tempting for teenagers. At the same time, it unfolds multiple aspects of their identity -a journey of knowledge from multiple themselves. Players' multiple identity fluid is constructed by navigating through virtual space (Turkle Sh., 1999). When one's virtual identity is interwoven with one's real identity, this creates a fertile ground for reflection on the malleable and flexible character of the latter.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Adolescents' identity on the web is multifaceted and complex, it is composed of elements of both the real and virtual world, of the true and the imaginary. It is created and re-created incessantly, as the teenagers are always on the web and are exposed to countless stimuli. The construction of one's identity is not a unilateral nor a linear process. It is rather a process in constant evolution and in a never-ending construction. Turkle (in Barney D. 2004:151) poses the question "Who am I?" a new question "Who are 'we' and 'I'?", highlighting the multifunctional and hybrid nature of identity in the digital age.

Naturally multiple selves generated on the internet are not viewed positively by all. The critics focus on the "compartmentalization" of the self, the superficial, the rough and hasty creation of it in the social media. Of course, there are voices which argue that new forms of electronic communication can make the Panopticon reality, since the virtual self leaves traces almost everywhere which can be accessed by authorities (Turkle Sh., 2008).

This criticism certainly has great importance. But if cyberspace is a breeding ground for testing and experimenting with one's identity and possible selves, it can equally be proven fruitful for the culture of resistance and project identity. Castells (2010) argues that, in society's network, project identity grows from communal resistance. In this new frame, identity does not only acquire the possibility of self-determination, but also the possibility of transforming oneself as well as society. Those of us casting our gaze toward a fairer transformation of society, digital identities can point us to new directions.

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## Global informatisation of society as a factor of transformation of the identity of a personality: the theoretical aspect

Marina Marchenoka, Velta Lubkina - Rezekne Higher Education Institution, Latvia, [marina-mar4enoka@inbox.lv](mailto:marina-mar4enoka@inbox.lv) [velta@ru.lv](mailto:velta@ru.lv)

### **Abstract**

*Development of information technology as a technical basis of modern society enters all spheres of life of the society and significantly influences ways and forms of existence of every individual. On the one hand, intensive application of information technology innovations in the society's everyday life and appearance of the sphere of virtual communication create wide space for realisation of possibilities, but on the other hand, it often leads to transformation of the identity of a personality.*

*Urgency of the given research is caused by dynamics of the information flow as a global factor of contemporaneity that gave rise to the problem of the crisis of socio-cultural identity expressed in "social atomisation of the society" (H. Arendt) and virtual communication, in social unification of the individual, in standardisation of the individual's way of life and behaviour, in the vacuum of life values, the loss of spiritual community, contributing to transformation of the person's identity.*

*The Aim of the research is: to consider the problem of the individual's existence in the conditions of the modern information society and to justify the thesis that the global modern society is claiming to universalism at the same time ignoring peculiarities of development of the individual and the society, which gives evidence of the crisis of the socio-cultural identity.*

**Keywords:** personality, global information society, socio-cultural identity, crisis of identity

### **Global informatisation of the society: social preconditions and consequences**

Global informatisation of society is one of the dominating tendencies of civilization development in the XXI century. Owing to rapid progress of information technologies, which are penetrating all spheres of life and are influencing every individual's ways and forms of existence, the information environment for people's vital activity is being formed.

Concept "informatisation of the society" is considered as a "global social process of active development and large-scale application of information resources" (*Финансовый словарь, 2004*).

On the one hand, active introduction of information innovations into everyday life of the society creates a wide space for development of the individual and for realisation of possibilities, but on the other hand, it causes a large number of problems and risks.

Thus, German sociologist and philosopher, author of the theory of the risk society and researcher of the problem of modern globalisation Ulrich Beck notes that "the modern society creates risks itself and also possesses special reflexivity in relation to risks, when people start collecting information about risks and their consequences" (*Beck, 1992*). People are worried about the sequel of the global informatisation of the society. The sociologist also observes that "risks of the modern information society have come into conflict with people's disposition to socially cultural values,

especially it concerns yearning for prosperity growth” (Beck, 1992). U. Beck says, “In the information society, “logic” of production of the welfare predominates over the “logic” of risk manufacture, and the individual is paling into insignificance” (Beck, 1992).

The theory of social informatisation was developed by Russian philosopher, academician Arcady Ursul, who investigated interaction between society and information technologies, mechanisms and tendencies of this interaction. The basic thesis in his theory is that “the main task of the rational humanistic orientation of information is to ensure that global introduction of new information technologies would serve for the welfare of people instead of doing harm” (Урсул, 2006). A. Ursul believed that social informatisation must follow social consequences and changes in the society, which the global informatisation process is responsible for, it also, must reveal social conditions and preconditions of informatisation, its social tendency and humanistic orientation.

Swiss scientist K. Hässig in the book “Fear of computer”, summarising his country’s experience and comparing it to experience of large information powers, tried to illustrate possible social positive and negative perspective and consequences of the informatisation of the society. On the basis of the investigation, the researcher worked out table “Consequences of informatisation in the mirror of the community”, which is a good example of the systematic approach to analysis of social consequences of informatisation (Table 1).

**Table 1.** *Consequences of informatisation in the mirror of the community (Hässig, 1990)*

Positive consequences	Negative consequences
<b>CULTURE AND SOCIETY</b>	
Free development of the individual	“Automation” of the individual
Information society	Life dehumanisation
Socialisation of information	Technocratic thinking
Communicative society	Decline of the level of culture
Overcoming the civilisation crisis	Avalanche of information
	Elitist knowledge (polarisation)
	Isolation of the individual
<b>POLITICS</b>	
Extension of liberty	Reduction of liberty
Decentralisation	Centralisation
Levelling of power hierarchy	State as a supervisor
Increased participation in public activities	Growth of state bureaucracy
	Strengthening of power due to knowledge
	Increase in manipulation with people
<b>ECONOMY AND LABOUR</b>	
Increase of productivity	Growing complexity
Rationalisation of life	Aggravation of the industry crisis
Capacity and competence growing	Concentration
Growth of wealth	Disposition to crises

**Table 1 Cont'd**

<b>ECONOMY AND LABOUR (Cont'd)</b>	
Overcoming a crisis	Standardisation
Saving resources	Mass unemployment
Environment protection	New requirements to mobility of the labour force
Decentralisation of industry	Dehumanisation of labour
New production	Stresses
Better quality	Dequalification
Diversification of products	Disappearance of numerous professions
New professions and qualifications	
<b>INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS</b>	
National independence	Growth of mutual dependence
Third World countries obtain development perspective	Technological dependence
Improvement of defensive capacity of the state	Sharper South and West confrontation
	Vulnerability
	Increase of war danger due to renewal of military systems

The table shows that the larger part of the respondents see informatisation as a possibility of transition of the society to a new level of life, a perspective of development of the society. For example:

- the degree of information orientation to the social sphere is growing;
- preconditions for solving global crises (economic, political, ecological, etc.) and for stable development of the civilisation, as a whole, appear;
- more people can be involved in politics, there are conditions for them to rise their social status;
- new intellectual professions are emerging; the level of competences and the work quality are improving;
- the level of informatisation lets countries to come onto positions of national independence.

However, the respondents are worried about risks related to informatisation:

- it is possible that the number of people – mechanical users of accessible information – will increase, which creates preconditions for decrease of the cultural level of the individual (there are fewer visitors to libraries, museums, concerts, cinemas etc.);
- there is a danger of polarisation of knowledge in the society;
- low level of communication between people, which is a socially dangerous phenomenon (the individual is isolated, the need and wish of personal communication disappear, the virtual communication is preferred);
- modern technologies give a possibility of control over the individual, it results in growing manipulation with people (if the state does not create conditions for growing up an intellectual individual, a crowd of “easy-driven” and predictable people will appear);
- rapid development of information technologies creates a possibility of disappearance of numerous professions, mass unemployment and the society’s stress as a result;



- danger of new wars due to failure of military systems.

Hence, despite the fact that informatisation of the society ensures a possibility of the community's transition to the new level of life and development, its consequences are contradictory.

### **Transformation and crisis of socio-cultural identity in the information society**

The contradictory nature of computerisation of society and the dynamics of information flows defined the problem of the crisis of socio-cultural identity that is considered as a "complex social and cultural phenomenon: the space of the information society is the very place, where processes of identification both of the society and the individual are impeded. This aspect is especially relevant due to the sharp growth of the number of network users, development of computer technologies and vague consequences of this process, asking for constant examination owing to the rapid pace of computerisation of the society" (Бауман, 2005).

Polish and British philosopher and sociologist Zygmunt Bauman identifies identity as "a prism, which is used to examine, evaluate and investigate various important parts of modern life" (Бауман, 2005). Z. Bauman says, "The problem of the socio-cultural identity, which has been pursuing man since the very beginning of the computerisation epoch, has changed its appearance and content. Formerly it used to be a type of the problem that pilgrims always faced: *"How to get there?"* Now it is more similar to the question faced by homeless vagabonds without documents: *"Where to go? Where will this road take me to?"* The task does not consist in finding enough forces and determination to proceed by trial and error through victories and defeats along the trodden path. Now the task consists in the choice of a less risky turn on the closest crossroads, in changing the direction before the way scheme changes or the destination moves to another place or loses its former attractiveness. In other words, the problem, which is tormenting people, lies not so much in the way how to obtain the chosen identity and to make other people recognise it, as in the choice – *which identity is better to choose* – and how to *change* the choice, if the previously chosen identity loses its value. The main problem is not how to find own place in the strict frames of the society and after finding it to retain it and to avoid exile, but the problem is that the boundaries, where the person got in, will soon collapse or disappear" (Бауман, 2005).

The crisis of socio-cultural identity in the information society is expressed:

- in social atomisation of the society, virtual communication;
- in social unification of the individual;
- in standardisation of the individual's way of life and behaviour;
- in the vacuum of life values, the loss of spiritual community, contributing to transformation of the person's identity leading to "the loss of feeling of the strict order of the world and laws of social development" (Бауман, 2005).

Let us examine the pronounced sequence of the transformation of the person's identity being a characteristic feature of the modern information society:

- “social atomisation” of the society, mediate and virtual communication, “social phobia”.

***“Social atomisation” of the society, virtual communication and social phobia***

The concept ‘social atomisation of the society’ means social disconnection, emergence of isolated individuals with impersonal social relations” (*H. Arendt*). As getting information does not require direct communication between people any more, the person may isolate oneself more and more and experience the illusion of independence from it. People shun each other, they are afraid of communication. For many researchers (*T. Hobbes, E. Fromm, A. Toffler, H. Arendt, L. DeMause etc.*), social atomisation of the society is a process of break of friendship, family, neighbouring and other social relations due to development of information technologies.

British philosopher *Thomas Hobbes* was one of the first, who mentioned the collapse of social relations in his work “*Leviathan*”, where he writes about the “war against everyone” meaning the consequences of the break of existing social relations. In other words, *T. Hobbes* has in view the very phenomenon of social atomisation, when he writes: “in such a condition, there is no place for diligence, because no one is guaranteed with fruits of his labour, therefore there is no farming, shipping, comfortable buildings, there is no knowledge about the surface of the earth, time measuring, handicraft, literature, there is no society...” (*Новиков, 2009*).

American philosopher and sociologist *Alvin Toffler* describes the same tendencies, writing “that is why it seems to us that the society is bulging at the seams. It is so. At the place, where there were some constant subcultures, the man could identify himself with, there are hundreds of temporary subcultures, contending and increasing. The powerful bonds which used to tie the society – the bonds of law, common values, education and cultural production – have been broken, and as a result the identity is being transformed” (*Тоффлер, 2008*).

American historian and psychologist *Lloyd de Mause* also explains the idea of the social environment characterised by the breach of relations in the modern information society; he notes that “it is difficult to describe the world, which can be created by industrialised individuals. The break of the system of ties and communication will result in loss of values and crisis of identity” (*DeMause, 2002*).

*Erich Fromm* in his work “*Escape from Freedom*” pointed that person’s individuation has got two tendencies. On the one hand, the individual realises that he/she is an independent social subject acting regardless traditional social structures, such as communities, groups, clans, etc. On the other hand, old social links, which have been developing through the ages and have been based on principles of mutual aid, are becoming weaker (*Фромм, 2006*).

The *Internet* and mobile communication devices have become very popular during last decades. The number of Internet users, mobile phone audience and their age are growing every day. For example, in Latvia, the Internet user’s average age is 37, but the oldest mobile phone customer is 99 years old according to mobile phone operator *TELE2* (*The Baltic course, 2015*). Latvia rates 37 in

the list of Internets using countries (*Economist Intelligence Unit, 2014*). In 2014, the share of Internet users in Latvia was 75.2% of the total number of population.

In a certain manner, global computerisation of the society is uncovered in the problem of individual's identity, i.e. self-discovery and self-perception in the social environment, in the community. In conditions of self-identification new communicative links are dominating; they are more virtual and are leading to virtualisation of social relations between people. Traditional methods of identification, based on direct contacts and joint actions, are getting less important in social and communicative relations. They are being substituted by virtual links and relations; the most striking expression of these links is various types of communication realised with help of the global network Internet. New conditions of communicative links give rise to new forms of identification, such as network communities emerging on different occasions. In the network community, people search for new ways of self-expression. Thus, the feature of identification in the information society mainly is the virtual search strategy and the strategy of obtaining identity, which destroys and makes inefficient the "face to face" form of identification" (*Бауман, 2005*). The problem of obtaining identification becomes a problem of personal choice, which gets complicated in the infinite field of new links. Realisation of the strategy of identity search using information and communication technologies is an attempt to overcome estrangement, satisfy the requirement in realisation of individuation. However, the real practice of usage virtual strategies of search and establishment of identity prevents from realisation of needs in full measure.

The given information technologies resulted in the shift of main people's interests into the area of distant, virtual interrelation and communication. On the one hand, it is much easier and quicker to solve many everyday tasks distantly; for instance, exchange with photos and music, mutual aid in various topics, and of course, satisfaction of the need in communication.

However, the innovations have a different side. People are ready to spend weekends and leisure at sites and forums, forgetting about the real life. Constant time spending in the virtual space, in psychologist and sociologist point of view, provokes both decline of quality of real communication and interrelation with other people or their complete denial, and the modern disease – social phobia, which impedes personal development, self-realisation in the society and brings to the crisis of the social and cultural identity.

"Social phobia" is defined by psychologists as a fear of society, fear of social situations (fear of appearance in public, meetings, large people crowds, where the person will be forced to speak, will become acquainted with other people, will have to answer or ask questions). Psychologists state that individual's social phobia is a consequence of constant being in the virtual reality, in social networks.

Virtual communication and passion for social networks, according to Oxford University professor *Susan Adele Greenfield*, will result in individual's and brain degradation. She says that social networks are dangerous, because people divide their life into two parts: "real in the virtual reality

and ‘quasi-life’ (pseudo-life) in reality, where the reality gets vague” (*Greenfield, 2008*). The individual makes a certain mythic creature, which he/she is not, and shows it off, substituting himself/herself with someone virtual. This substitution does not give the individual an opportunity to show his/her worth in the real situation. According to the data of *Greenfield’s* research, fans of social networks are in danger of crisis of personal identity, the loss of concept about themselves and their place in the society” (*Greenfield, 2008*), as well as they are endangered by decrease of concentration ability, loss of numerous verbal and non-verbal abilities.

There is no mistaking in French writer *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry’s* words: “There is only one true luxury, that of human relationships. Only by communicating we understand who we are and what our place in the society is” (*Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, 1956*).

Revelation of negative consequences of communication processes and crisis of identity in the modern information society gives grounds for search of new strategies, which would weaken the role of virtual links and increase the role of real social interrelations.

## **Conclusion**

- Global informatisation of the society is one of the dominating tendencies of civilization development in XXI century, which are penetrating into all spheres of life and are influencing every individual’s ways and forms of existence;
- On the one hand, active introduction of information innovations into everyday life of the society creates a wide space for development of the individual and for realisation of possibilities, but on the other hand, it causes a large number of problems and risks, which can lead to serious social consequences (*A. Ursul, K. Hässig, U. Beck*);
- K. Hässig’s table “Consequences of informatisation in the mirror of the community” is a good example of the systematic approach to analysis of social consequences of informatisation both for the society as a whole and for the individual;
- The contradictory nature of computerisation of the society defined the problem of transformation or crisis of socio-cultural identity of the individual;
- The conception of the crisis of the socio-cultural identity in the information society was put forward by Z. Bauman. It is consisting not so much in the way how to obtain the chosen identity as in the question which identity to choose and how to keep it in the rapidly changing information society;
- The crisis of socio-cultural identity in the information society is expressed in social atomisation of the society, in social unification of the individual, in standardisation of the individual’s way of life, in the vacuum of basic life values, the loss of spiritual community, contributing to transformation of the person’s identity (*T. Hobbes, E. Fromm, A. Toffler, H. Arendt, S. Greenfield*);
- Revelation of negative consequences of communication processes and crisis of identity in the modern information society gives grounds for search of new strategies, which would weaken the role of virtual links and increase the role of real social interrelations.

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## The Integration of non-national students in the Greek kindergarten

Georgia Chatzigianni, Sofia-Marina Darsakli, Eleftheria Dimitriou *Department of ESECE, University of Patras* [d.sofiamarina@gmail.com](mailto:d.sofiamarina@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*The aim of this project is to present the conditions of non-nationals within the Greek kindergarten schools. The research was based on eleven semi-structured interviews of non-national parents, who live in different areas of Attica. Data analysis was performed using the method of content analysis. After analyzing the results of our research, we came to the conclusion that foreign students, despite the difficulties they are facing, manage to integrate in Greek kindergarten schools smoothly. In addition, another finding of our research was that they manage to socialize at a satisfying level, as they develop good relationships with their classmates and teachers. Finally, it was discovered that foreign students have sometimes taken part in intercultural conversations within the classroom while very few are the cases where they have suffered racism.*

**Keywords:** Intercultural, Intercultural Education, Non-nationals, School Integration

### **Introduction**

The arrival of immigrants, brought many changes especially in the educational system, not only in Greece but also in the USA, Germany, England, etc. (Kiprianos, 2004; Markou, 1996; Nicolaou, 2011; Spinthourakis, Papamichail & Sinesiou, n.d.). Intercultural education of Greece, discussed within the educational circles is an even more important issue whose implementation and effectiveness are being tested in modern times (Kiprianos, Balias & Passas, 2003). The existence, therefore, of this modern matter, in conjunction with the timeliness issue, spawned the idea of the present paper and research.

In the sections that follow, the goal and the questions which this project was initiated are described. In addition, information on the methodology, the sample and the techniques used to collect and analyze the data obtained are given. Furthermore, some data is presented regarding the conduct of this research, the results and the conclusions upon its completion. Finally, some of the references studied during the research are listed.

### **Purpose**

The aim of our research was to study the conditions faced by non-national students within school grounds to determine how smoothly they are integrated in schools. Extracurricular integration issues that reveal the degree of socialization of children in the sample and outside school were also discussed.

### **Research Questions**

The present research focused on the study of the following questions:

- What are the views of non-national children themselves through what they report to parents?

- What is the relationship between non-national children and their peers (either national or not)?
- What is the relationship between non-nationals and teachers?
- Do Integration Classes and Support Courses operate in schools where non-national children are enrolled?
- Is there a differentiation in their educational path?
- Did non-nationals face difficulties? If so, how have they been addressed?
- Are the cultural differences of non-national children taken into account in the educational context of the classroom so as to approach them via the educational process?
- Do non-national students participate in extracurricular activities?

### **Methodology**

To conduct the research, it was considered appropriate to use the qualitative method. This approach allowed us to study in depth the views of a small number of cases of non-national families on the integration of their children in Greek kindergarten. The collection and production of data were held in the International Organization of Migration (IOM), the home environment of families -enabling the observation of everyday practice- and some interviews were conducted via telephone. It was sought to study whether the historical social context of these people (lifestyle, place of residence, cultural stimuli) affected the sample answers, which can only be successful once approached via the qualitative method. Through the answers of each group, the goal was to deduct a particular conclusion which would adequately represent the image of the sample, free from fragmentation and generalizations. For this reason, it was chosen not to follow a strictly planned process which would allow for potential changes. Our presence and interaction with the subject are important and necessary as this is a matter that requires careful handling, a clear preparation and implementation along with active feedback between interviewers and interviewees. The impersonal and mechanical approach of the issue would not generate the relevant research results. Qualitative research has its roots in the theory of the interpretative approach which is the source of many of the theoretical characteristics of the present research.

### **Sample**

For the conduction of a research according to Morrison (1993, as referred to in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007), a particular sample is needed. Therefore, in relevance to the integration of non-national children in Greek school, non-national families residing in Athens were surveyed. Interviews were taken from non-national parents who have children attending Greek kindergarten or the first classes of primary school. In the process of finding the sample above we were largely assisted by the International Organization of Migration (IOM), Greece and especially by the valuable assistance and guidance of George Tsioumpas, thanks to whom we contacted the mediators of the organization. The latter put us in contact with families of different nationalities, who constituted the survey sample.

Thus, the sample is composed of eleven families who have been residing in Greece from eight to eighteen years. Consequently, their children have been born and raised in Greece.

## **Techniques**

The techniques employed to conduct the research part of the paper included interviews, systematic observation and content analysis.

The interview took place with the assistance of non-national families, and parents in particular, to whom it was addressed. The basic criterion of the interview was associated with the intercultural model and axioms of equal treatment, equal access to education and equal opportunities, as indicated in Nicolaou (2011, p.130). It was described as unstructured, free and open as it consisted of 20 predefined questions, which were modified according to the course of the interview. Based on the typology of questions, they were divided in open, descriptive, introductory and opinion questions. Interviewees were quite free to express themselves and share their thoughts, receiving our guidance so as not to deviate from the matter under study. In all cases, our sample was informed prior to the interview of the identity, purpose and content of research conducted. Moreover, each interviewee would give his/her consent to proceed with recording the interview. Only one participant chose not to have the interview recorded.

Finally, content analysis was employed as a method of analyzing the views, words, phrases and style of the interviewees as well as the observations. Being the most suitable for cases of oral communication, content analysis helped quantify the data that emerged from the open interviews and observations, and especially their translation into categories. The latter acted as an essential prerequisite for the proper classification, coding and interpretation of the material which shall lead us to safe and valid conclusions.

## **Conducting the Research**

Most interviews were held in the offices of IOM and the Greek-Georgian Cultural Association, which we visited after contacting the people responsible and receiving permission from the mediators of the Organization. There were some interviews, conducted in the residencies of the interviewees and finally, some chose to speak to us on the phone. All interviews were held between 4 and 6 April 2015, once we had informed the participant of the research subject and purpose. The questions asked to them were the same for everyone.

Still, we reassured them that we would respect their anonymity and would not reveal their identity. Before starting each interview, interviewees were asked if they consented. Naturally, we informed them that these recordings would not be published, since they were destined for personal use and that we would return the tapes. With one exception only, the rest had no problem with us recording what we were told and nobody asked to have the recording returned or view its consent.

## **Results**

This part presents the data collected from the interviews, carried out as part of our research study. The results were analyzed based on the qualitative method and content analysis and were classified in three categories, resulting from the *axes* as extracted from the *intercultural model* of education with each one divided into subcategories depending on the frequency of parents' responses. Our findings are additionally presented in diagram form while the percentages are approximate.



**1<sup>st</sup> Category: Equal treatment at school**

By means of the interviews, it was attempted to study the issue of equal treatment of non-national children as opposed to national ones. Upon process completion, the following results were produced:

- i. *Good relations between the child and all his/her classmates along with socializing with Greek and immigrant students*

In all interviews, but one, the non-national parents argued that their children not only don't they have problems at school but maintain good relations with all their classmates.

- ii. *The child has received racist treatment by classmates*

Two of the eleven interviewees mentioned incidents of racism against their children by their peers, either with the use of 'nicknames' or with comments about their skin color.

- iii. *Good relations between the child and the class teacher*

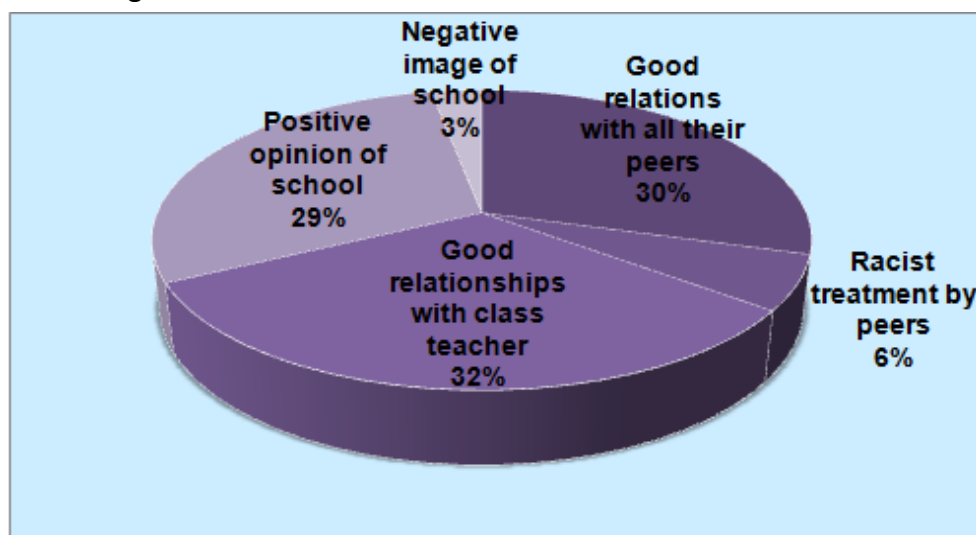
Overall, interviewees claimed that their children had a good relationship with the class teacher, who contributed to preventing the appearance of stereotypes and helped the non-national children learn the Greek language.

- iv. *School appeals to the child*

Overall, interviewees said that their children like school.

- v. *School does not appeal to the child*

A mother from the participants in the interviews, referring to one of her two children, said that he did not wish to go to school ever since he had been little.



**2<sup>nd</sup> Category: Equal access to education**

One of the research focus axes was whether there is equality in educational processes. This concerned the existence of Integration Classes and Support Courses at school and monitoring.

*i. The child has not attended Integration Classes and Support Courses*

This response was most common among the responses received in this part of the research.

*ii. The parent is not aware of the operation of Integration Classes and Support Courses*

While all parents were aware of the operation of separate classes after standard school hours, the answer 'Do not know' was given by three interviewees.

*iii. There are Integration Classes and Support Courses in the child's school*

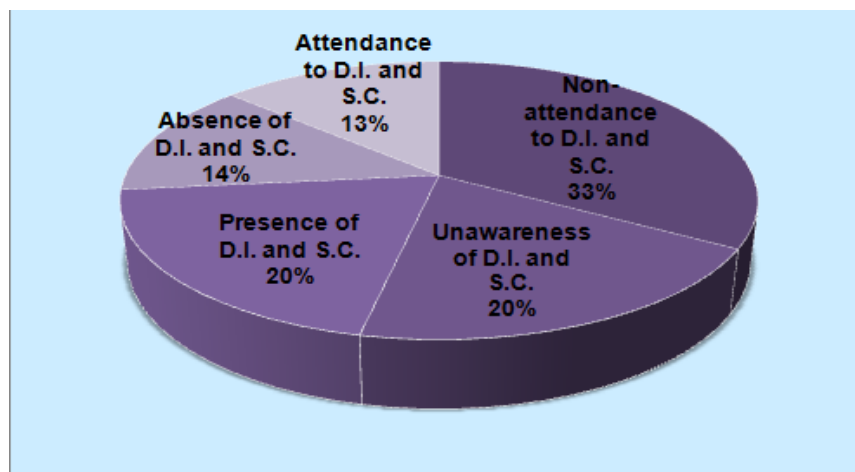
Out of the eleven interviewees, only three answered that additional classes operate in their child's school in order to assist students from other countries who face problems attending classes of their level.

*iv. There are no Integration Classes and Support Courses in the child's school*

The absence of additional Support Classes from their children's schools was mentioned by two out of the eleven interviewees.

*v. The child has attended Integration Classes and Support Courses at his/her school*

In this question, only two of the eleven interviewees said that their child has attended the Integration Classes and Support Courses operating in their children's schools and spoke extensively of the subsequent contribution of those to the academic progress of their children.



**3<sup>rd</sup> Category: Equal opportunities for social equality**

**1<sup>st</sup> Subcategory: Classroom discussions on diversity issues**

- i. The parent is not aware whether discussions are held in the classroom on the cultural characteristics of the child's country of origin*

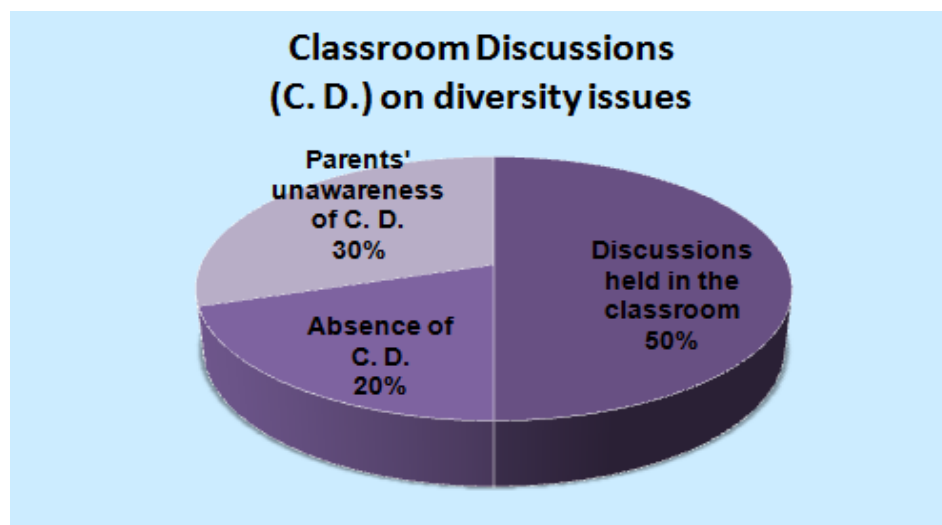
In three of the eleven interviews, the interviewees were not aware whether discussions had been held at school on the customs of the child's country of origin.

- ii. Classroom discussions are held on the diversity of people*

In five of the eleven interviewees, it was said that there have been discussions by the primary school/kindergarten teacher on the diversity and country of origin of each child in the classroom. In all cases teachers emphasized that irrespective of the country of origin and the different characteristics 'we are all friends'.

- iii. There are no classroom discussions held on diversity and the cultural characteristics of the child's country of origin*

There were two out of the eleven interviewees who argued that to their knowledge, these types of discussions have not been held in the classroom.



**2<sup>nd</sup> Subcategory: Extracurricular activities**

- i. The child is involved in hobbies.*

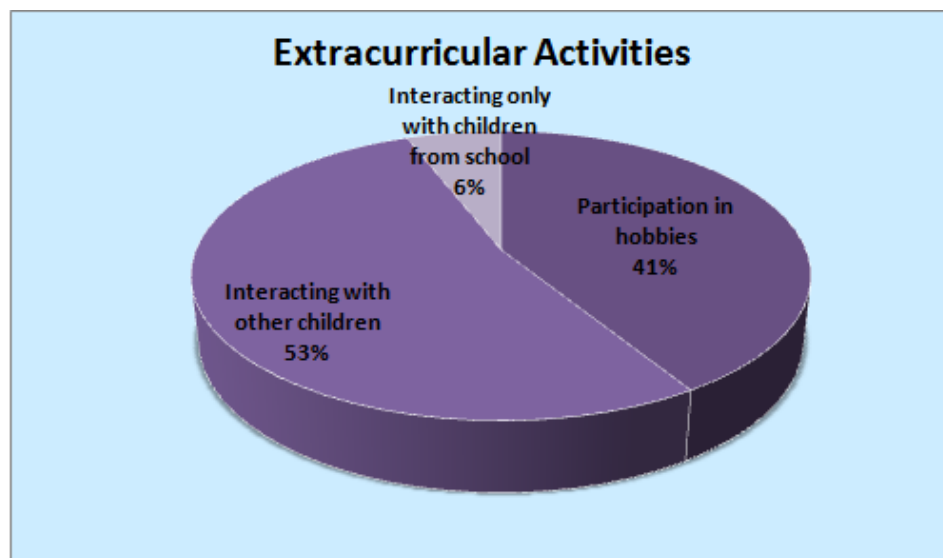
In seven of the eleven interviews, parents claimed that their children have various hobbies such as football, swimming, cycling, dancing, singing, etc.

*ii. The child plays in the neighborhood with other children*

In nine interviews, parents reported that their children play in the park making friends with both Greek and non-national children outside school. Although initially they had difficulties because they did not speak the language, they were quickly addressed.

*iii. The child only plays with children from his/her school*

In one interview, a parent claimed that his/her children were psychologically affected, isolated and made friends only with some children from school due to some racism experienced at first on the grounds of their color and country of origin.



## Conclusions

Analyzing and interpreting the results gathered from research may lead to some conclusions. More specifically, taking into account the 'equal treatment at school' factor, the conclusion deducted from the survey is that the non-national children maintain good relations with their peers either national or non-national. An important factor was the fact that these children were born and raised in Greece.

It is important to mention here that children have a good relationship with their teacher. In all cases, kindergarten teachers had a suppressive effect in cases of racism and dedicated their personal time to help children socialize within school grounds, understand their needs, learn the Greek language and create a nice and welcome environment for them (Kiprianos, 2008).

In addition, it is necessary to note that all children like school. Students wish to attend kindergarten according to the findings of the research. This is easily interpreted as the children find themselves in an environment where they learn new things, play with their peers and creatively spend a big part of their day.

Moving to the second axis of our research, the 'equal access to education' one, we may conclude that Support Courses and Integration Classes, which could balance the access to education for non-national children in most, if not all, cases do not exist.

It is useful to mention here that part of the sample of non-nationals, even if aware of the concept and purpose of the Integration Classes and Support Courses, was unaware of their existence in the child's school.

In addition, we ought to emphasize that most Integration Classes serve the interests of students. As concluded from the interviews, the contribution of Support Classes was important because children who attended, presented a different school performance in their subsequent educational path. Non-national students, apart from improving their Greek language skills, were also influenced by their peers since interacting with them positively contributed towards their socialization.

Analyzing the last axis of our research project 'equal opportunities', we can draw the conclusion that equal opportunities are given to both national and non-national students. We reach this conclusion once we consider that the parents of non-national students surveyed claimed that discussions are held in their children's classes on interculturalism and each child's different characteristics. Although most non-national children, as mentioned above, grew up being aware of the Greek customs and culture, teachers gave them the opportunity to talk about their origin and their country's customs from what they already knew themselves. Furthermore, there are discussions held in schools on the poor living conditions of children from poor countries, so that children can have a global view of the world around them. It is observed, therefore, that the issue of interculturalism is approached in different ways in the context of the classroom. In just a few cases, parents either did not know of the possibility of holding such discussions on interculturalism or knew that they were not held. But in most cases, the conclusion is that teachers aim at consolidating the message that 'we are all friends regardless of culture and customs'.

Speaking of 'equal opportunities' with respect to the extracurricular activities of children, it is possible to assume that they have been greatly achieved. More specifically, in all cases of the interviewees, their children engaged in various hobbies and their peer groups were largely composed of classmates and in many cases of neighboring children. In conclusion, non-national children did not experience racism in extracurricular activities and certain language difficulties, which initially existed, were soon overcome.

In summary, regarding the examination of the 'intercultural model', it is not possible to argue that its application is obvious in all the integration cases we studied. The integration of students of

different cultural identities in the Greek school is a process that requires time and effort. It is sometimes achieved to a higher degree while other times to a lesser one. In any case, teachers endeavor to reduce this distance and integrate non-national children in Greek kindergarten.

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## What the choice of joining an exchange program tells us about a student's racism

Spyralatos Jonathan, Alverti Alexandra - University of Patras, Greece [jspyralatos@gmail.com](mailto:jspyralatos@gmail.com),  
[alvert.alex@gmail.com](mailto:alvert.alex@gmail.com)

Supervisor: Julia A. Spinthourakis

### **Abstract**

*A worldwide problem that all people face in every country is racism. Today's society is developing and changing with the ramifications of these changes confronting us all; this is especially true for teachers and education. As teachers, it is very likely that we will not only face occasions of racist behavior among our students within the classroom or the school, but we ourselves might treat some pupils differently, even if we do so subconsciously. The purpose of this study is to examine, at the level of tertiary education, whether we can determine the degree to which one is a racist, based on his/her decision to be a part of a student exchange program. Furthermore, we examine whether there is a difference in the degree of racism between a student who selects to be a part of such a program and one who does not. In order to research this, we decided to use a questionnaire. We distributed the Symbolic Racism Scale, with some adjustments, to two groups of students: those who had participated in a 2014 student exchange program (at a Swedish and Greek university) and those who had not. What prompted us to research this subject was the fact that in the international bibliography there appears to be very few similar studies. Based on the data collected from this questionnaire we determined that there actually is a statistically significant difference between the two groups. In our presentation, we will highlight the problem, the theoretical framework, our methods and results of our research as well as recommendations for effecting change.*

**Keywords:** Erasmus, racism, student exchange program, prejudice

### **Statement of the problem**

We live in a society that, no matter how much we would like to believe differently, does not totally accept and respect the differences between people. Racism, in the sense of social discrimination, is a timeless phenomenon. As mentioned by Immanuel Geiss "forms of "primary" or "quasi" racism have been encountered in each and every society throughout history". Racism is an expression of human behavior, a phenomenon that has troubled several sciences, such as anthropology, biology, philosophy, psychology and sociology and is directly linked with the concepts of xenophobia and stereotypes (Papadimitriou, 2002).

Racism and xenophobia are but a reaction that reveals the contradictions of an increasingly fragmented and insecure society. We live in a place that makes us constantly feel threatened. Every day we are pressured by an overwhelming feeling of stress and anxiety that makes us insecure. The economic crisis, the pursuit of social and professional achievement and fierce consumerism overwhelms us, bringing forward the fear of revealing our weaknesses and creates an environment unsafe for those who are different (Chloptsioudis D., 2000).

### **Purpose of this research**

The aim of our research is to examine whether there is a difference in the degree of racism between a student who selects to be a part of such a program and one who does not and secondly to examine, at the level of tertiary education, whether we can determine the degree to which one is a racist, based on his/her decision to take part in a student exchange program.

### **Research question**

Our review of international literature combined with the purpose of our research led us to the following research question:

- Is the choice of joining an exchange program an indication of university student's racism level, in the form of discriminating opinions?

### **Significance of our research**

Many scientists who have researched student exchange programs have shown that participation in such a program can positively affect cross-cultural training, the growth of international awareness and the development of language (Anderson 2005, Black & Duhon 2006, Carlson, Lewin 2009a, Magnan & Back 2007, Savicki 2008, Williams 2005). VanHoof and Verbeeten (2005) found that according to students themselves the greatest benefits that they considered to have gained was the acceptance and admiration they felt for the foreign cultures, the love and appreciation they felt about their own and that they had learned more about themselves.

And many other researches, some of which we will examine below, show the importance of one studying abroad. However, in our international literature review, we found many studies researching racism, xenophobia, immigration, social exclusion and studies and others focusing on how exchange programs help students improve professionally and humanly, however we found very few researches (hardly any) linking student exchange programs to the decrease (or not) of racism. We therefore decided to conduct a study which would compare students who had participated in student exchange programs and students who had not, examining whether there is a difference in racist and discriminating views between the two groups.

### **Racism**

Moving on to the concept of racism, we must say that there have been many attempts to find a satisfying definition of this notion. However, after an extensive research of the international bibliography we were unable to find a definition of racism commonly acceptable by all people. This is likely due to the different forms racism has taken in its historical course and development.

It would take too long to mention all the accurate definitions that we found and liked, so we would only like to mention the one Gikas has given because we believe it was one of the broadest ones. He believes that racism is considering another group of people as inferior or even worthy of contempt because of their racial or ethnic origin. Racism is the rejection of people because of their diversity, who due to this pressure and marginalization are led to the inability to exercise some of their rights. It is any attitude, behavior or belief directed against any social group (Gikas, 1994).



There are many different forms of racism, but the two forms that interest us and are closer to our study would be new-racism and modern racism.

*New – Racism:* The reason this kind of racism has increased lately is due to the economic situation and crisis. This form of racism targets migrants and foreign workers. People who take part in this form of racism are usually unemployed and lack economic security, thereby blaming immigrants and foreigners for "stealing" their jobs and being the cause of the bad economic situation they're in (Balibar 1988, in Koutra 2007).

*Modern Racism:* Modern racism, at an ideological level, is mainly focused on the complex issue of immigration. We would say that it is a racism without races because people do not try to justify their claims with false scientific arguments (as they used to do), but base their argument on the alleged incompatibility of cultures that supposedly leads inevitably to conflict because of their differences (Balibar 1988, in Koutra 2007).

### **Student mobility**

One of the biggest and best organized mobility programs is the Erasmus. Erasmus is a student exchange program, established in 1987, that offers university students the opportunity to study or work in another European country for at least three months and a maximum of up to 12 months (European Commission, 2010).

As mentioned previously, mobility programs and their benefits to the students who decide to participate in them have been researched and discussed by various scientists (i.e. Murphy-Lejeune, 2002).

At this point we would like to study some of the benefits of student mobility through examination of the Erasmus program. The Kassel Centre which investigates higher education and work has carried out several studies on this subject. Below we would like to summarize three of the most crucial benefits students gain by studying abroad (Teichler 2001):

- Although former Erasmus students, in a series of surveys, were convinced that studying abroad had mainly academic benefits, researches showed that the greatest term benefits were attributed to cultural improvement, personal development and language skills.
- The majority of former Erasmus students (almost three quarters) thought that studying abroad helped them in finding their first job and about half characterized their study abroad as relevant and important to their work.
- Several researches show a strong impact of studying abroad on international work – related mobility.

According to Kerstin Jansson, Harald Schomburg and Ulrich Teichler, studying in another country is considered to have positive effects on the process of learning and development of one's skills in various areas. In particular, studying abroad is believed to help in:

- The acquisition of scientific knowledge (theories, methods and interdisciplinary knowledge) in areas are not taught in the country of origin.
- The successful study of fields related to international issues (i.e. European Law)
- In learning international and different approaches on various sectors
- The broadening of the mind and improvement of reasoning through contact with the differences of other countries, cultures and universities.
- The acquisition of international / intercultural communication techniques (e.g. foreign languages, intercultural communication forms and others)
- The personal development of students.

Souto Otero and Mc Coshan, in their research, indicated that most students, after returning from their exchange program, felt more capable of understanding people from other cultural and ethnic backgrounds (2006).

Several studies (Teichler et al, 2001, Jahr et al, 2001) have shown that student mobility and job mobility upon graduation, contribute only slightly to the vertical dimensions of professional success (e.g. status and income), but have a great positive effect on the horizontal dimensions of professional success. The most significant ones were considered the following (Teichler 2001):

- The "status" and income of students who had studied abroad rose only slightly, but mobility leads to a higher frequency of international work tasks and to the acquirement and ability to use the required skills.
- Exchange programs prepare students successfully for international mobility in their professional life as well and for more effective work with international aspects both in the home country and abroad.
- Erasmus exchange programs contributed to the qualitative development of students in Europe.
- Preparation for employment abroad and international work starts earlier.

Culture has also become a topic of research that has been studied as part of the Erasmus program. In an experimental study by Maiworm, Steube & Teichler (1992) results showed that knowledge about the culture and society of the host country had increased significantly during the study period abroad. This was also showed by another study 3 years later (Maiworm & Teichler, 1995b).

## **Method**

For the purpose of this research and in order to answer the research questions, we developed a questionnaire which helped us collect the required data for our empirical study. This section will

explain the methodology we used in order to conduct the study. Below we will present the questionnaire, the sampling method, the sample size and the methods used to analyze the data. In order to conduct this study, we decided to use the method of Quantitative (Empirical) Research. For the collection of our quantitative data we decided to use a questionnaire, while at the same time we conducted a review of international literature and noted the features which we considered the most relevant to our study. The choice of using a questionnaire to collect the data in our research was also affected by fact that we found questionnaires to be the primary data collection method of similar studies in international literature.

According to Karageorgos (2002) here are some of the benefits from the use of a questionnaire in surveys:

- The questionnaire is the cheapest method of data collection.
- Subjects who answer the questionnaire have the same point of reference.
- Anonymity enables respondents to give honest answers.

Continuing, he notes that the questionnaire is one of the key data collection tools and is widely used in educational and social research. It's a series of questions related to a topic that we want to study, to which individuals are invited to respond while representing the population (sample) or actually being the population. The answers to questions are always given in writing. In short, he describes questionnaires as a way of written communication between the interviewer and the interviewee.

The questionnaire we used was called the Symbolic Racism Scale in its initial form and was developed for the African Americans in the American South. The Symbolic Racism Scale (SRS) was created by Sears, D., and Henry, P. According to them (2003) the questionnaire was created in response to the criticism bestowed upon other research tools that were examining racism, such as the Modern Racism Scale (MRS) (McConahay, 1988). In essence, the SRS is the improved version of the MRS and was aiming at a more accurate rendition of the subjective and unidimensional discriminating views of America's residents towards blacks.

In its final form, our questionnaire consisted of eight discriminating phrases to which each student could answer indicating his agreement or disagreement on a five-point Likert scale. For example, one of the phrases stated that: "Migrants are not trying hard enough. If only they tried more, their standard of living would be similar to that of the locals". Students had the option to say: I totally agree, I agree, I do not know / I can't answer, I Disagree, I Strongly disagree.

So the more students tended to agree with the statements, the more racist we considered their views. For the coding of our results we numbered their selections from 1 to 5 respectively and for the total sum of each student's questionnaire we added the score of all questions. So for instance, someone who had answered "strongly agree" to all questions, would overall have a total of 8. On the other hand, someone who had answered "Strongly Disagree" to all of the questions would reach the sum of 40. The final score of each questionnaire therefore could range from 8 to 40. The

lower a student's score was, the less racist we considered his points of view, and as the score got higher, we considered his racism level to increase.

For the better presentation of the results, in some cases we decided to group the 5 answers (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) into 3 categories: Agree (which included the first 2 responses: strongly agree and agree), Neutral, Disagree (where we included the last two answers: Strongly disagree and disagree).

Our questionnaire was distributed to 100 students. 50 of them were students from the University of Patras and had not participated in a student exchange program and the remaining 50 were Erasmus students of foreign or Greek origin studying in Malmö or in Patra.

For the following analysis of our data we used the statistical program SPSS version 21.0

### **Presentation of the eight phrases of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire given to the students was consisted mainly of 8 discriminating statements (as stated above). Here we will present these 8 sentences:

*“These last years the government and the media have shown more respect to immigrants than what they really deserve”.*

Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
1	1,0	1,0	1,0
9	9,0	9,0	10,0
29	29,0	29,0	39,0
39	39,0	39,0	78,0
22	22,0	22,0	100,0
100	100,0	100,0	

*“Discrimination acts against immigrants are no longer the government’s issue”.*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	2	2,0	2,0
	<b>Agree</b>	8	8,0	10,0
	<b>Neutral</b>	6	6,0	16,0
	<b>Disagree</b>	40	40,0	56,0
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	44	44,0	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	100	100,0	

*“These last year’s immigrants have received more economic benefits than what they should have”.*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Strongly Agree	4	4,0	4,0	4,0
	Agree	7	7,0	7,0	11,0
	Neutral	27	27,0	27,0	38,0
	Disagree	39	39,0	39,0	77,0
	Strongly Disagree	23	23,0	23,0	100,0
	Total	100	100,0	100,0	

*“Immigrants have become too demanding for equal rights”.*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Strongly Agree	3	3,0	3,0	3,0
	Agree	12	12,0	12,0	15,0
	Neutral	30	30,0	30,0	45,0
	Disagree	35	35,0	35,0	80,0
	Strongly Disagree	20	20,0	20,0	100,0
	Total	100	100,0	100,0	

*“Immigrants should only go where they are accepted”.*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Strongly Agree	8	8,0	8,0	8,0
	Agree	12	12,0	12,0	20,0
	Neutral	23	23,0	23,0	43,0
	Disagree	24	24,0	24,0	67,0
	Strongly Disagree	33	33,0	33,0	100,0
	Total	100	100,0	100,0	

*“Immigrants do not try hard enough; if only they would try harder they could be just as well off as locals”.*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Strongly Agree	4	4,0	4,0	4,0
	Agree	10	10,0	10,0	14,0
	Neutral	17	17,0	17,0	31,0
	Disagree	45	45,0	45,0	76,0
	Strongly Disagree	24	24,0	24,0	100,0
	Total	100	100,0	100,0	

*“People who emigrated from my country to others overcame prejudice and worked their way up. The immigrants in my country should do the same”.*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	8	8,0	8,0	8,0
	<b>Agree</b>	16	16,0	16,0	24,0
	<b>Neutral</b>	36	36,0	36,0	60,0
	<b>Disagree</b>	22	22,0	22,0	82,0
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	18	18,0	18,0	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	100	100,0	100,0	

*“Most of the discrimination against immigrants is their own fault”.*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	3	3,0	3,0	3,0
	<b>Agree</b>	15	15,0	15,0	18,0
	<b>Neutral</b>	23	23,0	23,0	41,0
	<b>Disagree</b>	37	37,0	37,0	78,0
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	22	22,0	22,0	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	100	100,0	100,0	

### Difference between genders

Observing the below table we see that 6.5% of men and 5.8% of women agreed with phrases that were racist. 38.7% of men in our sample and 30.4% of women (as shown in the table) answered by keeping a neutral stance on statements that had racist content. A negative attitude toward these phrases of the questionnaire was kept in our sample by 54.8% of the male population and 63.8% of the female.

Difference in discriminating opinions between genders					
		Gender		Total	
		Male	Female		
Discriminating Opinions	<b>Agreed</b>	Count	2	4	6
		% within Gender	6,5%	5,8%	6,0%
	<b>Neutral</b>	Count	12	21	33
		% within Gender	38,7%	30,4%	33,0%
	<b>Disagreed</b>	Count	17	44	61
		% within Gender	54,8%	63,8%	61,0%
Total		Count	31	69	100
		% within Gender	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

*The difference was measured and not found statistically significant ( $p = 0,76$ ,  $t$  - test).*

### The effect of the father's job

The table below shows the influence that fathers have on their children's racist perceptions, in our sample. Between most of the categories we did not see many differences, we assume mainly due to our small sample size, but we found some interesting data that we believe are worth mentioning. However, none of our findings are statistically significant, therefore we mention everything with great caution taking into consideration the great possibility that these differences occurred by chance and only in our sample.

In particular, from the students whose father's job fell into the category of "scientific and high-status jobs" we found no students agreeing to the phrases given (0%). Neutral towards these statements appeared to be 8 students in the same job category of the father and it seems that the phrases were opposed by the majority of students, 17 (68%). Moreover, when the employment status of the father belonged to the category of "office clerks" we see all students disagreeing again with the phrases. Ten of the students (40%) were neutral and 60% (15 students) tended to agree. Interestingly, we found that out of the students whose father fell under the category "craftsmen and employees" 2 (13%) agreed with the discriminating phrases, 7 (46.7%) were neutral and 6 (40%) disagreed with them. Out of the students whose fathers were teachers, one (8.3%) student has agreed with the statements, 3 (25%) were neutral and 8 (66.8%) disagreed.

Effect of the father's job						
		Discriminating opinions			Total	
		Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed		
Father's job	Scientific and high-status jobs	Count	0	8	17	25
	% within Row	0,0%	32,0%	68,0%	100,0%	
	Managers and executives	Count	2	1	4	7
	% within Row	28,6%	14,3%	57,1%	100,0%	
	Office clerks	Count	0	10	15	25
	% within Row	0,0%	40,0%	60,0%	100,0%	
	Sellers	Count	0	1	2	3
	% within Row	0,0%	33,3%	66,7%	100,0%	
	Social services	Count	0	0	6	6
	% within Row	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	100,0%	
	Farmers and livestock raisers	Count	1	1	0	2
	% within Row	50,0%	50,0%	0,0%	100,0%	
	Craftsmen and employees	Count	2	7	6	15
	% within Row	13,3%	46,7%	40,0%	100,0%	
	Teachers	Count	1	3	8	12
	% within Row	8,3%	25,0%	66,7%	100,0%	
	Unemployed	Count	0	1	1	2
	% within Row	0,0%	50,0%	50,0%	100,0%	
	Retired	Count	0	1	2	3
	% within Row	0,0%	33,3%	66,7%	100,0%	
Total	Count	6	33	61	100	
	% within Row	6,0%	33,0%	61,0%	100,0%	

### **The effect of the mother's job**

At the following table, one can see the effect of the mother's job on student's answers to our phrases. Just like before, we're trying to determine whether the parent's jobs are a factor in student's racism, however these data are also not statistically significant and should be looked over cautiously. Here we will only mention the results that we found noteworthy. None of the students whose mothers belong to the category "Scientific and high-status jobs" has agreed with the phrases, two (13.3%) remained neutral towards them and 13 (86.7%) disagreed. Within the group titled "Office clerks", 2 students (8.3%) agreed with the statements, 12 (50%) kept a neutral stance and 10 (41.7%) disagreed. In the "Craftsmen and employees" category (10%) students agreed with the phrases, 2 (20%) responded neutrally and 7 (70%) disagreed with them. From students whose mothers are teachers 1 (4.2%) disagreed, 7 (29.2%) were neutral while the majority of 16 (66.7%) were opposed to the phrases. Finally, from the category "stay at home", one (6.3%) person has agreed to the racist perceptions, 7 (43.8%) kept neutral and 8 (50%) disagreed.

Effect of the mother's job						
		Discriminating opinions				
		Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed	Total	
Mother's job	Scientific and high-status jobs	Count	0	2	13	15
		% within Row	0,0%	13,3%	86,7%	100,0%
	Managers and executives	Count	0	1	2	3
		% within Row	0,0%	33,3%	66,7%	100,0%
	Office clerks	Count	2	12	10	24
		% within Row	8,3%	50,0%	41,7%	100,0%
	Sellers	Count	0	0	1	1
		% within Row	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	100,0%
	Social services	Count	1	2	7	10
		% within Row	10,0%	20,0%	70,0%	100,0%
	Farmers and livestock raisers	Count	1	0	0	1
		% within Row	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	Craftsmen and employees	Count	0	1	2	3
		% within Row	0,0%	33,3%	66,7%	100,0%
	Teachers	Count	1	7	16	24
		% within Row	4,2%	29,2%	66,7%	100,0%
Stay at home	Count	1	7	8	16	
	% within Row	6,3%	43,8%	50,0%	100,0%	
Unemployed	Count	0	1	2	3	
	% within Row	0,0%	33,3%	66,7%	100,0%	
Total	Count	6	33	61	100	
	% within Row	6,0%	33,0%	61,0%	100,0%	

### **Difference in discriminating opinions between students who chose different studies**

One of the things we considered interesting and decided to examine was whether choosing an education in the field of teaching would have an effect on student's discriminating opinions. Therefore, we split students into two groups: those who were studying pedagogy (48 students) and those who were not. From the students who were studying pedagogy, three (6.3%) agreed



with the discriminating views, 18 (37.5%) stayed neutral while 27 disagreed (56.3%). The sample size of students who were studying something irrelevant to education was 51 students, and from them, three (5.9%) agreed with the phrases given to them, 15 (29.4%) answered neutrally and 33 (64.7%) disagreed with these opinions.

Difference in discriminating opinions between students who chose different studies					
Discriminating Opinions			Studying		
			Other	Education	Total
	Agreed	Count	3	3	6
		% within Studying	5,9%	6,3%	6,1%
	Neutral	Count	15	18	33
		% within Studying	29,4%	37,5%	33,3%
	Disagreed	Count	33	27	60
		% within Studying	64,7%	56,3%	60,6%
	Total	Count		48	99
		% within Studying		100,0%	100,0%

### Comparison between Erasmus students of Greek and other nationalities

Another aspect of racism that we thought of researching was whether there is a differentiation in the level of discriminating opinions among Greeks and foreign students who have joined the Erasmus program. In order to study this, we categorized the Erasmus students into two groups: Greeks and all other nationalities. Our sample was consisted of 50 students in total, out of which 19 were Greeks and 31 foreigners. Looking at the table below we can see the differences in the responses between them. From the Greek students, no one agreed with the opinions, 5 remained neutral (26.3%) and 14 disagreed with them. From the sample of students originating from other countries 2 (6,5%) agreed with the phrases, 5 (16.1%) answered neutrally and 24 (77.4%) disagreed.

Comparing for nationality within Erasmus students					
Discriminating Opinions			Country of origin		
			Greece	Other	Total
	Agreed	Count	0	2	2
		% within Row	0,0%	6,5%	4,0%
	Neutral	Count	5	5	10
		% within Row	26,3%	16,1%	20,0%
	Disagreed	Count	14	24	38
		% within Row	73,7%	77,4%	76,0%
	Total	Count		31	50
		% within Row		100,0%	100,0%

*The difference detected between the two groups was measured and not found statistically significant ( $p = 0.395$ ,  $\chi^2$  test).*

### Controlling for traveling

Moreover, we decided to compare non-Erasmus students who have traveled outside the country at least once and those who have not. As shown by the table, there appeared to be a significant

differentiation between the two groups with students who had never traveled abroad having a higher percentage of agreement towards the questionnaire's phrases.

**Difference between students who had joined an Erasmus program and those who had not**

Finally, in order to examine our main research question (if participation in a student exchange program is a factor which affects student's discriminating opinions) we split our sample into two groups: those who had participated in an Erasmus program and those who had not, and we compared them. The results, as shown below, showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups ( $p = 0,003$ , T-test). More specifically, 4% of those who had gone on Erasmus seemed to agree with the racist phrases. The percentage doubled among the non-Erasmus students (8%). Neutral remained 20% of those who had been on Erasmus and 46% of those who had not. Finally, 76% of those who had joined an Erasmus program disagreed with the phrases while only 46% of the other group also disagreed.

Difference between students who had joined an Erasmus program and those who had not					
		Has joined an Erasmus program		Total	
		Yes	No		
Discriminating opinions	Agreed	Count	2	4	6
		% within Row	4,0%	8,0%	6,0%
	Neutral	Count	10	23	33
		% within Row	20,0%	46,0%	33,0%
	Disagreed	Count	38	23	61
		% within Row	76,0%	46,0%	61,0%
	Total	Count	50		100
		% within Row	100,0%		100,0%

**Conclusions**

After examining the data collected through our empirical research, we reached some conclusions which will be discussed below.

Among all the phrases given to the students through our questionnaire, there is one specific that we would like to discuss because it was the one that gathered the biggest percentage of agreement. The phrase stated that: "People who emigrated from my country to others overcame prejudice and worked their way up. The immigrants in my country should do the same". This outcome was expected by us, because, in our opinion, a usual characteristic of people with racist tendencies is that they often believe that they and those with whom they share some common characteristics (such as country, color and religion) are slightly better than people who are different from them in that field, even if this often happens subconsciously. For instance, we believe that people who have a strong sense of nationality tend to feel superior towards people originating from other countries. So in this case we presume that while examining this sentence, students who agreed with it, felt subconsciously that people with the same origin as them made a greater effort to improve their standard of living, which is probably not true.

One of the things we wanted to examine was whether gender is a factor that can predict the level of a student's racism. According to our findings, although we did spot a difference between men

and women, it was very small and in no case, should be generalized given that our sample was very small and the difference was statistically insignificant. Therefore, we believe that sex is not an indicator of a student's discriminating views.

Another factor that we found to have caused small variations in the level of student's racism was their father's job. What we found interesting was that none of the students whose father's occupation belonged to the "scientific and high-status jobs" agreed with the discriminating phrases. Also, from the students who had at least one parent as a teacher, a great percentage disagreed with our phrases. From the categories that had a significant sample size, the biggest percentage of agreement with the statements was noted within the students whose father's job was under the category "Craftsmen and employees". All these raise questions concerning the reasons to which we found these differentiations and whether higher (and better) education can help alleviate racism. Due to our small sample size, we would rather not go into more detail, but hope to complete another and more accurate study in the future examining this particular aspect of racism.

Similarly, considering the employment status of the mother, we found almost the same results. There was a higher proportion of disagreement towards the phrases among students who reported that their mother's job belonged to the category of science and high status. The categories that followed (in descending order) were: "social services" and "teachers". The two categories "office employees" and "stay at home" had the highest percentages of agreement and neutrality towards the statements, respectively. At this point we should again mention the small size of our sample and that we cannot generalize our findings to the population.

Finally, in our attempt to answer our main research question, we found that indeed, the students who had participated in the Erasmus program showed a smaller percentage of disagreement towards the statements.

In the case that our research question would be answered positively, among other things offered by the Erasmus program, we could conclude that it reduces the levels of racism of Erasmus students. Indeed, our research question was answered positively, but during the process of our study and after the analysis of our data, we were faced with various parameters that raised some interesting questions and led to some suggestions for further research. One of the most important ones is the fact that we do not know if the Erasmus program was the decisive factor which reduced previous existing racist attitudes of students or maybe perhaps the tendency for acceptance of diversity already existed beforehand in those students who chose to join the Erasmus program. And if this is true, then the level of discriminating opinions can be considered a factor that plays a role in a student's decision to join (or not) the program. In order to further study this we decided to go back and look at the international literature. After extensive research, we found that there are researchers who argue that those involved in the exchange programs tend to be relatively more open to diversity, even before participating in such programs (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002). In order to see the impact of the Erasmus program alone, it is important to identify and isolate the changes

that take place due to participation in it and to distinguish them from other general changes due to the fact that students at that age are growing up, maturing and are becoming more open minded anyhow. This is true especially since higher education alone can influence the broader development of students, regardless of whether that takes place at the home university of the student or abroad (Carlson & Widaman, 1988, Jacobsen, 2001, Mariani and Hewitt, 2008). We can consider the Erasmus as an effective process towards eliminating racism if only it leads to changes that do not take place among students who remained in their home countries.

There are significant differences between those who participate in student exchange programs and those who do not, but the differences do not derive from their experiences abroad, but instead Wilson suggests that such differences were what lead to the desire of participating in the first place (Iain Wilson, 2011). The Erasmus program, however, was established in order to make students feel more like citizens of the world, therefore a survey showing the opposite should be examined very seriously and repeated many times (Wilson, 2011).

On the other hand, studying other researchers, such as Kerstin Janson, Harald Schomburg and Ulrich Teichler we found the notion suggesting that one of the most significant positive aspects of studying abroad is the ability students get to broaden their horizons and improve their reasoning through contact with the differences of other countries, cultures and universities as well as the acquisition of international and intercultural communication techniques. Krzaklewska apparently agrees with him stating that a very interesting aspect of studying abroad is the ripening process. In a survey conducted, on the one hand students described their period abroad as a chance for exploration and experimentation, making use of the new opportunities given to them. On the other hand, they described that period as a time that enabled them to grow and mature, in other words a time during which they became adults (Krzaklewska, 2006). Even more impressive, however, is the fact that when students were asked, they did not describe an adult only as a person who has independence, is responsible for his actions and has developed a particular personality, but as a person who has acquired a series of intercultural competencies and skills. As Krzaklewska states (2007), only he will be "an adult who will be able to act freely in the globalized world. And he should be equipped with the right skills to interact with people of different cultures and to "survive" in any intercultural environment.

Taking everything into consideration, we must conclude that apparently joining an Erasmus programs is correlated with lower racism levels (in the form of discriminating opinions). However, whether that is the result of the program itself or is one of the determining factors that leads some students to participate in exchange programs and some not to, needs to be further researched. According to Wilson, we cannot yet know for sure what the long-term effects of the Erasmus program are (2011).

Finally, our involvement in this matter has shown to us that this is a complex issue involving many parameters and in order to reach a safe conclusion more studies must be completed taking into consideration other factors that may affect the student's perceptions.

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## Acceptance and tolerance vs. Exclusion in intercultural relations; testing the liberal multiculturalists' hypothesis

Antal Orkeny, Professor, Eotvos Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary [orkeny@tatk.elte.hu](mailto:orkeny@tatk.elte.hu)

### **Abstract**

*In the presentation, I make an attempt to test the liberal normative theory of multiculturalism through empirical means of cross national comparative sociology. The academic literature on multiculturalism as Will Kymlicka argues in his works is heavily normative, dominated by political philosophers who developed idealized theories of a distinctly liberal–democratic form of multicultural citizenship. According to the “liberal multiculturalism hypothesis” multicultural policies can be adopted without risking core liberal democratic values has been quite influential, shaping debates not just within the field of philosophy, but more widely in public life. Many sociologists, however, question whether multiculturalism in the real world can be empirically verified. While one position claims that multiculturalism can be harmonized to liberal democratic values, social justice, and value of freedom, equality, and fraternity, the opposite assumption is that multiculturalism undermines the stability of democracy, and the welfare state. While ethnic groups gain special power, and cultural dominance prevails, it causes prejudices and distrust, segregation, exclusion. The empirical test aims to investigate whether multiculturalism support or erode liberal democratic values. In the analytical part of the presentation, based on the ISSP National Identity Module comparative data from 1995, 2003, and 2013, we examine the relationships exist between multicultural attitudes and ideas of nationalism, different feelings of national pride, and the rate of migration in different countries around the world.*

**Keywords:** intercultural relations, liberal multiculturalists' hypothesis

## “Foreigners do not love us ... they envy us”. Constructing Citizenship Education in Times of Crisis.

Anna Koutsouri, Faculty of Social and Education Policy, University of Peloponnese, Greece.  
[ann40kou@yahoo.gr](mailto:ann40kou@yahoo.gr)

### **Abstract**

*We must underline that the sociopolitical situation and the economic crisis have a strong impact on students' views and opinions about citizenship, democracy and rights. In this context, the role of civic education is crucial and can play a very important role in the construction of citizenship and identity. This presentation aims to develop the results of a research project organised during 2013-2014 focused on the analysis of young pupils' perceptions aged 11-12 year at an ordinary primary school in Thessaloniki about the concept, the content of citizenship and role and the objectives of citizenship education in the curriculum and the school community.*

*In the first part, we will analyse the aims of citizenship education and its goals within the Greek educational system and raise some questions about different problems, obstacles and dilemmas. In the second part, we will present the results of our research based on the analysis of group interviews and discussions, pupils' ideas, comments and opinions. Our research was also based on data from coming from the observation field, the issues raised and the discussions among pupils and teachers.*

*Being inspired by the main ideas of Critical Pedagogy we decided to teach our pupils about different concepts and controversial issues and give them different material for the construction of their citizenship. After this learning period with the active role of students, they were encouraged to analyse their own experience based on participation, knowledge and discussions.*

**Keywords:** Citizenship, children's perceptions, qualitative research, Democratic Education.

### **Citizenship is changing in the time of Crisis**

The changes which take place within the Greek society determine, in a new way, the lives of its members. Those new conditions of barbarism<sup>i</sup> experienced by people in their everyday lives are being depicted by the dominant institutions of information and the state's discourse as the inevitable result of a profound crisis. A crisis which affects seriously all aspects of human life, economy, politics, the state and the family.

The responsibility for the causes [of the crisis] is placed to the welfare state, which is depicted as a formulation behind of time (Ranciere, 2009), as well as democracy (direct), born in the *polis* (city), is depicted as a political form of a bygone era, incapable of dealing with the needs of the contemporary world<sup>ii</sup> (globalization, knowledge society, multiculturalism, e.tc.). However, constantly the main culprit seems to be the citizen himself. The person is often accused of failing to overcome its individualistic -and identified with consumption- desires, to adapt rapidly to the demands of times, and to comprehend that it should disclaim rights and “privileges” so that new possibilities -able to solve the problem- will be created.



At the same time, the Bourgeois Democracy is highly criticized (Agaben, 2005). The modern polity of Representative Democracy does not achieve the aims of the 19<sup>th</sup> century's revolutions, neither their declarations for true equality and freedom (Ranciere, 2009/Badiou, 2005<sup>iii</sup>). Respectively, Crouch (2006) acknowledges that postdemocracy of the contemporary postmodern societies, introduces new parameters which compose the notion of the citizen. The intense population mobility (refugees and economic migrants), the globalization of economy, the changes during the last decades in the law systems of the western countries, the constantly increasing walls at the countries' borders and the enormous political dead ends, produce a strong interest for the discourses forming the citizen's identity (citizenship-Isin & Turner, 2002) as well as democracy and its contexts.

Citizenship, a notion usually referring to different and probably contradictory concepts (Mpalias, 2008:305), is inextricably linked to democracy and its contexts. In the era of modernity, it expresses the participation of the sovereign people in state governance and is identified with nationality. Nowadays its content seems to be changing.

The citizen feels more like a subject and less a participant, a modulator of the political power. A kind of *multiple citizenship*, not participating in the political domination- power, rather than in the various social institutions which construct the society within the state, is being formed (Karakatsani, 2004:14-15). Thus, in the last years the notion [of the citizen] is increasingly distancing the possibility of the direct exercise of power by individuals, while at the same time is more closely connected to the civil society,<sup>iv</sup> a term<sup>v</sup> which is frequently found in the institutional texts of the European Union<sup>vi</sup>.

Cosmopolitanism (Delanty, 2007:64) which is, since the 90s, systematically promoted in Europe by national and supranational institutions, made an attempt to establish a new concept of citizenship. Having borrowed "the world citizen" from the movement of non- nationalism, namely the citizenship outside the narrow boundaries of the nation-state, institutional texts *recontextualisate* the term (Bernstein, 1989 & 2000) for the needs of the globalized economy and neoliberalism. Besides the changes in the consideration and the dynamics of the term [citizenship] which have been promoted during the last decades, it is at the same time found that the notion is based on a law context, seeming nowadays to lead ever more people in a state of exception<sup>vii</sup> from citizenship (denizens -see Hammar, 1990 c.fr. Agamben, 2008:94),<sup>viii</sup> (Agamben, 2005)

In conclusion, we would say that in the time of crisis the notions of democracy, participation, right and of the citizen are being shaped by the dominant power structures and are being recontextualised on the basis of the globalized economy's needs. Those notions, which remain still infallible truths in the citizens' consciousnesses, gradually lose their dynamics and are recontextualised in order to serve the new conditions.

In the time of crisis, rapid and massive processes take place, which force people to reflect on democracy issues, on their rights and mainly on their dominant political status, that of the citizen.

However, many contradictions and conflicts seem to come up concerning the conceptualization of those terms by the individuals themselves, who through institutions such as of the education are requested to shape within a new imaginary context<sup>ix</sup> (a supranational one), the content of the terms both of democracy and of the citizen.

### **The Role of the School in the construction of Citizenship**

Nowadays it is found that the school's main function is of political order, on the contrary with the modern collective imagination which thought of it mainly as the base for social mobility and for social advancement (theory of the equal opportunities, Kymlicka, 2005:142-195). It is [the school] a mechanism of order and discipline (Fragoulis & Papadiamantaki, 2012:233) and just in this lays its political role (Solomon, 1992).

However, while the institution of education is traditionally connected to the state and the politics, the last decades, there seems to be an increasing relation of education with the market and the economy, with a transition from local/national level to the global/ supranational one. Similar changes occur in the conceptualization of the right to education. Therefore, in the new institutional texts such as CIRCA<sup>x</sup>, which is based on the Charter of Rights<sup>xi</sup>, the notions education and training appear as equal, almost identical<sup>xii</sup>. This gradually leads to the deduction of the right to education to the one of training for the low social strata.

In the same way, citizenship, in the educational politics of the E.U. states, seems so to be as highly promoted as the needs of market. Societies are increasingly characterized by multiculturalism and they seem like trying to shape conditions of tolerance for the "other" within the barbarism developed by the conditions of neoliberalism. It is indeed a contradictory educational policy the one which on one hand prepares the citizens for the competitive arena of the free market economy, while on the other hand extols democracy, equality, freedom and critical thought. The supranational formation itself (E.U.) as it is being formed, confronts with huge problems and contradictions. A separation between national and European citizenship is being created, as elements of the national identity contradict those of the European one (required for the Union through a common European imagination of the citizens within separate nation-states), since the historical origins of the states differ significantly<sup>xiii</sup>.

Thus, today more than ever, the notion of democracy and its contexts seem to be difficult to comprehend. The discourse over the issue, produced the last years, becomes increasingly sophisticated and elitist (Biesta, 2006). The multiple conceptualizations of the terms (right, democracy, citizen, participation, e.tc.) in the scientific literature and the democratic rhetoric, as presented mainly through the texts of the curricula in the western institutions of education (Biesta, 2008) distance people from the effective exercise of democracy, rights, participation.

The dominant discourse of the European Union and respectively of the Greek institution of education, in an attempt to change the objectives of the educational policy, have used the term

“citizen of the world” (Appriah, 2008), with the ultimate purpose for the citizens to acquire new skills for their adaption in the new economic and social conditions.

The intense population mobility (migrants, refugees, e.tc) towards the European Union during the last decades render the principles of the curricula, outdated and suggest the need for reform and change. The collective imagination should be constructed more on the basis of the supranational formation and less of the nation-state. Therefore, since the 90s, a consensus of interest is being formed to promote, in all western modern states’ curricula, citizenship education or civic education<sup>xiv</sup> (Vincent & Desautels, 2008), which include citizenship as well as education over democracy and human rights. The main objective for the students seems to be to develop political consciousness so that they become “active” and “responsible” citizens<sup>xiv</sup>.

The Greek educational system which in 1990 made an attempt, through the law for intercultural education, to address the issue of the school-age immigrants, since 2000 onwards, forms the principles of the curriculum (Y.P.E.P.T.H.A.- P.I., 2003 & 2005-A.P.S. & D.E.P.P.S.) in line with the main European imperatives (lifelong learning, active citizen, citizenship) and issues new course books, based on methods and strategies such as cross-thematic, interdisciplinary, experiential learning, group cooperation, etc., aiming to meet students’ educational needs (both of native and of immigrants).

In Greece, the subject of the Social and Political Education (1 hour in the weekly timetable) for the two highest (fifth and sixth) grades contains the objectives of the Civil/Political Education. The curriculum (A.P.S. and D.E.P.P.S.) encourages the utilization of the students’ past experience, projects, discussions and research forms -suggested by the activities in the books of the fifth and the sixth grade- aiming to develop students’ critical thought, empathy, activation and activity<sup>xvi</sup>. In the lower classes students are informed -though poorly- through the course Study of Environment about issues concerning mainly the private sphere of life such as family, neighborhood e.tc.

The curriculum in its rhetoric seems to have been influenced by the pedagogical currents of New Education and Critical Pedagogy. However, those particular pedagogic movements suggested another way for the development of the democratic consciousness, based on the “communal perception of citizenship”. It [the curriculum] perceives democracy as a way of living and the participation in the community as a way of learning. The objective is to build those cultural processes and principles of democracy which will promote the individual development in direct relation to the collective one (Karakatsani, 2004:38-39).

The research over the course books indicates that the students cannot express a critical attitude for the school life itself and thereby participate essentially in the democratic processes. Corresponding studies confirm that this finding is also the main issue for the European curricula (Vincent & Desautels, 2008).

Moreover, it is found that the democratic rhetoric of the curriculum actually contradicts to the reality the students experience the last few years. The curriculum is, for the children, their experiences from within and outside the school and not its rhetoric (Biesta 2008). The violent changes Greek family is going through the last years (poverty, unemployment, social exclusion) shapes the students' political consciousness, their stance towards the problems and their views for the various national, ethnic, social groups.

The concept of the citizen depicted through the books of the fifth and the sixth grade of the primary school shows a particular attitude and rational for the development of democracy: the "social contract-concept"<sup>xvii</sup> of citizenship of the liberal political philosophy. At the same time, direct democracy is depicted as an important but out of date political formation. Students' information through the class relies on the transmission of the one and only "truth", directing them to a particular idea of the citizen, the one based on volunteerism. In general, an individualistic attitude of the citizen is being promoted.

The above, form a new framework inside which, as mentioned before, there seem to be many contradictions. Although the students are informed through the course books about the citizen of the world, at the same time they everyday watch through the media many people's exclusion from citizenship. The school depicts voluntarism positively while at the same time students are being informed through the media for the scandals and the corruption of the voluntary organizations (MKO, Olympic Games e.tc). Thus, few important questions arise, regarding the apperceptions of the students, and the ways the individuals themselves manage the contradictions of the system. The main question concerns the way individuals and mainly the students as the future citizens construct the notion of the citizen.

### **The present research**

Since 2010 launched a research effort aiming to record the increasingly great contradictions which arose in the education for the notions of democracy and its contexts, such as the right to education<sup>xviii</sup> and to citizenship and to interpret the severe changes having taken place at school since mainly 2001 (monetary unification, Treaty of Nice) and thereafter.

The research has two parts:

*Theory Research* which through literature review aimed both for the clarification and the definition of the research's main conceptual tools such as democracy, the citizen, the right, education, participation etc.

*Research of Actors* which aimed to record the views of the educators, working at school but mainly those of the students', the children of the last two grades (fifth and sixth) which are identified as a group without voice (Hardman, 1973), since for that age no framework, allowing them to put requests and to claim changes in their education or in the wider social sphere, is provided.

The research is qualitative, ethnographic and of fieldwork (Sarafidou, 2011:13-21) studying a typical school unit (case study<sup>xix</sup>) for one school year with the action-research as the main methodological tool (Altrichter, Poch, Somekh. 2001). The research was based on participant observation and on the motivated social context-discourses<sup>xx</sup> (Burr, 2003).

The research material used in classroom was designed and the educational material of the institution was utilized in order to encourage focus group interviews (Morgan et. al., 2005/ Lewis, 1992) as the researcher wanted. Moreover, there was utilization of the current events. That way the children's views were explored, as they were formed throughout the year by the media, the family, the peers and the neighborhood.

The research consists of stages, the passage through which presupposes a feedback (Sagor, 2011) by the research subjects themselves. At the end of the school year the children constructed their neighborhood (project) driven by the right to education. After completing the construction, they were asked to place the "foreigners" (either from faraway or nearby) who come to live there, within it.

***The fieldwork:***

There was a research on the views of the fifth and the sixth grade's students of the preliminary school (91 students), of the educators working at the school and of a small number of parents. At the same time, there were field notes concerning each day's participation of the school units' practice.

**Research findings**

**a. Crisis and the Family**

Most of the students experience changes both on their way of living and in the school.

The majority of the families the last three years has been/is unemployed (the one or both parents) or at least one of the parents has changed his working place/ or work (work deterioration mainly in jobs like lawyers, civil engineers, contractors, closure of individual businesses, shops etc). The Greek family is forced to remake clothes, and school supplies. Usually the mother takes care of it and it is a new experience for many of the children. Moreover, the Greek family has reduced visiting places of entertainment and fun.

In some cases of students' families (mainly of the sixth grade) there have been attempts of migration. The father tries probationary to find a job abroad while the next step would be for the rest of the family to follow. These kinds of efforts seem to be unsuccessful since usually after a few months the parent chooses to return home. Moreover, some families of immigrants (five [5] this year) choose to leave the country seeking for better living conditions.

A sufficient, constantly growing number of families seem to face a significant problem of survival. The financial support of the family usually comes from the pensions of relatives

(grandfather or grandmother). Furthermore, mothers have developed, on the basis of friendly relations between school and neighborhood, an exchange network and a donation network of clothes, toys and other useful objects covering children's main needs. Family bonds, philanthropy and solidarity support currently these families. A small number of families seek food in the soup kitchen of the local church.

Finally, it is worth noting that the parents facing severe economic problems hardly talk openly about it. They, when a serious reason comes up, inform the school, where there is confidentiality over the issue. When wanting to share their economic problem, the parents many times bow their heads and talk in whispers about it, they also seem to develop compunction because of not working and mainly because of not being able to offer their children what they want or everything they need.

#### **b. Crisis and the School**

The school has also been affected by the crisis in relation to the institution of education and to the family.

The government's grants concerning education have been seriously reduced. Actually, before the outbreak of the crisis, the grants for education did not cover all the educational needs of a Greek family so that the education would be truly free for the citizens. The cost of the school activities such as classroom visits, supervisory course material for the holidays or the classes, is passing on the family, burdening its budget. The increasing economic hardship of the families affects the school's choices. Thus, classroom visits have been significantly reduced and the main criterion would be the limited cost, since it is borne by the families. There has also been noticed a discount in the teaching objectives and benefits for the student's due to the cost of the activities.

A positive change is that the school demands towards the family have been significantly reduced (supervisory course material, student aids, copier paper). The school now requires for each extracurricular activity that costs, free tickets from organizations and agencies. In some cases, a class fund is set up, bearing the expenses of those students in particular who are unable to meet even the low-cost classroom visits (usually 2,5 - 4 euro).

Students seem to collect information and experiences mainly from the family environment, the peers, the media, the neighborhood and the school. From the discussions that arose during the research (2013-14) children aged 10-12 years old keep up to date with the news and develop a political criterion on the basis of all mentioned above. It is worth noticing that at the beginning of the school year a fair number of students expressed the opinion that the fascist task forces that are against immigrants "make resistance" to the government. After the political assassination of the musician P. Fissa<sup>xxi</sup> the students' views differentiated. Most of them condemned the action and having been influenced by it they reconsidered.<sup>xxii</sup> A very small

number though chose to be silent and stopped expressing a view over the events throughout the rest of the school year when the investigations and the trials were taking place.

The students usually form views and attitudes over political issues such as the position of Greece in Europe, migration, political parties. They mention political terms like “right” and “left”, memoranda, parliament, fascism, etc. They comprehend the family’s problems and the changes which have occurred in their everyday lives. They express fear, exasperation e.tc. At the same time they form views and attitudes towards population groups such as the gypsies who “sting”, “steal the children”, “steal from us”, “anywhere they go they cause trouble”, and Turks with whom “we are enemies since ever”, “we fight”, and they “want to make us like them” [meaning the religion].

**c. The students’ views**

The students appear concerned for their everyday lives and mainly their future. They often express anxiety and sometimes fear for tomorrow. *“I want to grow up but also... how should I say that... I am afraid of growing up... all those things adults say, we don’t know what’s coming next [in the future]”.*

They seem to form views expressing strong depreciation of the political system and to identify any notion of political act with it. *“Ok, though I am a kid I am ashamed of what they do [the politicians], aren’t they?” “The politicians do not worth a bucket of warm spit... they have a silver spoon in their mouth and we are having a hard time». “We should all rough them up in the parliament... they are useless”*

Often, they think that everyone involved in politics *“is sold”, they “enter (the Parliament) to hunker down and they strip-mine us”* and that dealing with politics is pointless. They are led between despair and subversive optimism *“what should we do Miss? What can we do? We have no power... we are kids.” «...we shall throw them to the sea, ha ha ha, we shall kick them out... tell them: we don’t want you”*

The students’ views often express a strong aversion for the rest of Europe, mainly for Germany. Also, they often seem to believe the superiority of the Greek culture and a conspiracy theory against the Greek nation-state. *“It is the Germans’ fault [for the crisis] ... the Europeans ... they don’t like us” “They envy us ...the Greek language was voted the best of the world but was not elected ... [meaning officially] ““They want to take our petroleum. They found a lot.... There is everywhere, in the sea too, and they want it...”*

All above seem to establish a climate mainly of fatigue towards the foreigners that borders on xenophobia. *We want the foreigners out... we want them elsewhere... go elsewhere ha, ha, ha [from the relevant advertisement]”. «Humph! ..., that’s enough... they have all gathered here, Albanians, Bulgarians, Black, White, English, French, Portuguese, ha, ha, ha, that’s enough, no more ...”*

**d. The contradictions:**

Although the students blame mainly the Germans and the Europeans in total for the plight of their country they however acknowledge them as important foreigners in the neighborhood they construct. Therefore, from all the foreigners coming in the neighborhood they are the first to be positioned in it, being provided of individual housing, very often next to their houses.

Moreover, although they seem to resent the immigrants from the Balkans, they put the majority of them in the neighborhood. Probably the fact that in every class there are Albanian, Armenian and Russian peers plays a significant role. They often place mainly the “poor foreigners” (countries of the third world and the Balkans) in «hosting venues» and allow access in the school usually through a separate specific program (language, religion). Also in some cases they recommend that the teaching of the Greek language and culture should precede, through a special program outside school and that their integration to the Greek education should take place later on. This is characterized by enough students as a necessary step for assimilation.

Most of the students seem to comprehend the needs leading to migration and respect the right of the foreign children to education, religion and language. But in their majority, they suggest that the immigrant children are taught about their culture separately and not through their own school program and often even outside the school ground (in a guesthouse).

They easily reproduce equality rhetoric for all human beings though the majority of them deny any relation with the gypsies. The most powerful negative stereotypes seem to be formed for this population group [the Gypsies] and the majority [of the students] agrees to their complete exclusion from the neighborhood. In some working groups of the children it was observed throwing them under their desks<sup>xxiii</sup>.

Concerning the right to religion the students do not allow the construction of other religion's temples though in many groups Christian temples are being designed. They all believe that the students of a different religion will be able to exercise their right to religion through the separate program usually in the guesthouse created for the immigrant children.

All the groups accept their coexistence with children with special needs, and many adopt them in their own houses. They show a special care for those children: “it is very sweet”, “poor little one” but they don't seem to treat those children equally rather than with a spirit of philanthropy. Therefore, they are seen arguing about who will stick the photo of the child with special needs near his/her house or in it, without taking into consideration the family who accompanies it which in turn is in need of housing within the neighborhood as well.



### **Citizenship Education based on Critical Pedagogy.**

The findings of the research theory and the research of actors have put the planning of the Social and Political Education in a new basis. The actions were based on, inspired by and supported by the basic principles of Critical Pedagogy which acknowledges education in interaction with the rest social spheres, the political, the economical and the cultural one. Moreover, it comprehends that the interpretation of the social reality by people is shaped through fields of conflict (battlefields) aiming to the development of their critical consciousness and to the “empowering of the powerless and the transformation of the existing social inequalities and injustices” (Mc Laren, 2010: 281) in order to build a democratic society.

A basic principle is the acknowledgment of the individuals as actors, shaping the social reality with main tool their critical thought as the “essential mean with which people through the real action leave behind their status as objects to take up their role as Historical Subjects” (Freire, 1977:197).

In this context [of Critical Pedagogy] the educator “agent”<sup>xxv</sup> undergoes the same procedure as his students. Thus, they recognize the educator through his citizenship and not as an authority. He is as well, informed, he researches, he puts into question, he develops a critical thought and mainly he acts according to the targets. This procedure is being defined as a cultural action which aims to the conquest of freedom. “The teachers should comprehend the role the school education plays in connecting knowledge with power, in order to use this role for shaping critical and active citizens” (Mc Laren, 2010:282).

Thus, during the school year and in cooperation with the student’s various activities were developed which gave the opportunity for a new knowledge to be generated, while the official one was challenged. They were based on the research of the causes and of the responsibilities for issues arising either from current affairs or from the course book. Therefore, necessarily there was a transition from the responsibility of the individual to the one of the institutions and from the individualistic to the collective approach.

The students had the chance to be profoundly informed, to be up to date in relation with the current affairs which concerned both them and their families, to develop argumentation of the conflicting sides, in order to comprehend in depth social problems such as the migration issue, the ecological disaster caused by the gold mining factory in Chalkidiki, the privatization of the water company in Thessaloniki, the assassination of P. Fissas by members of the Golden Dawn, the arrest of Maria’s –the little gipsy- adoptive parents etc.

Out of all the actions throughout the school year the one the children thought as more important and more pleasant was the neighborhood construction and the educational sites within it. Through the actions they had the chance to be acquainted with different school systems, to express their wishes (green areas, play areas, libraries, science laboratories, planetariums etc.), to comprehend, through action, the abstract notion of the right to education, to put into doubt the existing structures of the institution of education (they suggested different subjects of education and

weekly timetables, separation of the classes, ways of hiring teaching staff e.tc.), to acknowledge to themselves and to the “other” needs and mostly desires meant to be satisfied in a collective basis.

Moreover, there was given emphasis on the students’ contradictions so that they become accepted and comprehended. All the above assisted the attempt to crack both the students’ and the educator’s (researcher’s) stereotypical thoughts and behaviors.

The students contacted the material of collectivities which was either distributed or displayed in the neighborhood. Some of the students themselves noticed that they no longer passed indifferently by the walls in the neighborhood but stopped in order to read the printed material. They started involving in discussion with the parents and in some cases making research with them on data or on information in the internet. Many students pointed that they were watching the news at home in order to bring new topics from current affairs related to the lesson or the homework to school.

The students’ interest for the Social and Political Education class increased and they did not complain over the work load as in other classes. They began to take initiatives and bring to school new material for elaboration and discussion.

This specific way of practice influenced both methodology and teaching in the rest of the classes as well. Furthermore, it was after the first half of the school year when the students begun to use arguments and started to respect their interlocutors, which was extremely difficult at the beginning of the school year.

Moreover, the students’ ability to talk freely about issues they themselves consider of significance, the ability to disagree (mainly with the educator’s views but with the peers’ as well), the ability to change opinion or position after a dialogue or a conflict<sup>xxvi</sup> within the collectivity, gave the chance for the democracy and its contexts to turn into action and experience.

Such an example is the neighborhood construction by the students centered in the educational public spaces. At the beginning, most of the children contented themselves just to express their personal desire for the spaces they gradually constructed without taking into account some collective or individual needs. Thus, there were many disagreements and conflicts. During the process of the work plan they managed to form collective proposals since they had to argue each time they wanted to promote their own desire, which turned out to be very exhausting.

Furthermore, the issue of citizenship which consists part of the teaching material of the Social and Political Education class (K.P.A., student’s course book, fifth grade, p. 12-15) fueled a number of discussions in the classroom. In the same period, there was the call for protest in the city by anti-racist groups demanding the right to Greek citizenship for the immigrants’ children who live in the country. The posters, with which the center of our neighborhood was full of, constituted a visual material and fueled the research over that specific topic. The findings led the students to the

conclusion that citizenship the last years is often a main issue of discussion and of legal arrangements and that there are conflicting views about it. Also, that there is a large number of immigrants who strongly seek for their right to citizenship even today. Therefore, the content of the course book, which claimed that the immigrants' naturalization after ten years of residence in the country is given- if asked, was renewed and updated

Through the relevant activities there was the chance to utilize the students' existing experience, to broaden the visual material of the subject (posters, written material made public in the neighborhood, internet, e.tc.) and to express the views and the attitudes of the students within a cooperative and democratic environment). The students were given the chance to participate in the dialogue production, in the development of the critical thought, in the management of some conflicts having arisen sometimes within the groups in the classroom.

### **Conclusions**

The findings of the research seem to confirm the view that "In the Greek reality, where civil society is extremely weak and the welfare almost or not at all developed, young people form a *schizophrenic tendency*" (Mouzelis, 2004:50) of cultural superiority to the weak and inferiority to the strong. Students form an idealized picture for the country (cultural superiority) through the school while simultaneously they acquire a strong feeling of inferiority to the West as well as disappointment and disapproval of what is happening in their country. This *schizophrenic tendency* is particularly strong in countries where the civil society is extremely weak and the welfare almost or not at all developed.

The main conclusion deriving from the research findings is that the institution of education seems to reflect the same contradictions Greek society experiences. On one hand, the cosmopolitan theory appears: the citizen [«foreigner» or not] is viewed with respect, with all the rights of a democratic environment (General Principles of the curriculum: 3-4), although on the other hand the strict connection of the institution with the nation-state (one religion, one identity) cannot be overcome (General Principles of the Curriculum: 5). The main rights to development and evolution (Hodgkin, 1998) of the immigrants' children living in Greece, such as mother tongue and religion, which constitute the identity of each student, as well as historical memory seem to be taboo issues for the Greek educational system, since hitherto it is not able to respect and offer them.

The findings of the research (theory and actors) which took place during the school year 2013-2014 prove that there is a gap between educational theory, as it is depicted in the Greek Curriculum (A.P.S.) and educational practice. The democratic rhetoric of the institutional texts contradicts the experiences the students have in their everyday lives, both inside and outside the school grounds. Parents' unemployment, the peer's poverty, racism and xenophobia in the neighborhood, the social exclusion of an increasing number of people in the city, educators' fear for the future of the school, of their students' and theirs, consist of the curriculum for the young children: the future citizens. On the other hand, the strategies and the methods inspired by the Critical Pedagogy which are suggested for the teaching of the lessons, out of their context, are invalidated through the

curricula's targeting to individualism, grading, the ranking of the students in levels of a typical assessment and the discrepancy between the curriculum and the schedule (teaching time).

Citizenship education inspired and based on the movement of Critical Pedagogy is nowadays been acknowledged of great significance. The exercise of the right to education by the increasingly more socially excluded is a crucial goal. The social context in the time of crisis, characterized by inequalities and democratic deficit, requires the immediate reform of the citizenship education in the Greek educational program.

Under these conditions the role of the educator-researcher is significant. With reference to the principles of Critical Pedagogy he has the ability to transform, in cooperation with his students, the official knowledge in order not just to update it but to bridge the gap between theory and action so that the students become critical and active citizens., so that through questioning the practices which will allow the change of the cultural and at the end of the political context of education, would develop, so that the notions (citizen, democracy, participation e.tc.) would be categorized within their actual context (society, economy, politics) and collectivity, the *polis*, would be constructed, to promote a true democracy.

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## Notes

- i. The term refers to Kastoriadis (Socialism or Barbarism). Lately it is often utilized to describe the inhumane conditions formed within the contemporary capitalistic system, as e.g. see the articles of Samir, A. and Tsiakalos, G.
- ii. "The conclusion we are asked to reach from these is that democracy is a political form of a bygone era that cannot suit ours ..." (Rancier, 2009:61).
- iii. "Today the word 'democracy' is the principal organizer of consensus. It is a word that supposedly unites the collapse of the socialist States, the putative well-being enjoyed in our countries and the humanitarian crusades of the West" (Badiou, 2005:78)
- iv. "Today, the economic crisis and the state bureaucracy force the state to "return" to the society activities which until recently were considered state affairs" (Bobbio, 1998:59). A coherent element of the civil society is the imaginary whole which constitutes the nation or nationality and which in the developed western countries grows together with the institutions. On the contrary in the Balkans, ideology precedes while the national fields, economical, political, educational, cultural either haven't been developed at all or are in an embryonic stage (Mouzelis, 2004).
- v. The term *civil society* defines the total of those social relations which fall outside the state's jurisdiction (all the coercive mechanisms within an organized social system). For the term (civil society) see Bobbio, 1998 and Fotev, G., 1996.
- vi. For the European Commission's texts using the term, see [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/who-does-what/stakeholders/index\\_el.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/who-does-what/stakeholders/index_el.htm) and [http://ec.europa.eu/news/eu\\_explained/index\\_el.htm#top](http://ec.europa.eu/news/eu_explained/index_el.htm#top)
- vii. The term *homo sacer* determines the situation of exclusion from citizenship (Agamben, 2005).
- viii. Such examples are the non-papier in France or the immigrants coming into Europe through the Greek borders who are trapped in the country or even worse the refugees from Syria who are forced to use the sea roots to enter Greece (by land they are blocked due to the wall in Evros river) with fatal consequences for their lives.
- ix. Kastoriadis, K., 1999.
- x. Based on the articles 3, 140, 146, 149 and 150 of the Treaty EK., [http://circa.europa.eu/irc/opoce/fact\\_sheets/info/data/policies/culture/article\\_7314\\_el.htm](http://circa.europa.eu/irc/opoce/fact_sheets/info/data/policies/culture/article_7314_el.htm)
- xi. The Charter of Fundamental Rights provides that "everyone has the right to education and to access to vocational and continuing training" (Article 14) and that "everyone has the right to work, to exercise the profession he has chosen or freely accepted to" (Article 15).
- xii. In the context of CIRCA a ten-year work program with the title "Education and Training 2010" (2002/C 142/01) has been approved.
- xiii. For example, the state church separation, a basic conquest of the modern societies, shapes citizenship in France and Greece in a contradictory way.
- xiv. There is a differentiation between the terms *civics* and *citizenship* which both express education in citizenship.  
Civics: a program which promotes insight over citizenship through teaching  
Citizenship: a program which promotes principles and seeks to participation- activation through broader education and training (formal or informal).
- xv. See Commission for the European Communities. (2000), [http://publications.europa.eu/index\\_el.htm](http://publications.europa.eu/index_el.htm)
- xvi. See Analytical Curriculum (A.P.S.) fifth & sixth Grade of Primary School and Cross-thematic Single Context of Curricula (DEPPS) of Primary and High School., [http://www.pi-schools.gr/content/index.php?lesson\\_id=11&ep=87](http://www.pi-schools.gr/content/index.php?lesson_id=11&ep=87)
- xvii. See Analytical Curriculum (A.P.S.) fifth & sixth Grade of Primary School and Cross-thematic Single Context of Curricula (DEPPS) of Primary and High School., [http://www.pi-schools.gr/content/index.php?lesson\\_id=11&ep=87](http://www.pi-schools.gr/content/index.php?lesson_id=11&ep=87)
- xviii. See the fifth grade course book of Social and Political Education, p.23, 62, 65. In p. 71 the introduction of a set of behavior rules by the majority of the classroom is promoted. Often, at the beginning of the school year or a program, the educators together with the students draw out the *contract* of the class which

- contains the rules of behavior with which all of them are obliged to comply since the majority of the class has accepted them.
- xix. This right is one of the child's rights to development and evolution according to UNICEF's classification (Hodgkin, R., 1998).
  - xx. The case study allows the qualitative research and the profound study of individuals, groups and school units (Hampiaouris, 2005).
  - xxi. The term *context*, initially determines the factors (discourses) which control the production of the discourse according to the views of the social post structuralism (Burr, 2003:137-203). The motivated social contexts concern the direction given by the researcher to the group of students, so as to be able to record the non-articulated forms of communication and reaction to the stimuli (I'Anson & Allan, 2006) among the researching subjects.
  - xxii. Pavlos Fissas was assassinated by a supporter of the Golden Dawn in 18/09/2013. The incident has given rise to further investigation on crime and finally to the arrest of members as well as deputies of the political party. For more information see <http://www.ertopen.com/news/ellada/koinwnia/item/25189-enas-chronos-apo-th-dolofonia-toy-payloy-fyssa>
  - xxiii. Many students, especially boys, before P. Fissas' assassination expressed the view that the supporters of Golden Dawn are the only ones expressing their resistance towards the memoranda and the bad political and economical situation of the country. The acts of violence by the supporters- members which sometimes were shown by the TV channels seemed at a child's mind justified, necessary and in some occasions heroic.
  - xxiv. There was a same finding in an older research concerning the views of minority groups in West Thrace in relation to the Gipses, see Koutsouri, A. (2009).
  - xxv. For the term "agent" according to the educator's role in Critical Pedagogy see Giroux, H. A. (1988).
  - xxvi. It is worth mentioning here the reaction of a girl student from Albania when listening to some of her peers commenting negatively the immigrants, cheering Golden Dawn's attacks and encouraging immigrants to leave while using racist humor. She stood up, took the floor and started to explain briefly the living conditions that had forced her family, her acquaintances and friends to leave their country. Moreover, she described the difficulties she herself with her family faced to cross the borders. Her words influenced positively the children's stance, since from that time on, they stopped the racist comments and also treated her with respect ever since. She felt empowered and begun participating strongly in the discussions and the workshops.



## Students' attitudes change in the process of a new culture experience

Sandra Rone, Māra Vidnere, [sandrarone@yahoo.com](mailto:sandrarone@yahoo.com)

### **Abstract**

*In order to investigate student's social dispositions and attitudes, we used the original Thurstone (1928) method, which helped to analyze and grade social trends accordingly to a stated value scale. These scales show those social values, which influence students' internal behavior by regulating function at work, communication, reference, recreation. This method allowed us to gather information about the stated value and detected attitude towards important social values and ethical norms. In this investigation, we only followed the principles of the L.L. Thurstone method, while all other aspects of the research were conducted without assistance (1927a). During the process, we noted that the values are understandable and real, and that they reflect the students' perception and experience. WORKING TARGET: to analyze today's student attitude as a specialization process improvement condition. MATERIALS AND METHODS. The L.L. Thurstone's student's attitude's investigation modify method is employed, which covers 8 bearing appointments. 324 students from Jelgavas Latvian and Russian schools were selected. RESULTS. Nowadays the base of human education are the ideals of humanism: humans are unique, unrepeatable, and important. The nucleus of humans is freedom, independence and responsibility. The purpose of education is to conform to the ideals of a democratic society, and to try to secure conditions for the development of abilities and possibilities. We understand human education as a self-realization and activation solidarity to improve oneself. CONCLUSION. Education and social development is connected and conventional process. There are more facilities for self-realization in democratic country. It is possible by self-education as a breeding base. Analyzing results there were discovered different attitudes in Latvian and Russian schools. Education as a priority in countries development is moved forward in time, revealing personalities value and attitude social importance.*

**Keywords:** student's attitudes, mobility, education

## Historic Environment and Museum Education as Means for Development of Citizenship in a Multicultural School

Despina Papageridou, Kostis Tsioumis, Professor & Argyris Kyridis, Eftimoglou Lina - MA, Intercultural Education / Professors Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece / MA, Intercultural Education and Museology [ktsioumi@nured.auth.gr](mailto:ktsioumi@nured.auth.gr)

### **ABSTRACT**

*All the aforementioned promote research, analytical, proactive and experiential learning, contribute to the motivation of learning incentives and expand knowledge. Moreover, they are essential to the development of historical awareness, the cultivation of historical skills, the understanding of the past and the concepts associated with it, the empathy and the awareness of the interdisciplinary nature of historical knowledge. The purpose of this research is to explore the views and practices of kindergarten teachers for the political socialization of young children, particularly through the historic environment and museum education in a multicultural classroom. This research was conducted in the city of Kastoria.*

**Key Words:** citizenship, historic environment, museum education

### **Introduction**

#### **Citizenship in Kindergarten Education**

Karakatsani (2004) mentions that “responsible citizenship” is estimated to include two key elements: 1. The civic property: the citizen is a free man in relation to authority, equal to their peers and demonstrates the existence and sovereignty through their vote. A citizen has rights which are presented in human rights declarations and democratic constitutions. 2. The responsibility: as a citizen, one must operate with guiding principles the freedom and the mutual obligations it imposes to peers and society (Karakatsani, 2004). Main objectives of this training is the knowledge of the institutions that govern the operation of the state and the awareness that the laws are set and applied both in social relations and in relations between people as well (Nikolaou, Spinthouraki, 2004, UNESCO, 2005, Banks 2012).

Kindergarten is a trusted central point for children whereas with the appropriate configuration they get encouraged to social learning (Sakellariou, 2002, Millei&Imre 2009). Zlata Guns (2009) states that a Nursery School is a place where children need to experience the principles of democracy and democratic decision-making. Children should have the opportunity to express their opinions, listen to others, and participate in decision making to learn democracy. Taking part in a community which respects the rights and is dominated by democratic relationships, children learn that their decisions are important in order to succeed in personal and collective goals. The basis for the design of educational activities must be the current interests, the needs and the proximal environment of preschoolers.

According to the existing bibliography and the opinions of kindergarten teachers, knowledge of history contributes to the development of historical consciousness and therefore to the creation

of responsible citizens. History may contribute to social, cultural and intellectual development of children significantly (Kokkinos 2003, Ferro 2001, Cooperland 1993). History offers preschoolers a chance to start criticizing the world around them, encouraging at the same time the use of observation, data, logic and documentation, elements designed to help children decide what to believe or what to do (Shemilt 1987, McAleavy, 1998, VanSledright, 1998, Riley, 1999, Levstik and Barton, 2001, Hicks et al., 2004, Lee, 2005, Dagkas, 2006, Leontsinis, 2006).

Local history in particular, raises the interest of most kindergarten students. The investigation of local historic past can lead students to positively appraise the importance of history and to recognize it as something very appealing to study and at the same time as something full of meaning for their existence and for their active and responsible involvement in life (Leontsinis 2006, Kasvikis and Andreou 2008, Douch, 1972, Hoskins, 1984). The introduction of history in the early stages of children's education offers them the chance to gain first-hand experience, ask questions, ponder, experiment and play with fresh insights (Cooper, 1995, Hoodles, 2001, Repousi, 2004, Dagkas, 2006).

Furthermore, museums host segments of the visible part of history, testimonies associated to certain aspects of both the human civilization and natural environment. The role of the museum as redefined may be connected directly to the educational needs of the current school (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994, Hennigar, 1999). The museum harmoniously integrates teaching practices of different disciplines such as the National and Local History, Geography, Natural Sciences, Environmental Studies and Art. (Nikonanou, 2010). Consequently, regular visits in museums and historic sites as a part of history class, comprise a more advance step, which require on the one hand the familiarization of students with objects of archaeological interest, sources of history into the classroom and on the other the acceptance of students, in a specially arranged for them educational context in museums and monuments (Koukouli-Chrisanthaki, 1998, Lee, 2006, Nakou, 2008).

## **Research**

### ***Research purpose and oblectives***

In this study, we explored the views and educational practices of kindergarten teachers for political socialization of young children, particularly through the historic environment and consolidation through the museum.

We believe that in order to achieve the purpose of the present study, the following correlations should be investigated:

- how to best optimize the local environment in order to consolidate citizenship,
- how to best optimize historical environment in order to consolidate citizenship,
- how Museum Education contributes to the development of social and historical awareness.

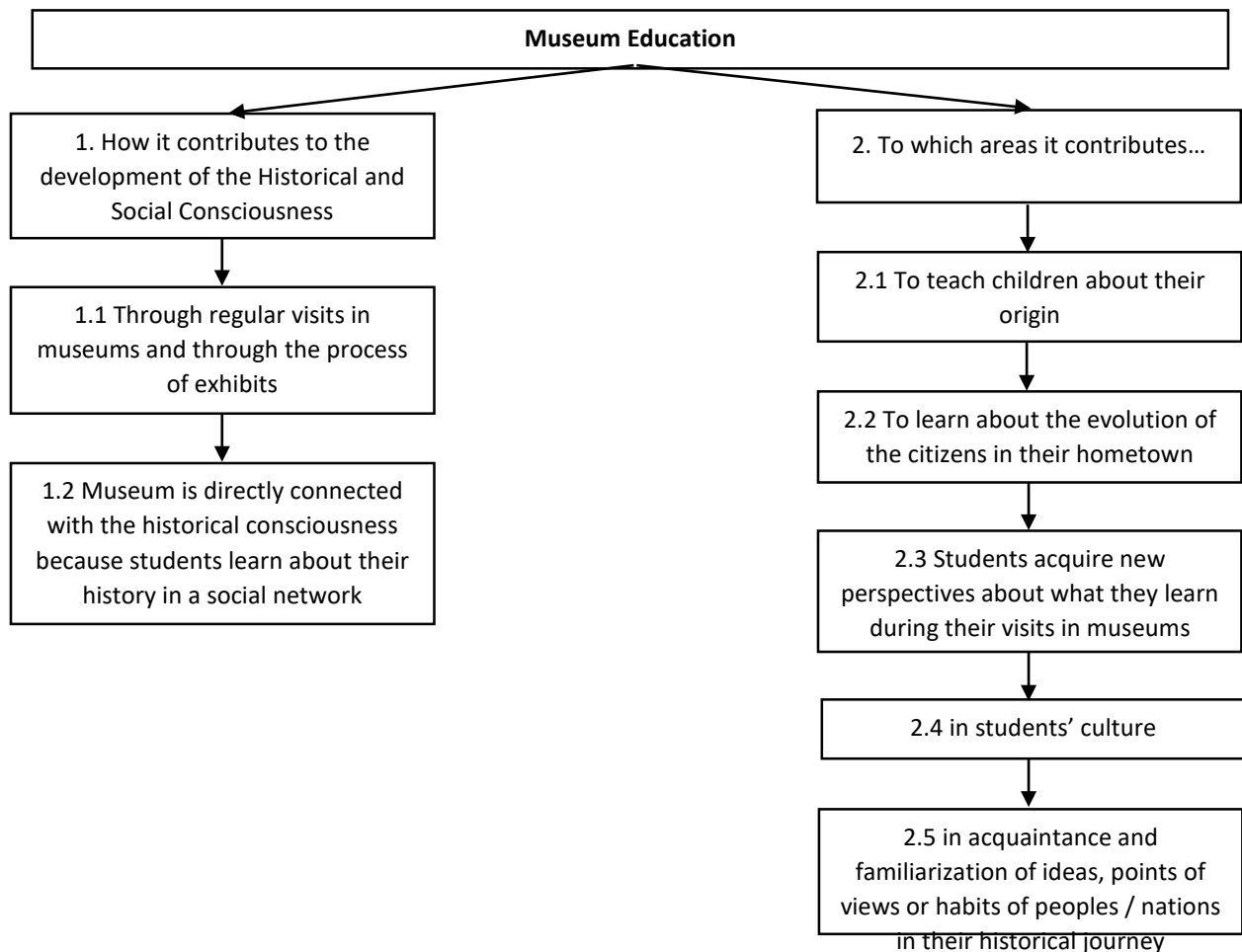
### **Data Collection**

One semistructured interview of 17 questions was used for data collection. The interview questions revolved around three main keystones, concerning the perceptions of kindergarten teachers about:

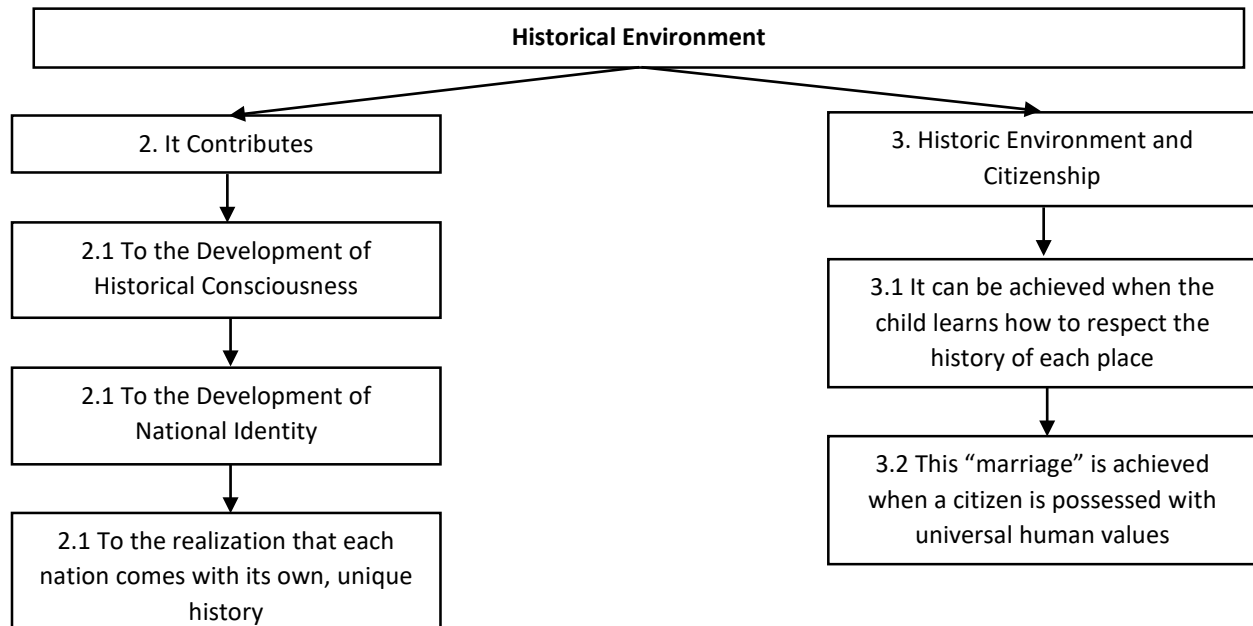
- the optimization of local environment in order to consolidate citizenship,
- the optimization of historical environment in order to consolidate citizenship,
- the contribution of Museum Education in the development of social and historical awareness.

The survey was conducted during the academic year 2012-2013 and specifically in May 2013. The interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants. They were individual with a duration ranging between 30-40 minutes. The descriptive statistical analysis was performed with the use of the statistical software SPSS 15.0. The words of the subjects were studied according to the principles of Classical Thematic Analysis. As a unit of analysis used the “topic” (Lasswell, Leites, 1965).

**Figure Thematic Categories**



**Figure Thematic Categories (Cont'd)**



### **Sample**

15 kindergarten teachers, 10 working in the municipality of Kastoria and 5 in the county Kastoria, were asked to give an interview about the historic environment and its consolidation as springboards for developing programs for citizenship in kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers were randomly selected. The only criterion set was the place of work. The characteristics of the subjects are the following, sex, study A & B, years of service and place of work.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Men	1	6,7
Women	14	93,3
Total	15	100,0

**Table 1:** *Distribution of subjects according to gender*

Studies A	Frequency	Percentage
Two years of studies	1	6,7
Four Years of studies	14	93,3
Total	15	100,0

**Table 2:** *Distribution of subjects according to studies A*

Studies B	Frequency	Percentage
Didaskaleio	2	40,0
Postgraduate Degree	2	40,0
Other Faculty	1	20,0
Total	5	100,0

**Table 3:** *Distribution of subjects according to studies B*

Years of service	Frequency	Total
6-10 years	3	20,0
11-19 years	7	46,7
20 years or more	5	33,3
Total	15	100,0

**Table 4:** *Distribution of subjects according to years of service*

Place of work	Frequency	Total
City	10	66,7
Suburbs	5	33,3
Total	15	100,0

**Table 5:** *Distribution of subjects according to place of work*

## **Research results**

### **2.Quantitive Data Analysis**

#### **Historic Environment**

The analysis of the texts of the kindergarten teachers in the category of Historic Environment, it depicts that the texts were quite extensive, containing a total of 368 references. The following tables present the percentage distribution of reports according gender, studies A & B, years of service and workplace (Tables –11).

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	26	5,8
Female	422	94,2
Total	448	100,0

**Table 6:** *Distribution of reports by gender*

In Table 6 we note that all men reporting amounts between 26 to 5,8%, while women in 422 with a rate of 94.2%.

Studies A	Frequency	Percentage
Two Years of Studies	37	8,3
Four Years of Studies	411	91,7
Total	448	100,0

**Table 7:** *Distribution of reports according to studies A*

In Table 7 we see that all the reports of a two-year kindergarten teachers amounts to 37 with 8.3%, while four-year studies to 411 with a rate of 91.7%.

Studies B	Frequency	Percentage
Didaskaleio	68	47,2
Postgraduate Degree	42	29,2
Other Faculty	34	23,6
Total	144	100,0

**Table 8:** *Distribution of reports according to studies B*

In Table 8, we note that all the reports of kindergarten teachers who attended the two-year Schools of Teaching amounts to 68 (47.2%). Kindergarten teachers who are postgraduate degree holders to 42 with 29.2% and kindergarten teachers who hold another degree amount to 34 with of 23.6%.

Years of service	Frequency	Percentage
6-10 years	68	15,2
11-19 years	197	44,0
20 years or more	183	40,8
Total	448	100,0

$p < 0,05$ ;  $F = 3,990$ ;  $df = 3$

**Table 9:** *Distribution of reports according to years of service*

In Table 9, we notice that all the reports with 6-10 years experience amount to 68 with percentage of 15.2%, whereas reports with 11 to 19 years experience in 197 with rate 44.0% and reports with 20 years experience and over 183 with rate 40.8%.

Place of work	Frequency	Percentage
City	296	66,1
Suburbs	152	33,9
Total	448	100,0

**Table 10:** *Distribution of reports according to place of work.*

In table 10, we see that there 296 kindergarten teachers who work in the city of Kastoria (66.1%). There are 152 kindergarten teachers who work in the outskirts (33.9%).

Yes/No	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	230	66,5
No	116	33,5
Total	346	100,0

$p < 0,05$ ;  $F = 11,620$ ;  $df = 2$

**Table 11:** *Distribution of reports according to answer (positive/ negative).*

In Table 11, we see that 230 kindergarten teachers believe that national holidays contribute to the political education of children (66.5%). 116 are negative to this aspect (33, 5%).

The following table presents the distribution of reports according to thematic categories and subcategories (Table 12).

Thematic categories	Frequency	Quantity
1.It contributes:	82	22,28
1.1.to the development of historical consciousness	76	20,65
1.2.to the development of national identity	3	0,82
1.3.to the realization that each nation comes with its own, unique history	3	0,82
2. Historic environment and citizenship	102	27,72
2.1. It can be achieved when the child learns how to respect the history of each place	82	22,28
2.2. This "marriage" is achieved when a citizen is possessed with universal human values	20	5,43
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 12:** *Distribution of reports according to modules and subcategory*

#### **Data presentation according to thematic categories**

##### **1. The historic environment contributes...**

The historic environment contributes to the development of historic consciousness (76 reports) and of the national identity (3 reports). Through the teaching of history young learners are offered the probability to face the world critically, start observe the environment more thoroughly, use facts, logic and documentation. These elements urge the children to decide what to believe or what to do (Leontsinis, 2006, Leontsinis and Repousi, 2001). Understanding and knowing history they realize that each nation has its own unique history (3 reports).

While visiting museums, art galleries and historic sites, the kindergarten teacher can seize opportunities and teach history based on concrete facts. This can contribute to the development of historic consciousness. There will definitely be cases where for practical reasons; students will not be able to touch the historic artifacts. In other cases, the visible contact in their place can help them understand better the part of history they are facing. Visits to various places and external collections can contribute to the development of historical knowledge and understanding, tapering for instance their sense of time and change through time, also offering a new field in which to practice their historical skills. External visits also offer chances for interaction with the community and connection of their experience in the kindergarten with the



outer world. In this way children come into contact with a variety of different personalities, places and objects (Nakou, 2002, Kokkinos, 1998, Keser , Akar & Yildirim, 2011).

History is just the past. It is closely connected to inquiries such as “why we exist”, “who are we”, “what is the future”. It is not possible to know who you are unless you are fully aware of your origin. We cannot predict the future unless we have a deep understanding of the past. All the above are firmly connected to the formation of the national identity. Teaching history in children is not going to help them predict the future. Yet it is going to offer them the chance to fully understand the current situation around them, it will equip them with the ability of logical and critical analysis, so as not to become prey to prejudice and ignorance. It will help face with responsibility the ongoing situation. It is a modest claim, likely, of course, not to be proven false (Carr, 1983, Hobsbawm, 1998).

### **1. Historic environment and citizenship**

In order to combine historic environment and citizenship, it is essential for the kids to learn not only the history of their place (82 reports), but to move a step forward by acquiring universal human values (20 reports). History cannot instruct people what to do in the future. What history has to offer is an updated data base, which helps people in decision making, rather than a silver linings playbook. History assists people appraise the present in an integrated manner. It may enlighten them, and if not fully, about the bond between the present and the past, about what has been continued and what has stopped, what has been maintained and what has been incisioned (Kokkinos, Alexakis, 2002, Nakou 2008,).

Children also need help in order to appraise the fact that the people of the past acted the way they did for a reason. They have to fully understand which actions induce a hypothesis. As for the knowledge and the perception of events, faces and changes in the past, children should be taught how:

- to recognize the reasons that lead people go through certain changes, why certain events happened and what the results were,
- to recognize and point out differences between the different lifestyles in different eras (Dagkas, 2006).

### **Museum Education**

The analysis of the texts of the kindergarten teachers about Museum Education depicted that the texts were less extensive, containing a total of 282 references. The following tables show the distribution of reports according gender, studies A & B, years of service and workplace (Tables 13 -17).

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	17	6,0
Female	265	94,0
Total	282	100,0

**Table 13:** *Distribution of reports according to gender*

In table 13, it is noted that there are 17 reports deriving from men (6.0%), whereas the corresponding reports for females came to 265 (94.0%).

<b>Studies A</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Two years of education	24	8,5
Four years of education	258	91,5
Total	282	100,0

**Table 14:** *Distribution of reports according to studies A.*

In table 14, we see that there are 24 kindergarten teachers completed a two-year curriculum (8.5%). On the other hand the respective percentage of teachers with four years of college attendance came to 91.5% (258 subjects).

<b>Studies B</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Didaskaleio	40	48,2
Postgraduate Degree	24	28,9
Other Faculty	19	22,9
Total	83	100,0

**Table 15:** *Distribution of reports according to studies B*

In Table 15, we see that all the reports of kindergarten teachers who attended the Didaskaleion amount to 40 (48.2%). There are 24 kindergarten teachers who are postgraduate degree holders with a rate of 28.9% and 19 kindergarten teachers who hold and another degree (22.9%).

<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
6-10 years	38	13,5
11-19 years	134	47,5
20 years and more	110	39,0
Total	282	100,0

**Table 16:** *Distribution of reports according to years of service*

In Table 16, we observe that all the teachers with 6-10 years experience amount to 38 (13.5%), 11 to 19 years experience amount to 134 (47.5%) and with 20 years of experience and more come to 110 at a rate of 39.0%.

<b>Place of Work</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
City	177	62,8
Suburbs	105	37,2
Total	282	100,0

**Table 12:** *Distribution of reports according to place of work.*

In Table 17, we see all reports regarding the workplace. The kindergarten teachers working in the city of Kastoria amount to 177 (62.8%) whereas kindergarten teachers working in the outskirts account to 105 at a rate of 37.2%.

Yes/ No	Frequency	Total
Yes	181	100,0
No		
Total	282	

**Table 18:** *Distribution of reports according to answer (positive/ negative).*

In Table 18, we see that all kindergarten teachers believe that museum education contributes to the formation of social and political education of children.

The table below portrays the distribution of reports according to thematic categories and subcategories (Table 19)

Thematic categories	Frequency	Percentage
1. How does museum education contribute to the development of historical and social consciousness?	104	36,9
1.1. Through regular visits in museum and through the process of their exhibits	18	6,4
1.2. Museum is directly linked to the historical consciousness, because students learn about their history in a social network.	2	0,7
2. To which areas does museum education contribute:	101	35,8
2.1. students learn about their origin	115	40,8
2.2. students learn about the evolution of the citizens of their hometown	25	8,9
2.3. students acquire new perspectives about what they learn during their visits in museums	24	8,5
2.4. in students' culture	15	5,3
2.5. in acquaintance and familiarization of ideas, points of views or habits of peoples/ nations in their historical journey	6	2,1
Total	282	100,0

**Table 19:** *Distribution of reports according to thematic category and subcategory*

**Data presentation by thematic category:**

**1. How does museum education contribute to the development of historical and social consciousness?**

Museum education contributes to the development of historical and social consciousness (104 reports), according to the tape recordings of the subjects. Historical (2 reports) and social education develops mainly through the knowledge of local and national history and through visits in museums (18 reports).

From the very beginning the Greek museum worked as a place of production and reproduction of historical knowledge within the ethnocentric ideological system. It adopted and represented

the official ideological stance of the state for the glorious Greek past and came to the need for composition of a national identity. Inevitably, political dependence on the state finally caged museum to play the role of “national characteristics manager” and a “perennial logic which wanted the museum to be just a nice little aesthetically very well presented and clean warehouse of artistic exhibits” (Kasvikis and Andreou, 2008).

In this way students exceed the level of simple visitors and learn to converse with the exhibits. Through them they become partakers with the lifestyle of the age to which the exhibits belong and learn about the artists, the creators or people who used them in their routine, and thus form their own opinion about what life was like in the past (Greenglass, 1986, Hennigar Shuh, 1999). In combination with visits to historical sites of the past in its overall dimension (traditional villages, listed buildings, harbors, inns, railway stations etc.), students can study the apparent remains of their culture and understand the concept of historical time and change.

## **2. Where does museum education contribute?**

Museum education contributes to the acquaintance of the student with their origin (115 reports), since inside the museums lays the history of their place. Moreover, students learn about the evolution of the citizen of their homeland (25 reports) as they face the past and compare it with the present. Museums exhibit objects, images and material and visual testimonies. Consequently, the focal point of approach of history at the museum cannot be theoretical. What is more, museum is an excellent option to introduce children to the historical method with the use and interpretation of the objects as testimonies and the wording of hypotheses or conclusions, optimizing this way versatile, physical, mental and intellectual capacities and images in relation to their social and cultural context (Kokkinos and Alexakis, 2002, Adams, 1982, Alexander, 1979, Barwell, 1990, Davies, 1992).

Museum education also helps children visualize their knowledge (24 reports). Central to any educational process in the museum is the original meeting of visitors with the exhibits; nowadays however, the central role of the visitor in the whole process is emphasized (Bounia and Nikonanou, 2008, Feher, 1990, Merriman, 1989).

Finally, a liberal artistic education is considered to help children realize the problems of creation and overcome technical obstacles and expression adversities in order to express and control their means of expression. To be, however, an effective artistic education, the teaching of literature, fine and performing arts and music is required. It is of utmost importance to create a collective response of arts education, where special role should be given to the interface of art, offering many opportunities to cultivate aesthetics, and especially in museum education, which offers a lot to the arts education of old and new (Glykofrysi and Leontsini, 2002, Chapman, 2000). We must, therefore, observe arts education in a wider framework, since it does not only concern the acquiring skills of artistic expression, but also aims at nurturing aesthetics through arts and visits to museums (15 reports) and archaeological or historical sites that connect art to history and culture.

## **Discussion**

Political education refers to the inner world of the individual, identifying in the citizenship ways, forms, potential of development and expansion (Psichopaidis, 2003). The pedagogical effect seems apparent when the ability of critical alertness and participation in the political arena arises (Brennan, 1981). As we observe, politics and ideology coexist both in the selected topics selected and in the way students and teachers process them (Banks, 2012, Torney-Purta and Vermeer, 2004).

According to their kindergarten teachers, there is an interrelationship between citizenship and the historic environment. This "marriage" was achieved when a citizen is the possessed of human values that stemming from actions related to local history. The local environment is linked to the history of each place and to the important events that have marked every place, events which are also part of our own identity. The kindergarten teachers of this study feel that with the use of the historic environment children get to appreciate the history, form national consciousness and identity and consequently become responsible citizens (Leontsini, 2002, 2006, Dagkas, 2006).

Local history significantly promotes the discovery, collection, observation, classification of historical sources and the extraction and presentation of general historical conclusions. This takes place during the preparation of visits to historic sites and monuments. In this study it has been well established that primary students have abilities to be gradually introduced in the historical methodology. Both oral and written teaching, with documents and sources about national celebrations and monuments and the history they involve, agree with recent views on how to best promote historical understanding and development of their historical consciousness (Leontsini, 2002, Vaina, 1997, Dymond, 1987, Douch, 1972).

According to the kindergarten teachers the contact of the students with the culture and the art both of their land and of other cultures', offers them the opportunity to fit into a given cultural environment, to learn to a better extend the history of their homeland, their identity. When preschoolers get to know the culture of their land and come into contact with other cultures, they can fit more easily into a given environment. Moreover, they can learn to the history of their homeland to a better extend and develop their identity. This leads to their understanding and accepting the history of other nations and cultures and enables them to search and evaluate the fixed points of the changing contemporary cultural identity. What is more they get able to identify the present sense of the historical life of modern man (Leontsini, 2002 Repousi, 2004, Nakou, 2002 Spathari-Begliti, 2002).

The political dimensions of the museum are, among others, associated with the fact that the significance, the value and the meaning of the objects do not derive from the objects themselves, but they are formed by those who have the power to control "the objects of knowledge". They are to determine how these objects are exposed and, thus, they produce, promote and cultivate the corresponding values and meanings (Nakou, 2002 Nikonanou, 2010 Bounia Nikonanou, 2008, Enzensberger, 2000).

The construction of more democratic and more humane societies can be achieved through knowledge, information, through acquiring relevant and life skills, adopting democratic values and awareness of all kinds of problems which modern man confronts in democratic societies (Korsgaard, Walters, Andersen, 2001).

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## Teacher's implementation and beliefs in sex education in Greek elementary schools

Stefania Papadopoulou [papadopoulou.stefania@gmail.com](mailto:papadopoulou.stefania@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this research is firstly to examine the views of teachers on the current situation in elementary schools related to sex education, what they apply and what obstacles have been encountered. Secondly, based on the beliefs of teachers, it examines the possibility of introducing sex education as a subject, the prospective outcomes and the need for teacher training. The data is derived from questionnaires to active primary teachers from 14 public primary schools in the Prefecture of Achaia in January 2015. The sample was 100 active teachers, who had their own class, had the afternoon class or were principals at school. The primary findings were that: a) the teachers (74%) prefer to take the opportunity from some students' behavior to discuss the issue in class, whereas hardly anyone has ever implemented a project, b) few teachers have taught the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Science chapter on the "Reproductive System", c) the primary school is considered suitable for the beginning of Sex Education, because it provides valid information and before puberty, d) teachers believe that Sex Education can be introduced in elementary school with: monthly projects (30%), as a school subject (29%) or as part of a school subject, e.g. science (27%), and e) teachers who have attended a seminar, feel more prepared to talk about Sex Education to their students.*

**Key words:** sex education, elementary school, teachers' perspectives

### **Introduction**

From preschool age, most children explore their bodies, observe differences between the sexes and have multiple questions on the topic. There is insufficient education about sexuality in Greek elementary schools, although this is an issue that interests people in most of their lives. Children seem to begin earlier their sexual contacts than before, more unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases are noticed (Mousiou-Mylona, 2012). Also, at least 80,000 abortions are performed every year in Greece and one in four women is a teenager (Tantanasis, 2015). The youth enters adulthood with little knowledge regarding relationships and sexuality (Helmer et al., 2015) and the first visit to the gynecologist is made several years after they have become sexual active (around 25 years old) (Gerouki, 2011).

This research aims to enrich the discussion and findings of the research community on Sex Education in elementary school. It will contribute to the presentation of the benefits of Sex Education, while informing teachers who are interested in implementing projects on Sex Education.

The Comprehensive Sexuality Education equips young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that they need in order to determine and enjoy their sexuality - physically and emotionally, individually and in relationships. It emphasizes a holistic approach in the context of emotional and social development. It recognizes that the provision of information alone is not enough. Therefore, young people have the opportunity to acquire essential life skills and develop positive attitudes and values (IPPF, 2009).

Many people argue that Sex Education is still a taboo subject and this leads to a lack of cooperation with parents. Therefore, the children resort to informal education, as a result of the indifference to their need for Sex Education from an early age. Clearly, discussions with friends, the internet, the leaflets and events are not always controlled and quite possibly consist of non-scientific knowledge. However, for some children schools may be the only source of reliable information about Sex Education (Gerouki, 2006). Elementary school, in most countries, is the ideal place for a Sex Education action plan that appeals to all children, because it is compulsory (Kirana et al., 2007) and children attend it before they become sexual active (Francis, 2010).

The parents are engaged in Sexual Education without perhaps knowing it, through their behavior and their attitude towards the child, the exploration of the body, daily routines for meals and general hygiene, trying to answer or avoid the early child's curiosity about sexual matters. Both home and school should provide Sex Education services, support each other's action and cooperate in choosing the appropriate content (Goldman & Goldman, 1982; WHO, 2010). Schools should recognize and support the parents' important role in the children's sexual socialization while parents, in their turn, should support school in providing Sex Education (Shtarkshall et al., 2007).

Many sources of information about sexuality are becoming more and more available to young people, but vary in their reliability (Carman et al., 2011). Children are informed from the television, the internet and peers, i.e. dubious knowledge (Gerouki, 2008b; Matziou et al., 2009) and less from their parents and the school (Matziou et al., 2009). It is important to understand that young people need both informal and formal education on sexuality. Both forms must complement each other (WHO, 2010).

It's never too early to start talking to children about sexual matters (IPPF, 2009). Sex education works effectively if it is provided early before young people reach puberty (Mlyakado, 2013) and before the beginning of their sexual activity (Milton, 2003). When in some countries it officially starts in secondary school, there is usually a narrower definition of Sexual Education. This difference in definition also explains why in some countries it is used the broadest title "Sexuality and Relationship Education" or similar titles against the "Sex Education" (WHO, 2010).

Although the Greek Ministry of Education has decided years ago the introduction of Sex Education course in the curriculum, this decision is repeated at least every ten years, as a risky and innovative option (Drakonaki & Siamou, 2003). At the same time, however, the issues of Sex Education are represented in Greek primary school through the courses "Environmental Studies", "Science" and "Greek Language" (Gerouki, 2008b), but the way of teaching cannot be considered as Sex Education (Drakonaki & Siamou, 2003). In addition, the Ministry of Education officially announced on November 2014 the implementation of the program "Social School", which contains actions and events, which are included in the school program. Among the 14 thematic axes of intervention there is Sex Education. But such projects are by far the least popular topic for project implementation in Greece with 1,6% (Gerouki, 2008a). The majority of teachers,

however, have discussed issues of sexuality in class. Those who have not discussed at all, claimed some reasons such as that there was no cause to do it, they do not have adequate training and that they feel embarrassed (Gerouki, 2011).

In many European countries, Sex Education is a part of the subject Biology, focusing more on health and less on personal relationships (Parker et al., 2009; WHO, 2010). Or again, it can be part of Science, Social and Political Education or Health Education to give the idea that it is part of a wider range area (Department for Education and Employment, 2000; Europa School UK; Welsh Assembly Government, 2010). The study of Quaresma da Silva (2014) showed that the topics of Sex Education are engaged only by the heterosexual point of view, excluding other sexual identities.

Many researches that have been conducted show that Sex Education projects have significant positive outcomes on students. Firstly, these projects contribute students to find reliable information and therefore they reduce the misinformation (Carman et al., 2011; Gunderson & McCary, 1980; IPPF, 2009; Kirana et al., 2007, UNESCO, 2009; WHO, 2010). Also, they help with the delaying of the beginning of sexual activity (Bourke et al., 2014; Gerouki, 2011; Kirana et al., 2007; Kirby et al., 2007). They can help children build relationships in which there is mutual understanding and respect for each other's needs. So, this helps to prevent sexual abuse and violence. Many agree that Sex Education will encourage children to protect themselves, be more responsible and make better decisions (Carman et al., 2011; Gerouki, 2011; Gunderson & McCary, 1980; IPPF, 2009; Kirana et al., 2007; Welsh Assembly Government, 2010; WHO, 2010). Finally, Sex Education aims to promote social stability, sustain the national moral codes, promoting positive attitudes and values (Kirana et al., 2007, UNESCO, 2009, Yu-feng, 2012), as well as emphasizing in the respect towards sexuality, in the different lifestyles, gender equality, attitudes and values (Gerouki, 2011; Welsh Assembly Government, 2010; WHO, 2010).

Sex Education is still a subject that many teachers and parents do not feel comfortable to handle with and therefore there are many difficulties in teaching it. These obstacles are challenges that must be overcome or reduced in order to provide Sex Education to children. The main barriers experienced by teachers that have implemented a project is the lack of funding, the lack of appropriate teaching material and the lack of teacher training (Gerouki, 2008a, 2011; Kay et al., 2010; Kirana et al., 2007; Van der Geugten et al., 2015). Also, teachers are not sure about the existence of the impact of religious morality against Sex Education (Gerouki, 2011; Kay et al., 2010), while half of parents believe that it contradicts religion (Kirana et al., 2007).

In conclusion, pre-service teacher training is clearly an important component of effective Sex Education in school. However, little is currently known about the training provided by universities to prospective teachers (Carman et al., 2011). Teachers who provide Sex Education should ideally be trained. If that is not possible, this should not be used as an excuse not to provide Sex Education. It should be introduced in school together with teacher training (WHO, 2010). For

example, Sex Education is still not a compulsory subject in teacher training colleges in Sweden, although they are required to teach it (RFSU, 2010b).

### **The research study (aim)**

The purpose of the research is firstly to examine the views of teachers on the current situation in Greek elementary schools related to sex education, what they apply and what obstacles have been encountered. Secondly, based on the beliefs of teachers, it examines the possibility of introducing sex education as a subject, the prospective outcomes and the need for teacher training.

### **Methodology**

For the aim of this research, it has been chosen to examine the views of teachers, as they are close to the students spending many hours at school together. The questionnaires had been handed out to active primary teachers from 14 public primary schools in the Prefecture of Achaia in January 2015. The 73,50% was kindly responded to the current study and filled in the questionnaires anonymously. Therefore, the sample was 100 active teachers, who had their own class, had the afternoon class or were principals at school. However, the sample was occasional. The creation of this questionnaire was based on the questionnaire from the research of Gerouki (2011) which had similar research questions.

The population of the research is the 1445 active teachers of the public primary schools in Achaia, who were working during the academic year 2014-15 and had their own class, had the afternoon class or were principals at school.

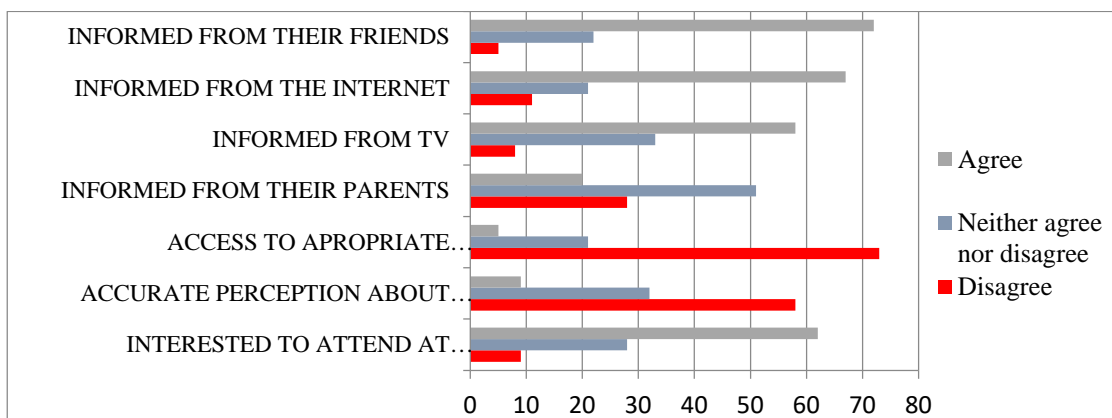
The quantitative analysis of data enables the possibility to overcome individual differences and identify features and aspects of wider social groups, for example teachers (Robson, 2010). Statistical analysis helps us to describe the population. However, we calculate the statistics of the sample so we can draw conclusions and therefore approach the population (Katsillis, 2006). Data were analyzed with IBM statistical analysis program SPSS Statistics 21.

### **Results**

The sample of this research was consisted of 28% (N = 28) male and 72% (N = 72) female. Most respondents, 57%, had a bachelor's degree of Department of Primary Education, while 32% had Pedagogical Academy's degree and only 11% had a Master's degree. The majority of the sample, 61% was teaching more than 15 years in primary schools. Then, 24% had 11-15 years of teaching experience and 15% had less than 10 years. The majority of respondents (75%) worked in 12-teacher elementary school and 19% in 6-teacher. There was a small percentage of 6% that was working in multigrade school.

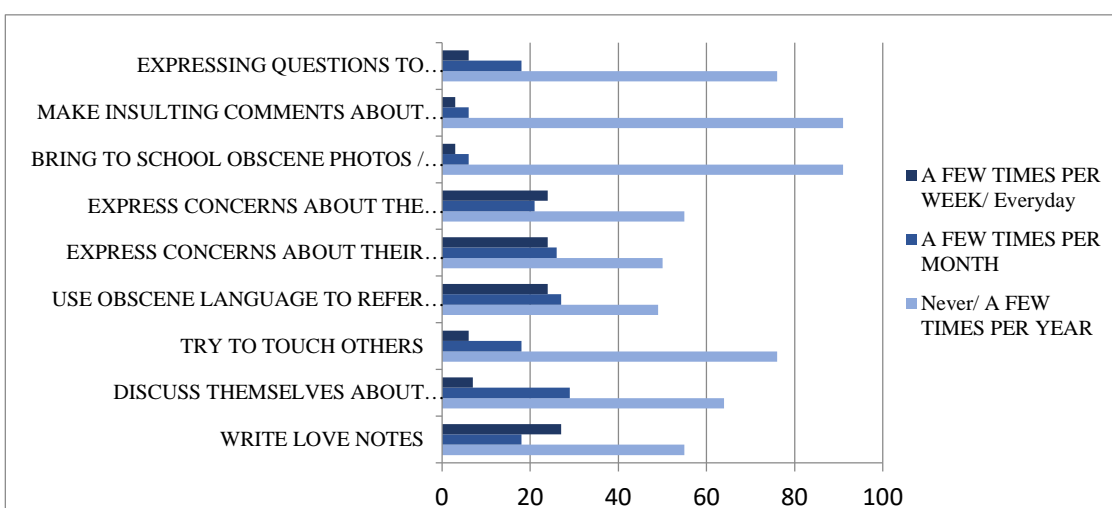
Most teachers (83%) stated that they have not attended a Sex Education seminar, as opposed to 17% who have attended one. Furthermore, 79% has the need for additional training relevant to the subject and almost all respondents (95%) would attend such a seminar.

From table A we can see that 72% of the teachers stated that students are informed in Sex Education matters from their friends, 67% from the internet and 58% from the television, i.e. unreliable and dubious sources. In contrast, 62% of the sample says that students are interested in attending a Sex Educational school program. In addition, 73% of the teachers believe that students do not have access to an appropriate Sex Education material and 58% think that they do not have accurate perception of their body and reproductive system.



**Table C: Students' Information about Sex Education**

Based on the answers of the respondents (Table B), students do not often express behaviors related to sexuality. It is possible that these behaviors are not noticed by their teachers. This is reflected in the answer of 76% of teachers that students do not express to them questions about sexual issues. Nevertheless, there are observed students behaviors due to their physical development, like the expression of concerns about their relationships with the opposite sex (24%) and changes in their body (24%).



**Table D: Behavior Expression of Students at School**

After the list of the sources of information and behaviors of children that are perceived by teachers, it is noted that an encouraging percentage (74%) of the teachers, but not essentially sufficient, has used any of the above as an opportunity to discuss the issue in class.

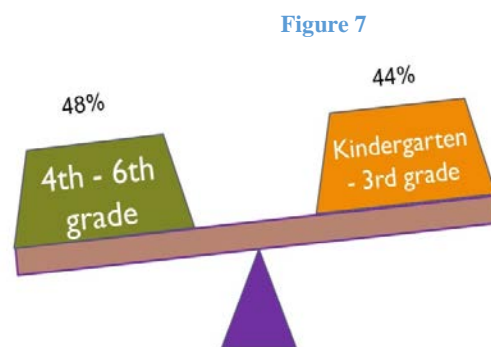
The majority (94.1%) of those who have attended a Sex Education seminar has discussed the issue in class by taken the opportunity of a students' behavior. On the contrary, from the teachers who have not attended such a seminar, 71.6% has discussed the issue in class with the students and 28.4% has not. The relationship between attending a seminar related to Sex Education and the discussion in class by taken the opportunity of a students' behavior was measured statistically significant ( $p = 0,05$ ,  $\chi^2$  test).

The vast majority of teachers (99%) have not implemented a project related to Sex Education, although there is an option within the "Health Education" or "Social School". Also, most teachers (72%) have taught very few times the chapter "Reproductive System" of Science in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This is the last chapter in the book and the teaching is not encouraged by the authors of the teacher's book.

Almost all teachers (97%) believe that school is the right place to start a more systematic teaching about issues related to Sex Education, except three teachers who said that the responsible institution is the family.

Primary teachers are divided in these two options: 44% think that Sex Education should start from Kindergarten until 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 48% from 4<sup>th</sup> grade until 6<sup>th</sup> grade (Figure 1).

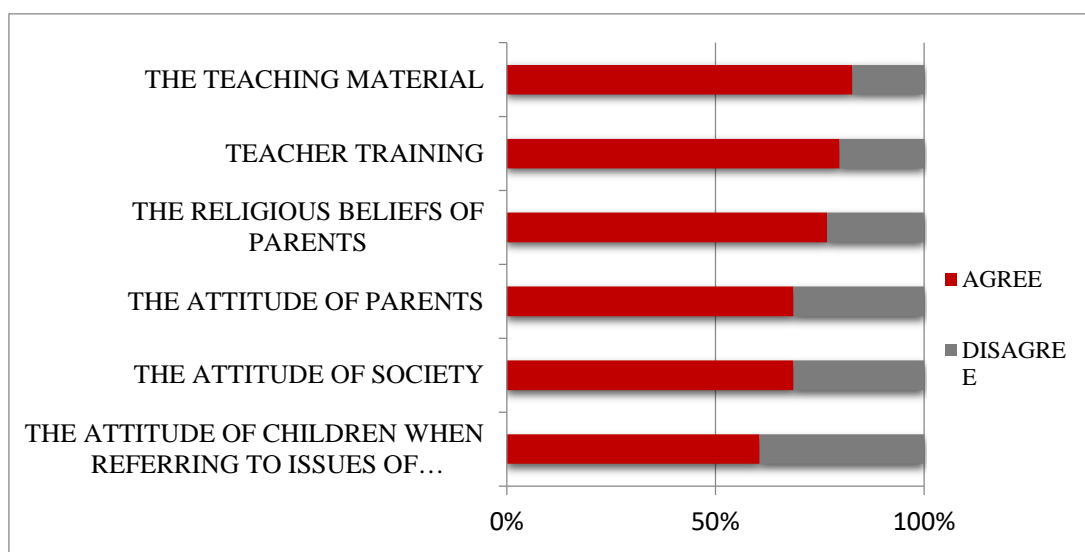
Teachers believe that Sex Education can be introduced in elementary school with: monthly projects (30%), as a school subject (29%) or as part of a school subject, e.g. science (27%).



Sex Education, according to teachers' views, has positive outcomes. It helps children not to become victims of sexual exploitation (88%), improves the students' health (76%), enhances students' self-esteem (86%), contributes to a better understanding of each other sex (88%), establishes responsible behavior for the future (92%) and teach acceptance and respect for others (95%). At the same time, it does not cause conflicts within the family (72%), but may cause conflicts between the school and the family (50%). Finally, most teachers keep a neutral position (35%) and some say that Sex Education is unlikely to lead to early beginning of sexual relations (26%).

Finally, the implementation of Sex Education projects has several obstacles (Table C). Teachers agree that the primary difficulty is the teaching material (82%), then the teacher training (79%) and religious beliefs of parents (76%). The attitude of society (68%), the attitude of parents (68%)

and finally the attitude of children when referring to sexuality issues (60%) are additional difficulties to be addressed.



**Table E:** *Sex Education Obstacles*

### Discussion & Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to examine the views of teachers on the current situation in Greek elementary schools related to sex education and, based on the beliefs of teachers, to examine the possibility of introducing sex education as a subject.

Firstly, teachers stated that students are informed in Sex Education matters from their friends, the internet and television, i.e. unreliable and dubious sources. Unfortunately, they are not informed by the school adequately. Students seem not to express questions about sexual matters to their teachers, because students do not really trust them, especially on issues of sexuality.

Teachers, more men than women, seem to prefer to take the opportunity from some students' behavior to discuss the issue in class. On the other hand, no one has ever implemented a project on Sex Education, despite the fact that there is an option within the Health Education or Social School. In the subject of Science in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade in Greece there is only one chapter concerning the reproductive system and it is the last one in the book and the curriculum. The data shows that the majority of the teachers have never or rarely taught this chapter. This is reflected in teachers' responses with 15 years of teaching experience, who have not taught this chapter more than three times.

It is noticed that teachers are positive in Sex Education training, based on those who have taken the initiative for discussion in class. These teachers faced the difficulties and the lack of training in Sex Education. On the other hand, teachers who already have attended a relevant seminar feel



more prepared to talk about Sex Education to their students. According to teachers' views, the school is the right place to begin the systematic teaching issues related to Sex Education. The primary school is considered more suitable because it provides valid information and before puberty. Teachers are divided in the following two groups for suitable class to start Sex Education: a) in kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of primary school and b) 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade of primary school. They also believe that Sex Education can be introduced in elementary school with: monthly projects, as a school subject or as part of a school subject, e.g. science. As teachers believe, Sex Education helps the children not to become victims of sexual exploitation, improves their health and self-esteem, and also it can teach acceptance and respect for others, building a responsible attitude for the future. Furthermore, with proper cooperation and the provision of information to the parents, Sex Education cannot cause conflicts between the school and family. However, the implementation of Sex Education projects has several obstacles which form the challenges that must be eliminated from every teacher and the Ministry of Education. The most significant difficulties are considered to be the teaching material, then the teacher training and finally the religious beliefs of parents.

### **Further research**

As it has been already mentioned, the research has been conducted in the prefecture of Achaia, but other regions in Greece should be examined as well. This will contribute to the research community in order to broaden the sample of teachers and reflect their views on a more general view of Greece. According to the sample, not only primary teachers, but also pre-school educators and parents should be taken into consideration for further research. Another subject for future study should also be considered the possibility of introducing teacher training programs in the University. Finally, observation of pilot Sex Education lessons will be essential for future research.

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## Teaching pupils about human rights and diversity. A case study from an urban primary school

Panagiotis Papadouris, Assistant Principal, 50<sup>th</sup> Elementary School of Patras [panppap@hotmail.com](mailto:panppap@hotmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*In this paper, we focus our interest on how schools and in particular teachers help develop within their students an understanding of human rights during times crisis, globalization and diversity. It is a praxis paper that presents a 'best practice' within the European project (NAOS) whose goal is to encourage schools to build capacity in the area of dealing with diversity. The paper highlights the collective enterprise of a primary school in the city of Patras working in conjunction with a school's yearlong project agenda which focuses on developing awareness and empathy in children, improving relations among them, enhancing communication, cooperation, solidarity and trust in order to create a safe, pleasant and creative learning environment. According Gay (2009), ideas about diversity determine how someone teaches. Teaching pupils about diversity requires the use of different methods and perspectives, variation and differentiation crossing the cultural borders. Pupils from diverse social and economic backgrounds as well as several immigrant children attend the particular school. The project aims to raise the pupils' awareness about racism, to inform them about the causes that lead people down the road of migration and exile, so that they understand the fear and uncertainty a refugee feels by stepping in their shoes and realizing that this can be achieved only through diversity. The key principles of the method we used focused on the pupil's active involvement, working in groups, connection to life, their personal experiences, critical thinking, interaction, interdisciplinary, cultivating relationships, supervision and guidance. The evaluation of the project revealed that the project fostered the pupils' sensitivity to racism, identified and removed stereotypes and prejudices and cultivated their friendly relations.*

**Keywords:** human rights, diversity, racism, stereotypes

## Teaching with art about identity-diversity-globalization

Suzanna Gonçalves, Instituto Politécnico de Coimbra, Escola Superior de Educação  
[susana.goncalves@ipc.pt](mailto:susana.goncalves@ipc.pt)

### **Abstract**

*The workshop is a hands-on-approach to the use of artistic means and expression in intercultural and global education. A brief introduction will explain the rationale and strategies behind art education and its connections to learning and subjects other than art. Examples from the facilitator's practice and also from the recent edited book (INTER)CULTURAL DIALOGUE THROUGH ARTS AND MEDIA (S. Gonçalves & S. Majhanovich, Sense, 2015) will be given. The workshop will include a range of practical exercises selected to illustrate an arty approach to teaching and learning issues of identity and diversity in a globalized epoch.*

**Keywords:** art, teaching, identity, diversity, globalization

## The voices of youth on European identity, citizenship and values from an aspiring country

Nikolina Kenig & Ognjen Spasovski University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius (FYRO Macedonia)  
[ninakenig@yahoo.com](mailto:ninakenig@yahoo.com), [nikolina@fzf.ukim.edu.mk](mailto:nikolina@fzf.ukim.edu.mk)

### **Abstract**

*The idea of European citizenship, which has advanced with the process of European integration, strives towards overcoming the idea of national identities. With various degree of success, the EU is trying to establish a contemporary view of citizenship through reinforcing its supranational nature and developing an attitude of tolerance towards diversity and human rights. If the concept of Europeanization is defined as the process of constructing shared beliefs and ways of political practice in Europe, it could be said that FYRO Macedonia is only half its way to achieve this goal.*

*Despite the proclaimed efforts of the official politics to work towards the European integration, the feeling of disappointment in the success of the integration has caused growing scepticism that begun five years ago and is often expressed through the narrative of refusing to sacrifice the national identity and national interests in favour of joining the European family. Taking into account the importance of identity issues, this research is trying to explore the perceptions and beliefs of young ethnic Macedonians regarding the EU, European and ethnic/national identity situated in an ambivalent societal context – an exposure to pro-European educational goals, together with the recently emerging reluctance towards joining the Union.*

*72 students with different study backgrounds at the age between 19 and 22 participated in the study. In 10 focus groups, formed on the basis of homogeneity of the field of study, they were discussing their views on the EU concept, EU values, EU future of the country, as well as their reflections on the congruities and incongruities between their national identity and the EU identity. The data were explored by using thematic analysis.*

*Results show that young Macedonians predominantly tend to idealize the concept of EU and are willing to accept European citizenship. They also tend not to see it as conflicting with their ethnic/national identity. On the other hand, some are sceptical and question the possibility of developing European identity and citizenship because they perceive a serious gap between the European values and the values that are dominant in the current public and political discourse. Findings have also suggested that it is not always the best solution to conceptualize a potential identification with Europe as necessarily being mutually exclusive with nation-state identity even in a context of perceived threat to it. These results are discussed in light of current research ideas and practices.*

**Key words:** *European values, European identity, qualitative analysis*

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## Identity issues towards Muslim minority education in western Thrace Greece

Rafailia Maria Tsiligkiridou, University of Brighton, UK [rafatsil@hotmail.com](mailto:rafatsil@hotmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*This paper is concerned with issues of identity and the impact on minority students' education in Western Thrace, in Greece. The main objective is to discuss the results of a small-scale research conducted in 2014 regarding primary minority education in Western Thrace. The antagonistic Greek-Turkish relationship, following the end of the Greek-Turkish war (1919-1922), exposed the Muslim minority which remained in Western Thrace to discriminatory policies. The Turkish identity, which is the identity of the major part of the Muslim minority, has been perceived as a hostile identity among the majority of Greek teachers. The study explores the extent to which the political background still influences minority education as well as the manner with which both minority and majority members perceive the role of identities within the educational system of Western Thrace. For the purposes of this research, a case study of a minority primary school was conducted. Both minority and majority teachers of this school were interviewed in order to investigate their own perceptions concerning minority education. On the one hand, the main findings revealed that the majority of teachers still have hidden superstitions and negative beliefs towards families of Turkish origin. On the other hand, minority members express a concern considering their own identity. According to them the monolingual, ethnocentric curriculum of mainstream education offers more opportunities for academic achievement and social mobility. However, they prefer minority education, especially for primary school level in order to safeguard their own identity, even though they recognize that minority education promotes segregation and hinders intercultural dialogue.*

**Keywords:** identity, Muslim minority, Western Greece

## The right of quality and identity in early education in times of crisis

Helen (Ellen) Mousena & Pantelis Kiprianos - Preschool Counsellor, Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs / Professor, University of Patras, Department of Educational Science and Early Childhood Education [mousenaeleni@yahoo.gr](mailto:mousenaeleni@yahoo.gr)

### **Abstract**

*Access to education and improving the quality in Early Childhood Education and Care is a fundamental right of children and an important political priority of the European Union and the OECD in recent decades. Furthermore, the debate on equality of educational opportunities remains relevant in a socio-economic context of cultural pluralism and in times of limited financial resources. Attendance in preschool education strengthens the identity of children in a multicultural environment. Survey data suggest that investments in small population groups are proving more effective for children, families and societies. Widening access to preschool education can improve overall performance and reduce socio-economic disparities between students, when the extension of accessibility does not put the quality of benefits (OECD, 2011) at risk. This paper examines the policies in the ECEC institutions on a European and a national level. The analysis is based on written documentation and practices. Studies and resolutions of the Commission on this issue are taken into consideration, and preschool education policies are analyzed on a national level. Our working hypothesis is the extent to which the recent institutional modifications for Early Childhood Education and Care in Greece are related to the context of quality that has been identified by the European Commission. The findings reveal differences between the European Quality Framework and national policies (mainly with respect to accessibility and funding) and underline the current challenges for improving the ECEC services on a national level.*

**Keywords:** right to quality, identity, early education, crisis

### **Introduction**

Quality and access to Early Childhood Education and Care have attracted the interest of policy makers in recent decades. In addition, as it is commonly known that early years are crucial to personality development and identity building, there is a growing demand for curriculum development that supports children and families from linguistic and ethnic minorities and low-income backgrounds. In this paper, we investigate the above issues at a national level comparing them to the European Quality Framework on ECEC and related benchmarks. In the first chapter of Part I we discuss quality as a fundamental right of children according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Chapter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. In addition, the dimensions of the concept of quality are outlined. In the second section, the policies on promoting quality are examined at international and European level. More specifically, we focus on Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Unicef and European Union's reports. In the third chapter, taking into account the existence of a significant number of multilingual and multicultural minorities in every country, we analyse the importance of a curriculum development that embraces this population with respect and supports them in identity building. In Part II of the paper we analyse the *system quality* in Greek ECEC in terms of accessibility and professionals' qualifications and practice, and the *pedagogical quality* in terms of curriculum implementation and parents' involvement. The analysis is based on written documentation and practices. The findings



in this work reveal differences between the European Quality Framework and national policies, mainly with respect to accessibility, and similarities at workforce and curriculum level. Finally, we outline the current challenges for improving the ECEC services both in system and pedagogical quality.

### **The Right of Quality in ECEC**

The demand for quality in Early Childhood Education and Care is a fundamental right for children and a main priority in academic and political discussions in recent decades. All children and adults have the right to evolve and to develop in a context of equity and respect for diversity. Children, parents and educators have the right to good quality in early childhood education services, free from any form of - overt or covert, individual or structural - discrimination due to their race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status (UN-Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, Article 2). In creating an ever-closer union among them, the people of Europe are resolved to share a peaceful future on common values. The European Union contributes to the preservation and development of common values while respecting the diversity of the cultures and traditions of the peoples of Europe as well as the national identities of the Member States and the organization of their public authorities at national, regional and local levels; it seeks to promote balanced and sustainable development and ensures free movement of persons, services, goods and capital, and the freedom of establishment. According to the Chapter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, "Children shall have the right to such protection and care as is necessary for their well-being. In all actions relating to children, the child's best interests must be a primary consideration" (Article 24). With respect to education, it is provided that "Everyone has the right to education and to have access to vocational and continuing training, to receive free compulsory education. The freedom to found educational establishments with due respect for democratic principles and the right of parents to ensure the education and teaching of their children in conformity with their religious, philosophical and pedagogical convictions shall be respected, in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of such freedom and right" (Article 14).

The concept of quality has caused much debate among academics and professionals in education and early childhood education. Peter Moss has noted that "... Quality early childhood services is a constructed concept, subjective in nature and is based on the values, beliefs and interests, and not on objective and global reality» (Moss, 1994: 4). Quality is not a permanent concept; it is continuously developing according to the given conditions. The main orientation of quality should be the fundamental rights of children. Epstein underlines the importance of preschool professionals in ensuring high-quality services: "High-quality early childhood services depend, in part, on the highly-trained staff and a consistent and developmentally based educational approach" (Epstein, 1999: 102).

Basic principles and typical characteristics of a quality school:

- Offers students access to and acquisition and application of a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that will prepare them for today's complex society.
- Is interested in and promotes the values of excellence and high aspirations.
- Is democratic, fair and equitable in dealing with its students.
- Develops and strengthens the students' sense of self-worth.
- Helps students develop their personal autonomy while highlighting the value of community service.
- Prepares students for involvement in the cultural and economic development of society. (Aspin, D.N., & Chapman, J.D. with Wilkinson, V.R., 1997).

According to the European Childcare Network (European Commission, 1996) approach, quality is a relative concept, based on values and beliefs. Defining quality is a process that is important in its own right, providing opportunities to share, discuss and understand values, ideas, knowledge and experience; the process should be participatory and democratic, involving different groups including children, parents and families and professionals working in services; the needs, perspectives and values of these groups may sometimes differ; and, finally, defining quality should be seen as a dynamic and continuous process, involving regular review and never reaching a final, 'objective' statement. Many European countries currently share common perspectives on both *system* and *pedagogical quality*. System quality includes adequate public regulation and financing, proper environmental and care conditions, governance quality, workforce quality, training of staff working with diversity. On the other hand, pedagogical quality includes improving the quality and variety of pedagogical processes, engaging in pedagogical research. The relational environment is critical for young children; reasonable child-staff ratios, parent involvement, greater attention to transitions, particularly for children at risk, are extremely important aspects (EC, 2014).

### **Promoting quality in ECEC**

The debate on equality of educational opportunities remains relevant in a socio-economic context of cultural pluralism and in times of limited financial resources. The Starting Strong reports by OECD (2001, 2006, and 2011) have put this issue in the center of discussion. Improving the quality of and access to early childhood education and care has become a major policy priority in OECD Member countries, according to the OECD report Starting Strong: Early Childhood Education and Care. Early childhood policy and services are strongly linked to cultural and social beliefs about young children, the roles of families and government, and the purposes of early childhood education and care within and across countries. Furthermore, governments are increasingly recognizing that public investment is necessary to support a quality system of early childhood education and care. Most countries in the OECD review seek to give young children the opportunity to experience at least two years of free early childhood education and care prior to primary school. A second priority across a range of OECD countries is to improve the recruitment, training and remuneration of early childhood professionals, particularly staff responsible for the development and education of children (OECD, 2001).

According to the Starting Strong II report (OECD, 2006), there is a growing recognition that early access to ECEC provides young children, particularly from low-income and second-language groups, with a good start in life and highlights two factors driving the government interest in ECEC, namely the wish to increase women's labour market participation and immigration. "Immigration makes a strong contribution to economies but can also raise challenges in the labour, social and education fields. Immigrant parents may not easily find work, child and family poverty rates may rise, and immigrant children can encounter difficulties in education. Comprehensive ECEC services help to integrate families with young children (OECD, 2006). The same research suggests that a more unified approach to learning should be adopted in both the early childhood education and the primary school systems, and that attention should be given to transition challenges faced by young children as they enter school. With respect to the curriculum two different approaches can be identified: the *early education approach* and the *social pedagogy approach*. Features of both approaches are compared with respect to a number of criteria. In summary, the early education tradition generally results in a more centralising and academic approach to curriculum content and methodology, while pedagogical frameworks in the social pedagogy tradition remain more local, child-centred and holistic (OECD, 2006). Parental involvement is generally organized but at different levels of engagement. "Parents and communities should be regarded as partners working towards the same goal. Home learning environments and neighborhood matter for healthy child development and learning." (OECD, 2011). Curriculum or learning standards can ensure even quality for ECEC provision across different settings, help staff to enhance pedagogical strategies and help parents to better understand child development. There is a need to think beyond curriculum dichotomies and consolidate the "added value" of individual approaches. A focus on critical learning areas can facilitate customized curricula; and local adaptations of curricula in partnership with staff, families, children and communities can reinforce the relevance of ECEC services to local children and communities. ECEC staff plays the key role in ensuring healthy child development and learning. Areas for reform include qualifications, initial education, professional development and working conditions. Higher qualifications are found to be strongly associated with better child outcomes and working conditions can improve the quality of ECEC services (OECD, 2011).

UNICEF (2008) highlights the appropriate training and working conditions for all staff as an important element of quality. It is noted that only high-quality care offers long-term benefits for society in the form of increased productivity and incomes and higher returns from investments in education. The importance of well-trained staff is also emphasized; 80% of childcare workers should be adequately trained and at least 50% should hold a bachelor degree. It is worth noting that disadvantages become established during the first years of life and it is at this stage, if at all, that a self-perpetuating downward spiral can be stopped.

The European Union recognizes the importance of early childhood education and care, especially in enhancing social cohesion by breaking the cycle of disadvantage and laying the foundations for lifelong learning as well as contributing to better educational outcomes. Firstly, the European Childcare Network's work (EC, 1996) on child care quality was developed within the framework of

a Recommendation on Child Care by the Council of Ministers of the European Parliament. It recommended that Member States develop child care services, emphasizing that “it is essential to promote the well-being of children and families, ensuring that their various needs are met.” The Childcare Network proposes forty quality targets which are deemed realizable, either completely or partially, depending upon the Member Countries throughout the European Union. The quality targets address nine areas: policy framework, financial policy framework, levels and types of service, education, staff ratios, staff employment, environmental and health, parents’ involvement, performance.

Secondly, in a recent work, experts from Member States and stakeholders have worked together to propose a Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care. The work of the TWG is based on the Council Conclusions on early childhood education and care: providing all children with the best start for the world of tomorrow and focusing on issues of accessibility and quality, such as creating well-integrated services of care and education with a joint vision for the role of ECEC, effective curricular frameworks, staff competences and governance arrangements. The QF makes it clear that effective ECEC systems should encourage participation, strengthen social inclusion, foster language learning and embrace diversity. The proposal sets the scope for quality and can be a benchmark to measure it in the early education system of each country. It is a European product which demonstrates that European cooperation brings added value to an area where subsidiarity is and must remain strong. The QF identified five quality topics: Governance, Accessibility, Workforce, Curriculum, Evaluation and Monitoring. It is very promising that Member States have already begun to use the Framework as a basis for negotiating new legislation and developing new standards, and as a basis for discussion between stakeholders (EC, 2014).

In times of crisis children are at risk of breaches or loss of rights. Taking into consideration today’s multicultural societies and the continuing relocation of the people arriving in European countries, investing in children must be a fundamental principle for decision makers and stakeholders in EU and Member States alike. Preschool education is the important period during which children develop their personality and construct their identity. Quality education supports them in learning skills and attitudes, acquiring knowledge and comprehending values. Being a transit and/or destination country for thousands of immigrants, Greece is faced with an unexpected situation, and quality and access to ECEC should be a major priority issue for the country’s policy makers.

### **Identity Building in contexts of diversity**

The importance of the early years for further learning processes, as well as for educational and social inclusion, is more and more widely recognized, thus strengthening the importance of high-quality services. Especially at a time when countries are facing important challenges relating to the social, cultural and linguistic diversity of their populations, quality also means taking into consideration the individual starting points and situations of all children in order to provide them with the best possible support in realizing their potential. Education is understood as building relationships that allow children to create their own image of the world they live in and to build their identity. In this context, it is vital that a pedagogy of diversity be developed which includes

respect for multilingualism. The central pillars of such pedagogy include a focus on differences and similarities, a concept of multiple identities and the inclusion of parents. According to the Quality Framework, a curriculum based on pedagogic goals, values and approaches which enable children to reach their full potential in a holistic way, and a curriculum which requires staff to collaborate with children, colleagues and parents and to reflect on their own practice must be developed and implemented (EC, 2014).

The ECEC curriculum should be transversal, multidimensional and cooperative in character. Its objectives and values, its didactical and pedagogical approach should focus on the child's global development (including well-being, as well as social-emotional, motor, cognitive and linguistic development). Education should be understood as a process of cooperation and reflection that includes all partners (children, parents and professionals from different sectors). A curriculum that embraces linguistic, cultural and social diversity, involves parents and respects cultures is a promising curriculum for ECEC today. A partnership with parents is essential to create reassuring learning environments for children and allow them to develop secure emotional relationships. It is important to ensure continuity in children's linguistic development and to take into account the gains achieved within their families. The ECEC setting cannot alone meet all the needs. ECEC settings benefit from fostering a positive climate of confidence and from creating welcoming and attractive spaces for all parents, irrespective of their culture, language, gender, ethnic group, socioeconomic background or specific needs.

Values, goals and child-rearing beliefs of minority ethnic families should be recognized, respected and valued in mainstream ECEC provision through adopting pedagogical approaches which intentionally promote socio-cultural diversity in society. The evidence emerging from the analysis of good practice developed across EU Member States suggests that potential obstacles may be overcome by involving parents and local migrant communities in democratic decision-making processes associated with the management of ECEC services and by recruiting personnel from minority ethnic groups (Bennett, J. and Moss P. 2011). By analysing the conditions that guarantee the successful implementation of good practice, the literature review on the participation of Disadvantaged Children and Families in ECEC Services in Europe (Lazzari A. and Vandenbroeck M., 2013) has drawn a framework for inclusive practice that provides insight into how to translate such principles into everyday practices within ECEC institutions. These insights include:

- The child, as a citizen with rights, needs to be placed at the core of any educational initiative. Inclusive practices are grounded on an ethical commitment to social justice and respect for diversity that become concrete through the expression of values such as citizenship, democracy and social solidarity (Broadhead, P., Meleady, C. & Delgado M.A., 2008);
- Children's identities need to be nurtured by feelings of belonging that are developed through meaningful relationships with adults and peers and through the interaction with a welcoming environment that values their languages and cultural backgrounds (Brooker, L. and Woodhead, M. (Ed.), 2008).

- In order to be responsive, educational practices need to be co-constructed with children and their families. Parental involvement needs to be based on an equal partnership with ECEC providers and include a. democratic decision-making structures (e.g. parental committee) for the management of ECEC services; and b. staff with an open-minded disposition towards challenging traditional practices. (Proposal for key principles of a Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care, 2014).

Findings from research conclude that ECEC curricula can be powerful instruments to make the ECEC system more effective in its overall mission but, at the same time, they ‘can also engender processes that move away from this main goal because they go against the principles of good practice’ (Laevers, F., 2005). In the QF it is noted that well-qualified staff whose initial and continuing training enables them to fulfill their professional role, and supportive working conditions including professional leadership which create opportunities for observation, reflection, planning, teamwork and cooperation with parents, constitute key objectives. The ECEC “Workforce” qualifications, skills, competences and working conditions have to allow them to successfully deal with a multilingual environment. Furthermore, research evidence is consistent with the view that the staff: child ratio can have a significant impact on the quality of care that children receive (Munton, T., Mooney, A., Moss, P., Petrie, P., Clark, A., Woolner, J., et al., 2002). In this regard, research findings indicate that higher staff ratios (more staff per group of children) are more likely to facilitate positive and responsive interactions among adult and children – both on an individual and a group basis. The impact on children’s development has been extensively demonstrated (Sylva, K., Melhuish, E. C., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I. and Taggart, B., 2004). However, the findings also reveal that the influence of the staff: child ratio on quality is linked to other elements of the care environment including staff education and training, staff salaries and group size.

According to the *Starting Strong II* report, “figures from various countries reveal a wide pay gap between childcare staff and teachers, with childcare staff in most countries being poorly trained and paid around minimum wage levels” (OECD, 2006). According to the QF, finding opportunities for ECEC staff to develop their skills can make an important contribution to the quality of services provided. However, staff training and development, good leadership and a supportive working environment are not the only factors which support high quality. It is also important to create working conditions where staff is valued; where there is sufficient time for preparation, team meetings and reflection; and the adult: child ratio enables each child to receive the attention they deserve. Good working conditions create well-motivated individuals who have the time and resources they need to support children and to work with their parents and members of the community. The most important challenge nowadays is the preparation of staff so that they can fulfill their professional role in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

## **Quality and Identity in Greek ECEC System**

### **Governance and Accessibility in ECEC**

Good quality and accessible Early Childhood Education and Care systems are equally important for empowering people to have successful lives. Increasing access to ECEC has been one of Europe's priorities in recent decades and specific benchmarks have been set to be met by member states. According to the 2002 Barcelona European Council agreement, *by 2010 at least 90% of children between three years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under the age of three should be granted access to ECEC*. Increasing access to high-quality ECEC is also the focus of the EU 2020 Strategy benchmarks that call for the participation of at least 95% of children between the age of 4 and compulsory school age by 2020. Furthermore, the QF has put action statements for

- Provision that is available and affordable for all families and their children and
- Provision that encourages participation, strengthens social inclusion and embraces diversity (EC, 2014).

It is worth examining the Greek ECEC system in more detail. Early childhood education and care services in Greece are provided by a split system made up of day care centres (dcc) and pre-primary schools (pps) or kindergartens. Both types of institutions must set up their rules of operation in compliance with existing legislation as well as with the regulations specified in ministerial decisions, i.e. central-level steering documents. The responsibility for ECEC governance and regulation at central level lies with three different Ministerial Authorities. The Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction is responsible for the governance regulation of day care centres, -infant centres, which can be attended by children from 6 months to 2½ years, and centres for children aged 2½ to 5 years-. As far as the private day care centres are concerned, the Ministry of Health and Social Security is responsible and assures the related operation approval (Ministerial Decision 16065, National Gazette 497/22.4.2002). Also, the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs is responsible for preprimary schools, attended by ages 4-6. Children aged 4-5 years may enrol either in dcc or pps depending on availability of places.

All children have the right to enrol in day care centres of their Municipality. Upon enrolment, priority is given to working parents' children and/or children from economically weak families, with emphasis placed on children in need of care by virtue of various social causes (double or single orphans, children of unwed mothers, divorced or separated parents, children born to parents with a physical or mental disability, multi-member families etc.). The selection criteria for infants and children and their credit awarding may be specified by the respective Municipality Council, following its reasoned opinion. Funding of public day care centres is provided from each municipality's budget. A municipal council must approve the rules of operation, either set up and submitted by each centre in compliance with the regulations specified in the central-level steering documents or set up by the municipality and applying to all dcc (as is the case with the municipality of Athens, the largest municipality in the country). As in many other European

countries, there is no legal entitlement to a place in day care centres. In fact, demand for attendance is significantly higher than available places.

In recent years, there has been a growing shortage of places in the public ddc. In the current phase of great austerity, an effort is being made to address the problem by securing additional funding by means of a programme approved and included in the NSRF funding context 9NSRF, 2014-2020). As a result, a limited yet important number of places are being subsidized in public day care centres as well as in some private centres which applied for participation. However, the number of places secured by this programme is still limited compared to the demand for attendance (Eurydice, 2014:170). Available data indicate that a large number of children under the age of 3 cannot profit from ECEC services while the percentage of children over 3 years of age is far from negligible. In fact, 36% of children under the age of 3 do not participate in any of the ECEC services, while 13% of children over the age of 3 do not participate either (Eurydice, 2014:68).

Legal entitlement only exists for children between 5 and 6 years, for whom preprimary attendance is compulsory; whilst for younger ages attendance is only possible when extra places exist. Attendance in the public preprimary schools is free and children living at a distance from the pps in their catchment area have their commuting subsidized. Although attendance in kindergarten is compulsory, there is a small proportion of children from rural areas or ethnic minorities (i.e. Roma) that do not attend. More often than not, their parents rather minimize the importance of schooling at early years. In other words, there is a matter of comprehensibility (Vandenbroeck, 2015).

However, quality does not only mean provision of places. Rather, it means meeting specific standards relating to the centres' environment and equipment. A recent small-scale study found that in several cases the conditions in day care centres were not satisfactory while building and operation regulations were not observed. Space per child requirements are not met, especially in big cities. By contrast, space and overall conditions were found to be more satisfactory in rural areas. Private dcc in urban areas offer more space and better conditions but these can only be afforded by high-income parents. As previously mentioned, public dcc enrolment procedure gives priority to children from low-income families. As a result, public dcc display more diversity than private ones, which are normally characterized by a high degree of homogeneity in children's population.

In 2010 the so-called Educational Priority Zones (EPZ) were introduced by the Ministry of Education. These include schools in areas where there is a low overall educational index, high school dropout, low access to higher education, high risk of poverty and other low socioeconomic indicators. EPZ aim at equal inclusion of all children in school as well as improving the education quality for these disadvantaged groups. Differentiating teaching and applying best practices of alternative and flexible learning are part of this approach. At kindergarten level, the focus is on language, literacy and mathematics in spontaneous and organized activities and on building



bridges between the school, the families and the community. EPZ kindergartens receive additional resources, such as one extra teacher and a school psychologist. The educational process focuses on offering support to children with learning disabilities or language difficulties. The programme aims to strengthen students' identity and social skills. The school is connected with the family and the local community and offers families of low socio-economic and educational indicators the benefits of education concerning personal and interpersonal development of children, free of cost. Furthermore, the school becomes a self-defined unit of organization, assumes operational initiatives and adapts the programme to the needs of the student population.

Conclusively, scarcity of ECEC places affects children under the age of five. At the same time, there is provision for embracing and supporting children from low-income families and diverse linguistic, cultural and social backgrounds. To meet the EU 2020 Strategy benchmarks Greece should generously invest in ECEC, a goal that remains to be fulfilled in a time of crisis and limited financial resources

### **Preschool professionals**

The quality of ECEC depends on the existence of well-educated, experienced and competent workforce who work in optimum conditions. Initial education and training programmes for all professionals in an ECEC context, and more specifically for preschool pedagogues and teachers, help to create a shared agenda and understanding and improve quality. The EC Childcare Network's targets claim that qualified staff employed in services should be paid, a minimum of 60% of staff working directly with children in collective services should have a grant eligible basic training of at least three years at a post-18 level which incorporates both the theory and practice of pedagogy and child development. All training should be modular, all staff in services working with children (both collective and family day care) should have the right to continuous in-service training, and 20% of staff employed in collective services should be male. With respect to staff-child ratios it aims for

- 1 adult: 4 places for children under 12 months
- 1 adult: 6 places for children aged 12-23 months
- 1 adult: 8 places for children aged 24-35 months
- 1 adult: 15 places for children aged 36-71 months (EC, 1996).

In addition, the QF statements ask for well-qualified staff whose initial and continuing training enables them to fulfil their professional role, and supportive working conditions, including professional leadership, which create opportunities for observation, reflection, planning, teamwork and cooperation with parents.

Greece exhibits a high level of quality in terms of staff qualifications with intensive initial education and continuous professional development of preschool professionals. Day care centres employ pedagogues at levels 4, 5 and 6 of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), while preprimary schools employ teachers at levels 5 and 6. More specifically, preschool

pedagogues working in day-care centres receive their initial education and training at Higher Technological Institutes. Preprimary teachers are university graduates of relevant university departments. A considerable number of them, however, are employed at the dcs. In the course of their studies, both pedagogues and preprimary teachers are sensitized to the special needs of children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as to other special needs issues. Issues related to present-day multicultural societies and the multicultural environment typical in many Greek schools are addressed, while children's rights and issues of citizenship and differentiated pedagogy are raised in their studies.

Preprimary school teachers also have access to in-service training programmes. This in-service training is often provided by school counsellors in the form of workshops or seminars. Seminars are organized by school counsellors for large or small groups of teachers and the topics covered are proposed by teachers. Attendance is compulsory, and teachers are granted leave of absence for this reason. In addition, school counsellors organize non-compulsory training sessions. It is unfortunate that the pedagogues in day-care centers cannot profit from this type of in-service educational support, as the educational dimension is not formally acknowledged as part of their working task. Further, the competent authorities for the provision of in-service training (ministries, municipalities, professional organizations) organize training programmes to meet the needs of continuous education on topics such as new curricula, teaching methods, cooperation with parents and the local community, as well as developing competences to address students with learning difficulties and/or language difficulties.

By contrast, quality in terms of staff-child ratios is far from satisfactory. Both in dcc and pps Greece displays a lower ratio than Europe. A basic difference exists between dcc and pps with respect to staff. In dcc there is a variety of working professionals, including pre-primary teachers, preschool pedagogues and assistant pedagogues, welfare workers, pediatricians, psychologists, cooks, cleaners and drivers, while pps only employ teachers and part-time cleaners. As regards the gender of pedagogues and teachers, only 1,4% are male. In general, the pedagogical and educational profession in Greece has a low status and is badly-paid, thus preventing men from pursuing a teaching career.

The adults: children ratio also differs and it depends on children's age. In dcc the ratios are as follows:

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Age 6 months – 2.5 years	12 infants	2 Preschool pedagogues + 1 Assistant preschool pedagogue
Age 2.50 years – 4 years	25 children:	1 Preschool pedagogue + 1 Assistant preschool pedagogue
In pps: Age 4 - 6 years	25children	1 pp teacher

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Conclusively, the ECEC workforce in Greece meets the European targets with respect to qualifications such as initial education and continuous professional development. Regarding the adult: children ratio, this should be higher in order to meet the above-mentioned targets. Finally, men in ECEC teaching posts represent a very low percentage, likely to rise only if sufficient incentives are provided by the Greek state.

### **Curriculum in ECEC and parents involvement**

Learning and education do not begin with compulsory schooling – if nothing else, they begin at birth. The early years are the most formative in children's lives and lay the foundations for their lifelong development. The ECEC curriculum should set common goals, values and approaches which reflect society's expectations about the role and responsibilities of settings in encouraging children's development towards their full potential. The main purpose of preschool curriculum is the children's social, emotional, physical, cognitive and linguistic development. The QF statements ask for

- A curriculum based on pedagogic goals, values and approaches which enable children to reach their full potential in a holistic way.
- A curriculum which requires staff to collaborate with children, colleagues and parents and to reflect on their own practice.

Under existing legislation, Greek day care centres aim to offer care in a safe environment, help children develop physically, mentally, emotionally and socially and contribute towards compensating for differences resulting from the cultural, economic and educational level of their parents. They must also serve parents and in parallel sensitize them on issues of contemporary pedagogy and psychology. Further, they have to help children of pre-school age to make a smooth transition from the family to the school environment (Ministerial Decision, 16065). Day care centres operate without a formal educational programme; instead, each of them has the responsibility of developing its own programme taking into consideration children's needs and interests.

Preprimary schools, as an agent of children's socialization, should ensure all necessary conditions for ordinary and diversified development. Pps apply a centrally defined educational curriculum, the Cross-thematic Curriculum (DEPPS) that adopts a holistic approach to children's physical, emotional, mental and social development, placing the child at the centre of the educational process. The parents' role as child educators is recognized and put into value in the programme and collaborative relations between teachers and parents are encouraged. The basic theoretical orientations upon which the cross-thematic curriculum rests are as follows:

- Children learn better in an environment that covers their needs and in which they feel protected.
- Development is stimulated when children experience challenges slightly above their level of skills.
- Knowledge acquisition is not simply transmitted but depends on the constructive activity of the students themselves.
- Children possess diverse modes of learning.
- Play, whether spontaneous or pedagogically organized, is an important means of stimulating development.

- Learning takes place in authentic situations and involves topics which are interesting for the children.

The cross-thematic curriculum includes the learning fields of Language, Mathematics, Environment Studies (social and physical), Creativity and Expression, and Information Technology. The methods used in the curriculum implementation are *Project-based learning*, which engages children in carrying out actions leading to concrete productions, and *Theme or Problem-based learning*, which focuses on developing solutions to real-world problems. The learning activities must be flexible so as to accommodate the needs, inclinations and interests of each child in a safe and comforting environment, respect the cultural identity and language of all children and be planned in a way that encourages students to develop investigative interests, make hypotheses, develop critical thinking, make decisions and solve problems. Parents can be involved in both *Theme* and *Project* based learning supported by and in collaboration with the teachers. In such cases, a learning community is developed which embraces cultural diversity and produces excellent results for all participants.

Teachers engage children in exploratory activities in ways likely to be meaningful to pupils, providing relevant materials and learning aids. They encourage the development of their students' autonomy and self-confidence; they promote the acquisition of elaborate forms of language in communication and incorporate the use of new technologies in the daily life of the *pps*. They nurture peer interaction, collaborative activities between children and an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and respect. A portfolio for each child is created comprising a collection of the child's work, assessment results, records and notes made by the teacher. Preschool counsellors supervise, mentor and support teachers in their daily teaching needs in curriculum implementation. Teachers collaborate with their colleagues, parents and school counsellors on issues of curriculum implementation, encouraging cooperative actions with parents on different issues of common interest. Extremely important is the active collaboration between pre-primary and primary school teachers in establishing bridges between pre-primary and primary school so as to ensure a smooth transition for the children from the pre-primary school environment to that of the primary school.

Parental involvement in the Greek ECEC can take various forms but this involvement is institutionalized in the case of *pps*, with legislation from 1985 (Law, 1566/85) onwards allowing for the creation of a formal parent association in each *pps*. In day-care centers, this possibility largely depends on the centres themselves and, to some extent, on recommendations by the respective municipality Board. A parents' representative participates in these Boards as a member although her/his contact with parents cannot but be limited. In general, parents support the operation of day-care centres in many ways depending on the invitation calls of the day-care administration. The involvement of parents in the *pps* consists mainly in their support to school operation, involvement in the implementation of educational activities and contribution to the support and assessment of children.

The main operational factors in preschool curriculum implementation are teachers, curriculum and parents. The pps curriculum referred to above proposes methodological approaches, stressing the teacher's roles as well as the school's opening to the community and to society at large. In this context, school-family cooperation is stressed. The active role of the family is recognised as a crucial factor in the educational process and teachers should encourage parents' participation in the best possible way. Parents can be a valuable source of knowledge for curriculum implementation and the realization of diverse activities. For example, parents' professions are considered valuable resources for the development of a variety of actions in the different subject areas or the pps work plan. Parent participation is also vital on field trips with parents functioning as escorts, as well as in the organization of school festivals and other cultural activities. The benefits of such engagement are seen as many and the effects are seen as positive for everyone involved. Above all, children can feel the continuity and positive climate between school and family, a realization which contributes significantly to their emotional stability.

Moreover, as stated in the *pps Teacher's Guide* (Ministry of Education, 2006), cooperation with parents is of vital importance for parents who do not speak Greek. In such cases, the pre-primary teacher must ensure appropriate translation means, possibly seeking assistance from other parents who speak the language and/or relevant local institutions. The teacher promotes systematic communication with parents in alternative ways, such as scheduled meetings with all parents, telephone communication, communication calendars, bulletin boards, informative meetings with specialists in different areas. Cooperation between *nepiagogeio* and family is specified by a Presidential Decree (1998), which states that "*Monitoring and evaluation of child development is undertaken by the teacher and must be based on information provided by the family history on the child's development and the assessment of the family relations with the child and the child's wider social context.*" Teacher-parent cooperation is conceived as critical to children's development and well-being.

Conclusively, preschool curriculum in Greece is aimed at children's well-being and development. It is based on a holistic approach to learning and enhances staff collaboration and parental involvement while embracing linguistic, cultural and social diversity. The preprimary curriculum promotes these objectives to a great extent. Therefore, it can be inferred that the European educational benchmarks on this issue are met.

### **Summary**

Improving quality in ECEC means high level accessibility, convenient settings, a contemporary curriculum and high-quality workforce. Equal access to high-quality early years services is a main goal at international and European level. In this paper, we research the extent to which the recent institutional modifications to Early Childhood Education and Care in Greece are related to the context of quality that has been identified by the European Commission, and we report differences between the European benchmarks and national policies, mainly with respect to accessibility and working conditions. With respect to the preprimary curriculum and teachers' qualifications and practice the current national modifications to ECEC meet the European quality targets.

It is true that during periods of limited financial resources research is extremely difficult to carry out. Nevertheless, it is thanks to research that economic growth can be pursued and crises overcome. Despite the austerity measures that have been taken over the last years, the main challenges for policy makers are the creation of new day care centres and preprimary schools to increase access to ECEC settings, the appointment of teachers, preschool pedagogues and other professionals both for ddc and pps, and, finally, the continuous supporting of low-income and minority population.

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## Economic crisis, visual literacy and citizenship: six cartoonists “targeting” the economic crisis

Argyris Kyridis, Christos Zagkos, Lazaros Papoutzis, Iphigenia Vamvakidou [akiridis@nured.auth.gr](mailto:akiridis@nured.auth.gr)

### **Abstract**

*In this research, we focus on the economic crisis through its representations in cartoonists' visual material as it was exposed in the Municipal Gallery of Piraeus. Six cartoon artists exposed their work from the 28th of January to the 4th of February 2011, entitled “Η κρίση των 6” [“The crisis of the six”]. In cultural studies, we are interested in revealing the stereotypes and the construction of different meanings in order to de-construct the ideological and political denotations/connotations. In this material, we try to “read” the public visual discourse as it is reproduced by the six artists. The researching problem refers to visual literacy in relation to the notion and the practices of citizenship that seems to be reconstructed nowadays in the middle of the social-political and economic crisis. As semioticians already considered “images and symbols” can be used either in media discourse or in media education in order to promote cultural and intercultural knowledge on identities. The New London Group, a cohort of educators and researchers interested in examining the teaching of new literacies, noted literacy's fundamental purpose is to ensure that all students benefit from learning in ways that allow them to participate fully in public, community, and economic life. The aim of this project is to teach post-modern citizenship in the context of modern capitalistic crisis using visual material such as post-modern graphic-designs and cartoons. This learning environment, based on the constructivist learning philosophy that evolved during the 1970s and 1980s, has its foundations in cognitive learning psychology. Our post-modern visual society demands a level of communication that remains largely unaddressed in the classroom. If the goal of literacy education is to empower students with the tools to communicate and thrive successfully in society, shouldn't we consider the current literacy demands of visual literacy?*

**Keywords:** visual literacy, identities, cultural studies, semiotics



## Social Organization, Democracy and citizenship: Theoretical insights under the prism of the Greek Financial Crisis

Georgia Gouga & John Kamarianos, Athens TEI and University of Patras [ggouga@teiath.gr](mailto:ggouga@teiath.gr)

### **Abstract**

*In recent years, the discussion regarding the notion of organization has been either considered as the main concern of Economics and those involved in Management and Business Administration, or (with respect to social sciences) it merely constitutes an academic debate between Weberian and meta-Weberian theorists. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the position that the discussion on the notion of organization is not merely a historical type of epistemological research cut off from the social reality, but one that concerns our daily lives and constitutes a conscious choice. In this endeavor, we will consider the importance of the field of democratic citizenship. It is well-known that social reality is not characterized by purity. On the other, within the complexity of daily lives, the social analyst can identify those organizational reasons that highlight the important features of social partnership and action. The understanding of the linking limit between micro and macro analysis depends on the understanding of this reality. Finally, we believe that an understanding of organizational change can enable the analysis and interpretation of phenomena and the difficulties stemming from the current financial crisis to the extent that it gives meaning and redefines the retreat of the welfare state and the emergence of new forms of organization of the activities of social subjects. The final quality of citizenship and the stakes of democracy ultimately depend on this understanding.*

**Keywords:** Citizenship, Social Organization, Welfare State, Democracy

### **The ties weakened**

In late middle of the last century particularly in the late sixties and seventies, organizational theory was an important topic among sociologists, but at the end of the century the ties between theory and empirical research weakened. According to Nikos Mouzelis' work, "Sociological Theory: What went wrong",

*"the persistent failure to link micro with macro, and action with institutional structure, in post-Parsonian sociological theory has made in lose momentum. The main energies of theoretically minded sociologists are now turned towards epistemological issues and/or to debates in disciplines such as linguistics, semiotics or psychoanalysis. This shift in focus from sociological-theoretical to philosophical linguistic and psychoanalytical issues has weakened the ties between theory and empirical research. The under development or stagnation of sociological theory proper means that it has not been possible to effectively translate insights drawn from philosophy or from theoretical developments in neighboring disciplines into conceptual tools that would facilitate rather than hinder empirical research on the constitution reproduction and transformation of social systems particular societal ones." (1995 :149).*

Given the above argument, some observers consider that organizing and specifically social organization theory is not only an issue of economic analysis, but also a major concern for sociologists, political scientists, educators, managers and others. More specifically, the impact on democracy by the European financial crisis and the retreat of the European welfare state are an important common ground for social minded scholars.

In this light, detecting the emergence of a new problematic on organization and democracy necessitates sociological analysis with the aim to investigate capable theoretical schemes, in terms of social cohesion. This in turn has inherent relevance to how we reference it terms of citizenship and identity.

Therefore, the main purpose of this study is an initial foray in an attempt to make some contribution on the necessity of the continuing significance of connecting active citizenship with classical organization theory, for both analyzing and intervening in organizational life under the weight of the social crisis. Organization analysis is not an instrumental-type option. Understanding social organization and organizing as part of everyday life and organization analysis, is very important to understand citizenship.

More concretely, in the context of complicated contemporary societies, social scientists must be able to outline the organizational reason that defines the qualities of citizenship as a political relation and social action. In other words, as an option, it is not simply related to Market needs, but also a methodological framework to analyze and understand structural policies and action regulatory affecting societal and institutional dynamics. Thus, democratic organization (theory) as a pragmatist call to experience, relates and decisively redefines the social relationship and gives a democratic meaning to the political choice.

Moreover, according to analysts such as Du Gay “an organization is a way of arranging for the coordinated performance of tasks and the analysis and dialogue on organization is directly connected with real life and every day action”. (Du Gay, 2015: 2).

### **Democratic organization theory**

Deploying the term ‘democratic organization theory’ in this way, to refer to a stance, attitude or comportment, and an associated persona that bears it, we can highlight the significant differences between many contemporary approaches to organization and organizing, not simply in organization studies, but more widely in sociology and cultural economy.

Greek philosophers did not attempt ‘to provide a systematic theory of reality, but to teach their followers a method with which to orient themselves both in thought and life’ (Hadot, 2009, p. 90; Du Gay, 2015: 5).

The competence to understand the dynamic transformation of organizational reason can facilitate the analysis and interpretation of the social and political consequences of debt crisis. The relevance of facilitating analysis and interpretation lies in that with understanding comes the potential to be in a position of rationally dealing with it.

For example, the decline of the Welfare State redefines social structure, in new forms of institutional structure (semi-state institutions) and ways of social action emerge.

In short, the financial crisis and the retreat of the welfare state in Greece entail, among other things, a re-allocation of the terms relating to the debate on Democracy (Habermas, 2015). However, the apparent domination of economic liberalism over welfare capitalism, as best illustrated by the debt burden of the European Union, highlighted in the most emphatic way the antitheses preventing the prevailing of the political and the desired shielding of the social (Spinthourakis, Gouga, & Kamarianos, 2017).

More specifically, the breakdown and change of linear narrative as a continuous coherent transition from one educational level to another is a reality. The dynamic of economic, political social even educational changes (e.g. in the European Higher Education Area) are especially indicative of this reality. Under this regulatory framework, the social subject is called upon to identify their own micro-narrative regarding their educational path, depending on their social and fiscal mobility related dependencies and possibilities. Their broader economic capabilities to ensure the best personal economic life prospect will also determine their conception of the socio-political environment (Balias et al., 2016, Hepnet, 2011).

Progressive deregulation policies had and continue to have their basis in the introduction of market reason into social function, which directly impacts the reduction of funding and the substantial decline of the state (Kiprianos, et.al., 2011). In the case of Greece, deregulation was not just a matter of policy and convergence with the rest of the European Union, but a matter of fiscal survival. On the other hand, analysts and intellectuals such as Habermas (1984; 2015) would identify the issue of the debt crisis as a European problem concerning the quality and social cohesion of Western societies (Staats 2004).

Under these circumstances organization analysis is not only a theoretical framework or only an academic dialogue between Weberian and post Weberian theorists, but a specific methodology to analyze and understand social structure and action as well.

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## Citizenship “in Debt”: Towards a precarious European identity

George Pasias & George Flouris Department of Philosophy, Education and Psychology  
University of Athens [gpasias@ppp.uoa.gr](mailto:gpasias@ppp.uoa.gr), [gflouris2000@yahoo.gr](mailto:gflouris2000@yahoo.gr)

*“There is not a better way of legitimizing power relations, than making them appear ethical and renew them by using the ‘language of debt’—especially, because it automatically gives the impression that the weak link of the whole matter are they who do something wrong”*

- David Graeber  
Debt: The First 5.000 years

*“There is nothing more unequal than the equal treatment of the unequal “*

- ARISTOTLE

### **Abstract**

The characteristics of ‘European Citizen’ and the concept of ‘debt’ constitute central issues during recent years since they are closely linked, among other things, with the critical concepts of bio-politics, meta-democracy, rights of the public sphere and social cohesion.

In this study, it is maintained that “debt” constitutes a “discourse” which establishes citizens’ consciousness, creates power relations and functions at a political, social, ethical, institutional and ideological basis.

In the “grammar of debt” one comes across all of the basic functions concerning the “grammar of citizen”. Debt and its symbolism exerts power which classifies, engraves, confirms, produces, subjugates, excludes, dismisses and ‘punishes’ citizens. Thus, citizenship is undergoing a complete transformation or metamorphosis since it becomes a deconstructed, precarious and powerless construct.

The issue of debt acknowledges the critical bio-political discipline, surveillance and control of the new forms of governmentality. This governmentality constructs the societies of precariousness, of uncertainty, of social exclusion since debt encompasses not only the individual sphere but the entire social web, the State, the collectivities and the society at large.

The purpose of this study is to conduct a critical discourse analysis of the relationships between “citizen” and “debt” which seem to be connected with the waning of the political construct, the increasing deficit of symbols and democracy and the hegemonic domination of an economic – technocratic model of governance. This model deconstructs fundamental characteristics of the political democratic dimension in favor of an economic dystopia and of the bio-politics of an expendable society.

**Keywords:** European Citizenship, European Identity, Precarious and Uncertain Society, ‘Grammar of Debt’

### **European Citizenship as a multiple and polysemeiotic content**

Historically, the ideotype of 'European Citizenship' either as an *imaginary-symbolic* representation or as a *policy paradigm* came into existence during early 70's and it was gradually transformed into a central imaginary concept of the european integration project (Shore, 1993: 787-790; Shaw, 1998; Bee, 2008).

European Citizenship has been characterized by a multiple and polysemeiotic content (ideological, political, legal, cultural, social) closely related with EU's crucial institutional tasks ('*People's Europe*', *european polity*, *european collective identity*, *public sphere* and *civil society*) as well as with the ideology of 'europeanization' both at the 'internal' ('*ever closer union*', '*unity in diversity*') and the 'external' level (*image and place of Europe in the world*) (Boxborn, 2000; Pasias, 2007; Bee, 2008).

Since mid 90's the 'european citizenship' status has been closely connected with an intensive criticism pertaining at the EU's 'deficits', such as:

- (a) *Ideological* and *symbolic* deficit
- (b) *institutional* deficit (legitimation, transparency, openness),
- (c) *political* deficit (democracy/ governance),
- (d) *cultural* deficit (identity formation issues) and
- (e) *social* deficit (membership/ participation/ social cohesion) (Rumford, 2003; Pasias, 2007; Pasias & Flouris, 2011).

In the late '90s the European integration project had been deeply criticized for the 'democratic deficit' and the lack of the institutional 'transparency' and 'openness'. The notion of the 'democratic deficit' is considered as a crucial one and is often used to bundle together a number of different themes including "*technocratic decision-making, lack of transparency, insufficient public participation, excessive use of administrative discretion, inadequate mechanisms of control and accountability*" (Majone, 1998: 14-15), as well as issues of popular participation and representation (Wincott, 1998).

### **The economy/market based citizenship' and the lack of EU's political identity**

Moreover, citizenship's crucial social, cultural and political elements (*belonging, identity, rights and participation*) have been criticized as partial, fragmentary and deficient at EU's institutional and political discourse (Lehning, 2001; Olsen, 2003; Kostakopoulou, 2007; Bellamy, 2008). All those major concepts were developed asymmetrically (Delaney & Barani, 2003: 95-96) by prevailing of a certain type of an '*economy /market based citizenship*', placing special emphasis on the 'rights of the internal market' (of mobility, residence and work), in favour of the economic and at the expense of the political and the social dimension (Hansen, 2000; Katrougalos, 2007; Pasias, 2007).

The ratification process of the European Constitution (2003-2006), and the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty (2006) reaffirmed a huge ideological and political deficit, as it was observed that:

- a. The ideal for a 'People's Europe' and of a federal democratic perspective had been baulked by popular ignorance, apathy and indifference.
- b. The European Union project has focused at the *"extremely competitive knowledge based economy"*, inspired by the neoliberal perspective which subjugates politics under the market economy, undermine specific social policies and expand the "social deficit" of the new Europe.
- c. Power-knowledge relations at the EU's governance level have consisted by elitist nature and practices controlled by 'Eurocrats', as well as by a set of organized groups with particular ends aimed at influencing EU politics and policies: civic groups, lobbies, associations and Brussels-based European umbrella organizations (trade unions and employers, NGOs, professional associations, charities and religious communities) (Jenson, 2007; Golding, 2007). As it is stated *"for the Eurocrats, the key problem was not European citizenship as such, but European citizens. A central element was how to increase identification with European institutions, as well as how to strengthen their legitimacy"* (Holford, 2006: 322).

### **Citizenship in a measurable 'Europe of knowledge'**

In the years following the launch of the Lisbon Strategy, the European Commission policies focused at making the citizen/competence nexus to be quantifiable in a measurable "Europe of knowledge": *"Only if citizenship can be 'measured' will it be central to the European Union policy and will survive in the post-Lisbon world"* (Holford, 2008:340).

As a result, a concrete set of standards, indicators and benchmarks became a part of the heart and soul of the European policy process. Major European symbolic signifiers such as "active citizenship" and "civic competence", initially were designated as "concrete objectives" (Council, 2001), they were quantified using "indicators" (European Commission, 2003, 2004; Council, 2005) and were categorized as "competences" (Council, 2007); they were later reduced to measurable results (de Weerd, 2005), they were developed and measured as Composite Indicators (ACCI & CCCI) and finally they were cartographed as "performativities" (Hoskins, et al. 2006, 2008).

The citizen/competence nexus was connected with new "policy-knowledge" relations, a major "governance turn" and shifting technologies in the EU education policy formation process; the nexus uses the OMC as a steering process of an "audit culture" as well as of a "governing at a distance" process, expanding the techno-economic rationalities to the broader social and civil spheres and at all levels of education (Alexiadou, 2007; Grek, 2008; Lange & Alexiadou, 2010).

This "policy as numbers" and "governing by numbers" mentality marks also a shift to policy learning, as it replaces the socio-political debate with technical expertise and "performativities" (Ball, 2004; Ozga 2008; Grek, 2009). The emphasis on competences and "standardization", does not only take the form of knowledge production, but it also becomes a means of governance, a technology of surveillance, and a technocratic education policy advocacy tool (Lawn, 2011). The

practices of benchmarking, auditing and accountability, disguise political power to technical formalities and consensual processes, expressed in terms of data, indicators and benchmarks (Normand, 2010; Lingard et al. 2013). The above notions are explicated and supported by the statements of several experts: *“Defining ‘competences’ as an educational outcome for learners as well as developing indicators and assessment tools to evaluate and measure competence is even more of a political and ideological act because they constitute the technology of control”* (Deakin Crick, 2008: 313). *“Comparability”* is being promoted not only as a way of knowing or legitimizing but mainly as a way of governing. *“(T)hat once hard measures of citizenship are produced, they become an efficient ‘truth’ that can be legitimated through evaluation and ranking. As measures are represented in comparative tables, the conversation shifts to ‘Why are we ranked here?’ rather than ‘How/why were we ranked?’”* (Rutkowski & Engel, 2010:391).

Consequently, Europe is presently facing a new educational paradox controlled by new relations between numbers and politics: the domain of numbers is politically composed and the domain of politics is made up numerically! Acts of social quantification are “politicized” and a diversity of strategies – benchmarking, target-setting, peer reviewing, expert networks, performance indicators, etc. – are mobilized in order to distract discussion from EU’s political issues (legitimation and democratic deficit, lack of information and transparency) and reorient them towards the more diffused level of the Eurocrats’ governance! (Pasias, 2009; Pasias & Roussakis, 2013).

### **A new ‘debt economy’**

In the context of the contemporary economic and social crisis in Europe, the european citizenship regime has deeply influenced by the economic supremacy over the politics and the society. The hegemony of the market is not only followed by the increase of economic downturn and recession as well as by social inequalities. The market also seems to function against or at the expense of politics, and it seems to seek the restriction and the containment of public space and discourse through the prevalence of the neoliberal rationale and politics. The neoliberal bio-politics are defined as a composite technology of power which has as an object of regulating and controlling the functions of human life through the mechanism of governmentality and control (Lazzarato, 2009; Peters et al., 2009; Lemke, 2011).

The domination of this ideology and the policies of a ‘marketable neoliberalism’ have been characterized by the formation of discourse such as competitiveness, economic efficiency, entrepreneurial rationale, minimal state, privatization, deconstruction of working relationships, governance of technocrats, new forms of accountability and assessment constructing a ‘society of surveillance and control’ (Ranson, 2003; Olssen, 2004; Ball, 2009).

The last two decades financial markets gradually have taken a dominant role over the production system and the global economy, forcing enterprises as well as institutions of the public sector and states to comply primarily with capital interests. This process of “financialization” of the economy has led to the hegemony of global financial markets as well as to a fundamental transformation of



the political and societal regime governed by the financial market capitalism (Epstein, 2005; Lapavitsas, 2009).

The financial crisis (2008/9) was a direct result of prioritising the so called “busno-power” interests – banks and financial enterprises – at the expense of society’ and citizens’ well-being and value-based questions (Mikl-Horke, 2010). The criticism re-emerged during the recent economic, debt and social crisis (2009 – 2014), when many EU member states experienced in a tragic manner the results of the deconstruction of the welfare state and the pension system, the deregulation of the labour relations and the destabilization of the social cohesion (Matsagganis, 2012; Dimoulas, 2014; Gutierrez, 2014) due to the lack of policy responses to the choices of the globalized, speculative stock-market “casino-capitalism” (Sinn, 2010; Giroux, 2011).

A new ‘debt economy’ has come into existence, with the neo-liberal turn in capitalist development, that is changing not only the architecture of the capitalist accumulation but the form of the political and social relations and the “citizenship status” (Federici, 2014). Debt has become ubiquitous, affecting countries as well as millions of people across Europe, who for the first time are indebted to banks, and it is now used by governments and financiers not only to accumulate wealth but to undermine political power, social cohesion and solidarity (Guttmann & Plihon, 2010).

### **The “grammar of debt” and the ‘construction’/fabrication of the ‘homo debtor’**

Debt has its own ethic (honor your debt) which is different and complementary to the ‘work ethic’ (effort-reward) and when it is emerged and/or imposed it makes people or countries subjects that are accountable and indebted towards the creditors. World conditions have imposed an ‘ecumenical debt economy’ and citizen became the ‘homo debtor’. The homo debtor has already been constructed: those who did not have capital were in debt and felt ‘guilty’ for that (Lazzarato, 2012).

The persons in debt (at the individual and collective level) perceive their “freedom” as choosing only the way of paying the debt off. Freedom is viewed as a limited «choice». These circumstances abolish many democratic processes and citizens become: debtors as individuals, as households, as countries, as societies. The homo debtor is an a-chronous (timeless) subject without a capability of political intervention. The political system is closed; the choice for flexibility does not exist. The rules that are set by the markets must be observed and respected (Stavarakakis, 2013).

This condition leads to the “State of debt”. A State which depends its existence from its ability to borrow capital from the lenders under terms and conditions of borrowing and payment. Debt is not only a question of budget and economic concerns but a political relation of subjection and enslavement which legitimizes the suspension of democracy in favour of “technocratic governments” beholden to the interests of capital (Lazzarato, 2015). In this sense, “governing by debt” the State becomes a “state of exception” (Agaben, 2005) controlled by the hybrid regime of “post-democracy” (Crouch, 2004).

In the marketable 'knowledge society', the hegemony of finance managed to exchange knowledge and rights for credit and debt. Knowledge and work eliminate gradually the rights of citizens and are transformed into commercial, consumable and expendable products. Knowledge and the 'Pedagogy of debt' change education from an individual process and collective emancipation to a private transaction, an individual responsibility, a commercial intervention and a consumer service (Williams, 2006).

The "grammar of debt" came on top of all of the basic dysfunctions concerning the "grammar of the European citizen". Debt and its symbolism exerts power which classifies, engraves, confirms, produces, subjugates, excludes, dismisses and 'punishes' citizens. Thus, European citizenship is undergoing a complete transformation or metamorphosis since it becomes a deconstructed, precarious and powerless construct under the pressures of a risk economy based rationale (Allen & Ainley, 2011; Standing, 2011).

The issue of debt acknowledges the critical bio-political discipline, surveillance and control of the new forms of governmentality. This new biopolitics signifies an "affective turn" in power relations and sovereignty, imposes new "states of exception", constructing the societies of precariousness, of uncertainty, of social exclusion since debt encompasses not only the individual sphere but the society at large (Dean, 2010; Carnera, 2012).

### **Debt and the 'commodification' of citizens**

Under such circumstances debt 'teaches' world views, it forms aspects and ideas as well as it creates prospects. It teaches that the primary value that transpires the social system is the capitalist market and its laws! It enhances the fact that it is a natural and inevitable phenomenon. It further 'teaches' that it affects all spheres of human life which constitutes a sub-subject, and a sub-system of the market. Debt teaches that «democracy» is a market that limits freedom as a transactional process since its strength is drawn from the markets. An educational framework that depends from the economic capability of the customer/consumer who takes responsibility for the cost (monetary, emotional etc.) (Williams, 2006). Furthermore, debt creates a guilt feeling, a sentiment of insecurity which it is based on the fear of one's inability to pay off the debt. Thus, debt transforms a 'social contract' to an obligation towards banking or credit institutions. The person in debt (unemployed, poor, excluded) as well as in NEET (not in employment, education or training) is a citizen who essentially lacks the basic political and social rights (work, education, communication, security for life time) (Avis, 2014).

The hegemony of the market is not only followed by the rise of economic and social inequalities. The market also seems to function against or at the expense of politics and to seek the containment of public space and discourse. If being a citizen means being able to exercise awarded rights within the limits set by market tutelage, then the fundamental relation between citizenship and rights is diluted. The excluded (poor, unemployed) citizen is essentially deprived of basic political (belonging, participating) and social (working, learning, feeling secure) rights. "Social contracts" are thus being replaced by "individual contracts" regulated by market needs: Flexible working

contracts, knowledge franchising, learning-for-work contracts depend on the individual's ability to deliver 'adequate' measurable outcomes. In this 'market society', the tragedy of 'market citizens' who are limited to 'having 'market rights' (especially those who are excluded by the markets) do not only ascribe to the 'commodification of knowledge' (and the price that has to be paid for accessing it) but also to the 'commodification of themselves', which are then measured as more or less as "profitable" or "efficient" investment! (Pasiás & Roussakis, 2013).

### **"Precariat": Citizenship without Democracy?**

The domination of the neoliberal paradigm and the «market/technocratic» views and practices are directly linked with terms and concepts such as *uncertainty*, *precariousness* and *consumerism* in education and in society. Citizens are also confronted with the challenges of disciplinary neoliberalism, 'learning' to live and survive in 'risk societies' with uncertain choices in an internationalized and planetary milieu/environment of "state of exception", of political instability, of social deregulation and of risk taking (Uluorta, & Quill, 2009).

The «bio-politics of debt» and the domination of the 'market paradigm' in the field of education» and work, are characterized by new flexible, 'flexicure' and precarious relationships of work which lead to the formation of a precarious society (Ross, 2008). Under these circumstances, a construction of an uncertain (educated, specialized, cultured but unemployed) «marketable» human capital is created, that of the "precariat", which is a new version of economic, social, and cultural transformation of a modern proletariat in the market economies and knowledge driven societies (Standing, 2011).

Uncertain and precarious worker and consumable knowledge, mean, however, that both the 'object' and the 'subject' of knowledge – individual and collective – are considered disposable, and the whole society is gradually becoming 'expendable'. In the context of the contemporary economic and social crisis in Europe, citizenship "in debt" provokes for a critical "discourse" about the future of Europe concerning "citizenship without democracy" and "demoi-cracy without citizens"! (Nicolaidis, 2013).

Revisiting Aristotle's view, "Man is a political animal" we may rethink "politics" (values & principles) and "praxis" (agogy and paideia) against the dystopic bio-politics of the global financial markets/'agores', re-enforcing the political and social imaginary of the "agora of demos"!

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## The identity of disability during the Greek financial crisis: Empirical views of diversity

Alexandra Georgiou & Spyridon-Georgios Soulis Department of Primary Education, University of Ioannina [algeorgiou@cc.uoi.gr](mailto:algeorgiou@cc.uoi.gr) , [ssoulis@cc.uoi.gr](mailto:ssoulis@cc.uoi.gr)

### **Abstract**

*A general consensus of related researches on disability the last fifteen years is that disability ought to be understood as a social construction. Disability requires to be approached as a product of the obstacles that society itself places on the individuals with disability. In other words, disability should be examined within a broader social environment since it is defined in social terms. It seems that the identity of disability is not a definitive personal feature but it is a concept constructed by society since it is society that determines the limitations that render the individuals disabled and denies them the right to fully participate in social life. As a result, the identity of disability is shaped by the citizens' views on disability which are formed and differentiated according to their social and cultural context. During a financial crisis, the social and cultural context is being redefined and changed. The question that rises is how the change of the financial status of Greek citizens, due to the financial crisis that they face, influences the identity of disability.*

*With the aforementioned in mind, a research was conducted exploring whether the financial status of Greek citizens has influenced their attitudes towards disability. More specifically, the present research was conducted in the prefecture of Ioannina, Greece. The findings revealed that the higher the citizens' incomes are the more positive their attitudes towards disability are. In particular, it was noted that citizens with lower incomes compared to those with higher incomes are against the inclusion of students with and without disability. Furthermore, citizens with lower income perceive that people with disability and people without disability cannot be equally happy. Therefore, a negative image of disability has been documented - an identity of disability which requires to be reconstructed without any delay.*

**Keywords:** Identity, Disability, Diversity, Greek financial crisis

### **Introduction**

Most research on disability explores the identity of disability based on the social relations that are formed between the citizens and the people with disability (Watson, 2002). More specifically, understanding the identity of disability will lead to redefining the relationship between a person with and a person without disability (Shakespeare, 1996).

Disability is often linked to the health status of a person or to their limited abilities (Officer & Groce, 2009). However, this view fails to take into account social factors such as discrimination, prejudice, lack of access, which worsen the social position of a person with disability. The social definition of disability, which is a common place in the debate about its understanding, is the belief that identity is not a definitive personal feature but a result of the social conditions which do not allow the person with disability to fully participate in the financial, social, professional, political and cultural life of the community. Disability, that is, should be perceived as a product of the obstacles that society itself places on the individuals with disability. In other words, disability ought to be understood as a social construction. According to Boghossian (2001), *to say of something that it is socially constructed is to emphasize its dependence on contingent aspects of our social selves.*



The definition of disability as a social construction is based on the idea that disability is the product of specific cultural circumstances (Wendell, 1996). Namely, people with disability are not always treated by society in the same way. The level of their integration or seclusion is different and it is according to the dominant cultural ideology about diversity. More specifically, the concept of diversity does not coincide with the need to achieve uniformity. On the contrary, diversity should be regarded as a source of development for society in general since it is a prerequisite in order to provide each individual, regardless of their physical, mental, psychological, cultural, religious or racial features, with all the necessary tools that will allow their personal development and growth. At the same time, diversity can contribute to the shaping of a new civilization in which every citizen will equally participate.

In other words, disability needs to be examined within the broader social context as it is constructed in social terms. Thus, disability is defined by the citizens' attitudes towards disability which are shaped and differentiated according to the social and cultural framework. However, the social and cultural framework is redefined and changed in periods of financial crisis. According to Rosenthal, Charles and Hart (1989) a financial crisis means that important decisions need to be made in a short period of time and under conditions of uncertainty. At the same time, it poses a significant threat against the existing structure, the fundamental principles and rules of the social system.

At the moment, there are many countries which face a financial crisis, Greece being among them. Financial crisis in Greece affects all Greeks and particularly those who belong to the middle and lower classes. The impact of the financial crisis on the social and financial life has been widely discussed on a national as well as international level (Economou et al. 2014; Kondilis et al. 2013; Papaslanisa et al. 2015; Zavras et al. 2012). These discussions led to the conclusion that income cuts or lack of income coupled with the rise of unemployment, negatively affect the welfare of the citizens and drive a large segment of the population into conditions of extreme poverty and marginalisation (Marmot & Bell, 2009).

Without doubt, the financial crisis has brought about many changes with grave consequences on a personal as well as communal level. A research carried out in 2012 by the European Foundation Centre, has revealed that the social impact of the financial crisis is particularly obvious in the everyday life of the citizens. Specifically, it redefines the citizens' attitudes towards important social issues and towards social groups.

During the Economist's 3rd CSR Conference in Athens in 2011 discussing "People with Disability and the Right to Inclusion" it was pointed out that in "times of financial crisis those who are primarily afflicted are people with disability". Similar concerns were raised by the International Labour Organization panel discussion in 2009 which suggested that those in need of health and rehabilitation were among the most vulnerable in times of crisis. A recent research by the National Disability Alliance in Greece has shown that during this financial crisis people with disability

experience a lack of social welfare, exclusion, redundancies, poverty and marginalisation to a much greater extent. (KAPA Research, 2013). This marginalisation is reinforced by a probable negative citizens' attitude towards disability. As we know, each person has a certain attitude towards circumstances, social groups and people with which they interact. This attitude is eventually depicted in their behaviour (Maisonneuve, 2001; Miles & Wolfgang, 2007).

Citizens' attitudes towards people with disability can be a facilitation tool or a serious obstacle for their integration and public participation. Therefore, the present research attempts to depict how current Greek society, while being in dire financial straits, deals with disability and diversity in general.

### **Aim**

Aim of the present research is to explore the citizens' attitude towards disability while they are facing financial crisis and whether the change in their annual income affects their attitude. Given that childhood is favourably treated within the social context, the citizens' attitude towards children with disability will reflect their equivalent attitude towards disability in general. Hence, the parents' attitude towards children with disability and the impact of the financial crisis on their attitude were examined in order to determine the citizens' overall attitude towards disability. Meanwhile, the present research aims to explore whether the parents' attitude towards children with disability is influenced by factors such as gender, age, educational attainment and by the presence of a child with disability within the family.

Specifically, the present research attempts to answer the following questions:

- What is the parents' attitude towards children with disability?
- How does their annual income affect their attitude?
- Is their attitude affected by factors such as gender, age, educational attainment or the presence of a child with disability?

### **Methodology**

#### ***Research Tool***

Keeping the aforementioned aims in mind, the Yuker, Block and Young, (1986) questionnaire, translated and adapted into Greek by Mantziou and Hatira, was chosen to be used as means of data collection. It is a self-referential questionnaire which examines the perceptions and attitudes of people towards children with any type of disability. Specifically, it consists of the following 20 statements, the responses to which are on a six-point Likert scale (Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, slightly disagree, Slightly agree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree):

1. Parents of children with disability should be less strict than other parents.
2. Children with disability are just as smart as typically developing children.
3. Living together with children with disability is easier than living together with typically developing children.
4. Most children with disability pity themselves.
5. Children with disability are the same as the other people.

6. There should be special schools for children with disability.
  7. Children with disability should live and work in special communities.
  8. It is the state's duty to take care of children with disability.
  9. Most children with disability worry too much about everything.
  10. We should expect children with disability to have the same performance as typically developing children.
  11. Children with disability can be equally happy as typically developing children.
  12. Living together with children with major disability can be more difficult than living together with children with minor disability.
  13. It is possible for a child with disability to lead a normal life.
  14. One should expect a lot from children with disability.
  15. Children with disability have the tendency to isolate themselves.
  16. Children with disability fret and get upset more easily than typically developing children.
  17. Children with disability can have a normal social life.
  18. Most children with disability have low self-esteem.
  19. Children with disability are irritable.
  20. One should be careful of what they say while interacting with children with disability.
- The score, with 120 being the highest value, represents participants' attitude towards children with disability. The higher the score the more positive the attitude.

### ***Sample***

The procedure of collecting the empirical data took place in June 2015 in various towns of the prefecture of Epirus, located in Western Greece. 402 parents took part in the research 112 of which were men, 282 women while eight participants did not give any information about their gender. The vast majority of the participants (261 parents) are between 35 and 44 years old, 74 are between 45 and 55 years old, 53 are between 25 and 34 years old, four are between 18 and 24 years old and ten are over 55 years old. As for the participants' educational attainment, 108 have a high school diploma, 82 have a Technological Educational Institute degree, 160 have a University degree and 52 have a Postgraduate degree or a PhD. The majority of the parents who participated in the present research do not have a child with disability (97,3%).

The majority of the 402 participants stated that their annual income was between 12.001€ and 18.000€. The percentage of participants with an annual income less than 6.000€ was 9% of the sample. A notable fact is that 5.7% of the participants did not answer the question regarding their annual income (Table 1).

### ***Statistical Analysis***

For the Statistical Analysis of the research data the SPSS for Windows, version 20.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the qualitative variable of the parents' overall attitude towards children with disability. The student's t-test for independent samples was used to examine the difference between the means of the two groups in relation to the parents' overall attitude towards children with disability. In cases where the groups were more than two the One-Way Anova was used and in cases where there was a

statistically important difference the Bonferroni correction was used. The chi-squared test was used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the expected frequencies and the observed frequencies in one or more categories. The level of significance was 0,05 (p-value).

## Results

The descriptive statistics of the parents' attitude towards children with disability (Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD), Minimum/Maximum (Min/Max)) show that the majority of them have a relatively positive attitude (M=67,21) (Table 2).

	Frequency	Relative Frequency
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	112	27,9
Female	282	70,1
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	4	1,0
25-34	53	13,2
35-44	261	64,9
45-55	74	18,4
55 and over	10	2,3
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		
High School Diploma	108	26,9
Technological Educational Institute Degree	82	20,4
University Degree	160	39,8
Postgraduate Degree or PhD	52	12,9
<b>Annual Income</b>		
< 6.000	36	9,0
6.001 - 12.000	77	19,2
12.001 - 18.000	95	23,6
18.001 - 24.000	61	15,2
24.001 - 30.000	38	9,5
30.001 - 36.000	23	5,7
> 36.001	49	12,2
<b>Being a parent of a child with disability</b>		
Yes	10	2,5
No	391	97,3

**Table 1:** *Participants' Demographic Characteristics*

	M	SD	Min/Max
Parents' attitude towards children with disability	67,21	10,483	39/100

**Table 2:** *Descriptive statistics of the parents' attitude towards children with disability.*

Furthermore, the impact of various demographic and personal characteristics on the parents' attitude towards children with disability was examined. It was revealed that the educational attainment ( $p=0,000<0,005$ ) and the annual income of the parents ( $p=0,041<0,05$ ) positively influences and makes a statistically important difference on their attitude towards children with disability (Table 3). More specifically, the participants with a high educational level appear to have a more positive attitude towards children with disability than the participants with a lower educational level. Meanwhile, the participants with a high annual income have a more positive attitude compared to those who have low annual income.

	Mean	Sig. (p)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	65,72	0,080
Female	67,72	
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	66,75	0,514
25-34	65,94	
35-44	67,63	
45-55	67,07	
55 and over	61,78	
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		
High-school Diploma	64,85	0,000
Technological Educational Institute Degree	64,40	
University Degree	69,46	
Postgraduate Degree or PhD	69,56	
<b>Annual Income</b>		
Less than 6.000	61,89	0,041
6.001 - 12.000	66,85	
12.001 - 18.000	66,72	
18.001 - 24.000	67,22	
24.001 - 30.000	68,45	
30.001 - 36.000	69,10	
over 36.001	69,74	
<b>Presence of a child with disability</b>		
Yes	67,00	0,949
No	67,16	

**Table 3:** *Parents' attitude towards children with disability per demographic characteristic.*

Using the Bonferroni correction for the participants' attitude towards children with disability in relation to their educational attainment and their annual income, the following statistically important differences were observed.

There is a statistically important difference between the attitude towards children with disability of the participants who have a high school diploma and the attitude of those who have a University degree ( $p=0,002<0,05$ ) and a postgraduate degree or PhD ( $p=0,042<0,05$ ) (Table 4). That is to say, the participants who have a postgraduate degree or a PhD and the participants who have a University degree have a more positive attitude towards children with disability than the participants who have a high school diploma. Similarly, there is a statistically important difference in the attitude of the participants who have a postgraduate degree or a PhD compared to those who have a degree from a Technological Educational Institute ( $p=0,029<0,05$ ) (Table 4). That means that the participants who have a postgraduate degree or a PhD have a more positive attitude towards children with disability than participants with a degree from a Technological Educational Institute.

(I) Educational Attainment	(J) Educational Attainment	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Technological Educational Institute Degree	University Degree	-4,613*	1,284	<b>0,002</b>
	Postgraduate Degree/Phd	-4,706*	1,734	<b>0,042</b>
	High School Diploma	-0,449	1,504	1,000
	University Degree	-5,063*	1,399	<b>0,002</b>
	Postgraduate Degree/Phd	-5,155*	1,821	<b>0,029</b>
	High School Diploma	4,613*	1,284	<b>0,002</b>
University Degree	Technological Educational Institute Degree	5,063*	1,399	<b>0,002</b>
	Postgraduate Degree/Phd	-0,093	1,643	1,000
	High School Diploma	4,706*	1,734	<b>0,042</b>
Postgraduate Degree or PhD	Technological Educational Institute Degree	5,155*	1,821	<b>0,029</b>
	University Degree	0,093	1,643	1,000
	High School Diploma	4,706*	1,734	<b>0,042</b>

**Table 4:** *Multiple Comparisons participants' overall attitude in relation to their educational attainment.*

Additionally, there is statistically important difference between the attitude towards children with disability of the participants whose annual income is 30.001€ -36.000€ and the attitude of a) the participants whose annual income is less than 6.000€ ( $p=0,046<0,05$ ), b) the participants whose annual income is between 6.001€ and 12.000€ ( $p=0,047<0,05$ ), c) the participants whose annual income is between 12.001€ and 18.000€ ( $p=0,040<0,05$ ) (Table 5). More specifically, the participants with an annual income of 30.001€-36.000€ have a more positive attitude towards children with disability than the participants whose annual income is less than 6.000€ compared to the participants whose annual income is between 6.001€ and 12.000€ and to the participants whose income is between 12.001€ and 18.000€.

(I) annual income	(J) annual income	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
	12.001-18.000 €	-4,827	2,035	0,382
	18.001-24.000 €	-4,964	2,185	0,497
	24.001- 30.000 €	-6,558	2,418	0,087
	30.001- 36.000 €	-7,850*	2,775	<b>0,046</b>
	>36.001 €	-7,213*	2,282	<b>0,036</b>
	< 6.000 €	5,332	2,099	0,241
	12.001-18.000 €	0,505	1,594	1,000
	18.001-24.000 €	0,368	1,782	1,000
	24.001- 30.000 €	-1,227	2,061	1,000
	30.001- 36.000 €	-2,518*	2,471	<b>0,047</b>
	>36.001 €	-1,881*	1,900	<b>0,042</b>
6.000-12.000 €	<6.000 €	4,827	2,035	0,382
	6.000-12.000 €	-0,505	1,594	1,000
	18.001-24.000 €	-0,137	1,706	1,000
	24.001- 30.000 €	-1,732	1,996	1,000
	30.001- 36.000 €	-3,023*	2,416	<b>0,040</b>
	>36.001 €	-2,386*	1,829	<b>0,039</b>
12.001-18.000 €	< 6.000 €	4,964	2,185	0,497
	6.000-12.000 €	-0,368	1,782	1,000
	12.001-18.000 €	0,137	1,706	1,000
	24.001- 30.000 €	-1,595	2,149	1,000
	30.001- 36.000 €	-2,887	2,544	1,000
	>36.001 €	-2,250	1,994	1,000
18.001-24.000 €	< 6.000 €	6,558	2,418	0,087
	6.000-12.000 €	1,227	2,061	1,000
	12.001-18.000 €	1,732	1,996	1,000
	18.001-24.000 €	1,595	2,149	1,000
	30.001- 36.000 €	-1,292	2,747	1,000
	>36.001 €	-0,655	2,247	1,000
24.001- 30.000 €	< 6.000 €	7,850*	2,775	<b>0,046</b>
	6.000-12.000 €	2,518*	2,471	<b>0,047</b>
	12.001-18.000 €	3,023*	2,416	<b>0,040</b>
	18.001-24.000 €	2,887	2,544	1,000
	24.001- 30.000 €	1,292	2,747	1,000
	>36.001 €	0,637	2,628	1,000
30.001- 36.000 €	< 6.000 €	7,213*	2,282	<b>0,036</b>
	6.000-12.000 €	1,881*	1,900	<b>0,042</b>
	12.001-18.000 €	2,386*	1,829	<b>0,039</b>
	18.001-24.000 €	2,250	1,994	1,000
	24.001- 30.000 €	0,655	2,247	1,000
	30.001- 36.000 €	-0,637	2,628	1,000
>36.001 €	< 6.000 €	7,213*	2,282	<b>0,036</b>
	6.000-12.000 €	1,881*	1,900	<b>0,042</b>
	12.001-18.000 €	2,386*	1,829	<b>0,039</b>
	18.001-24.000 €	2,250	1,994	1,000
	24.001- 30.000 €	0,655	2,247	1,000
>36.001 €	30.001- 36.000 €	-0,637	2,628	1,000

**Table 5:** *Multiple Comparisons participants' general attitude in relation to their annual income.*

Meanwhile, there is statistically important difference between the attitude of the participants with an annual income over 36.001€ and the attitude of a) the participants with an annual income less than 6.000€ ( $p=0,036<0,05$ ), b) the participants with an annual income between 6.001€ and 12.000€ ( $p=0,042<0,05$ ), c) the participants with an annual income between 12.001€-18.000€ ( $p=0,039<0,05$ ) (Table 5). To be more specific, the participants whose income is over 36.001€ have a more positive attitude towards children with disability than the participants whose annual income is less than 6.000€, than those whose annual income is between 6.001€ and 12.000€ and than those whose annual income is between 12.001€ and 18.000€.

Subsequently, the present research attempted an in-depth study of the correlation of the parents' financial status with their attitude towards children with disability. For this purpose, the influence of the annual income variable on each one of the 20 questionnaire statements was examined. More specifically, the study revealed that participants with a high annual income, contrary to those who have a lower income, strongly believe that living with children with disability is easier than living with typically developing children ( $p=0,019<0,05$ ). Moreover, participants with a high annual income, contrary to those who have a lower income, do not strongly believe that living with children with major disabilities is more difficult than living with children with minor disabilities ( $p=0,000<0,05$ ). What is more, participants with a high annual income disagree to a great extent with those who have a lower income that children with disability should live and work in special communities ( $p=0,003<0,05$ ). Finally, participants with a low annual income, contrary to participants with a high annual income, strongly believe that children with disability are irritable ( $p=0,005<0,05$ ) (Table 6).

Crosstabs	Asymp. Sig. (2 sided)
Whether the participant thinks that living with children with disability is easier than living with typically developing children. * Annual income	0,019
Whether the participant thinks that children with disability should live and work in special communities. * Annual income.	0,003
Whether the participant thinks that living with children with major disability is harder than living with children with minor disability. * Annual income.	0,000
Whether the participant thinks that children with disability are irritable. * Annual income.	0,005

**Table 6:** *Impact of the annual income on participants' attitudes towards children with disability.*

## Discussion

The present research aims to contribute to a better understanding of the identity of disability during the Greek financial crisis through parents' attitude towards children with disability. The identity of disability is determined by the citizens' attitude towards children with disability, who, as a general rule, are more sensitive towards children with disability. One of the main findings of the present research is that this attitude is influenced by their annual income. Parents with high



annual income show a more positive attitude towards children with disability than parents with a lower annual income. As a result, the citizens' positive attitude towards disability is related to the rise in their annual income. Thus, it is obvious that Greek citizens' attitude towards disability is affected by the recent developments in Greek society and economy. A study conducted in Ireland in 2011 gave similar results as it revealed that the attitude towards people with disability during a financial crisis has worsened. Compared to similar researches in 2001 and 2006 in Ireland, in 2011 the attitude towards people with disability and especially towards children with disability was less positive (National Disability Authority, 2011).

The present research has shown that the parents' financial status affects their views on living with children with disability. Parents whose annual income is high are more positive towards living with children with disability compared to parents whose annual income is lower. Furthermore, the parents' financial status affects their views on where children with disability should live and work. Parents with a high annual income disagree to a great extent with those who have a lower income that children with disability should live and work in special communities. That means that the reduction of a family's income during a financial crisis makes living with children with disability even more difficult since they have increased practical and functional needs.

The parents' attitudes towards children with disability are greatly affected by their educational attainment. The higher their educational level the more positive their attitude towards children with disability. As a result of the financial crisis that hit Europe in 2008, many countries, Greece among them, have made cutbacks in the budget for the educational institutions (OECD, 2013). Consequently, as the citizens' educational level gets lower their attitude towards disability becomes less positive.

As a conclusion, the attitude of Greek citizens towards disability is linked to their financial welfare. The financial crisis and its mismanagement in particular, can lead the country to moral and social distortions undermining the past progress regarding the acceptance of diversity.

### **Limitations**

At this point, it would be useful to point out certain limitations. First of all, it should be taken into account that a self-reported questionnaire cannot fully bridge the gap that might exist between reported beliefs and real behaviors. Another limitation is the fact that the Greek citizens, and in particular the parents' which took part in the research comes exclusively from the prefecture of Epirus, located in Western Greece. There was no participation from parents from large urban centre's, whose background is vastly different from that of parents from the provinces. Therefore, it would be advisable to examine the differentiation in parents' attitudes according to the place they live.

Finally, an additional limitation of the present study is the fact that the respondents who formed the sample were only adults. It would be interesting to examine how the financial crisis affects not only parents' attitude toward disability but also children's' attitude toward disability.

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## One for all and all for one

Marina Stamatopoulou [mastama@sch.gr](mailto:mastama@sch.gr)

### **Abstract**

*Throughout our daily life we associate with many different people, we in return justify and evaluate their behavior. The way in which we understand the causes of behavior depends on various factors: the general conditions, roles, prejudices, our expectations etc. Freud argues that 'literature is useful in the mental balance of man, because it acts as a substitute for satisfaction.' People support the progress and development, peace and happiness of young people. Therefore, we argue that through proper and thorough training of children we are in a position to pass on values and attitudes to ensure their national status and consciousness but also their European, intercultural consciousness. In my work, I have found that my students love the tales I chose to help them to learn about the European Union, the authorities and institutions, in the most simple and pleasant way. They discover and creatively work cooperatively in groups. Every creative man hides unbridled imagination and a lot of great people have been affected by the fairy tales of their childhood. The well-known phrase 'once upon a time ...' exerts a magic power and meaning for the child. It transfers the wings of imagination to knowledge of the world! It helps develop a universal consciousness. The purpose of this paper is to use fairytales to motivate students to learn and not only Greek culture but that of Europeans. We will compare them and discover similarities and differences between European cultures. What unites us is more and more important than what divides us, thus strengthening the sense of European citizenship, which shows respect and tolerance towards other European cultures and peoples. We live together in a large family which affects each other, helping each other and interact. This awareness will help to nurture a global consciousness that are called to serve the citizens of tomorrow.*

## Intercultural Education: the answer to the preservation of identity in the globalized community

Sevi Athina, Eleftheriadou Laskarina, Theodoros Vavitsas, & Fili Chrysafo - Secondary Education Teacher / University of Ioannina, Greece [athina\\_sevi@yahoo.gr](mailto:athina_sevi@yahoo.gr)

### **Abstract**

*The present paper provides a valuable insight into the key-role of intercultural education, as the medium of recognizing, respecting and preserving the individual identity in a multicultural world that tends to assimilate and annihilate people's unique and distinct nature. The writers thoroughly deal with the current state of globalization and its dimensions, as a result of economic reasons, having further repercussions for people's social and cultural life. In an attempt to clarify the term civilization, its obvious relation to human nature is revealed while culture is defined. The paper ends up in a dialogue with a view to producing satisfactory answers on main issues regarding globalization, multiculturalism and intercultural education.*

**Keywords:** globalization, identity, intercultural education, civilization, culture, multiculturalism

### **1. Civilisation**

#### **1.1 The notion of “civilization”**

While the term “civilization” is frequently used in spoken language, its exact meaning cannot be easily ascribed, as various guises of the word make their presence, depending on the subjects - person, group, society- and the situation it is called to describe each time.

The word “civilization” derives from the ancient Greek word ‘citizen’, which was used to define people’s acceptable quality or mentality in the towns they lived, reflecting a form of proper social organization. It is no coincidence, then, that all ancient Greek philosophers referred to the proper way of behavior when they denoted the ideal citizen.

In modern history, the term is revived during the French revolution when the word “civilization” (civilis/civis), namely the one which refers to the citizen, the urban inhabitant, is introduced. Adamantios Korais, the Greek governor, used the ancient Greek word “civilization” enriching it with a new content, that of knowledge and enlightenment through education, presenting it as a vital element of the rebirth of the Greek nation (Dimaras, 1989).

According to Bambiniotis (2008), civilization refers to «the total of the materialistic and spiritual products of action by a group of people, social, national or religious and is reflected through the ethics, the spiritual development, the behavior, the interpersonal relations, the aesthetic expression and the way of life» (p.1458).

Triandafyllidis (1998) in the Dictionary of Common Modern Greek Language defines civilization as «the totality of materialistic, spiritual, technical achievements and performances, which are the result of the creative powers and skills people possess and is historically expressed through

the types and the forms of organisation and action of the society, as well as through the creation of both materialistic and spiritual values» (p.1102).

### **1.2. Civilisation and human nature**

The concept of civilization is directly related to (if not depended on) the notion of human nature, in which we can find the integral components of the construction of civilization.

During their evolutionary route in time, human beings have been trying to dominate nature with techno-cultural actions, starting with the early efforts for survival and the later human technological and scientific achievements in modern times. Studying human history and analyzing the nature of the human existence with a view to reaching the truth as a unifying element of humanity, one can comprehend people's tendency to connect their works with eternity and universality. Man, therefore, creates culture, civilization, is co-shaped and complies with the evolutions (Portelanos, 2010).

Thus, according to this physical, naturalistic interpretation, since civilization is a phenomenon of domination (both cultural and technical), it would be difficult not to relate it to the domination of nature (Portelanos, 2010:23). In contrast with nature, which is primitive, civilisation is related to the spiritual evolution of human kind and is proven through the visible creations that humanity has accumulated and is still accumulating through its historic route (Vernikos & Dasklopoulou, 2002).

Civilisation, then, is not only the experiences or facts people live or the creations they make; it is human nature's need to understand the world through quest and exploration of existential matters that compose their spiritual evolution. A civilization is expressed through art, the existence of God, love, birth and death. (Portelanos, 2010).

In our contemporary world, the crisis of civilization is quite current and can be approached through its content and interpretation, its sources and its relation to its ethical dimension. This, inevitably, propels us to grapple with the notion of civilisation using our experiences and past events, or apply the modern or post-modern thought, which has been around since the industrial revolution began (Portelanos, 2010).

In general, civilization, as an expression and notion should be approached through a system of analogies, ontological, humanistic and moral elements, with a view to preserving its totality, which, according to Aristotle, is the incorporation of the general truths that concern human nature. In addition, one could claim that it attaches a meta-physic nature (Portelanos, 2010).

### **1.3 The theory of civilisation**

Civilization is a broad notion, a multi- dynamic and multi-complex total of systems which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, moral rules, customs, languages, and non-verbal communication (Nikolaou, 2005). Civilization is presented as the total expression of human societies. In terms of

its ethical and spiritual dimensions, two orientations come up: the anthropologic, which focuses on the way of life, and the cultural one, which mainly (not exclusively) focuses on mentality and art (Albanis, 2005).

The anthropologic approach, according to Albanis (2005), refers to the common human conscience of the complete and the special character of civilization. It embraces whatever can be passed down from generation to generation following social procedures and ensuring the cultural continuity of a society. Civilisation can be learnt, transmitted, dynamic, selective and has inter-related bases; it is ethnocentric (Pappas, 2001).

Universality, on the other hand, focuses on all these common elements one can observe in different societies, in different time periods, related to language, religions, values, ethics, patterns of behavior as well as the material objects as common points of reference for the creation of civilization; it covers a broad spectrum of ideas like values, beliefs, art and cerebration.

The cultural approach was based on the theories of utilitarianism, capitalism and technical rationalism, according to which civilization is examined with regard to its spiritual and ethical dimension in relation not only to the western cultural reality but also to the opposing dynamic in focus and content (Albanis, 2005). Culture is related to a given society, while civilization is linked to wider aspects of time and space. As a consequence, culture is a sub-total. It describes the cultivation of the mind, education and spiritual tradition as well as the creation of a society. It is, according to the Dictionary of Common Modern Greek Language “the mental and physical cultivation, as a result of a long-term procedure of learning and education” (Triandafyllidis 1998:749).

Post-modern considerations of the civilisational approach focus on post-modernity and globalization, notions that mark our present era and are going to be explicitly discussed in our study.

## **2.1 Globalisation**

It seems that globalization dominated the scene during the last centuries against technology and commercialization. While the term was first introduced in the 90's, some consider that Columbus' venture to cross the ocean was the threshold of the new era, while others link it to the end of the Cold war or the establishment of international companies.

Globalisation has not yet been precisely defined. It remains quite vague and is related, on the one hand, to the consequences of the connections that derive from the social and economic structure of modern societies, the rapid technological development and communication and, on the other, the free distribution of ideas, goods and movement of people in a world without borders, since the technical, institutional, social, political and cultural restrictions that define the nation-state cannot be included in the notion of globalization.

According to Giddens (1998) globalization is defined as a complicated series of procedures that are linked to political and economic factors. It transforms everyday life (mainly in developing countries) and simultaneously creates new inter-state systems and powers. It is not just the scene of our contemporary politics: in total, globalization transforms the institutions of the society we live in.

From another point of view, it is «...the historic procedure during which social transformations are featured by multidimensional expansion – in some places at a quick pace and in others at a slower- in all social spheres like: economy, politics, legislation, civilization, technology, knowledge, information, communication, army, environment» (Nikolaou,2005:42).

As Amin (1997) states, the evolution of the notion of globalization with respect to the accumulation of capital occurred in four given steps:

- 1500-1800: capital is accumulated in the dominant atlantic centres
- 1800-1945: capital in urban national states
- 1945-1990: capital in multinational companies
- 1900 and beyond: capital in a few families (the era of open capitalism)

In general, the dialogue which defines the term “globalization,” as well as the disagreements related to its origin or birth strongly puts the notion in doubt, as some support that it is the capitalist system itself and its expansion, others state that it is just a new economic reality, while the rest prefer the term: “internationalization” since they believe in economic-commercial relations among industrialized nations and not in a “global globalization” (Nikolaou, 2005).

## **2.2 Globalisation and Universality**

These two terms are incorrectly used as synonyms. Globalisation, of anglo-saxon origin, refers to an economic phenomenon, which promotes economic incorporation through the liberation of the market.

Universality, a term preferred in Europe, mainly in France, appears to have two guises. On the one hand, it is a neo-liberal universality whose ideological background coincides with the concept of globalization, but it is a broader notion which includes it, and on the other, it is democratic, since solidarity in no case coincides with globalization.

The ideological frame of neo-liberal universality, including the fields of politics and civilization, paves the way to globalization (its alibi for acceptance and establishment) since the international financial system of the market and the economy demand a procedure of “normalization” and “homogenization” promoted through “massive” culture with a view to weakening the nation-state.



Solidarity, being the other side of universality, offers the alternative, the dynamic or maybe the utopian answer to the disadvantages of globalization, since it distributes, places emphasis on the whole while it does not exploit nor exclude it. On the contrary, it includes it, and, though it is not strictly economic, it pursues the dream of adequacy of goods for all citizens around the world aiming at universal social and political justice.

### **2.3 The pros and cons of Globalisation**

Being a two-sided coin, globalization has both drawbacks and benefits. Regarding its negative side, what prevails is the domination of the market and its enforcement as a cultural value, the idealization of patterns of life, commercialization, boundless, selfishness, utilitarianism and the domination of the superficial and the evanescent. Entirety is replaced by a fragmented reality; values are relativized in the pursuit of profit, while cerebration fades away. Modern non-systematic reality does not express the collective historic continuity and as a result, there is no purpose in life. Additionally, space and time are de-personified and lose their symbolic value, leading to the abolition of the borders and the weakness of the nation-state, making economy the dominant regulatory power (Albanis, 1998).

Under these circumstances, the contribution of globalization to the peace, affiliation and mutual understanding among nations is questioned, as the culture of the financially powerful nations is imposed, focusing on the material and deprived of any connection to the spiritual.

On the contrary, the positive side of globalization entails the opening of borders, the shaping of a framework of communication among people, novel suggestions, technologies, directions and suggestions for superficially dead-end situations. The idea of globalization, thus, in its positive approach as the free distribution of ideas, goods and people means acquaintance and osmosis of cultural elements, co-existence and participation in educational and materialistic goods aiming at acceptance, respect, peaceful co-existence, reconciliation, prosperity and fight against injustice, where all people are citizens of this world.

### **2.4 The dimensions of globalisation**

The term “globalization” refers to the concept that the world is united in its organizational function and consequently the individuals, through their own existence and interaction with other creatures, contribute not only to its homogenization but also to weakening the state-centered structure (Albanis, 1998).

When the spiritual and the materialistic bases of globalization (two spheres in continuous interaction) are evolved simultaneously, they become the objective dimension of it. When globalization is perceived as an approach to serve interests, then it becomes a multi-leveled process and acquires a subjective dimension. It is a structure of culture deprived of its social dimension, a product of the market and technology in combination with the pursuit of global imposition and its methods and is defined by its specifications or its goal. In this case, civilization

is structured and massive, technological, materialistic, anti-spiritual and anti-humanistic (Albanis, 1998).

### **Multiculturalism – Interculturalism - Identities**

#### **3.1 The concept of nation – ethnotic identities**

The people (the “group of companions,” according to Homer) who share “common minds” and a “common action” define the notion of the nation, while Herodotus attributes Greek’s unity to their strong cultural identity, the fact that they shared the same blood, language, religion and attitude (Portelanos, 2010:56). «The nation, as a cultural entity cannot be isolated only if its code of values and its cultural heritage are strong» (Portelanos, 2010:67). The result of the influence of different cultures on people is visible since people themselves, being members of a nation, produce civilization, either as lay people or as erudites. This is a nation’s mission in history.

Identity is defined as: « the totality of differentiating characteristics, features that define what one is, who one is, and allow for their recognition» (Bambiniotis, 2008:1764). Groups or individuals are self-defined through specific homogenous elements and common traits. «Identity constitutes a uniqueness against the pluralist, the pluralistic differentiations of persons and peoples» (Portelanos, 2010:51).

During socialization, the person initially creates a team-social identity and later on an individual identity. They perceive the environment, they organize their relation with it and they communicate. Gradually they shape and complete their own identity (Kanakidou-Papagianni, 1994).

The creation of nations based on peoples’ needs and willingness was quite promising, but throughout history and depending on the social and political demands, in societies which were definitely not static, it was transformed and served the needs of the times or probably of the specific groups. These groups used people’s simplistic faith in the notion of *the nation*, in order to preserve their privileged position. Nations built national identities persuading people that their nation is an ecumenical, physical entity. Consequently, the need for the existence of identities is a social construction (Nikolaou, 2005). Maratou-Alifanti & Galikou (in Gatsi, 2009) state that identities are mental constructions which are shaped gradually according to the given social, political and historic conditions.

However, the latent danger which threatens the recognition of group identity and consciousness is to over-estimate their value and lead the group to ethnocentrism, rejecting all foreign creatures as inferior.

#### **3.2 Multicultural societies - Identities**

Multiculturalism has always been a reality, it is not a phenomenon of the present times. It has been the rule, not the exception (Nikolaou, 2005). Globalisation and co-existence of lots of heterogeneous groups in the same space has enhanced it (Bereris, 2001). The quantitative adverb

“multi” reproduces and defines a quantitative result, describes and does not denote the discriminations as well as the conflicts of civilisations.

The term “multiculturalism” refers to a pluralistic cultural model, related to the humanistic tradition which was expressed from the Enlightenment until the 20th century. At the same time, it implies the refutation of civilization as a unified, cohesive system and its replacement by a society which cannot function as an organic unity (Kapsomenos, 2008).

Bartosz Wojciechowski (2012) metaphorically describes a multicultural society as “the orchestra of the human race,” where every national group, being able to preserve their diversity, plays a valuable instrument, while at the same time, functions within a certain community or society. Multiculturalism presupposes a cultural identity, diversity and pluralism and forces societies to look for ways to ensure the harmonic co-existence of different identities and cultural differences (Portelanos, 2010).

Multicultural nations should lead their members to abandoning their “ego” and accepting “the other” = “we”. What nations have to do is spot their common references and overlook their differences (Gatsi, 2009).

In light of cultural anthropology and human ecology, the notion of cultural identity in our modern world becomes multiple and less distinctive in the boundaries of ecumenical civilization. It does not exclusively depend on the indirect communication and interaction among the members of a society, but on the relations they develop within wider and more global frames of social building (Konstantopoulos, 2000).

In a relevant article, Mokades (in Gatsi, 2009) states that modern identity is not exclusively white or black. It is beige. According to Kellner (1998:143) identity is just «an illusion, a myth», since mankind’s autonomous side disappears in society and is determined by bureaucracy, consumerism and the mass media as well as the impact of various environmental influences. The complexity of the individual- cultural identity and the need for a multiple cultural identity is, therefore, lucid. These identities do not exclude each other, they are “cumulative layers” and their selective application by the subject depends on the specific cultural environment (Nikolaou, 2005).

### **3.3 Interculturalism – Intercultural Education**

In our present time, which is marked by the exchange of populations, ideas and thoughts (mainly due to advanced technology and communication) what is needed is the existence of a mutable way of thinking among different ideas, the ability to perceive and defend the differences and at the same time invent objective possibilities of amalgamating them (Bereris, 2001).

Interculturalism denotes the relations of communication, exchange, interaction and osmosis among civilisations. According to Kanakidou-Papagianni (1994) the use of the preposition “inter”

implies the dialectic relation, “interaction, mutuality and real solidarity”. It presupposes, then, the existence of lots, different civilisations and affirms the creative communication among them” (Kapsomenos, 2008).

Interculturalism is the completion of a long route in time during which assimilation, embodiment, multiculturalism and antiracist policy are its most important stations (Bereris, 2001). Interculturalism, as a phenomenon, seems to have various starting points, in different times and spaces or under peculiar cultural conditions, sometimes homogeneous and others not (Portelanos, 2010).

The relation between man and nature is the first form of interculturalism. Three axes determine the movement of interculturalism: social, cognitive and political duty. It is an open way of thinking which spots not only the common elements but also the differences among civilisations and accepts the difference as a value and a size. Being an intercultural carrier does not entail that you betray your civilization. On the contrary, you expand your evolutionary potential, enrich your civilization through observation and critical analysis and respect whatever is different. It seems that the introduction of the term “cultural opening,” Bereris (2001) claims, could replace ‘interculturalism’ in the given global time and space of the multifarious society we live in.

The “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, article 26, ensures interculturalism, communication, normal co-existence, understanding, interaction and respect. It does not imply change or redefinition of one’s identity. On the contrary, it pursues change of behavior, tolerance, acceptance of diversity and acquisition of communicative skills.

In 1972, UNESCO describes Intercultural Education as the educational practice which refers to developing countries aiming at preserving the ethno-political identity of their citizens as a negotiatory argument of equal treatment in the global community and in the equal distribution of global wealth.

The European Parliament describes Intercultural Education as: the specific practice applied by the school education for young people in a country, in which different nationalities live. According to Kanakidou–Papagianni (1994) “Intercultural Education is a reaction of theoretical and practical type in a changing cultural reality”.

### **3.3.2 Intercultural Education**

The notions of individual and cultural identity are both the inviolable terms and the starting point for the development of Intercultural Education. It is not just a lesson. It is a procedure which is definitely not static. What is required is proper education regarding rights, peace, the environment, diversity and respect (Bereris, 2001).

Intercultural Education is a way of dealing with problems which demands sensitivity and pedagogy proportional to the values that interculturalism defends. In 2011, Portelanos warned

that the success in intercultural education depends on the self- criticism of the educational system and the self-consciousness of the indigenous civilization.

### **3.3.3 Principles of Intercultural Education**

The four principles, which were formulated by Helmut Essinger (Nikolaou,2005) are clear and in no way, can they be misunderstood:

- education for empathy
- education for solidarity
- education for intercultural respect
- education against the ethno-centric way of thinking

### **3.3.4 Presuppositions - Prerequisites of Intercultural Education**

According to Bereris (2001) the presuppositions of intercultural education are:

- the ability to process the various forms of thought and action
- the ability to move from the one way of thinking to the other: knowledge breaks all the barriers and helps the understanding of the links that unite us.

Children should be offered a multiplicity of literacy and knowledge and be instilled with values so as to ensure the defense of the intercultural and democratic society.

Additionally, the main prerequisites of intercultural education were defined by Portelanos (2010:187)

- the ethical: the understanding of diversity and subsequently the self-recognition of the people, the civilization and its culture in relation to the global civilization aiming at diversity and interculturalism.
- the institutional: intercultural education should be institutionally consolidated.

## **Conclusions**

The writers try to provide satisfactory answers to crucial matters that have come up, based on what has been previously discussed.

An intriguing question that has sprung up during our study is whether intercultural education can live up to the expectations it has created and simultaneously provide solutions to the problems that not only education but also the entire society suffers from in the era of globalization.

As it has already been mentioned globalization is the product of the capitalist system, which, seeks only profit, sacrifices everything and shapes social norms, irrelevant to the values, ideals, cultural elements each person possesses, leading them to de-structured relations. No one can doubt the existence of globalization. It is at the same time both inevitable and dangerous, as it aims at homogeneity based on materialistic criteria (Portelanos, 2013:235), in an era that “consciousness,

the innate good of the existence of peoples is hibernating” (Portelanos, 2011:67). “Globalisation hinders the substantial access to the ‘archive’ for speculation and groping of the goods of a civilization” it has a “naturalistic core and vision” (Portelanos, 2010:112).

The aspects of this phenomenon can be comprehended through positivist and moral approaches and consequently the analysis of its humanistic and ethnographic extensions. Major changes have been made to all levels of life, by introducing new ideas or differentiating existing ones. Globalisation, being techno-economic, should not equate and indiscreetly incorporate everything, especially in the field of education.

Through all these rapid changes, the science of Education has inevitably redefined its content and role (Portelanos, 2010:113). People’s cultivation of values, based on the fulfillment of their spiritual and materialistic goals, guarantee the completeness of universality or ecumenism (Portelanos, 2010:114). Philosophy interprets universality as ‘the internal activity of human nature’ (Portelanos, 2010:60).

Universality and ecumenism as principles of social life in humanity are reinforced and tend to make the notion of a “state-nation” a depended sub-total. Additionally, the broadly accepted «universal values», which are a common conscience, remind us that there are natural primary values that assist the foundation of unified relations.

On the contrary, the intercultural dimension of education implies interaction, mutuality, solidarity, co-operation, recognition, acceptance of the way persons and groups differ and react. According to all these, the intercultural dimension offers important expansions to the multicultural approach of education on a global level. However, intercultural education cannot by itself be very effective, if there is not an intercultural unconscious and if it cannot be combined with intercultural education (Portelanos, 2010).

Interculturalism does not refer to a total of more than one cultures, but to a critical completion, to a dynamic of cultures willing to meet and compare, to exchange opinions, to borrow mutual words, ideas, assumptions, imaginations and utopias and to add familiar symbols belonging to other cultural systems (Bereris, 2001:70).

Globalisation, on the other hand, “... establishes the idea of communication and co-existence of people believing in idols and their adherence to the possession of a-rational creatures” (Portelanos, 2011:56).

Education, then, should primarily ensure that the roots of the knowledge of hierarchical thought, which leads to the distinctions and discriminations against people, social groups, languages cultures and mainly between people and nature, rationalism and phantasy, mind and body, are no longer alive (Bereris, 2001:44).

G. Holf (in Kanakidou-Papagianni, 1994:22) describes this approach as a new form of co-existence in which “foreign habits are recognized, multi-lingualism is a given fact and what people pursue is their contact with a different cultural background. How can diversity and different cultural identity exist under the spirit of universality without stigmatizing or marginalizing the individual - “other”- and what approach is suggested by the intercultural dimension of education in order to avoid homogenization and egalitarianism?”

The fear of placing emphasis on the ‘different – other’ may, on the one hand, stigmatize them and, on the other, reproduce negative, racist, past behaviours, seems to be ungrounded if not simplistic, if one considers the terms “culture”, ‘multiculturalism’ and “interculturalism”.

Besides, Longman Dictionary (1987:767) defines personality as “the whole nature or character of a particular person,” while Bambiniotis (2008:872) as “the totality of the special physical, spiritual, psychic and social characteristics a person has” or “the person’s quality to distinguish oneself among others due to the existence of special characteristics”. Since personality is what makes people differ or distinguish from the others, why does the use of the word diversity trigger so many reactions?

“The proper use and the evolution of diversity is a legitimate cultural action” which does not intend to exacerbate diversity, bringing about conflicts, distances and competition. It is a huge pedagogical mistake not to take into consideration the criteria of diversity and of identity when a student enters school for the very first time (Portelanos, 2010:142-3).

“Humans, being rational beings, different from other organisms in nature, can react when the centre of their personality, their uniqueness, their personal identity, which has been composed throughout their lives, is insulted” (Portelanos, 2010:231).

It may be a sign of hypocrisy or a lack of understanding of the value of interculturalism to claim that the incorporation of the “different” student is inhibited when we recognize their national, cultural or religious identity. Children are able to handle their innocence; they function as “their heart tells them to” and when they co-exist with representatives of various identities undoubtedly evaluate their classmates’ personalities, which cannot be isolated from the influences it has received during its shaping (Portelanos, 2010:208-9).

Do we make the ‘other’ feel comfortable or are we, ourselves, prejudiced and unable to gain experience through knowledge when we overlook the “other’s” background?

In conclusion, unity in intercultural education is questioned only when cosmic criteria are set (Portelanos, 2010:209).

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## Identities and commitment of the specialty of Philologists in times of crisis

E. Papaloi & G. Papafotiou - Hellenic Open University, Parodos Aristotelous 18, 26 335, Patra, School of Humanities, Post-Graduate, Course in Education, Educational Management - [evipapaloi@gmail.com](mailto:evipapaloi@gmail.com) | [papakyp@otenet.gr](mailto:papakyp@otenet.gr)

### **A. Theoretical Framework**

#### **1. Research Framework**

In this research, we attempt to explore identities and the degree of commitment of the teachers - philologists teaching at high schools of the Pieria County in times of crisis.

Several studies in the field have demonstrated that it is important that the employee gets satisfaction from his/her work and makes commitment towards his/her institution, since, this fact positively affects his/her efficiency, creativity, mental balance and social welfare (Kantas, 1998, Kantas, 2001, Briones, Tabernero & Arenas, 2010) and, contributes to the efficient functioning of the organization (Nehmeh, 2009). More broadly, according to the theory of "social identity", the person tends to place himself into categories-groups which contribute to maintaining or increasing his/her positive self-image (Tajfel, 1972).

At this point, it is important to note that, at the lyceum, the specialty of the philologists plays a decisive role, since in addition to their teaching role, which is very demanding, they develop a rich activity related to all aspects of school life.

To be more specific, our research questions are related to the following:

- how philologists perceive their role as teachers of this specialty
- what emotional and evaluative meaning they assign to this
- how they perceive their interactions with colleagues-director-students-parents
- to what extent they feel affected by the crisis
- what is the degree of their commitment to the school unit where they work

#### **2. Processes within the educational unit**

The cornerstone of the educational system is the school unit and, its driving force is the teacher, whose role is crucial in the educational process (Saracaloglu & Yenice, 2009). In schools, teachers work to maximize learning results and, constitute a community with the following main characteristics: synergy, interaction and collective intelligence's development (Theofilidis, 2005). It appears that a teacher's success in his demanding role depends on the relationship that he develops in his work and the level of satisfaction he gets from it (Duskas, 2007).

#### **Organisational Commitment**

This term expresses the dedication of the person to the organisation he works, the feeling that he is part of it (Finegan, 2000) and, consequently, his emotional and psychological attachment

or identification with this organisation. According to Becker's behavioral theory (1960), the person is committed to its actions, having invested (time, energy, etc.) through a process of exchange to the expected benefits (economic, social, psychological, etc.) which are connected with the activities and the operations of the organisation (Liou & Nyhan, 1994, Powel & Meyer, 2004). Furthermore, according to Cook and Wall (1980) the organizational commitment appears in the forms of identification, engagement and loyalty<sup>15</sup>. More broadly, it is a psychological state that characterizes the relationship of the employee with the Organisation and contributes to his decision to maintain his cooperation with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Commitment may be affective (personal characteristics, characteristics of work, organizational structure & working experiences), continuance (investment on the job, existence of alternatives) and, normative (personal values, values formed through interactions within the school).

Concluding, we can admit that one's general working environment and experiences seem to have a considerable effect on levels of commitment. These experiences are related to the satisfaction of one's expectations, the feeling of justice, the organisation's credibility, the level of support/motivation, the frequent feedback on clear responsibilities, the absence of conflict, the success of the objectives, the possibility of autonomy, the evaluation system, the challenges and opportunities for professional development, participatory decision-making and finally, the importance of the organisation for the individual (Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006).

In the field of education, various internal and external factors seem to affect a teacher's commitment<sup>16</sup>. Moreover, it appears that, the affective organisational commitment is one of the most crucial factors that increases the levels of teacher's job satisfaction (Markovits et al., 2007) and removes the possibility of burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). Apart from that, the nature of the teaching subject (humanities, sciences, etc.), which may give the opportunity for deeper emotional ties between teacher and learner, a teacher's feeling of duty and responsibility towards his students, a teacher's degree of freedom and autonomy to design his teaching and, the sensitivity with which he communicates with his students create a background of strong educational commitment and dedication to work.

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<sup>15</sup> The identification reflects the pride of the employee who is a member of the organization, the engagement translates his desire to make an effort for the sake of the organization and, finally, faith refers to emotional attachment and the obligation to remain in this organisation.

<sup>16</sup> - Natural and social environment of the school, level of education (primary or secondary school), the infrastructure, etc.

- Broader social forces: recognition of teacher's work from students and parents, evaluation of the educational work, school's reputation and school's relations with parents and local community, aspects of society for the school and teachers, etc.

Thus, one's working environment as well as the professional group, in which a person belongs, allow him to gain power, to realize his potential and also, to be committed.

***Professional identity and role of the philologists in times of crisis***

Certainly, work is a powerful framework for the establishment of our identity. According to the theory of "social identity", a person tends to place himself into categories-groups which contribute to maintaining or increasing his/her positive self-image (Tajfel, 1972). In addition, the identity that is anchored in society and social groups manifests itself as a professional identity and is built on a system of behaviour related to one's status.

Interestingly, in our society, professional identity seems to be extremely essential: people are self-identified through their employment, their qualifications and also, through their organization which permits them to be part of a certain professional network (Navridis, K. et al., 1997, Baugnet, 1998). Furthermore, within the workplace, social situations such as coherence and consensus, encourage a person's self-development and self-expression and help him strengthen his feeling of uniqueness. On the other hand, some other situations (conflicts, confrontations) contribute to the deconstruction of identity's unity and to the creation of a fragile identity.

More broadly, in the workplace, people find models or persons similar to them, with whom they can elaborate or invent scenarios in which they hold a position that confirms or renews their identity (Blanchet & Trognon, 1994, Barus-Michel, 1987, Luthans, 2005, Papaloi, 2002). Thus, through the selection of a distinct specialty, an employee has the possibility to differentiate himself from others. More specifically, at the Lyceum, the specialty of the philologists plays a decisive role, covering about 35% of the overall taught hours, shaping attitudes & mentalities and, helping students realize their potential and become autonomous individuals.

Given the fact that our educational system is a social system open to environmental influences, we can conclude that any change in the correlation of forces on a socio-politico-economical level may affect it even on a micro scale of the educational unit. Nowadays, the socio-economic crisis that has affected Greece has provoked a wide range of changes in the area of education<sup>17</sup> and, consequently, has affected the way teachers perceive their identity. At this point, it has to be mentioned that, professionals whose identity is not built on a solid base have difficulties in enduring these changes and express feelings of professional degradation. For others, the changes may be considered as an opportunity for conquering new positions and tasks and through this process, their identity is re-shaped.

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<sup>17</sup> Changes in the educational policy, salaries reduction, reductions in spending on education, the elimination of key institutions supporting children with economic or learning difficulties, etc.

Through our research, we'll try to analyse philologists' perception of their role and their level of commitment and also to ascertain whether or not they have built a strong identity in times of crisis.

## **B. Methodology**

### **1. Aims and objectives – Methodological Tools- Sample**

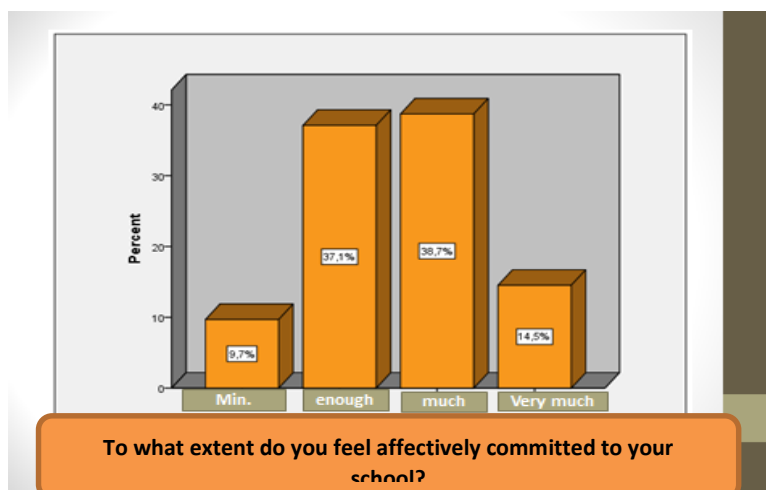
In this research, we attempt to explore the identities, the role and the degree of commitment of teachers - philologists serving at high schools of Pieria County in times of crisis.

The survey involved 62 teachers (14 men + 48 women) serving at 7 general high schools (Lyceums) of the Pieria County. Their opinions were collected by a questionnaire designed for the purposes of this research.

### **2. Perceptions from the Analysis of Quantitative Data**

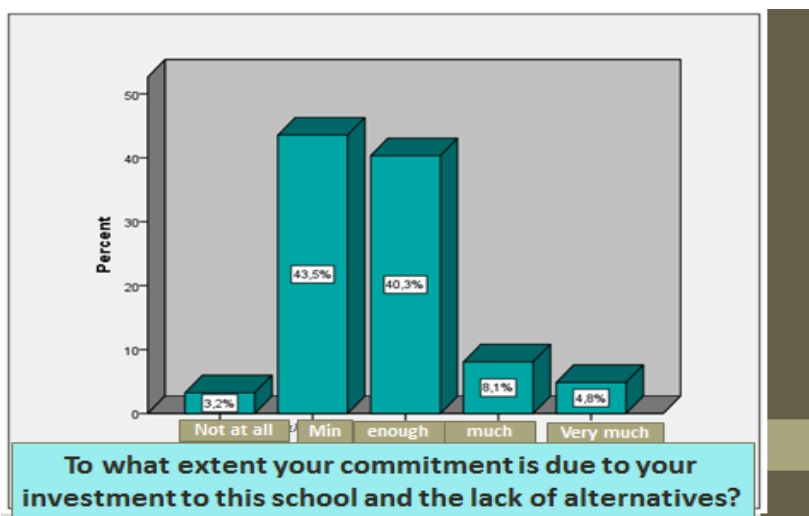
#### ***Affective commitment***

The results of this research provide evidence on the fact that there is a very high level of philologists' affective commitment: the vast majority feels proud of their work at the Lyceum, which means a lot to them and, deserves their loyalty. To be more specific, almost three (3) out of four (4) philologists, (75,8% ) seem to be fairly or very affectively committed to their school. Interestingly, the 14.5% of our sample are very much affectively engaged with their school, whereas, only one (1) out of ten (10) philologists (approximately the 9.7% of our sample), indicate that this kind of commitment is minimal (see Diagram1). Therefore, it appears that philologists' teaching subject, which encourages the creation of deep relationships with their students, their high level of responsibility towards their students' aspirations, as well as the degree of their freedom to plan and carry out their teaching job, create a background of strong commitment towards their work.



### **Continuance**

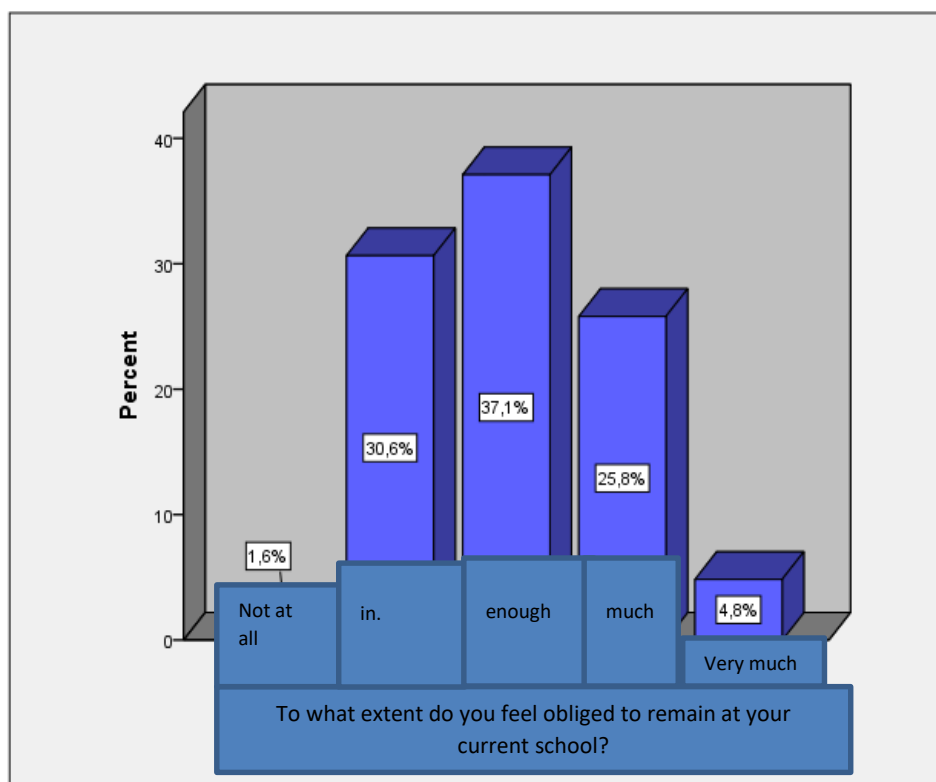
According to the findings of our research, 83,5% of our sample (four (4) out of five (5) philologists), feel that kind of commitment on a relatively low level. In addition, only 8.1% of them feel very committed due to their personal investment in this school and the lack of alternatives. Even lower (4.8%) is the percentage of philologists who have this feeling to the fullest extent (very much). At this point, we should also mention the percentage of 3.2% representing those who do not at all feel such kind of commitment (see Diagram 2). The results reveal that, according to the Becker's theory (side-bet theory, 1960), most philologists have invested time, ideas and energy in their current school and would like to continue to work at it.



**Diagram 2**

### **Normative commitment**

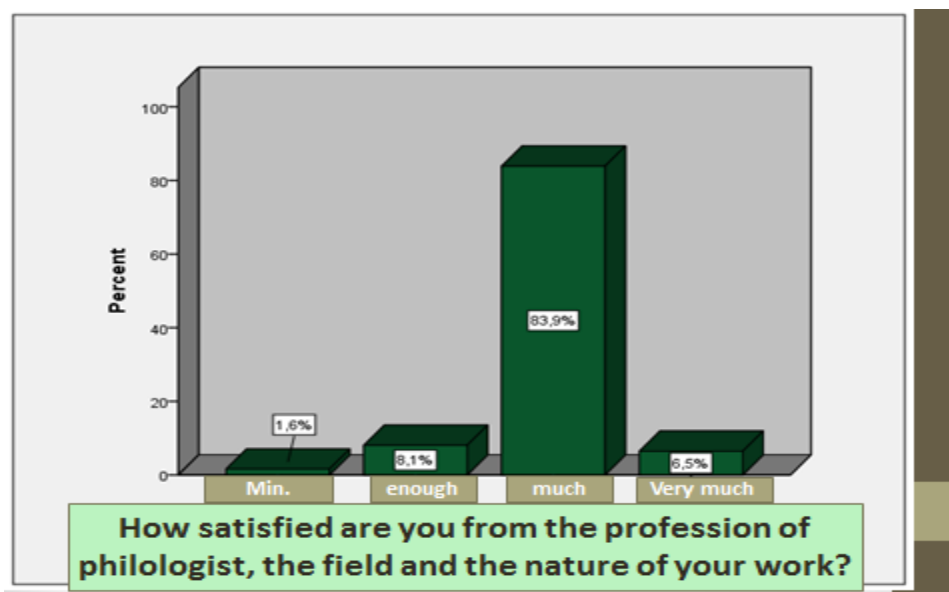
Just a 4.8% of philologists feel obliged to remain in the same school, while one (1) out of four (4) philologists feel much obliged. Moreover, 37.1% of them feel quite obliged to remain at their school, whereas, three (3) out of ten (10), (30.6%), feel slightly obliged to remain. Finally, there exist a very low percentage of philologists (1.6%) who do not feel at all obliged to remain at the same school (see Diagram 3).



**Diagram 3**

***Level of satisfaction due to the profession***

It is important to note that, the great majority of philologists, (83.9% of our sample) are very satisfied with their profession, their didactic and pedagogical tasks and, the general framework of their job (see Diagram 4). Thus, we can assume that the findings of this research are consistent with the theory of the characteristics of the work (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), according to which, the level of employee's satisfaction is proportional to the type of work, the importance of the tasks, the variety of skills and feedback. Interestingly, philologists, compared to other specialties, are in greater contact with their student's due to increased teaching hours and the nature of their courses.



**Diagram 4**

### **C. Conclusions**

The results of this research revealed that, the specialty of the philologists has created a very strong and positive identity and self-image respectively, allowing them to get satisfaction from their role and practices at school despite the socio-economic crisis. In addition, the social identity expressed by the philologists is connected with the social role which they have to play at school, the level of self- awareness they possess and, the strategies that they are implementing in order to integrate smoothly into their school's reality.

As far as their commitment is concerned, it seems that, the commitment expressed by the philologists is mostly affective. According to the results, the affective commitment is high, whereas the normative and the continuance commitment are rather moderate. Furthermore, the particular characteristics of their work, such as the field of action and the challenges, are positively correlated with their commitment, since; the eventual expansion of philologists' scope of action increases the challenges and, consequently, their dedication. The results showed that:

- four (4) out of five (5) philologists (83.5%) feel the commitment to remain at the school in which they are serving,
- the majority (53.2%) is quite satisfied with his/her professional prospects, 1 in 4 (25, 8%), indicates that he/she is very satisfied
- seven (7) out of ten (10), (71%) are fairly or very satisfied with their relationship with their students' parents & the community

Thus, despite the difficult circumstances under which philologists exercise their work and duties, they seem to have formed a strong identity and feeling of commitment. The results of our



research provide evidence on the fact that, as the major factors of their commitment, are considered their personal characteristics, the characteristics of their job and the organizational structure & working experience (such as school climate, leadership, infrastructure, relationships with students).

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## The case study – preventing dropping out of school

Helen Toming, University of Tartu, Estonia [helen.toming@ut.ee](mailto:helen.toming@ut.ee)

### **Abstract**

*The current paper is based on a case study analysis. At first the paper focuses on a description of the case, then the main results and conclusions of the empiric study are introduced and then the analysis of the case study which includes theory and results of the different studies, is presented.*

*Overview of the case: at the center of the case is a 14-year-old girl who has problems with school attendance while the influence of different risk factors may lead to dropping out of school. The theoretical framework of the study is based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and adults from different microsystems were involved. The first aim of the study was to describe the risk factors and find out why she has a low school attendance, and the second aim was to find out the options to improve her school attendance. The intervention was successful even though the girl changed schools. At the end of the school year, she produced an instructed wall painting which reflected her life with fears (represented by spider) and hopes (represented by orange tree), and at the end of the next school year she graduated a basic school with plans to continue her studies. Analysis of the case study revealed that risk factors which influence dropping out of school are related, and therefore the intervention must consider different microsystems (e.g., school, home, friends and peers). Mainly the negative interactions in the system and between the systems appeared as risk factors and therefore the key-word in intervention is cooperation between different systems. However, this case was resolved only after the adults began to listen to the girl who was in a crisis indicating that there are efficient ways to prevent dropping out of school.*

**Keywords:** ecological systems theory, dropping out of school, risk factors, Intervention and prevention

## School dropouts' perceptions of dropout prevention tools

Kristi Kõiv, University of Tartu, Estonia, [kristi.koiv@ut.ee](mailto:kristi.koiv@ut.ee)

### Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to determine which tools of dropout prevention should be important based upon the perceptions of school dropouts, and relate these perceptions to the dropout literature. The sample consists of 200 (62% male, 38% female) dropouts from primary schools, ranging in age from 16 to 22 years ( $M = 18.2$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ) in Estonia. Dropouts' self-evaluations were measured with 18 statements and a Principal Axis Factoring with oblimin rotation was conducted to create summated scales. The six factors which emerged were: Alternative Schooling; Basic Academic Strategies and Academic Supporting Network; Exclusion of Dropouts from Everyday Schooling; School Attendance without Absenteeism; School Change; and Vocational Training and Employment. Research results indicated that dropouts perceived school attendance without absenteeism as the primary preventive tool of dropping out and alternative schooling (e.g. boarding school, home tuition) factors as less important. The second highest ranked factor was Vocational training and Employment and Basic Academic Strategies and Academic Supporting Network ranked as the third factor. The paper discusses the implications of these findings to help the educational community promote academic success and reduce the dropout rates among youth.*

**Keywords:** *Dropping out of school, prevention tools, dropouts' perception.*

### Introduction

A nowadays successful student is expected to graduate from school and be able to participate in society as a productive, engaged citizen. The failure of the education system to graduate students is a multi-faceted and complex social problem caused by a cumulative process of social exclusion (Jahnukainen, 2001). It is a result of personal, social, economic, education or family-related reasons (Köller, 2004). Although long-term demographic trends have shown a decline in the school dropout rate, statistics have revealed an increase in noncompletion rates beginning in the 1970s (Rumberger, 1987). More recently, the dropout problem is likely to become more serious in the coming years in industrialized countries and it was called "Dropout crisis" (Steinberg & Almeida, 2004) or "The silent epidemic" (Bridgeland et al., 2006).

Different adult subjects – teachers (Diyu, 2001; Hunt et al., 2002), parents (Diyu, 2001; Hoz, Kainan & Reid, 2000), school principals (Kemp, 2006), psychologists (Egyed, McIntoch, & Bull, 1998), who have evaluated the risk factors of dropping out emphasize different reasons; for example, teachers and psychologist tended to evaluate more school and family risk factors, school principals school factors and parent's family risk factors. Also, school staffs' (included teachers) evaluations – measured by survey, revealed that the most highly rated interventions for school dropout included increasing motivation of students, notifying parents of a late or absent students, providing emotional support to students, and a lower student/teacher ratio (Hunt et al., 2002).

However, it could be argued that the phenomenon of school dropout requires a broader understanding to take into account also ideas of young people themselves in the search for a solution to this phenomenon. Dropouts' school experiences (Tidwell, 1988), experiences during

(Davey & Jamieson, 2003) and after school leaving (Dekkers & Claassen, 2001; Lee and Breen, 2007) was focus of some qualitative studies. Smyth and Hattam (2001) argued that dropouts can clearly identify the complex reasons behind their decision to leave school without graduating.

Qualitative (Beekhoven & Dekkers, 2005; Diyu, 2001; Kortering & Braziel, 1999; Lee & Ip, 2003; Meeker, Edmonson, & Fisher, 2008; Mokibelo, 2014) and quantitative (Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006; Coley, 1995; Diyu, 2002; Downing et al., 1994; Kõiv, 2007) research showed that dropouts saw as priorities those causes of dropout which were connected with schools as the most important. In addition, parental and family social-economic factors were seen less important by dropouts. During interviews Bridgeland et al. (2006) asked question to dropouts to explain what might help students to stay in schools and most dropouts blame themselves for failing to graduate. Also, there were things dropouts say schools can do to help them – improvement of teaching and curricula; improvement of instructions and support; school climate that foster academics; strong relationships with at least one adult in the school; and improvement of communication between parents and schools. Downing's et al., (1994) quantitative study revealed that more than 62% of the dropouts indicated that someone in the school setting had helped to persuade them to stay in school and that without these persons, they would have dropped out.

Dropping out is one of the most protracted educational problems around the world in literature as early as 1927 (Fuller, 1927) giving attention to the area of dropout prevention and intervention. The specific interventions of dropping out from school are grouped into the following categories (review: Prevatt & Kelly, 2003): academic (e.g., study skills, reading lab, tutoring); mentoring (e.g., volunteer adults, peer buddy system, teacher-as-advisor); psycho-social skills (e.g., conflict resolution, anger management); teacher/parent training (e.g., behavior management, home visits); school/classroom structure (e.g., reduced class size, adjusted schedules, cooperative learning); vocational/work (e.g., vocational exploration, work release); and monitoring.

Three systematic reviews have focused on the effectiveness of prevention and intervention programs to reduce school dropout or increase school completion (Klima, Miller, & Nunlist, 2009; Lehr et al., 2003; Wilson et al., 2011). Wilson et al. (2011) concluded that most school- and community-based programs were effective in decreasing school dropout. However, while still producing significantly positive results, the attendance monitoring programs were significantly less successful than case management, school restructuring, skills training, college-oriented programs, mentoring/counselling, vocational programs, and community service. Klima et al. (2009) also stated that three types of programs show improvement in school outcomes: alternative programs, mentoring, and behavioral programs, but no positive outcomes were found for alternative schools, academic remediation or youth development programs.

Addressing the dropout crisis it will require responding to a dual challenge: Education systems must promote and support both dropout prevention strategies and dropout intervention strategies. A research question was evoked: Which tools for dropout prevention are important based upon the perceptions of school dropouts?

The purpose of this study was to determine which tools of dropout prevention should be important based upon the perceptions of school dropouts.

## **Method**

### ***Sample***

A sample consists of 200 (124 males and 76 females) adolescents who had a school dropout experience ranging in age from 16 to 22 years ( $M = 18$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ), whereby 16-year olds were 2, 17-years olds 51, 18-years olds 94, 19-years olds 38, 20-years olds 10, 21-years olds 3, and 22-years olds 2. Participants of the study were left school without graduating at 6 months to 5 years ago ( $M = 2.04$  years,  $SD = 1.05$ ), and the dropping out from schools happens when the adolescents were 13-18 years old ( $M = 16$ ,  $SD = 1.57$ ).

### ***Study design and instrument***

To answer to the research question, first, a preliminary questionnaire with open-ended question was designed. Pre-study was performed among 56 school dropouts to get answers to the open-end questions about describing of dropout prevention tools. Based on the results of the pre-study, answers of the preliminary questionnaire were categorized and redesigned into close-ended questions. Then the revised questionnaire was used to collect data in the main study.

In the self-report questionnaire question was asked: *How much will help each tool to avoid dropping out from school?* In addition to demographic information, participants responded to the 18 item (Table 1, second column), each presented with a set of Likert-like questions (1 = very much, 2 = somewhat, 3 = not at all).

## **Results**

The mean ratings for each of the 18-items are presented in Table 1. The results indicate that dropouts perceived regular school attendance without absenteeism ( $M = 1.49$ ,  $SD = .73$ ) and going back to previous school to study ( $M = 1.50$ ,  $SD = .80$ ) as the most important dropout prevention tools. The home tuition ( $M = 2.42$ ,  $SD = .79$ ) and removing from homes ( $M = 2.36$ ,  $SD = .77$ ) were evaluated as least importance as tools for dropout prevention. The reliability estimates of the scale using Cronbach's  $\alpha$  yielded a strong reliability coefficient ( $r = .90$ ).

A Principal Axis Factoring with oblimin rotation, using the 18 items, resulted in six factors (Table 2). A criterion loading of .40 or higher was used to increase interpretability of the factors.

Item	Tools of dropout prevention	M	SD
1	Regular school attendance without absenteeism	1.49	0.73
2	Going back to previous school to study	1.50	0.80
3	Vocational education and career development	1.61	0.74
4	Employment	1.65	0.79
5	Positive relationships and interaction with teacher/school staff	1.69	0.72
6	Life/social skills curriculum	1.75	0.69
7	Remedial teaching and supplementary lessons	1.96	0.81
8	Easy-to-learn curriculum in the area of Math, Science, and Languages	1.97	0.83
9	In-service training/night school	2.01	0.81
10	Tutoring in school	2.03	0.76
11	Change of school/student mobility in school level	2.09	0.77
12	Avoiding to remain a second year in the same form at school	2.13	0.78
13	Special classes for dropouts	2.12	0.76
14	Distance learning	2.17	0.79
15	Avoiding bonding to former antisocial peers	2.28	0.80
16	Living in boarding school	2.29	0.78
17	Removing from homes	2.36	0.77
18	Home tuition	2.42	0.79

**Table 1.** *Dropouts' questionnaire item raw score means and standard deviations.*

The six factors were named after considering the types of items that loaded on each factor. The six factors listed in order of amount of variance explained, were Factor 1: Basic Academic Strategies and Academic Supporting Network; Factor 2: School Attendance without Absenteeism; Factor 3: Alternative Schooling; Factor 4: School Change; and Factor 5: Exclusion of Dropouts from Everyday Schooling; and Factor 5: Vocational training and Employment. Next, the factor items with loadings of .40 or higher were added together for each factor to obtain subscale total scores for each participant. Then, for each subscale all total scores were added together and divided by 200 to obtain an average subscale total score for the entire sample. This process was followed for all five subscales. The averages for each subscale are presented in Table 3. Finally, the average subscale scores were ranked (see Table 3) to identify which prevention tools of dropping out were viewed by school dropouts as the most important.

The results found that school dropouts agreed that school attendance without absenteeism was the most important tool for prevention of dropping out. The second highest ranked factor was Vocational Training and Employment. Basic Academic Strategies and Social Supporting Network ranked as the third factor. This included life and social skills and easy-to learn (Math, Science, Languages) curriculum, remedial teaching, supplementary lessons, in-service training, mentoring, and positive relationships and interaction with teacher/school staff. School change, consisting of student mobility in the school level and avoiding of repetition of school year, was the fourth highest ranked dropout prevention tool by dropouts. Two lowest ranked factors were: (1) Exclusion of Dropouts from Everyday Schooling by forming special classes for dropouts and giving possibilities for distance learning, and (2) Alternative Schooling for dropouts with possibilities to live in boarding schools, remove from homes, home tuition and avoiding bonds with former antisocial peers.

Factors

Item	Basic academic strategies and academic supporting network	School attendance without absenteeism	Alternative schooling	School change	Exclusion of dropouts from everyday schooling	Vocational training and employment
Regular school attendance	.12	.43	-.05	-.34	-.31	-.07
Going back to previous school to study	.19	.44	.02	.01	-.29	.07
Vocational education and career development	.11	.15	.19	.17	.33	.41
Employment	.13	.19	-.26	.12	.17	.57
Positive relationships and interaction with teacher/school staff	.54	.17	.12	.23	.09	-.32
Life/social skills curriculum	.57	-.08	-.16	.21	.23	-.14
Remedial teaching and supplementary lessons	.65	-.13	-.13	-.11	-.03	-.26
Easy-to-learn curriculum in the area of Math, Science, and Languages	.71	.23	.14	.06	.06	.12
In-service training/night school	.47	-.15	-.29	-.30	-.27	.11
Tutoring in school	.55	.09	-.20	.27	.03	-.30
Change of school	.06	-.47	.02	.43	-.47	.02
Avoiding to remain a second year in the same form at school	-.26	-.43	-.21	.56	-.04	.11
Special classes for dropouts	.15	-.58	-.17	.04	.50	.18
Distance learning	.13	-.28	.04	-.28	.40	.02
Avoiding bonding to former antisocial peers	.16	-.48	.45	-.26	.16	-.23
Living in boarding school	.15	-.15	.44	.15	-.41	.01
Removing from homes	.09	-.58	.46	-.04	.12	.20
Home tuition	.11	-.11	.43	-.39	-.43	.07
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	<i>4.18</i>	<i>3.86</i>	<i>2.42</i>	<i>1.84</i>	<i>1.50</i>	<i>1.28</i>
<i>% of variance</i>	<i>12.7</i>	<i>11.7</i>	<i>7.3</i>	<i>5.6</i>	<i>4.5</i>	<i>3.9</i>
<i>Cumulative % of variance</i>	<i>24.4</i>	<i>37.3</i>	<i>54.9</i>	<i>59.3</i>	<i>63.7</i>	<i>65.2</i>

**Table 2.** Principal Axis Factoring of the 18-Item dropouts' self-report questionnaire.

Subscale: Tools of dropout prevention	M	SD	Rank
School attendance without absenteeism	1.49	0.765	1
Vocational training and employment	1.63	0.767	2
Basic academic strategies and supporting network	1.90	0.769	3
School change	2.11	0.770	4
Exclusion of dropouts from everyday schooling	2.15	0.773	5
Alternative schooling	2.34	0.784	6

**Table 3.** Subscale ranks, means, and standard deviations.



## **Discussion**

The phenomenon of school dropout is serious social problem requires a broader understanding with giving more attention to the opinions and ideas of young people themselves in the search for a solution. The direction of the present study was to explore the perspective of dropouts concentrating on the issue of importance of dropout prevention tools.

Rumberger (2001) suggests that dropping out represents one aspect of three inter-related dimensions of educational achievement: Academic achievement, educational stability, and educational attainment, whereby achievement has been reported as one of the best predictors of school dropout and best predictor of future achievement (Garnier, Stein, & Jacobs, 1997). While there were no simple solutions to the dropout prevention tools as seen by dropouts in the present study, there was clearly perceived importance of academic attainment without absenteeism as a dropout prevention tool by dropouts themselves.

Low levels of academic achievement (e.g., Caliste 1984) and high absenteeism (e.g., Bryk & Thum 1989) were the strongest behavioral predictors of school dropout. Several authors (e.g., Simner & Barnes 1991) have pointed out that the earlier a student with low achievement levels and high absenteeism can be identified, the more likely is it that dropout prevention will be successful. School dropouts themselves agreed that school attendance without absenteeism was the most important tool for dropout prevention. Also, this result is parallel with school psychologists' perceptions that chronic absenteeism was a primary cause of dropping out and should be a national priority for dealing with the dropout problem (Egyed et al., 1998).

The second highest ranked prevention tool for dropouts in the present study was vocational training and employment. It was shown previously that vocational training and employment oriented programs were one of the most effective programmes at reducing school dropout rates (Wilson et al., 2011).

Support for students' basic academical strategies (life and social skills curriculum, easy-to learn curriculum, remedial teaching, supplementary lessons, in-service training, tutoring) and supporting network (positive relationships and interaction with teacher/school staff) in school and classroom ranked as the third important group of dropout prevention tools by dropouts. This result confirmed previous studies in this area – positive student-teacher relationship is a protective factor against school dropout (Lessarda, Poirierb, & Fortina, 2010), and can reduce rates of dropping out (Dika & Singh, 2002; Kortering & Braziel, 1999; Rumberger, 1995). At the other side, individualized instruction and instructional methods/material have revealed as effective components for dropout prevention and intervention (Klima et al., 2009).

Dropouts perceived changing school as relatively unimportant tool of dropout prevention. Previous analysis of the effects of student mobility on the risk of dropping out of school (Swanson and Schneider, 1999; South, Haynie, & Bose, 2005) has showed that those who change schools are at risk of graduating and dropping out.

In the present study, dropouts reported that two lowest ranked factors concerning with dropout prevention tools were: (1) exclusion of dropouts from everyday schooling by forming special classes for dropouts and giving possibilities for distance learning, and (2) alternative schooling for dropouts with possibilities to live in boarding schools, remove from homes, home tuition and avoiding bonds with former antisocial peers. It was concluded from systematic reviews (Klima et al., 2009) that no positive outcomes were found for alternative schools (schools with separate facilities and services for students) and academic remediation to reduce school dropout.

Our findings show that perceptions of dropouts about dropout prevention tools generally support effectiveness of dropout intervention programmes cited in the literature – such as effective for dropping out were tended to be evaluated highly (school attendance without absenteeism, vocational training, employment, support of students academical strategies, supporting social network for students in schools), and such as not so effective (exclusion from school and alternative schooling) were tended to be evaluated lower.

Results of the study as listening to dropouts' voices can be utilized to help dropout prevention building in schools. Summarizing present results – prevention activities of school dropping out might include supports to improve school attendance without absence; basic score strategies connected with life and social education curriculum and social networking at school; and vocational training and employment.

Recommendations for future research – much more attention should be given to the opinions of young people themselves in the search for a solution to high rates of dropping out of school.

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## Negotiating bicultural identities in Greek society: The case of students with an immigrant background

Lida Stergiou Assistant Professor, University of Ioannina, [lstergiu@cc.uoi.gr](mailto:lstergiu@cc.uoi.gr)

### **Abstract**

*Bicultural conditions, i.e. conditions where subjects refer to two different cultures, raise crucial questions and problems concerning identity formation. In the case of Greece, these problems become more acute due to the dominant monocultural education and mentality. Even more, in the case of immigrants from Albania, which has been a highly stigmatized group, the goal of a balanced bicultural identity is very difficult to achieve. In order to examine the way bicultural identities are negotiated, the paper focuses on students with an immigrant background. More specifically, it focuses on the case of four Greek university students originating from Albania. Based on qualitative data coming from a narrative inquiry on Language Biographies, the paper gives emphasis on the sociocultural and the familial factors effecting biculturality. The aim is to provide a deeper understanding of the struggle for self-determination in terms of national, cultural and linguistic identity under bicultural conditions.*

**Key-words:** bicultural identity, acculturation, assimilation, language shift, Albanian immigrants

## Students' participation in local society's activation - citizenship education in fieldwork

Elżbieta Wołodźko [ewolodzko@moskit.uwm.edu.pl](mailto:ewolodzko@moskit.uwm.edu.pl)

### **Abstract**

*Citizenship education demands students' participation in different practices to build their cultural awareness, social responsibility and readiness for engagement in activity for social change. Such type of participation can be achieved during a process of action learning or action research – educational and investigative strategy through which students produce and apply reflective and practical knowledge (Park, 2011). Students' engagement in educational and social projects (action research) then plays a significant role in acquiring both civic competences as well as competences concerning scientific activity in the fieldwork (Babie, 2009). The third aspect of such a participation is local society members' activation in common activities carried out in order to integrate the society and to overcome local inequalities. The article presents narrative data gathered through open interviews with students who told their stories about education they experienced through participation in the (action research) project realized in a small village near Olsztyn. The data reveal the developmental process of shaping students' identity as members of community of learning and practice (Lave, Wenger, 1991).*

**Keywords:** student participation, citizenship education, fieldwork, community

## Educational contracts towards a composition of educational discourse: economic co-articulations in the formation of educational policy

Evangelgia Kalerante, University of Western Macedonia [ekalerante@uowm.gr](mailto:ekalerante@uowm.gr)

### **Abstract**

*The present paper focuses on meaningful educational practices in order to elevate educational tools and evaluate these practices in terms of effectiveness in changing economic conditions. There is an analysis of educational dimensions of the corresponding discourse which is formed on the micro-level of educational institutes and on the macro-level of political organizations. The dialectical relationships between educational and economic verbal and nonverbal phenomena are of special importance in a period when economic co-articulations are tied to education and consequently to individuals who opt for the labor market. The educational discourse and the consequent educational discourse generate a new field of perceiving market operation and the individuals' position in the economic system. Skills, discipline and fulfillment through work acquire a different content regarding the creation of new meanings in the educational policy. Economic development is associated with work preferences, choices and objects towards the formulation of "representations" in the educational environment. Given the fluid political and economic conditions the immobilization of educational programs does not apparently correspond to economic competition. Therefore, the stability of the educational meaning is theoretically ineffective. The process of breaking up which is based on an educational policy of reversal along with disturbing the educational structures in order to compose an educational model full of perspectives to individuals and societies is illustrated in the present paper. The suggested educational policy is based on the unfolding of proposals taking into account the competitive field. As a result, the educational discourse corresponds, as an intervention, to different competitive fields. In this respect, the deconstruction of educational operations not corresponding to modern conditions is the one process. The other one is tied to the articulation of flexible re-adjusted analytical and meaningful types which are also rich in knowledge and content which are interconnected to "systems" of discourse defining the changing reality.*

**Keywords:** economic co-articulations, educational policy, education contacts

## The ethics of dialogue – Habermas and interculturalism

Marina Stamatopoulou [mastama@sch.gr](mailto:mastama@sch.gr)

### **Abstract**

*Today, the massive movement of people worldwide, affecting the demographic composition of the 'host countries' of migrants and constitutes an important factor shaping the multicultural character of their societies. The main challenge that multicultural societies are now required to face mainly consists of the organization of relations between locals and foreigners in such a way that their meeting does not lead to conflict, but the creative interaction of cultures. This involves the principles of acceptance and respect towards the other -hetero. Here comes philosopher Habermas, as a supporter of the metaphysical universalism. It is a philosophical aspect about law and ethics that has as its starting point the ABSTRACT: and an autonomous ego, but this is the communication ego. According to Habermas, human language is a potential carrier of rationality, means that it is characterized by the possibility of rational understanding on matters related to the physical and social space and culture. Language is not a neutral positivist system of symbols or a simple body of news and information between the transmitter and receiver, but is intertwined with the memory that connects the past with the future and is a means of understanding the human species to its historical course and development. From the perspective of "Ethics of Dialogue," education develops individual abilities to participate in dialogue processes, which frame rationally and social relations. Within this inter-subjective communication, the right to confrontation and contestation through the public presentation of arguments is given. It is worth noting that this educational dimension becomes especially dynamic condition of multiculturalism. After all, the aim of intercultural education is the approach of the "other culture" with critical attitude in everything established and consolidated. Habermas is deeply influenced by the "linguistic turn" in philosophy and social theory and hopes in the prevalence of universal knowledge and morality.*

**Keywords:** Ethics, dialogue, Habermas, interculturalism



## Civic education for sustainable development in the view of the UNESCO-decade 2005-2014

Andreas Brunhold University of Augsburg [andreas.brunold@phil.uni-augsburg.de](mailto:andreas.brunold@phil.uni-augsburg.de)

### **Abstract**

*Since the 1990's, the principle of sustainable development has increasingly been adopted by policy makers and civil societies all over the world. With the acceptance of this principle, the significance of education for sustainable development (ESD) has also been recognised. Increased awareness of the problems of environmental challenges, globalisation and poverty has meant that the concepts of environmental education, global learning, and education in development policy have been consistently oriented towards sustainability. This leads to an increased awareness that globalisation processes must be shaped in accordance with the objectives of sustainable development, both nationally and internationally. By encouraging the idea of sustainability to take root in all areas of education systems, the World Decade of Education for Sustainable Development from 2005 to 2014 was intended to take significant steps towards greater educational sustainability. The curriculum of civic education for sustainable development and global learning should, therefore of course, very close-linked to global development and globalisation processes, which are bringing about major changes for all of us, both in our immediate and our extended environments, as well as in the different countries of the northern and in the southern hemisphere. Therefore, the learning area of global development objectives is structured in an inter-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary manner. It carries the essential features of a domain: a delimited object area, a specific approach to the world, and the reference to a basic teaching concept in the educational policy traditions of one-world or development-policy education and global learning. Because of that, the curricula of civic education for sustainable development and global learning are to be seen within the mandate of the United Nations educational policy.*

**Keywords:** civic education curricula, education for sustainable development

## Educating in post-democracy: challenges for citizenship in the new dark ages

Maria Nikolakaki, University of the Peloponnese [manik@uop.gr](mailto:manik@uop.gr)

### **Abstract**

*Eight hundred years after the monumental Magna Carta agreement in which citizenship rights were recognized, all signs ominously point in the opposite direction. Today governments from Canada to Australia, from the United States to New Zealand and others besides, a new paradigm of “citizenship” is being radically rearticulated especially under the guise of the omnipresent “terrorist threat” that has seriously eroded basic human rights. In short, as any reasonable analysis shows, we are now living in an age that can be accurately terms, “post-democratic”. By focusing my analysis on “citizenship” and the inherent rights in which this legal status consists, a status that is the foundation on which any democratic nation-state rests, I will show that legal protections have been seriously compromised. Without the legal protections of “citizenship” democracy turns into authoritarianism or worse. I will go on to identify and characterize how education (which has always been about educating the citizen of the future) too has been correspondingly compromised in lockstep with the erosion of legal protections of citizens. My paper thus raises the following questions: “What does it mean, under this new post-democratic condition to educate and to struggle for reclaiming basic human and citizen rights? What will it mean to educate children stripped of citizenship owing especially to the growing immigration crisis, continuous wars, and financial problems spawning from increased austerity measures? How can education be inclusive, when the law is increasingly purging citizens into the zone of “non-citizen”? And, how does this condition impact education and pedagogical activities within the space where public space is dramatically shrinking to the pressures of corporate privatizing trends?*

## “The impact of economic crisis on the regularity of school’s functioning and daily life”

Papaloi Evangelia & Dema Theodosia, Hellenic Open University, School of Humanities, Educational Management - [evipapaloi@gmail.com](mailto:evipapaloi@gmail.com) | [std071396@ac.eap.gr](mailto:std071396@ac.eap.gr)

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **1. Research Framework**

The outbreak of the economic crisis caused some cracks to the general framework of our educational system and schools functioning: despite the rhetoric of progress, the Ministry of Education took measures which, aimed at reducing the functional costs without taking into account the deterioration of services and the social impact of these changes on schools’ daily life and functioning.

It is important to note that school as an institution aims to transfer the values of each society so as to ensure its future while it acts as a socio-cultural factor of renewal and progress and, is in dialectical relationship with the community (Xochelis, P., 1991). In addition, conditions of teaching should be such as to promote the best use of the effectiveness of learning and enable teachers to focus on their professional tasks (ILO-UNESCO, 2008).

The main purpose of this study is to explore teachers’ and school leaders’ opinions regarding the impact of the economic crisis on the proper functioning, the attitudes and the cooperation within the educational units.

#### **2. School functioning in times of crisis**

The term of “crisis” has as a starting point the concept of distinguishing as well as the ability to see well, to separate one thing from the other, to separate a whole to its elementary parts. Moreover, it also has the meaning of forming or expressing opinions and, the sense of change of a state or a disease” (Tsiantis, K., 2010).

In the Greek society, the crisis has generated severe problems in various fields of our daily life (unemployment, stress related to professional issues, raise of depression and suicides rates, drug addiction, usury, health services functioning with few staff and low funding, demographic decline, etc., World Health Organization (WHO), 2009, ETUSE, 2012, EUROFOUND, 2012, Marcus, R., Gavrilovic, M., 2010, Dekker, S., & Schaufeli, W. 1995). Consequently, within the Greek families, the deterioration of living standards due to the economic crisis has a great impact on children who experience feelings of uncertainty and eventually of anger that enhance the manifestation of violent and aggressive behavior at school. Finally, the crisis severely affected the education system, which was vulnerable because changes that had to be made in order to make school efficient and flexible had not been undertaken or completed.

Certainly, the crisis in Greece has brought forced changes to the school culture and, it is obvious that, these dynamic processes of social differentiation have altered job’s characteristics and

teachers' working conditions. Briefly, the outbreak of the economic crisis caused some cracks to the general framework of our educational system as well as to the functioning and daily life at schools as it follows:

- Changes in educational policy (level of school's autonomy, professional development opportunities, management models, evaluation system, pedagogic & didactic methods, etc.)
- Reduction of funding (maintenance of infrastructure, school size, school networking, etc.)
- Changes in teachers' working conditions (salaries reduction, increased workload, lack of staff, continuous changing of work environment, emotional fatigue, etc.)
- Students' delinquent behavior related with problems at students' families (unemployment, stress, delinquent behaviors, etc.)

From the above, we can conclude that the school's daily life and functioning is not static but is affected by changes in the broader social environment and, that, effective school improvement necessitates pressure and support from both external and internal sources (Fullan, 2001). Moreover, school can be considered as an open social system (Zavlanos, 1999) that interacts and communicates constantly with the immediate or wider social environment in which it operates (Bourandas, 2005). Hence, expanding on this reflection, environmental influences -which are regarded as inputs or influencing the inputs- interact with internal school factors inside the black box processes and give the products, or the outputs (Pasiardis, 2004).

As already mentioned, low funding has led to schools' mergers, without taking into consideration the compatibility of existing cultures and other demographic factors and, this in compatibility appears to have created serious cultural conflict problems ("culture clashes", Greenberg, & Baron, 2013). In addition, crisis brought accompanied measures and strategies (Greenberg & Baron, 2013) as well as transformational changes (Pasiardis, 2004) in schools' daily life.

To sum up, crisis that penetrated our society and influenced the political and value system cannot have left unaffected school. Through this research, we'll attempt to explore whether the undoubted changes in school inputs (reduced funding and staffing as well as psycho-emotional effects on all actors involved) affected its regularity and daily functioning.

## **Methodology**

### **1. Aims and objectives – Methodological Tools- Sample**

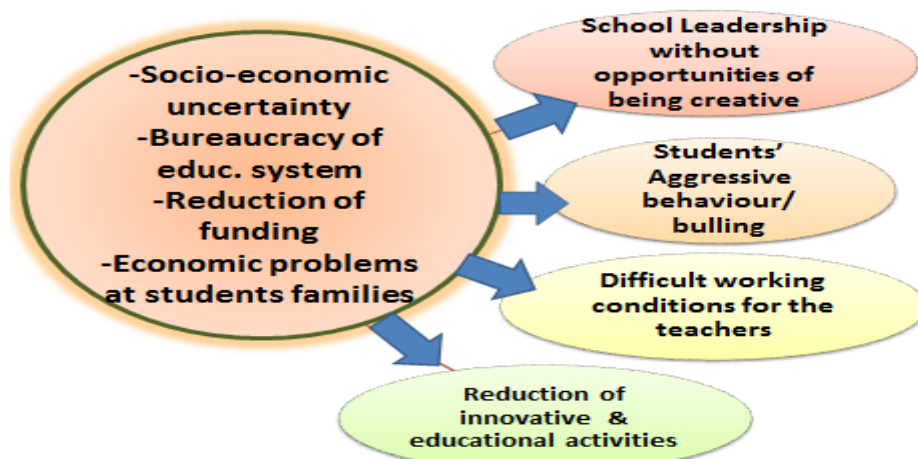
The sample of this research was consisted of 104 teachers and 5 school leaders working at secondary schools in Athens. The principals' views were collected with semi-structured

interviews, while, the teachers' ones<sup>18</sup> were investigated through a questionnaire created for the purposes of this research.

## **2. Directors' Perceptions from the Analysis of Qualitative Data**

It appears that principals' points of view present many similarities. Most of them refer to the social impact of the crisis on students' attitudes and behaviors and, to severe financial problems (low funding) that nowadays face schools. The main deterioration seems to regard students' behaviors. Apart from that, two directors of our sample state that many students have difficulties in participating in actions and events that require financial contribution. As far as relations between teachers are concerned, it seems that there is no clear evidence whether or not there exist any changes. Finally, as far as perception of their role is concerned, all of them – in direct or indirect way- underline that, often in practice, among others, dominates the bureaucratic dimension of their role.

To sum up, according to principals, the socio-economic dimension of crisis affects school's daily life in the following aspects (see Scheme 1):



**Scheme 1**

## **3. Teachers' Perceptions from the Analysis of Quantitative Data**

The main exogenous factors recorded that affect school's regularity and functioning are the general education system, the school funding and continuous personnel changes. As far as the general education system is concerned, we can see that teachers' opinions correspond with

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<sup>18</sup>Interestingly, the level of teachers' studies seems to be high: almost one out of four participants hold either a master's (22.1%) or doctorate (1.9%) or second degree (1%). The level of studies combined with the high percentage (89.4%) of those who have attended various trainings are likely indicative of teachers' concern for professional development.

principals' opinions. This fact underlines the extent to which Greek educational system, due to its centralization, is connected with school's daily functioning, through laws and circulars, (Ifanti, 1995). More broadly, teachers may also include on "general education system," all aggravating changes brought by the economic crisis in their professional daily life (see Table 1).

External Factors Ranking	N	Mean	sd	Min	Max	Percentiles		
						25th	50 <sup>th</sup> (median)	75th
General Educational System	83	1.69	1.125	1	5	1.00	1.00	2.00
School Funding	83	3.12	1.310	1	5	2.00	3.00	4.00
Impact of Crisis on Students' Families	83	3.45	1.118	1	5	3.00	4.00	4.00
Interventions by Administrative Agents	83	3.51	1.130	1	5	3.00	4.00	4.00
Constant Changes of Personnel at Schools	83	3.25	1.529	1	5	2.00	3.00	5.00

**Table 1**

Then, first we will see, the impact of crisis on emotional–psychological factors, such as teachers' emotional stress and feelings of burnout, on the school's infrastructure, on students' delinquent behaviour and on teachers' attitude towards their professional development.

Interestingly, teachers in their majority (>65%) answered to questions detecting whether and how the crisis has affected them personally, that they have not been affected. More specifically, most of them say they have not been affected by crisis with respect to the following issues: "the way they exercise their teaching" (73.5%), "their willingness to cooperate with colleagues" (73.5%), and the "personal commitment for their school" (71%). Great charge appears to lie in teachers' feelings regarding job satisfaction and, the way they carry out their extra-curricular tasks. There is, however, an overall positive effect; mainly in terms of desire to offer and to do volunteering work (see Table 2).

To which extent crisis has affected:	N	Very negative	negative	Not affected	Positively affected	Very Positively affected
Your personal commitment towards your school	101	4	15,8	71,3	7,9	1
The way you exercise your teaching	102	2,9	14,7	73,5	8,8	0
The way you carry out your extra-curricular tasks	102	3,9	19,6	70,6	5,9	0
The way you perceive your role as a teacher	102	1	23,5	65,7	8,8	1
Job satisfaction feelings	102	10,8	31,4	44,1	11,8	2
Your willingness to cooperate with colleagues	102	0	13,7	73,5	11,8	1
Desire to offer	102	0	7,9	64,7	22,5	4,9
Desire to do volunteer work	102	3,9	16,7	49	23,5	6,9

**Table 2**

Taking into account all of the responses, we can see a moderate impact of the crisis on the school routine as seven (7) of the seventeen (17) factors seem to aggravate. These factors are both of emotional – psychological (such as emotional stress and feelings of burnout) and of material nature. For example, the greatest burden appears in the general working conditions, including all the effects mentioned in the theoretical part, followed by infrastructure and students' academic performance and delinquent behavior and, teachers' concern for professional development.

Finally, we detect the extent to which the crisis affected the various factors that affect school's daily functioning. It seems that, solidarity between teachers, principal's supportive behavior and, relationships between teachers and students seem to have not been much affected by crisis. Since these are the three-main climate forming factors, these results appear to reinforce our findings regarding the fact that the majority believes that the school climate has not been affected (see Table 3 & Table 4).

<b>In your opinion, the economic crisis, in what extent has affected</b>	<b>Affected in a Negative Way</b>	<b>Did Not Much Affected</b>	<b>Affected in a Positive Way</b>
School Climate	45.5	53.5	1
General Working Conditions	67.7	32.3	0
Infrastructures and Equipment in Your School	55.4	43.6	1
Cooperation Between Teachers	3.9	80.2	5.9
Disagreements Between Teachers and the Director	19.3	78.2	2
Director's Support Towards the Teachers	7.1	81.8	11.1
Relations Between Teachers and the Parents of their Students	34	52	14
Director's Control Towards the Teachers	16	81	3
Teachers' Relations with their Students	10.9	76.2	12.9
Students' Delinquent Behavior	49.5	45.5	5
Students' Academic Achievements	53	45	2
Teachers' Willingness for Professional Development	46.5	43.6	9.9
Feelings of Solidarity Between the Teachers	9	69	22
<b>Cont'd</b>			
Teachers' Feeling Burnt-Out	65.3	28.7	5.9
Teachers' Emotional Fatigue	69.3	22.8	7.9
The Number of Innovative Activities	31	55	14
The Number of Educational Visits	24.2	69.7	6.1

**Table 3**

<b>The Impact of the Economic Crisis</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>mean</b>	<b>sd</b>	<b>Var</b>
Solidarity Between Teachers	100	-1	1	18	0.1300	0.54411	0.296
Director's Support Towards the Teachers	99	-1	1	4	0.0404	0.42664	0.182
Teachers' Relations with the Students	101	-1	1	2	0.0198	0.48949	0.240
Cooperation Between Teachers	101	-1	1	-8	-0.0792	0.44007	0.194
Director's Control Towards the Teachers	100	-1	1	-13	-0.1300	0.4185	0.175
The Number of Innovative Activities	100	-1	1	-17	-0.1700	0.65219	0.425
Disagreement Between Teachers and the Parents of their Students	101	-1	1	-18	-0.1782	0.43350	0.188
The Number of Educational Visits	99	-1	1	-18	-0.1818	0.52223	0.273
The Relations Between Teachers and the Parents of their Students	100	-1	1	-20	-0.2000	0.66667	0.444
Teachers' Willingness for Professional Growth	101	-1	1	-37	-0.3663	0.65913	0.434
School Climate	101	-1	1	-45	-0.4455	0.51914	0.270
Students' Delinquent Behavior	101	-1	1	-45	-0.4455	0.59119	0.350
Students' Academic Achievements	100	-1	1	-51	-0.5100	0.54114	0.293
Infrastructures and Equipment	101	-1	1	-55	-0.5446	0.52009	0.270
Teachers' Burn-Out	101	-1	1	-60	-0.5941	0.60296	0.364
Emotional Fatigue Teachers'	101	-1	1	-62	-0.6139	0.63119	0.399
General Working Conditions	99	-1	0	-67	-0.6768	0.47009	0.221

**Table 4****Comparing Quantitative and Qualitative Data Results**

Certainly, a general comment would be the different perspective between teachers and principals. Teachers, as professionals, underline crisis' effects on infrastructure, students' academic achievement and, finally on students' delinquent behavior.

On the other hand, principals, as responsible for a school's functioning, mentioned mostly students' behavioral issues and their difficulty in participating at events demanding their financial contribution. Principals acknowledge and teachers emphasize the deterioration of their general working conditions. To be more specific, principals, although they assume that the climate would have been affected by the crisis, they appear to believe that, in their schools, there are no any noticeable changes in teachers' behavior. Respectively, teachers do not refer to any noticeable changes in terms of school climate because of the crisis. On the contrary, they underline a certain negative charge on their general working conditions and feelings of burnout, while, in matters of personal feelings, the majority of teachers does not consider that it has affected.

**Conclusions**

It is important to note that, the aim of school is to transfer, through education, learning, and socialization, cognitive and cultural achievements among young people so that they will be able to cope with the roles they adopt as adults. Furthermore, the process of decision-making on the aims of the organization is at the heart of educational management and, school aims are strongly influenced by pressures from the external environment (Bush, T. 2011). It has to be underlined that schools should provide the necessary support to teachers by ensuring appropriate physical conditions, evaluation system & feedback for organizational development as well as by allowing




the diagnosis and treatment of difficulties regarding the educational process in order to encourage quality teaching and active participation of all persons involved (UNESCO, 1999).

Through our research it was revealed that in times of crisis, a school's functioning is adapted to the new socio-economic reality while the teacher as a social subject and as a scientist-researcher is subject to various changes.

Our results provide evidence of the fact that the economic crisis has not affected a school's climate as well as the relationships between teachers and principals, but, has borne the overall working conditions, the teachers' emotions and feelings of burnout (see table 5). Interestingly, the economic changes observed in the Greek reality did not have significant impact on educational practices: within the organizational context, in addition to formal structure, also informal relations exist, which are crucial and seem to have not been altered by crisis. Thus, the vibrations of the crisis are internalized and assimilated by the school's everyday life and practices while the school operates as a community of responsibility and as a learning community. The findings of our research reveal crisis' negative impact on:

- A school's infrastructure, practices and equipment. Principals refer to the negative social impact of crisis and the decreased funding of their school whereas teachers: underline the difficulties deriving from the general education system's latest changes and the decreased funding.
- Students' academic performance and behaviour. At this point, it has to be mentioned that, due to the increasing unemployment and the continuing reduction of family income, children experience feelings of uncertainty and anger, which enhance the expression of violent and aggressive behavior at school (Stuckler, D. et al., 2009).

Economic Crisis' Impact on School's Functioning and Daily Life	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uncertainty</li><li>• Changes in Educational Policy</li><li>• Reduction of Funding/ Maintenance of Infrastructure</li><li>• Salaries Reduction, Increased Workload, Lack of Staff, Continuous Changing of Work Environment, Emotional Fatigue</li><li>• Problems at Students' Families (Unemployment, Stress, Depression, Aggressive Behaviors, etc.)</li></ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teachers' Stress &amp; Dissatisfaction impact on their performance, lack of interest and passive behavior, reduction of commitment</li><li>• The General School Climate has not been much affected</li><li>• Difficulties in the Relations with Students</li><li>• Lack of Equipment</li><li>• Class Climate/Relations with Students</li><li>• Students' Delinquent Behavior</li></ul>

**Table 5**

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## The impact of school excursions from Greece to other member countries of the E.U. on the formation of European Identity

S.-M. Nikolaou, E. Krommyda, V. Barmpa, Nap. Papageorgiou Department of Education, University of Ioannina (Greece) [snikola@cc.uoi.gr](mailto:snikola@cc.uoi.gr)

### **Abstract:**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the role of school excursions from Greece to other member countries of the E.U. in the development of European Identity. More specifically, the research focuses on the long-lasting school excursions that take place during the senior school year in Greece, having as a destination one or more member countries of the E.U. These excursions bring Greek students in contact with other European cultural, behavioral and social characteristics, leading to the assumption that this kind of interactions form and further develop European Identity. To investigate the main question of this research, a Focus Group was conducted with the participation of six graduates that have been in such excursions. The Focus Group is a qualitative method of social inquiry that can provide quality data produced by interaction and lead to an understanding of more complex and dialectical data. The conversation was based on three general questions that concerned the meaning of European Identity, the experiences acquired in the excursions and their assessment of the impact these excursions have had on the formation and development of European Identity. The results of the study, demonstrated that school excursions, in other member countries of the E.U., amplify the primary Greek national identity through comparisons and evaluations between cultural characteristics among Greece and the visited countries. The European Identity is not formed only by the contact with the visited countries, but also via a complex combination of rejecting Greece's European profile while at the same time, Europe is perceived as a structure based on ancient Greek culture.

**Key words:** European Identity, School Excursion, Culture, Focus Group, Greece

## Challenges, profiles and roles of leaders at private and public secondary schools

Papaloi Evangelia & Papakitsou Vasiliki, Hellenic Open University, School of Humanities, Educational Management - [evipapaloi@gmail.com](mailto:evipapaloi@gmail.com) | [vasiliki.i.papakitsou@gmail.com](mailto:vasiliki.i.papakitsou@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

This study attempts to shed light on and explore the perceptions and the beliefs of teachers and school managers of public and private secondary schools in Athens regarding the role and identities of leaders as well as their importance and contribution to the successful educational management. Based on the assumption that the concepts of self and identity are shaped within the context of complex social interactions, we accept that the individual is enriched by the collective, sets up and builds its social identity through its relationships with others: the group is a tool through which an individual can imagine, decide, legitimize and convince other of their viewpoint (Blanchet & Trognon, 1994). This study consists of two parts: the theoretical and the empirical one. Thus, in the theoretical framework, we analyze the leader's profile, professional identities and roles within the educational unit. More specifically: the general framework of a leader's social identity according to the demands of his/her role and the expectations of the others, a leader's role of shaping an internal school policy in a constantly changing context, a leader's skills/traits of personality for effective school management. The sample used for this research consists of 40 teachers (20 serving in a public and 20 serving in a private school) and 2 school leaders working in secondary schools in Athens (one public and one private). The principals' beliefs were collected through semi-structured interviews, while the teachers' ones were investigated through a questionnaire. According to the results, the basic assumption of the research that the role of leadership is crucial and contributes significantly to the whole effectiveness and efficiency of the school was verified. Moreover, it seems that the school leaders who work in private school units are more efficient than those working in public schools; constructing, thus, a professional identity which gives them the opportunity to develop and apply their leadership skills.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### ***Research Framework***

Education is one of the most fundamental institutions of our society and public life, characterizing and reflecting national policy. Moreover, the school as an institution is an integral part of the social reality and is composed of many elements that interact with each other creating an environment which is characterized by complexity. It is important to note that, due to the Greek's centralized educational system, schools have little autonomy as it constitutes the end recipient of decisions regarding the educational policy issues. Within this diverse context, educational managers face with increased speed changes and reforms to which the response requires high professional ethics, knowledge, skills and responsibilities.

Certainly, educational leadership and the way it is practiced is connected -directly or indirectly- with the quality of educational experiences and learning achievements while, simultaneously affects the climate, communication and cooperation within the educational unit (E. Papaloi, 2012). Thus, nowadays, it is absolutely necessary to develop a new model of educational management and administration, putting the emphasis on the collaboration, the active participation, as well as on the responsibility and the leadership skills development.

The purpose of this research is to analyse the importance and the role of “leadership” in the administration of educational units through the investigation of directors’ and teachers’ opinions, at private and public schools. In particular, the scope of this research is to analyze leader’s profile, professional identities and roles within the educational unit of both private and public secondary schools in Athens.

Therefore, through this research we attempt to explore and describe:

- the general framework of leader’s profile according to the demands of his/her role and the expectations of the others,
- leader’s role of shaping an internal school policy in a constantly changing context,
- leader’s skills/traits of personality for effective school management.
- eventual differences between directors’ and teachers’ opinions, of both private and public schools.
- differences between private and public schools as seen by teachers & principals

### ***Effective internal policy of the educational unit***

#### **Educational leadership**

The main characteristics of the educational system in Greece are its centralized character and its monolithic and complex structure, which is based mostly on the bureaucratic model. In this point, the "internal educational policy of the educational unit is defined by Mavrogiorgos (1997) as the need for planning, programming, evaluating, reporting, intervening and critical supporting of the changes proposed centrally by the same educational unit. Certainly, for training units, the existence of an efficient management and leadership is a prerequisite, in order to accomplish their purpose: the role of school leadership is crucial and contributes significantly to the whole effectiveness and efficiency of the school (Akrivou et al, 2011, Andreou & Papakonstantinou, 1994).

Interestingly, the coding of leadership behavior has been the subject of many researches (see Quinn, 1996). Hence, the growth in the importance of school leadership has been accompanied by theory development, with new models and more sophisticated conceptual frameworks emerging and established approaches being redefined and further developed (Walker, 2010, Theofilidis, 2005). More specifically, in the field of education, leaders are called to face complex, paradox and ambiguous situations and, according to Leithwood, K., et al. (2004), the role of school directors- leaders has four dimensions (emotional/cognitive/organizational aspect & family) which affect students’ achievements. In addition, the term of “school principal” (or school leader) determines a distinguished part of a school unit on which a managerial executive is responsible for the implementation of specific activities. According to Katsaros (2008), the school leader has a key- role regarding the creation and support of core values and beliefs shaping the culture of the educational unit. In addition, he is in charge also of the diffusion of these values and beliefs in the local society, while, at the same time, he/she has to evaluate

others and be self-evaluated, by playing a leading part in the processes of the internal evaluation of the school unit.

Various categorizations and typologies have been developed regarding school leadership, such as the democratic-authoritarian-enabling model, the transactional model (Hoy & Miskel, 2008), the transformational model (Geyer & Steyer, 1998), the authentic model (Luthans & Avolio 2003), etc. and, many skills have been connected with effective school leadership respectively (p.e. feeling of personal mission, self-awareness, control over their acts and emotions, lasting mood for growth, understanding of what is important and what is not, be creative and independent, know his/herr goals and how to achieve them, etc.). To sum up, the effective school leader<sup>19</sup> has to comply with the following:

- transmits his vision for the organization
- has self-awareness
- is strongly motivated and has a high expectation of the others
- is distinguished for his humility
- is devoted to his school
- participates actively in all processes paying attention to everyone
- has both theoretical and empirical knowledge
- understands that every situation is unique
- earns the respect and trust of his subordinates
- supports the professional development of the teachers

### **Roles & Interactions within the School Unit**

Certainly, being a member of various social groups is a fundamental characteristic of the human species. Several studies in the field have demonstrated that we spend a great part of our lives within groups and, according to Mead (1934), the self is the result of the internalization of group's social behaviours and expectations. Furthermore, it seems that, within the organization, people participate and/or lead groups for many reasons: being a member or being the leader of a professional group that is considered to be important makes people feel strong enough to face various challenges and stresses their self-esteem. It is true that, when the group operates effectively, it can be a reference point for its members, a source of development, of learning and professional satisfaction since; individuals perceive themselves not directly, but only by adopting the point of view of the others.

More broadly, individuals-members of a working group tend to build sharing knowledge, that is to say, a similar representation of the world, coherent with common norms and values and, this normalization function is spontaneous in all groups (Blanchet, A., Trognon, A., 1994). The notion of interaction is a concept that allows us to update, materialize and, in some way,

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<sup>19</sup> These characteristics and skills are referring mostly to the “transformational” school leadership style

operationalize the mediation between the individual and society to the extent that it occurs between individuals in the presence of one to the other (Baugnet, 1998). Extending this reflection, we can assume that the self is a cognitive structure of recognition and interpretation of the information, which has as a function, the regulation of social experience (Markus & Zajonc, 1981) and that roles are behaviour models related to a position or function in the social system.

According to Hollander (1980), to lead a professional group is to help a group achieving its goals by reinforcing its needs for coherence and identity. Consequently, leadership's locus is in the intersection of three factors: the leader, the context, and the participants. Based on the acknowledgement that, self, profile and identity are shaped in the context of complex social interactions, we accept that, the school leader is enriched by the collective, sets up and builds his social identity and profile through its relationships with the others: *the group is a tool to imagine, to decide, to legitimize and convince the person's views* (A. Blanchet & A. Trognon, 1994). In this point, it has to be mentioned that, within the organizational framework, in many cases, it appears that leadership is limited in the simple exercise of power as dictated by the position (Kantas, 1998).

Therefore, we can assume that there is a clear distinction between (school) leader and (school) manager and, context's role is extremely important: among others, leader's profile is based on his vision for school development, his positive attitude towards difficulties, his persistence on forming a powerful culture, his motivation skills, his practice to lead by example and, his ability to shape new leading personalities (Barnett et al., 2000, Goleman, 2000, Bourantas et al., 2007). On the other hand, manager has the legitimate power to face the complexity within the school unit and is present-oriented by putting the emphasis on organizational stability, control and effective functioning.

Thus, through this research, we'll attempt to shed light and explore the perceptions of teachers and school principals at both public and private secondary schools in Athens regarding:

- The role & the profile of the school leaders
- Their importance & contribution to the successful school management & leadership

## **Methodology**

### ***Aims and objectives – Methodological Tools- Sample***

As it has already been mentioned, the aim of this research is to record all elements and relations that are developed within the school unit in order to highlight the factors which facilitate the effective school management. This research took place in one private and one public school in Athens. The method that was selected as appropriate for our research is the triangulation. In brief, in this research, our questionnaire was completed by eighty (80) teachers from one public and one private secondary school (40 teachers from each school respectively), while, semi-structured interviews were taken from the two (2) school principals respectively.

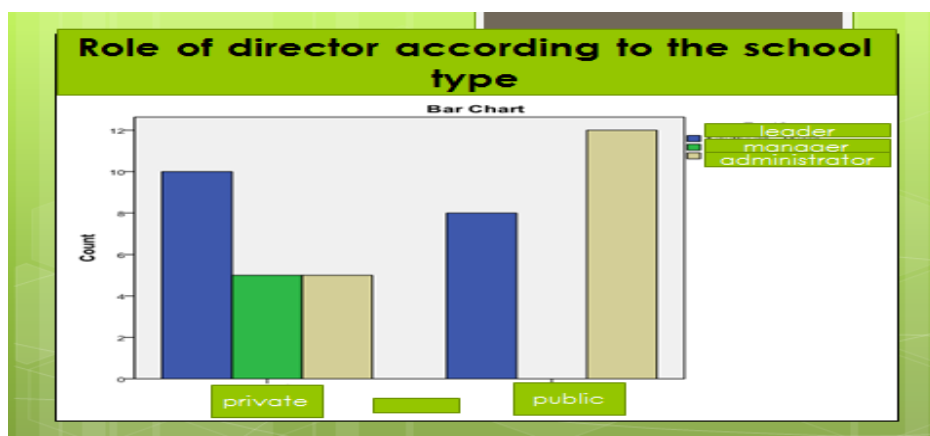


## Perceptions from the Analysis of Quantitative & Qualitative Data

### Quantitative Data - Teachers' opinions

Important difference exists in the description of the profile of the principal-leader. The leadership styles that, according to the teachers are applied are, by percentage of 30%, the supporting and the leadership based on the responsibility, while they also emphasize on the leadership style with control with percentage of 25%.

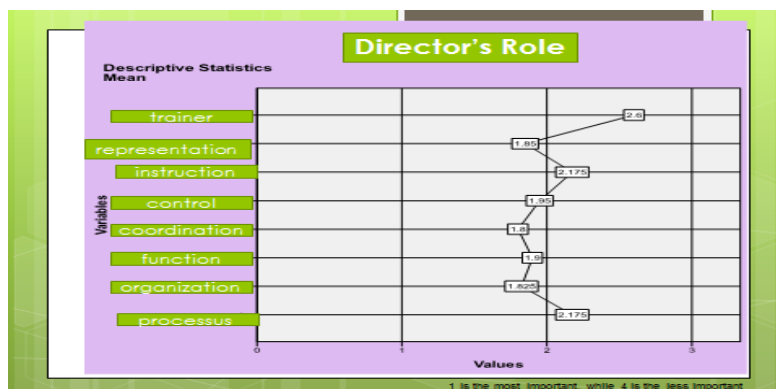
Teachers are differentiated considerably when asked if their principal has the personality and the ability to affect and motivate his employees so that they make the right decisions. Teachers of private schools gave particularly positive answers. On the contrary, teachers of the public-sector present higher percentages in the negative answers. There is a big percent of teachers (45%) that considers their principal as a leader and another equally big part of teachers who considers their principal as an administrative manager. 45% of the sample supports the idea that their principal has the ability and the personality to influence them in a great degree in order to make right decisions. Judging from the results, it can be said that principal's work at the private school unit is described as more effective than that of the principal at a public school unit (see Diagram 1).



**Diagram 1**

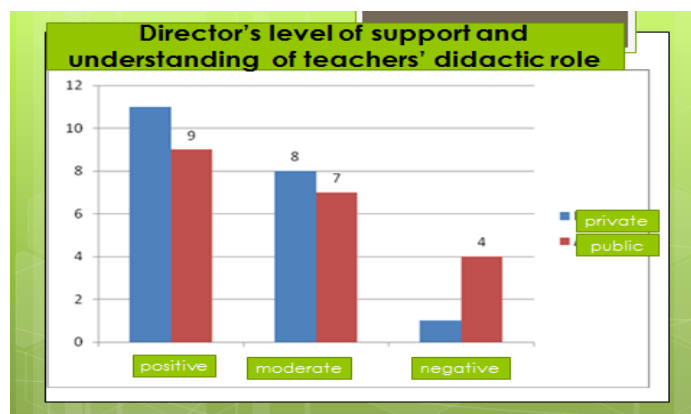
Interestingly, teachers seem to consider that principal's role is more coordinative than educational. This means that, teachers wish for their director to be in charge of the team and to ensure the unity of the efforts at the implementation of a common task. To be more specific, teachers at the private sector appear to support that their principal has more leading abilities than the principal of the public school.

In addition, teachers are differentiated considerably when asked if their principal has the personality and the ability to affect and motivate his employees so that they make the right decisions. Teachers of the private school gave particularly positive answers. On the contrary, teachers of the public-sector present higher percentages in the negative answers (Diagram 2). At the public school, there are limits for teachers at the decision-making process, although they would like to participate in a more active way.



**Diagram 2**

The majority of teachers working at the private school have answered that their principal perceives the problems that they face at the implementation of their work. On the other hand, teachers of the public-school unit present important percentage (30%) in the option for “little”, which means a small degree of perception of their problems. Regarding the collaboration with their school principal, it seems that there exists a more positive approach at the private school than at the public school. At the public-school teachers report that the support on behalf of their principal is poor, while only a small percentage of teachers at the private school reports the same and, a high percentage declares that there exists some kind of support (see Diagram 3).



**Diagram 3**

### **Qualitative Data - Directors' Opinions**

It is important to note that, at the private school, the principal can act in a more autonomous way and, to a large extent, decisions are made collectively.

As far as the perceptions of their role are concerned, we notice that the principal of a public school refers in a negative way both towards his working conditions and the behaviour of certain teachers. On the contrary, the principal of a private school of our sample appears to feel and act more freely and has a wider spectrum of authority.

Moreover, there is a great difference in the way the two principals perceive the problems that teachers face when carrying out their duties. In public schools, a principal's duties appear to be more centre-focused placing emphasis on "monitoring". On the contrary, a principal of a private school appears to have a different profile and leadership style and underlining words such as "knowledge", "excellent internal working environment" and "team work". Moreover, he refers to his role as a "mentor" with a "strong" opinion on everything concerning the school function and as a "leader" who can coordinate the teams. On the contrary, the principal at the public school tries to express his "vision" by participating in all the school's activities and setting himself as an example.

As far as the leadership style is concerned, the research has concluded that, to a large extent, principals have a coordinative role; they seem to have a supporting and responsible leadership style with mentoring abilities.

### **Conclusions**

The results of this research revealed that there is inter-dependence between personal and institutional factors and that the leader's role of shaping an internal school policy and efficiency in a constantly changing context depends on both institutional/ environmental<sup>20</sup>, and, personal factors.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, it seems that there exist considerable differences between public and private schools and, that the institutional framework acts as a catalyst on principal's profile.

Concluding, the results from the quantitative data demonstrated that the principal of the private school performs his duties with certain limits of autonomy while, the principal at the public school has a rather procedural role (see diagram 4). These clues are confirmed by the qualitative research underlining that the principal of the private school appears to be more effective than that of the public school. In addition, it seems that he has the autonomy to determine and plan actions such

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<sup>20</sup> Institutional/Environmental Factors (Institutional framework & interactions between all actors involved, the overall socio-economic & cultural situation, the level of autonomy)

<sup>21</sup> **Personal Factors** (Cognitive skills, administrative & organisational skills, interpersonal skills, scientific knowledge)

as the evaluation system and other initiatives. On the other hand, the principal of the public school, due to the restrictions imposed by the educational system, cannot undertake initiatives beyond the regulatory framework (see diagram 5). Certainly, as Levine (2005) underlines, *today, principals have the job not only of managing schools, but also of leading them through an era of profound social change that has required fundamental rethinking of what schools do and how they do it and, this is an assignment few school administrators have been prepared to undertake.*

<b>Public School Principals' Opinions</b>	<b>Private School Principals' Opinions</b>
Rather negative working conditions, rather inappropriate behavior of some teachers	The principal has more freedom to act and wider authorities. Working conditions are described as "ideal".
Relationships are rather typical	As a result, he has good relationship with teachers and, is undertaking many initiatives that he wouldn't have taken if he were principal in a public educational unit.
He tries to share his vision by giving the example	
He acts as a supervisor	He acts as a mentor & coordinator
In a large degree, the framework of the educational policy is limited, without leaving much space for initiatives	He puts the emphasis on the team work

**Diagram 4. Leadership as seen by the School Principals**

<b>Public School Teachers' Opinions</b>	<b>Private School Teachers' Opinions</b>
The educational system puts certain limits to teachers, to a large extent	There are a few limits regarding educational policy
Their principal's role is to manage, coordinate and transact	Their principal's role is coordinative but with multiple duties
Moderate effectiveness of the principal - "Working environment is positive but relationships are rather typical"	Their principal is very effective - "Working environment" is supportive and flexible
They are not satisfied with their professional development opportunities	Teachers are, up to point, satisfied with their professional development opportunities

**Diagram 5. Leadership as seen by the School Teachers**

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*Poster Presentations:*

## THE DESIGN and UTILITY OF A MULTICULTURAL CALENDAR IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Athanasios “Thane” Katsillis, University of Edinburgh [thanekats@yahoo.com](mailto:thanekats@yahoo.com)

### **ABSTRACT:**

This original cartoon-inspired-poster presents a multicultural calendar framework that can be used by teachers in their classroom whether they have students from diverse backgrounds or not. In the latter instance it can be used to make children aware of the diversity that exists in the world they live in. Holiday traditions, special times of year, cultural or religious events—everyone has stories to share about important calendar events. A multicultural calendar enables the teacher to recognize the cultural heritage of all the students so that they can talk about the many traditions that each of one brings to their classroom, school and community. Using a medium student friendly which recognizes important holidays and events can help create an atmosphere that shows respect and inclusion. :

**Keywords:** cartoon art, calendar, identity, multicultural classroom

The Poster is available at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/eyfztc2xi7prc1k/calender%2BholidaysA4.jpg?dl=0>

On the next page is a version of the poster with reduced clarity, following the above link leads to a crisper version.





## Unity and Respect in Times of Crisis: The Importance of Solidarity and Alliance.

Angeliki Mexia

### **Abstract:**

The school is an important mechanism of social inclusion for most children, but also a social exclusion mechanism for children from poor family backgrounds with specific cultural conditions. Racism is a result of influences, cultural arrogance and discrimination. It is passed from parent to child, often subconsciously, and thus reproduced and magnified in schools. This can lead to negative emotions and behavior, such as racist violence, observed mainly against foreign students, resulting in stigmatization and their marginalization. The school as an institution should contribute to prevailing living conditions and humanizing society. Children should understand and tolerate those who are different and "alien". According to all of the above, we understand that such racism and exclusion of minorities has resulted in violence issues such as bullying in schools. Violence occurs on school premises but is not necessarily a social phenomenon. Just a few decades ago, physical force by a teacher against a student constituted an acceptable behavior, inseparable from the practice of the discipline at school (Artinopoulou, 2010, 1). Today, this ideology in relation to the violence against minors as a form of discipline has been abandoned and the protection of children's rights has become a priority. The aim of this project is to firstly record the phenomena of racism in Greek school through the presentation of interviews and live examples of primary teachers, school violence forms, characteristics and consequences. Secondly, to review the Greek institutional framework (laws - decrees) and states which address this phenomenon.

## “Paedonomia” in Patras in the late 19th and in the first half of the 20th century

Alexandra Diamantopoulou, University of Patras (Greece), [alexadiama@gmail.com](mailto:alexadiama@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*Children’s moral and ethical education has always been a concern of society. In modern Greece these have their roots in the 19th century when the Regency organized the Greek Educational System according to the Bavarian model. Not only school but also “paedonomia” was responsible for the moral and ethical education of the Greek children as it is seen through the number of articles and headlines dedicated to this issue in the local Press. “Paedonomia” was responsible for the supervision of children during their social interactions; thus, supporting parents in their children’s upbringing. Thus, “paedonomia” helped children form their own identity and character. Although the institution of “paedonomia” was not continuous as financial problems often imposed shutdowns, nonetheless, it became one of the major issues of the educational field in the late 19th and early 20th century. In the present study we will examine the issue of “paedonomia” through the articles and headlines dedicated to it in the local Press. From 1880 till 1936. We will do so using various local newspapers which dedicated articles to this issue concerning its functioning, financial problems of the institution, money raising and parents’ contribution and attempt to discuss what has in times of crisis and diversity come to replace this function.*

**Keywords:** paedonomia, the Press, moral and ethical education, identity

### **Introduction**

“Paedonomia” was an issue of main concern of the Greek society in the late 19th and early 20th century. During this time Patras met a flourishing economy, thanks to its port, commercial activities and transactions developed. In this context, great emphasis was given to the education and moral upbringing of the children.

Despite the general welfare of the society of Patras, during this period the risk of children’s moral corruption was greater, making more urgent and necessary the creation of the institution of paedonomia.

The local Press devoted a number of articles on this issue, trying in this way to raise public awareness, inform the local community and to put pressure on the need for the establishment of paedonomia in Patras and its financing.

### **Methodology**

In this study we examined 29 front page articles on “Paedonomia” from the local Press of Patras. The articles date from 1880 to 1936 and come from the following three newspapers, which were amongst the largest circulation local newspapers of the time:

- **Forologoumenos** (a political, commercial and news newspaper, published every Friday from 1869 to 1894).
- **Neologos Patron** (a daily newspaper, published from 1894 to 1972).
- **To Fos II** (a free-thinking newspaper, published from 1918 to 1933).

For the needs of this study we used both quantitative and qualitative content analysis.

### **Purpose of the present study**

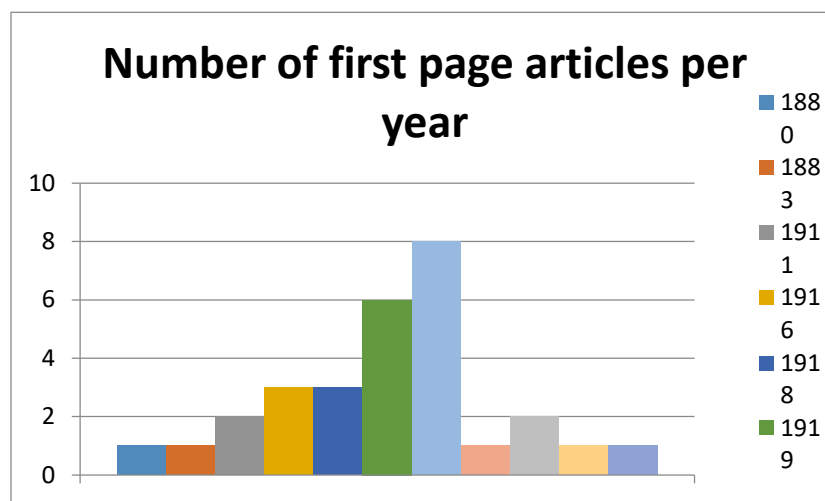
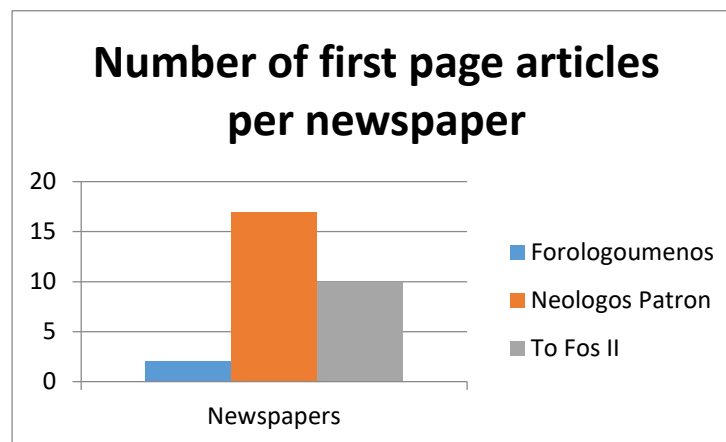
The purpose of this study was to show how the issue of paedonomia is presented by the local Press and how local newspapers reproduce what was said on this issue.

### **Results**

Neologos Patron gathers the largest number of first page articles on Paedonomia. However, there can be no comparison among the newspapers as Neologos Patron is a daily newspaper while the other two are published on a weekly basis.

**Number of first page articles per newspaper**

Newspapers	Number of articles
Forologoumenos	2
Neologos Patron	17
To Fos II	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>



<b>Number of first page articles per year</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of first page articles</b>
1880	1
1883	1
1911	2
1916	3
1918	3
1919	6
1920	8
1921	1
1926	2
1927	1
1936	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>

Most front page articles are published in 1919 and in 1920 respectively. Just before the Asia Minor Catastrophe, Patras was an important commercial and industrial center of the Peloponnese and the Western Greece. Its economic prosperity though made the necessity of the institution of paedonomia bigger than ever because moral corruption risks for the children were increasing. This need was reflected in the local newspapers.

There were different type of texts published in the local newspapers on “Paedonomia”:

- Articles
- Letters
- Information documents by the Directorate of Paedonomia
- Texts reflecting the views of their authors
- Argumentative Texts
- Texts written by parents, teachers, doctors, citizens of Patras

### **Conclusions**

The idea of the creation of a paedonomic association belongs to the school doctor Chr. Georgakopoulos (To Fos II, 8/1/1920, No 342b). From the very first moment the citizens of Patras agreed to the necessity of the establishment of “paedonomia”, because there were many moral and social risks for the children and “paedonomia” would contribute to forming good and useful citizens. “Paedonomia” has its roots in ancient Sparta where great importance was given to “paedonomia” because children belonged to the State and not to their parents. However it is stated that the purpose of paedonomia is neither terrorism nor the deprivation of children’s liberty. According to Neologos Patron (11/12/1919, No 322), the co-operation among educational functionaries and important figures of Patras will contribute to:



- Promote the establishment of paedonomia
- Gather resources
- Find the right people to staff paedonomia.

Great importance was also to the selection of the right people who would take over children's moral education and supervision. In Neologos Patron (10/3/1916, No 67) it is mentioned that there is a draft law on "Paedonomia" under construction. Moreover, a congress on paedonomia was organized in 1919 in Piraeus in order to put pressure on the government to take measures on the voting of the draft law (To Fos II, 22/10/1919, No 294).

Finally, we could say that "Paedonomia" is a very important institution that supervises children during their social interactions; thus, supporting parents in their children's upbringing on the one hand, and the children themselves forming their own identity and character on the other hand.

## **References**

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Forologoumenos, 18 November 1883, Year I', No 470.

Neologos Patron, 25 April 1911, Year IZ', No 5966.

Neologos Patron, 6 July 1911, Year IZ', No 6037.

Neologos Patron, 10 Mars 1916, Year KB', No 67.

Neologos Patron, 16 November 1916, Year KΓ', No 317.

Neologos Patron, 12 December 1916, Year KΓ', No 343.

Neologos Patron, 10 September 1918, Year KE', No 247.

Neologos Patron, 11 September 1918, Year KE', No 248.

To Fos II, 12 December 1918, Year A', No 4.

To Fos II, 6 February 1919, Year A', No 58.

To Fos II, 22 October 1919, Year A', No 294.

Neologos Patron, 5 November 1919, Year KΣΤ', No 287.

To Fos II, 11 November 1919, Year A', No 314.

To Fos II, 12 November 1919, Year A', No 315.

Neologos Patron, 11 December 1919, Year KΣΤ', No 322.

To Fos II, 8 January 1920, Year B', No 342b.

To Fos II, 11 January 1920, Year B', No 373.

To Fos II, 28 January 1920, Year B', No 390.

Neologos Patron, 8 February 1920, v KΣT', No 37.

To Fos II, 11 February 1920, Year B', No 402.

To Fos II, 20 February 1920, Year B', No 411.

Neologos Patron, 27 February 1920, Year KΣT', No 55.

Neologos Patron, 21 Mars 1920, Year KΣT', No 77.

Neologos Patron, 1 February 1921, Year KZ', No 282.

Neologos Patron, 29 November 1926, Year ΛΓ', No 789.

Neologos Patron, 9 December 1926, Year ΛΓ', No 798.

Neologos Patron, 17 January 1927, Year ΛΓ', No 16.

Neologos Patron, 12 Mars 1936, Year MB', No 67.

## *Workshops*



## From Crisis to Kairos: An artistic journey with a sense of humour

Hugo Verkest, [hugo.verkest@vives.be](mailto:hugo.verkest@vives.be)

WORKSHOP – Interactive (90' - 10-15 participants)

### **ABSTRACT**

In this interactive workshop we will give an overview of some remarkable pieces of art that provide us a unique insight into how artists deal with global and local crises. Starting in the Low Countries with Hieronymous Bosch and Peter Brueghel the Elder, we discover how these Old Masters used to be active and critical citizens. In their forceful environments they were using caricatures to give expression to their key experiences as injustice, repression and abuse of power. What kind of metaphors and symbols did they introduce to reframe the political and spiritual crises of their times? Is this counter-art useful for (young) citizen of 2015? Newspapers in the 19th century engaged artists in etching the editorial visions in black and white. Generations of cartoonists and social-oriented painters observed and interpreted the 'Zeitgeist' in the streets of Europe. In the past as well as in the present, cartoonists are not afraid to stand on the barricades or to knock on the doors of the Cabinets of Ministers or the headquarters of political parties. Their battlefield still remains on paper, while their ammunition are words and pictures; their howitzers are printing presses, newspapers and magazines, sometimes a textbook for pupils in secondary schools. In the agenda of freedom of speech, January 7th 2015 is certainly one of the darkest dates. To some ideologies the creative jokers are 'persona non grata'. In the second part of our workshop we decode the political language of our cartoonists in the light of radicalization, "eurofication", austerity measures and pointless violence. How can we inspire our students to integrate an artistic grammar and vocabulary in citizenship and remembrance education in light or shadow of unexpected crises? In the course of the presentation, we deliver in a gallery of artistic expressions that can be levers that lift up the crises.

**Keywords:** crisis, humour, media, identity, citizenship

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