

UDC 37.013.74 : 378.477
doi: 10.15330/jpnu.5.1.73-79

UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY: ANTI-DISCRIMINATION EDUCATION AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

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Abstract. The issue of social exclusion and the consequences of this process for members of minority groups is becoming increasingly important in the field of education. The answers to this state are the postulates of anti-discrimination education and intercultural education. It is worth reflecting what common features, and what are the differences between the two approaches? How can we define the interrelationships between the intercultural education and anti-discrimination education? In this article the two approaches are mentioned as: “the two sides of the same coin” and also as: “anti-discrimination education as a specific continuation of intercultural education ... and vice versa”, or as a result of seeing different problems “being together in manifold world”. These different reviews of the problem generate different consequences for understanding these two approaches. Their association may be present in a variety of events and initiatives at both school and other institutions of education and socialization among children, adolescents and adults.

Keywords: anti-discrimination education, intercultural education, diversity, social isolation.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the field of education, the issues of social exclusion and the consequences of this process are increasingly addressed to members of minority groups. The response to this state of affairs is the postulate of education in the spirit of religious, social, racial, ethnic, and political tolerance involving exchange of experiences, attempts at dialogue despite the presence of differences [6, p. 34], and the prevention of discrimination against persons with “protected characteristics”. This situation causes a necessity for promotion of many inclusive activities. It is desirable to popularize the idea of inclusion and openness towards “Others”, as well as to increase knowledge, develop skills, and develop positive attitudes towards differences and diversity.

All these assumptions are reflected in intercultural and anti-discrimination education. Both of these approaches appear to be a “response to the manifold world”, suggesting a specific approach to the problem of social diversity and the consequences of coexistence with “Others” and “Foreigners”. It is important at this point to consider these educations in relation to the actions they promote. How do we illustrate the similarities and differences in their perception? What are the common features and what are the differences between intercultural education and anti-discrimination education? It will be particularly important to address the question: “How can we define the interrelationship between

intercultural education and anti-discrimination"? How do they perceive their assumptions – as complementary or otherwise – as a different way of looking at the issue of social diversity, emphasizing the other problems and issues that arise from it? It is also necessary to reflect on how the combination of both approaches may be present in various events and initiatives. This practical aspect seems to be particularly significant in the planning of concrete actions, both in the classroom and in other institutions of education and socialization.

2. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

With regard to the issues contained in this text, the reference to the definitions of the main concepts in the title of this article will be significant at the outset. Many definitions of "intercultural education" can be found in the literature. In this article, I will choose two which show the main subject slightly differently. Thus, intercultural education may be defined according to J. Nikitorowicz as: the total mutual influence and influence of individuals and groups, institutions, organizations, associations, unions, which foster human development so that they become fully aware and creative members of the family, regional, religious, national, continental, cultural, global-planetary and capable of actively self-realizing its own unique and lasting identity and distinctness [9, p. 934]. From this perspective, intercultural education would refer to the dynamic development of multidimensional human identity, growing in an increasingly diverse and multicultural world. In this context, engagement with diversity can be seen as an opportunity to develop human consciousness and creativity in relation to daily activities undertaken in diverse groups and environments. In other definitions of intercultural education, the emphasis is on the following: intercultural education promotes the understanding of different people and cultures. It includes teachings that accept and respect the normality of diversity in all areas of life. It makes every effort to sensitize the learner to the notion that we have naturally developed in different ways. It seeks to explore, examine and challenge all forms of "isms" and xenophobia while promoting equal opportunity for all. Intercultural education works to transform not only the individual, but the institution as a metaphor and mechanism for the transformation of society [3]. This definition also reveals another aspect of diversity – difficulties in understanding different "worlds" because of characteristics such as race, ethnic, religion, language etc. This kind of education is a "cure" enabling respect for differences and supported peaceful contacts with "Others".

Intercultural Education can be implemented in many institutional and non-institutional spaces. In the context of the content of this work, it is worth noting the guiding principles laid down in 2006 for the (especially implemented within multicultural organizations) intercultural education. They are:

Principle I. Intercultural Education respects the cultural identity of the learner through the provision of culturally appropriate and responsive quality education for all. It means, that the use of curricula and teaching and learning materials should: build upon the diverse systems of knowledge and experiences of the learners, incorporate their histories, knowledge and technologies, value systems and further social, economic and cultural aspirations; introduce the learners to an understanding and an appreciation of their cultural heritage; aim at developing respect for the learners' cultural identity, language, and values; make use of local resources.

Principle II. Intercultural Education provides every learner with the cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to achieve active and full participation in society. It means, that the use of curricula and teaching and learning materials should ensure: the provision of equal access to all forms of education for all cultural groups of the population; the elimination of all forms of discrimination in the education system; the provision of educational qualifications to ensure equal access to secondary and postsecondary education and vocational training; the adoption of measures that facilitate integration into the education system of groups with special cultural needs, such as the children of migrant workers; the provision of equal opportunities for participation in the learning process; the provision of learning environments that are non-discriminatory, safe, and peaceful; the implementation of special measures to address contexts where historical backlogs limit the ability of learners and teachers to participate as equals with everyone else in society.

Principle III. Intercultural Education provides all learners with cultural knowledge, attitudes, and skills that enable them to contribute to respect, understanding, and solidarity among individuals, ethnic, social, cultural and religious groups and nations. The development of curricula that contribute to: the discovery of cultural diversity, awareness of the positive value of cultural diversity and respect for cultural heritage, critical awareness of the struggle against racism and discrimination, knowledge about cultural heritage through the teaching of history, geography, literature, languages, artistic and aesthetic disciplines, scientific and technological subjects, understanding and respect for all peoples; their cultures, civilizations, values, and ways of life; including domestic ethnic cultures and cultures of other nations, awareness of the increasing global interdependence between peoples and nations, awareness not only of rights but also of duties incumbent upon individuals, social groups, and nations toward each other, understanding of the necessity for international solidarity and cooperation, awareness of one's own cultural values that underlie the interpretation of situations and problems as well as the ability to reflect on and review information enriched by the knowledge of different cultural perspectives, respect for differing patterns of thinking [13].

Anti-discrimination education, in turn, emphasizes the need to strengthen educational activities on issues related to the prevention of exclusion and discrimination against disadvantaged groups. Dedicated initiatives are undertaken in Poland by the Association for Anti-Discrimination Education (TEA). This organization recognizes anti-discrimination education as the conscious action of increasing knowledge and skills as well as influencing attitudes to counteract discrimination and bias-motivated violence and to promote equality and diversity [12]. Recognizing that socio-cultural diversity is a fact, it is proposed to promote, respect, and appreciate the aims of this type of education. This is related to the protection of others from unequal and unfair treatment, as well as the strengthening of personal readiness to respond to the appearance of these phenomena [12]. It is assumed here that counteracting discrimination is not only a problem for individuals from excluded or minority groups, but an important social issue. Thus, special emphasis is placed on personal responsibility for preventing and responding to discrimination [12]. The main objective of anti-discrimination education is to ensure that each individual has adequate conditions of life and development, respecting their dignity, freedom, independence, and equality with others. Its key aims include the recognition of prejudices and stereotypes, the development of knowledge about the effects and causes of discrimination and exclusion, the development of competences to counter discrimination, the development of knowledge about discriminated categories and emancipatory movements, and the strengthening of individuals and groups discriminated against on the basis of inclusion and empowerment.

This education should be regarded as one of the pillars of civil society and a democratic state of law: human rights education, anti-discrimination law, and knowledge of tools used to combat discrimination are the cornerstone of its actions [12]. On the other hand, in the field of developed attitudes, the equality of the people, irrespective of their characteristics and the respect for the diversity of individuals and groups, becomes more and more important.

Anti-discrimination education makes reference to three components: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The first emphasizes the development of knowledge of the mechanisms and consequences of discrimination and exclusion. It refers also to social phenomena from the perspective of power relations, groups of discriminated people, the grounds for discrimination, emancipatory movements, and instruments of discrimination prevention.

In relation to the second component, skills, anti-discrimination education accentuates the ability to respond effectively to discriminatory behavior. The Anti-Discrimination Education Association distinguishes three roles associated with activity in the process of discrimination, being the victim, the perpetrator, and the witness.

Anti-discrimination education also realizes the mission of promoting an attitude of acceptance of quality. It references recognition of the inherent dignity, freedom, and equality of every person as well as respect for diversity. It also promotes the awareness of bias and stereotypes and discovers means of counteracting them.

Intercultural education seems to be more about understanding and promoting diversity, promoting openness and equality, than about anti-discrimination education. "Diversity support" is more about preventing discrimination by concrete actions: increasing knowledge, developing skills and competences. However, other interpretations are also possible. In this description, both diversity and the similarity between the understanding of intercultural and anti-discrimination education are becoming more apparent. The difference and convergence of the goals and actions undertaken / promoted within them are becoming more and more evident.

In the above description of intercultural and anti-discrimination education, the most important aspects of their understanding are included. In this respect, we can point out some distinctive approaches to understanding the relationship between anti-discrimination and intercultural education. I have defined them as follows:

1. Intercultural and anti-discrimination education as "two sides of the same coin". Intercultural and anti-discrimination education can be regarded as complementary, complementary approaches. It is assumed that, on the one hand: "One cannot exist without the other, but each one can also function independently". Penetrating, and even presenting in one and the same approach, the specific tasks and assumptions of intercultural and anti-discrimination education gives a holistic opportunity to embrace the complex problems of "being together in a diverse world." In this sense, intercultural and anti-discrimination education can be seen as two separate parts of one whole – comprehensive interventions for the creation of a peaceful space "for all", in which the development of tolerance and openness towards "Others" and the other part, the development of useful skills, increasing knowledge about culturally different people and groups. On the other hand, it is a real development of the competence to respond to activities in which the rights and freedoms of individuals belonging to "legally protected" groups are strengthened, as well as the strengthening of representatives of these minorities, on the basis of their inclusion and empowerment. In this interpretation, the particularity of the "independence" of both approaches, and at the same time their interrelationships, becomes particularly evident.

2.1. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION EDUCATION AS A SPECIFIC CONTINUATION OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION ... OR VICE VERSA?

On the other hand, it is important to emphasize that anti-discrimination education on counteracting discrimination is being implemented once the impact on the development of knowledge and skills in the multicultural world has taken place. Accordingly, the antidiscrimination of diversity described in the previous definition will be treated as a consequence of the processes of becoming aware of its cultural aspects and the contact with "Others" and "Foreigners." But we can look at this situation from the opposite side. Thus, practical intercultural learning interventions would be the result of prior reinforcement, such as the ability to respond to discriminatory behaviors, or increased knowledge of what discrimination is, what affects its appearance, and which are the far-reaching effects. In this approach, the stepping-up of actions taken and perhaps even the structure of their actions, is evident. This can be reflected in multidimensional and multi-stage education projects and programs that take into account both "anti-discrimination" and "intercultural" aspects. Therefore, it is appropriate to understand intercultural and anti-discrimination education as one of the processes that accompany one another.

2.2. INTERCULTURAL AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION EDUCATION AS A RESULT OF SEEING DIFFERENT PROBLEMS OF "BEING TOGETHER IN A DIVERSE WORLD"

As it is clear from the definition, intercultural and anti-discriminatory education can be considered as presenting different approaches to the question of "otherness" in which other aspects or problems of common living in different worlds are apparent. The "common core" seems to be the realization of the complexity of the surrounding world, which leads to the capture of somewhat different problems (in both approaches) generated by the existing state of affairs. On the one hand, it may be the need to shape open attitudes to "Others" and "Foreigners", to influence the understanding of the diversity that

surrounds us and to carry out activities to adapt people who are culturally different to the host country. However, conflicts, violence, and discrimination can be generated by representatives of different cultures. Flexible “separation” of tasks across different educational approaches can lead to more effective implementation of well-targeted initiatives dedicated to different problems.

The aspects covered here do not, of course, include all possible interpretations of relations existing between intercultural and anti-discrimination education. In addition to reflection, significant emphasis is placed on the goals of intercultural and anti-discrimination education, which are expressed in a variety of programs, projects, and other initiatives aimed at children, adolescents, and also adults. It is appropriate to highlight the role of organizations that conduct environmental activities such as counseling, training, conferences, educational campaigns, publications, organization, courses, concerts and events, trips, tours and meetings, and workshops [12]. Non-governmental organizations often fight for respect for human rights and prevent discrimination. When trying to distinguish between them, it is worth using the categories distinguished by C. Barnes and G. Mercer [1, p. 135–136].

Each of the organizations listed below can address both aspects of intercultural and anti-discrimination education. They are:

- Charity organizations – Traditional charity organizations and charities run by “No – Other” for “Others”. They carry out diverse activities, often in tandem with the statutory obligations towards government departments and professional institutions.

- “One Case” organizations – They are called for “Others” by “Others”, sometimes also managed only by “Others”. Their activities usually focus on individual problems and they also lobby for specific issues concerning the representatives of the categories at risk of exclusion. This type of organization can be used, for example, to fight for professional activation of persons with disabilities or immigrants, as well as for school education of Roma people, etc.

- Managed by “Others” self-help organizations – They run self-help projects, campaigns, programs, and support groups as well as co-creating national organizations. They can act on their own or in partnership with local and national social organizations. For example, specialized centers for people with disabilities [1, p. 135–136].

Developing this type of activity seems to be an important step in shaping a democracy-based, open-minded society and the pluralism of ideas, norms, and values. This question also becomes a motive for the activity undertaken by religious associations, especially in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church [5, p. 11]. Primary and secondary schools, as well as higher education institutions, are also part of the goals of anti-discrimination and intercultural education. The actions they use involve a variety of instruments such as film education, debates and discussions, “city games”, exhibitions, concerts, festivals, seminars, meetings, lectures, and workshops highlighting the problems and relationships of minority and majority groups, the role of stereotypes and prejudices, and the consequences of social exclusion.

3. CONCLUSIONS

To summarize the above briefly discussed issues, it should be noted that actions taken within the organizations described may be referred to as “contemporary struggles for recognition” [2, p. 12]. In the last two decades, there has been a significant increase in the number of projects realized for “Others” and others on the Polish and international levels. As a result of this type of initiative, changes in socially dominant prejudices and the fulfillment of the needs of dignity and respect for groups with legally protected characteristics are becoming a factor. To put it more broadly, the activities undertaken within them should serve social development and prepare individuals for the demands of social life [1]. In this regard, it is necessary to reinforce the belief that in a world in which human differences are evolving at every turn, it is impossible to act as in earlier, more homogenous communities. It is necessary to develop new, complex, practical intercultural competences.

The pedagogical approach developed at many levels becomes the pursuit of a paradigm of coexistence among the divisions that divide humanity. This is necessary nowadays, when “Others” go

out into the streets, speak uninvited and not listened to or demand political and cultural representation" [16, p. 35–36]. This is coupled with the fact that it will depend on how we deal with differences in different areas of life, depending on how we function in the dynamically changing world of late modernity [11]. Living together means discovering others, counteracting enslavement, and achieving common goals [14, p. 18]. Both the concepts of intercultural and anti-discrimination education support this "shared life" process. However, only by transforming them into concrete actions, which – depending on the specific needs of minority and majority groups – support "mutual, non-violent, and discriminatory, growing in a diverse world", will they have the sense and depth to change that which you want to see in the current and future world. According to R. Kapuściński, we can say that: *The world we enter is a Planet of Great Opportunity, not a chance of the unconditional, but open only for those who take their jobs seriously* [5, p. 75]. Thus, trying to understand the "Others", sharing with them responsibility for a peaceful world, becomes one of the most important goals, and our role is to find the special tools that help them to succeed.

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Received: 12.12.2017; **revised:** 22.03.2018.

Смотер Катажина. Розуміння різноманітності: антидискримінаційне навчання та міжкультурна освіта. *Журнал Прикарпатського університету імені Василя Стефаника*, 5 (1) (2018), 73–79.

Проблема соціальної ізоляції та наслідки цього процесу для представників національних меншин набуває все більшої актуальності в галузі освіти. Тому значну увагу сьогодні приділяють постулатам антидискримінаційної та міжкультурної освіти. Варто замислитися над тим, які спільні ознаки та які відмінності існують між двома підходами до вирішення цієї проблеми? Як саме ми можемо визначити взаємозв'язки між полікультурною освітою та антидискримінаційною освітою? У цій статті автор аналізує два підходи як "дві сторони однієї монети", а також: поняття "антидискримінаційного виховання як специфічного продовження міжкультурної освіти ... і навпаки" або як "результат бачення іншого аспекту проблеми, будучи у різноманітному світі". Такі різні подання проблеми породжують різні наслідки щодо розуміння цих двох підходів: їх зв'язок може існувати в різноманітних заходах та ініціативах як у школі, так і в інших установах освіти, соціалізації серед дітей, підлітків і дорослих.

Ключові слова: антидискримінаційна освіта, міжкультурна освіта, різноманітність, соціальна ізоляція.