



Original Contribution

CENTER FOR INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

I. Koleva

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Department of Information and In-Service Teacher Training

ABSTRACT

The educational project includes pedagogic activities and initiates the establishment and functioning of a qualification center of intercultural education. The qualification targets are adults: teachers and directors from all levels of education system and parents of different ethnic origin. The stress in the education plans and programs will be placed on the intercultural practices in the conditions of the educational institutions: kinder gardens, schools, houses for orphans and houses for children with specific educational needs. The teachers will have a possibility to enhance their knowledge as trainers in different regions of Bulgaria. The experience of other European countries will be explored, compared and implemented.

Key words: educational project, qualification center, intercultural education, teachers

SITUATION

The goal of the scientific and research project is to integrate vulnerable minority groups and ethnic subgroups in our country to a model of intercultural education /in this case: the Roma and Turk ethnic communities/, creating an innovative social and educational strategy to bring ethno-cultural discrimination practices to an end in all levels of education.

The proposed conceptual model considers a model structure of intercultural dialogue and education.

The model is also influenced by the fact that we live in post-modern society conditions, and this makes it necessary to accentuate the value orientations of persons from different ethnic and national origin. It is necessary, therefore, to keep the typology of ethnic interrelationships and achieving the technical integration at social and personal level for each individual unit – state structures, cooperative or private organizations that are related to this process. The fulfillment of the goals of the project requires a change in the internal environment and external environments of the intercultural dialogue:

The internal environment of the intercultural dialogue is determined by the following factors:

- Not all the structures related to intercultural education are accomplishing their functions in accordance with their mission;
- The developed programs and forms are not adapted to social and educational needs of the specific minority group /ethnic group, confessional group etc/;
- The partners are not acquainted with the legislation in the field of ethnic and demographic issues;
- A lack of tradition of efficient dialogue between the NGO structures of civil society and government structures /respectively, the Parliamentary Commission on civil society issues and the Social Committee, which is part of this Commission/;
- Lack of tradition of strategic planning of specific structures with respect to cooperation and interrelations with other partners;
- Lack of transparent coordination between the local municipal structures and central bodies;
- Others...

The external environment for the implementation the ideas of intercultural dialogue is determined by the following problems:

- Insufficient development of the

* **Correspondence to:** Assoc. Prof. IRINA KOLEVA
Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Department of
Information and In-Service Teacher Training, 1619 Sofia,
224 Tzar Boris III Blvd, tel.: (+359 2) 857 02 81
E-mail: kolevairina@yahoo.com

- infrastructure for civil initiatives in small locations /lack of accessible communications and others/
- Lack of local information on the activity of the Directorate of ethnic and demographic issues
 - Insufficient coordination and cooperation between NGOs /civil structures/, municipalities and central authorities on ethnic and demographic issues.
 - The lack of adequate information in educational institutions, and institutions involved in public health and social policies at the local level on the processes of integration of minorities
 - The motives, the value orientations and the ethnic type of minority communities and groups are not sufficiently taken into consideration;
 - Poor coordination between motivations of partner structures and organizations at all levels of the central and local government /pursuing ad hoc interests, here and now, lack of strategic thinking/.
 - Lack of practical knowledge in civil society work in the implementation of the governmental policy in the field of ethnic and demographic issues /unfair competition in the execution of different types of projects between NGOs – looking for leadership positions, lack of efficient dialogue and interaction with the Directorate of ethnic and demographic issues, inefficiency in the search for partners and in the coordination, in the implementation of constant public discussion forums etc./.
 - Missing workgroup of analysis of the present state of the target of the activity of the Directorate and nonexistent strategic planning of the activity
 - Missing databank of consultants, experts and auditors of the activity of the Directorate
 - Missing network of centres on ethnic and demographic issues in the fields of education, social activities, health services, labor resources, professional orientation, business structures etc.

METHODS

The target groups of the project are made of pedagogical subjects: 1275 teachers, directors, pedagogical advisors and assistant-tutors from 30 cities and towns and 107 educational

institutions. The project duration is 20 months.

The specific activities involve the development of an innovative strategy, technology and educational sets in the field of intercultural education at all levels of the system of education. A network of intercultural education centres “Centre and network of intercultural dialogue and education” will be the first in Bulgaria. A unified national centre for promotion and coordination of innovative pedagogical practices in the field of intercultural education for the information exchange between the Ministry of Education and Science, NGOs and municipal authorities will be created, including divisions for teachers training. Such intercultural education centres is needed in order to prevent negative attitudes of adults /teachers and parents/, as well as racism and xenophobic manifestations. Traditional educational practices in the Republic of Bulgaria do not emphasize ethnic and intercultural communication as a social need and behavioral practice of the teacher and parent. Hidden practices of socio-cultural assimilation of minority groups – roma /gypsies/ and Turks by educational programs, sets and textbooks, which are not adapted to their ethnic psychology are quite common.

The intercultural education centre will be the first such centre in the Republic of Bulgaria. It will develop into a National centre of promotion of innovative pedagogical practices of intercultural education.

THE SPECIFIC GOALS ARE RELATED TO:

- 1 Acquiring and reflection by teachers and children from different ethnic origin /Romas, Bulgarians and Turks / of pedagogical technologies in intercultural education.
2. Transfer, by teachers, of pedagogical models of interaction in multi-ethnic environments to different forms of pedagogical /consultative centres, social adaptation groups, cognitive motivation groups, ability for social orientation groups etc. /.
3. Developing and implementation of educational sets using innovative pedagogical technology for multi-ethnic education, enhancing the ability of social orientation of teachers and children with unequal ethno-social status. Intercultural pedagogical practices and pedagogical technologies are developed and implemented in a planned preparation of assistant tutors, teachers and parents.

Project place: regions of Burgas, Sofia, Lovech, V.Tyrnovo, Silistra, Kyrdzhali.

Project place: regions of Sofia, Asenovgrad,

G. Delchev, Silistra, Glavinica, Alfatar, Dulovo, Tervel, Tutrakan, General Toshevo, Pavlikeni, Suhindol, Strazhica, Pomorie, Lovech, Dimitrovgrad, Momchilgrad, Kiustendil, Kyrdzhali, Ardino, Nedelino, Zlatograd, Topolovgrad, Sredec, Kameno, Malko Tyrnovo, Karnobat, Rakovski, Rakitovo. The project is in accordance with local priorities, as on building an intercultural education model in a starting preparation of assistant-tutors from other ethnic origin /Roma in this case/ is emphasized in the plan of educational development of municipalities.

REFERENCES

1. Koleva, I., Innovative educational technologies. Theory of education /didactics/. Student textbook – MU, 2005, Scientific Editor T. Popov
2. Koleva, I., “New Earth” Program. Theory of education /didactics/. Student textbook – MU, 2005, Scientific Editor T. Popov
3. Koleva, I., Education and inter-ethnic environment. Theory of education. Student textbook – MU, 2005, Scientific Editor T. Popov
4. Koleva, I., Bilingual technology /reflective aspects/. S., Geya Libris, 2004.
5. Koleva, I., Pedagogical technologies in inter-ethnic environments – Education and qualification, 2001, № 3, 88-93.