

The 6th International Conference Edu World 2014 “Education Facing Contemporary World Issues”, 7th - 9th November 2014

Psychosocial influences in multiethnic communities

Lucian Săcălean^{a*}, Daniela Gîfu^{b,c}

^a“Petru Maior” University, Nicolae Iorga 1, Târgu Mureș 54008 Romania

^b“Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, Carol I 11, Iași 700506 Romania

^cUniversity of Craiova, Alexandru Ioan Cuza 13, Craiova 200585 Romania

Abstract

This paper proposes a pilot study on the psychosocial impact on coexistence in multiethnic communities in order to improve the current educational policies. In fact, the case study reflects the problems of a multiethnic community that includes in significant shares Romanians, Hungarians and Roma. We propose a methodology based on a corpus of data collected in three communities whose ethnic groups have different shares, analyzed both from a quantitative and qualitative perspective; individual and comparative (two by two, respectively all three). The main beneficiaries of the proposed analysis are sociologists, psychologists, political scientists, teachers, politicians, implicitly the whole society.

© 2015 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license

(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of The Association “Education for tomorrow” / [Asociația “Educație pentru maine”].

Keywords: educational policies, multiethnic communities, ethno-social discourse, psychosocial impact.

1. Introduction

The paper brings in discussion a different approach than other works found by us in specialty literature about how the multiethnic communities can live together in the same state. Actually, we propose a pilot study on the psychosocial impact on coexistence in multiethnic communities in order to improve the current educational policies. Those educational policies are adapted to the real needs of communities in correctly understanding and in enhancing the acceptance of different types of relationships with other ethnicities. We will not discuss here the reforms undergone by the Romanian education system, nor about the effects that the reform has had on national minorities

* Lucian Săcălean. Tel.: +40-754079790

E-mail address: lsacalean@gmail.com

(Constantin, 2013), but about the perception of those affected, especially about how they think a perception can be changed. On the other hand, in the case of the Roma minority there are not less than 18 subgroups only in Romania, with major differences between them, which further reduces the chances of applying a strategy at national level, the situation pleading rather for local solutions.

There are fundamental differences even among the minorities that we make reference. The Hungarian minority integrated economically, socially, educationally, respectively the Roma minority, subject of ethnic stigma, social exclusion or even the denial of civil rights (Rövid, 2013). Unlike the Hungarians, who display their affiliation to the community and culture, for the Roma the situation is more difficult in the sense that the denial of belonging to this ethnic group, the distancing from it, precisely of those who can provide examples of success, makes a positive development even more difficult. We naturally asked ourselves if we can or cannot apply the same recipe in the case of the two minorities, knowing that prejudice and stereotypes play an important role in public discourse, proving the existence of a predisposition to emphasize ethnic differences.

Romanians and Hungarians often have divergent constructs on the history and relations between the two ethnic groups, their social status and personality traits etc. (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1999). The particular ethnic structure of Târgu Mureş makes the behavior differences associated to such representations to be more visible than in other places. The city became the target of a stereotype whose content refers to the fact that here, people's behavior is dominated by the ethnic criterion, the distinction being made primarily between the Romanians and Hungarians, the other ways of categorizing being passed as secondary. Although in Romania there is a syllabus for the (optional) subject "Intercultural Education"[†] and even a concern in theorizing education and intercultural communication (Plugaru, 2007), we believe that such endeavors must be complemented by field research and the shaping of policies starting from practical situations. It is important to underline that, although there are such reports[‡], which disclose important aspects, pluses and minuses of intercultural education policies, our study focuses on the vision and needs of members belonging to different ethnic communities. The language, the identity construction, how to relate to each other, become operating criteria. From this perspective we find common points with the experience of other communities, both close and remote geographically (Gill, 2014).

The paper is structured as follows. After a brief introduction, section 2 describes the background which sustains our topic, section 3 presents the multiethnic community, especially two analysis models with mobilized role, and section 4 discusses the work methodology including quantitative and qualitative analysis in order to explain the actual situation in Romania. Finally, Section 5 presents some conclusions and future work.

2. Background

The topic of the cohabitation of ethnocultural communities acquires new dimensions today; the solutions applicable to the inherent challenges of the current developments can no longer be the specific nineteenth century nationalist type. In fact, almost everything must be reassessed: the relationship between the administration and the members of an ethnicity, the relations within the ethnic group, respectively the relationships between two or more ethnic groups that share a territory. As a consequence, rethinking education policies, cultural policies, development strategies, or even the relationship between the police and the ethnic community (Vintileanu, 2003) become necessary. Therefore if freedom of conscience and unrestricted expression; rights related to education and health; economic equality of opportunity; the right of association and assembly would not have to be questioned, new questions can be asked and they need an answer – is democracy representative and possible in a country characterized by a high degree of diversity? Will authoritarian methods be required to ensure stability in areas characterized by tensions as a result of diversity?

The key might be the active cohabitation, but this would require overcoming fears, the parallel discourse of the intentional distancing from each other. Or an apparent counterargument is given precisely because of the necessity of preserving cultural identity lines that define an ethnic group at a certain moment. Then there are differences between

[†]Approved by order of Minister no. 5817/ 06.12.2010.

[‡]Research Report of the Community Development Agency "Together"- 2010.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1110729>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1110729>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)