Characteristics of a transformative model for multicultural education, based on research in Russia and Germany

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Abstract. Many countries around the world are discussing the development of multicultural education within their educational systems. There is increasing focus on transforming multicultural education, which leads to the need for a transformative model of educational development. Comparative studies are taking the lead in addressing this goal and recommending specific steps to incorporate multicultural pedagogy more systematically into an existing education system. This paper presents conclusions from Russian and German scientific inquiries in addressing multicultural pedagogy.

Keywords: national system of multicultural education, adaptive model, transformative model, stages of comparative research, characteristics related to developing a national educational system based on multicultural pedagogy

Introduction

In Germany and Russia, contemporary high school education does not contribute very extensively to the formation of a multicultural identity, due primarily to the lack of a system for incorporating multicultural education at the high school level [1, 2, 3, 4]. There are two trends being pursued today in the efforts to develop multicultural education, the adaptive model and the transformative model [5]. This paper will look at two possible schema to aid in educational development.

Main text

1. The adaptive model is based on adapting multicultural education to the conditions currently existent in a country's educational system [6]. The adaptive model is used in many countries and is based solely on using educational courses in the teaching process to aid in the formation of a multicultural identity. This model is ineffective as it lacks an overall vision for a new, high-quality educational system that will provide solutions for multicultural problems and improve upon the current low level of integration between different countries.

2. A better model for multicultural education is one that takes into account comparative research and the conditions of education systems across different countries. For the purposes of this paper, we will call this model the transformative model. The proposed transformative model focuses on the development of an individual who has the requisite consciousness, mentality and ability to adapt quickly to changing multicultural processes. To enable this kind of individual transformation, we must develop a new educational system, hereafter called the system of multicultural education, based on current trends in the education systems of different countries.

Currently, the lack of systemic or unified research in the field of multicultural education has reduced multicultural pedagogy within education to the simple implementation of individual training courses. As a result, multicultural education is generally oriented only towards the needs of a single country, rather than towards a system of multicultural interests that takes into account the interests of multiple countries [7, 8, 9].

As a result, we must develop methods that will enable the realization of true multicultural education. In general, it is important to create a multicultural educational environment by optimizing cooperation between two countries. Moreover, it is essential to optimize the process of preparing multicultural individuals. The leading objectives should be, firstly, the consideration of the individual as a subject of culture in a multicultural environment with a goal to determine the significance of the formation of an individual's multicultural qualities; and secondly, the development of a transformational model of the system of multicultural education. Comparative research plays an essential role in the creation of multicultural education and in the development of the transformational model.

Today, comparative research is a significant contributor to educational theory and practice in many countries. From Zaltman's point of view "research (study) should value the power of complexity of the understanding process of integration and consider the great imbalance that exists between the way of our expectations and thoughts of further cooperation. This has the aim to explain what we find preferable for integration, to know how we react in one or another way; to understand the varieties of teaching views" [10]. There must be a systemic description of the processes in the development of education which incorporate the logic of comparative research:

1. Analytical stage: In this stage it is critical to assess the problems in multicultural education. This stage should include a description of the educational system and the following tasks must be undertaken (see Table 1).

Table 1. Tasks related to development of multicultural education

1.	analysis of various definitions and interpretations of a "system of multicultural education" in order to account for different pedagogical developments in different countries
2.	differentiation between the problems of systems of multicultural education in comparable countries (since each country is interested in solutions to multicultural education to varying degrees, one of the main difficulties is mobilization of multiple countries)
3.	analysis of the role of universities towards multicultural educational system development. At the beginning of the 20th century a university's functions were only vaguely defined and poorly understood [11]. A university operates on many levels: state, regional and local. It is important to review the specifics of each level and identify opportunities for the development of scientific research at each level. As the importance of internationalization and globalization has risen, universities have changed as well. Many institutions have attempted to define new indicators of quality in higher education in order to improve the educational system at a national level, while preserving local cultural practices in the face of increasing globalization [12, 13]. To do so, it is necessary to consider facets of internationalization when creating policy aimed at changing the functions of a modern university. The following factors should be considered: the competence that students and faculty show in multicultural contexts, the need to preserve and support local cultural practices already existent in the national educational system, the selection, implementation and legitimization of components that have been successful in instigating educational reform in educational systems around the world and, and the management and control of the development of multicultural education within this international context
4.	analysis of the lack of a system oriented towards preparing a multicultural individual
5.	definition of the basics necessary to create an educational process that enhances multiculturalism within individuals in different countries. Educational programs are far too diverse and complex to allow for the formation of a singular conclusion that one program is better than another. The development on international integration of educational programs is due on one hand to the contradictions inherent in dissimilar understandings of the concept of "multicultural education" in various countries [14]. The insufficient number of comparative studies related to a common vision on the development of multicultural education also plays a role. An educational program presupposes a definite order and unified approach to its development in different countries [15].

2. Critical evaluation stage: At this point, it is necessary to discuss and criticize comparative research that draws from empirical studies. One must critically analyze the stakeholders who have knowledge of the current system and analyze the possibility of comparing the two systems (for example: Are the systems closely enough related?). The process of developing multicultural educational philosophies is a long process that emphasizes the synthesis of various movements throughout a variety of educational systems. The majority of countries examine new pedagogical movements through the perspective of historical frames of reference in the study of pedagogy. Pedagogy is rarely allotted adequately substantial consideration within the framework of pursuing international integration of educational systems. Because of this, it is important for educators in both Russia and Germany to examine the following aspects (see Table 2).

Table 2. University characteristics related to development of multicultural education

1.	Localization examines which countries are involved in the development of multicultural education
2.	In order for interconnectedness between the higher education systems of different countries to develop, there is an implied existence of shared interests between the countries and a will to collaborate
3.	It is crucial to be aware of the specific characteristics of an individual's mentality, or the characteristics of the overall worldview shared by members of an individual society. Similarly, it is essential to examine both the cultural preferences and the representation of those preferences within an individual or society

3. Structural orientation stage: At this point, attention should be focused on solving those problems associated with the development of systems of multicultural education in comparable countries. The structure for the development of multicultural education should rely on a core group of characteristics and processes.

The first groups of factors below are related to the development of theories of multicultural education. It is useful to identify a number of features to create a benchmark from which to orient the development of a system of multicultural education. The following analysis relates to factors that are relevant specifically to Russia and Germany.

The second group of factors is related to developmental trends in institutions of higher education, including systematic preparation of multicultural individuals and changing organizational and institutional structures. Today's multicultural education has been reduced to only a few educational courses develop by lecturers. A unilateral vision is not conducive to the development of multicultural qualities. However, in recent years several studies in Russia have noted the importance of modernizing universities in the following areas.

Table 3. Factors in the development of multicultural education theory, based on Russia and Germany

Characteristics	Germany	Russia
1. The change in theoretical approaches towards conditions necessary for developing multicultural processes entails a change in the content and technological components of the educational process.	Competency-orientated and integrative approaches have become high-priority.	
2. The change in access to new information, improving research portals, and ensuring their accessibility.	A small number of research portals [16]	A large number of research portals [16]

Table 4. Factors in the development of systems of multicultural education, based on Russia and Germany

Characteristics	Germany	Russia
1. Financial, governmental and institutional support for scientific research that is orientated towards optimizing the development of a national system of multicultural education	Not unavailable	
2. Reorganization of institutions of higher education and the development of research universities	Not implemented	
3. Development of a wide integrative program between institutions of higher education in different countries, incorporating such factors as academic departments, educational programs, and joint research.	Not implemented	

The third group of factors requires the consideration of an individual's mental characteristics, as well as the overall mentality of a society, it is necessary to develop new psychological mechanisms that analyze unconscious or subconscious emotional responses to multicultural situations and stimuli. Over the past few decades, a variety of psychological instruments have been devised in order to promote the advancement of multicultural education. Sen A. writes that it is essential "to recognize that peoples' behaviour cannot be described in terms of a single complete preference ordering only. It can be driven by motivation other than self-interest, such as social commitment, moral imperatives and conventional rule-following" [17].

P. Kennig and H. Plassmann state that "Any information struggles when it comes to emotion, because it seems mainly to engage our cognitive brain – the one that consciously analyses, reflects,

calculates and makes decisions rather than our emotional brain which reacts spontaneously, immediately and intuitively… but our two brains do not work in isolation – there is a constant interaction between them and the main problem for a person may be at the frontier between two – where pre-conscious impulses emerge" [18].

Scientists of neuropsychology believe that we have to spend more time looking for links between the rational and emotional parts of brains – particularly in the way that unconscious processes express our conscious thoughts. Previous researchers have tended to focus on rational (or thought through) responses rather than on pre-rational (or instinctual) processes. These pre-rational processes are mental shortcuts that allow us to interpret meaning without having to process it in a thoughtful manner, but by means of using certain instinctual dimensions (ex. uncertainty avoidance, power distance, masculinity vs. femininity, etc.)

These instinctual dimensions can be divided into cultural practices, "as enacted" and values; "as it should be". Responses to "as enacted" questions reveal the perceptions of a person concerning current practices in societies and organizations. (Kennig, P., Plassmann, H.) Responses to "as it should be" values refers to the analysis of how an individual might attempt to change his or her views within a cultural context by adopting a changed behaviors.

Along with acknowledging the necessity of instinctual and rational behaviors, it is important to bear in mind "black concepts" or "black boxes", a psychological element that an individual employs when attempting to understand a problem presented by a different cultural context.

The fourth group of factors relates to the need to consider efficiency within universities under new conditions. Evaluation of efficiency is complicated by the fact that there is still no clear understanding of the desired results of educational processes in light of multiculturalism. Thus, attempts at transferring processes directly from one country to another cannot be successful since the criteria and indicators a country needs to assess the effectiveness of the formation of educational processes do not exist.

Conclusion

This paper discusses the importance of transitioning to a new model of transformational implementation of multicultural education across different countries. The paper provides an overview of different developmental stages and the role of comparative research. By analyzing how the transformational model would work in Russia and Germany it is possible to determine factors that should become the basis of a transformational model of multicultural education.

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