Multicultural Education Curriculum Development in Turkey

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Abstract: *In recent years, Turkey has seen an increase in immigration and, consequently, also in the enrolment of international students. These students from many countries, with a variety of cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious, and educational backgrounds are in need of education that "teaches the value of cultural diversity." Schools must also deal with issues related to differing socioeconomic backgrounds, and, sometimes, limited awareness of diversity and a lack of cultural competence. Thus, it has become essential for Turkish schools to adopt a multicultural curriculum, restructured in accordance with knowledge of the right of all to education, in keeping with principles of global justice. The purpose of this paper is to provide multicultural educators with such an insight from research on development curriculum of multicultural education. In addition, this paper offers ideas culled from successful multicultural programs in the U.S. and elsewhere and discusses how these ideas can be made useful in the Turkish system.*

Keywords: *Multicultural education, Curriculum, Turkey*

1. Introduction

Much of the world has changed since the American Civil Rights Movement in 1969 occurred. The world did not only see the liberation of African Americans from the oppressive and discriminating White American society, but also how important it is for members of society to become tolerant (or develop some degree of tolerance) to individuals whose social and economic background, ethnicity, culture, gender, or even age differ greatly from their own. This is expected since social interactions within local and international settings are no longer limited to interactions within one's culturally, ethnically, socially, and economically homogeneous spheres.

A tolerant society indeed sounds ideal. A society where discrimination rarely occurs and where everyone has equal access to social and economic opportunities regardless of their physical attributes sounds utopian but is not entirely only a dream. In a democratic multicultural society, the only way for different cultures to meet without any conflict is for understanding to occur. According to Chreptaviciene and Urboniene (2005) understanding breeds tolerance and tolerance breeds respect. This is then translated to positive social interaction between and among individuals coming from diverse origins.

While understanding is an easy concept to grasp, there are a number of elements that makes understanding difficult to actually achieve. For one thing, the psychology of individuals creates barriers that make understanding less successful at higher or deeper levels (Eldering, 1996). Another thing that prevents successful multi-cultural understanding (and hence multicultural tolerance) is the social influence that tends to shape individual psychology. If a society tolerates multiculturalism, the individuals within the society will more likely become sensitive and respectful of the characteristics and attributes of individuals comprising the society. Consequently, if the society practices or promotes the practice of discrimination, individuals comprising the society will never be too far in practicing the same.

The concept of multiculturalism and tolerance to diversity is very much applicable to Turkey and to the Turkish society. Despite the fact that 99% of Turkey's population is Muslim, the Turkish government institutionalized the protection of the practice of other secular religions (Cinoglu, 2006). In addition to that, Cinoglu (2006) emphasizes that the Turkish government sought massive modernization programs in order to make the country acceptable to the rest of the global community. For example, Turkey has sought full membership to the European Union since 2004. This signals the desire of the Turkish government to become as competitive, if not as powerful, as other members of the union. These two among other factors could potentially make Turkey a cultural utopia described above.

Even with the steps Turkey has made towards creating a successful multicultural society; recent turn of events like the Hijab ban in public places have elicited major concern (Aydin, 2010). The naïve attempt of the government to eliminate cultural and religious discrimination by banning a specific religion's garb backfired and placed Turkey in a sticky situation. This circumstance highlights the failure of the Turkish government to implement and institutionalize diversity-related programs. Another lesson learned from this event is that the Turkish government is unprepared to handle

complex issues that arise whenever there is an attempt to solve one or more diversity issues. This paper evaluates the successes and drawbacks encountered by the educational reforms in Turkey. In addition, this paper provides multicultural educators with insights from research on the development of curriculums for multicultural education in Turkey.

2. Definitions and Scopes of Multicultural Education

There are numerous definitions and perspectives of multicultural education to reflect standpoints of specific disciplines or outlooks of different professional organization. Based on a review of literature on multicultural education, several scholars has described multicultural education a quite differently. For example, according to (Banks & Banks, 1997; 2001), multicultural education is a transformative movement in education that produces critically thinking and socially active members of society. It is not simply a change of curriculum or the addition of an activity. It is a movement that calls for new attitudes, new approaches, and a new dedication to laying the foundation for the transformation of society. In addition, Gorski (2010) argues that multicultural education is designed to develop citizens in democratic society-by considering the needs of all students. It makes explicit how issues of race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, gender, and abilities/disabilities are intertwined with educational process and content. In addition, Bennett (1999) defines that "multicultural education is an approach to teaching and learning that is based upon democratic values and beliefs, and affirms cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies and an interdependent world and it is based on the assumption that the primary goal of public education is to foster the intellectual, social, and personal development of virtually all students to their highest potential" (p. 11). From these several different perspectives and definitions, Tiedt and Tiedt (1999) also states that multicultural education is an inclusive teaching/learning process that that involves all students in emerging a strong sense of self-esteem, discovering empathy and tolerance for people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and experiencing equitable opportunities to achieve their fullest potential.

Through different perspectives and definition from well-known scholars in multicultural education field, however, researchers including (Gay, 2000; Gorski, 2010; Nieto, 1996; Salili & Hoosain, 2001) agree that multicultural education aims at teaching students to accept, understand and appreciate different culture, race, social class, religion, gender, and geographical line differences, and instill in them during their formative years a " sense of responsibility and commitment to work toward the democratic ideals of justice, equality and democracy (Manning & Baruth, 1996, p. 3). The multiculturalists believe that multicultural education helps students understand and affirm their community cultures and helps to free them from cultural boundaries, allowing them to create and maintain a civic community that works for the common good (Banks, 1993; Sleeter, 1991). They argue that a unified and cohesive democratic society should be created only when the rights of its diverse people are reflected in its institutions, within its national culture, and within its schools, colleges, and universities. However, a national culture or school curriculum that does not reflect the voices, struggles, hopes, and dreams of its many peoples is neither democratic nor cohesive. Therefore, the aim of multicultural education, according to Sleeter and Grant (1994), is promoting cultural diversity, promoting human rights, promoting alternative life choices, promoting social justice and equal opportunity, and promoting equity in the distribution of power.

3. Turkey and the Turkish Educational System

According to CIA (2010), the economic reforms in the past allows the present economy to experience consistent growth (around 6% per annum until 2009) in its industry, service, and agricultural sectors. Turkey's GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in 2010 is about $729.1 billion with GDP contribution of 65.5% for industry, 25.7% for service, and 8.8% for agriculture, The Turkish economy allows a wider window for privatization of various industries like banking, communication, and transportation which helps middle-class entrepreneurs compete in the market. Moreover, Turkey has begun distributing oil and petroleum to Central Asia and Europe through its own Baku-Tbilisi- Ceyhan pipeline, thus signaling another era of growth and development.

The Turkish society has improved significantly since the first modernization programs were instituted in 1923. Much of the improvements were directed to infrastructures: the creation of jobs for locals, the opening of the nation to global trade and commerce, and the creation of various academic institutions. As of this writing, there are more than 160 universities in Turkey whose entrance and qualification is strictly regulated by the government (except for the Open Education Faculty in Anadolu University). Education is one of the most basic human rights in Turkey in accordance to its legislation and international commitments. However, in Turkey, the only language of instruction in the educational system is Turkish. In addition, Kurdish people which is the largest ethnic minority in the country with around 12-16 million population and their language is banned in education, state offices, and public sphere since 1923 which is against of human rights. Cinoglu (2006) argues that Article 42 of the (Turkish) Constitution stresses the importance of access to

education. Article 42 of the Turkish Constitution mandates that the State support disadvantaged students through scholarships, and if necessary, the government will require the parents or guardians to send their children to school. The Article 42 states that no one can be prevented from making use of their right to education. In Turkey, education is monitored and controlled by the state through the Ministry of National Education. One of the many functions of the Ministry is to design, create, implement, and manage curricula for all public and private schools in the country. Curricula design is mainly focused on the support of various government programs on economic and social development. Public and private schools do not have the liberty to change the curricula to fit their own objectives or to fit the unique needs of its students (Cinoglu, 2006).

Turkish children are required to take 8 years of basic education and 4 years of high school education in order to advance to higher education. Secondary education covers general, vocational, and technical curricula. However, high schools is not a preparation for specific vocations but is meant to prepare students for higher education. There are four types of high schools in Turkey: fine arts, multi-curricula, evening, and private. By the time high school students reach their second year, they will be given the option to attend specialized branches of learning in the natural sciences, social sciences, foreign languages, literature, and mathematics (CHE, 2005). In order for the students to become eligible in higher education, they need to obtain the *Lise Diplomasi* (High School Degree) from their secondary education and to obtain passing points in the Student Selection Examination (OSS), depending on which program they wish to enroll.

Higher education in Turkey is provided by 103 state universities, 54 private universities, and 5 higher institutes of learning (MEB, 2010). The government wing that is responsible for overseeing higher education in Turkey is the Ministry of National Education but the commission handling the directives of the Ministry for higher education is the Council of Higher Education. The establishment of universities, selection of faculties, and founding of institutes and four-year schools are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of National Education. The Council of Higher Education on the other hand handles the establishment of two-year vocational schools and the creation of departments and divisions within the university. Even so, the Council retains a fully autonomous national board of trustees independent of any political or government influence. Another important body is the Interuniversity Council which is composed of the rectors of all the universities and a member from the Senate elected by members of council. The majority of the higher universities use the Turkish language as a medium of instruction although some universities use French, English or German.

As a result, the education in Turkey is somewhat excellent. Out of the 77.8 million people in Turkey, the literacy rate is 87.4%, wherein 95.3% of the male population and 79.6% of the female population are literate (CIA World Factbook, 2011). This is due to the fact that the Turkish government has placed strong emphasis on educating its general populace in order for them to contribute positively to the country's workforce.

4. Turkey as a Multicultural Society

Turkey has always been very accommodating to foreigners and to people from outside Turkey. Since the early 15th century, the Ottoman Empire has always welcomed hundreds of thousands of Spanish, Armenian, and Portuguese Jews along with Russians, Polish and Europeans in search political asylum in the course of over 600 years. Turkey has always been a refuge for people from various cultures and ethnicity driven by either political or economic factors. In fact, Turkey sits very well with the mix of cultures within its domains that social and cultural issues are not major concerns of the Turkish society.

Modern Turkey is a secular state, meaning it does not have a uniform or required religion. Despite this, it is still a culturally diverse country. Its major ethnic groups are Turkish (75%), Kurdish (18%), Cerkez, Arabic, Armenian, Circassian, Greek, Abazan, Romanian, Laz and others. About 99.8% of its population practice Islam with the remaining 2% practicing mostly Christianity or Judaism (CIA, 2010). (The ethnic distribution in Turkey remains debatable as different sources publish different figures). Thee ethnic distributions proposed by Andrews (2002) classifies the people in Turkey into four major groups which are (a) Turkic-speaking people, (b) Indo-European-speaking people, (c) Semitic-speaking people, and (d) Caucasian-speaking people.

The Turkish people have deep ties to their country's culture. Despite this, modernization, or westernization as what Turkey believed it was called, became the primary goal of the Turkish government since its legislation in 1923 (Cinuglo, 2006). Social and political reforms were made as early as the 18th and 19th centuries, aimed towards massive westernization of Turkish society. One of the highlights of the Turkish aim to become a part of the Western world is its pursuit to become a member of the European Union (EU). Discussing multicultural nature of Turkey from the perspective of its entrance into the European Union is necessary since it gives us a deeper understanding of the social and cultural dynamics of the country. Basically, the main barriers between Turkey and its entrance into the European Union are the anti-Muslim feeling harbored by Europeans and the growing ethnic naturalism in Turkey (Cinoglu, 2006). Despite the

strong presence of cultural homogeneity in Turkey and despite the Turkish government's effort of smoothing its policies to encourage cultural heterogeneity, it is not considered a melting pot. According to Arnesto (2002), multiculturalism in Turkey "resembles a traditional Turkish desert named assure where every ingredient preserves its own flavor but when taken together… compose a delicious taste" (p.6). In other words, there is harmony and coherence between the ingredients and these complement each other in many ways. However, the components have remained what they are without really losing their identity amongst the myriad of other components. Individuals from different cultures in Turkey somehow manage to co-exist and avoid serious social and cultural conflicts in the process, but they have not been able to cohere as one unified society for many different reasons.

Two of the main reasons that Turkish society has not been able to unify culturally are cultural isolation and cultural indifference. The social structure and the political conditions of any given society have a strong influence on the attitudes and views of its people towards ethnicity and race (Ugur, 1995). These attitudes are then reflected and projected by and to the members of each ethnic group which are more or less based on divergent identities. Social integration between and among cultures does not really occur (Arnesto, 2002) if cultures remain isolated between and among each other. In other cases, cultural tolerance exists as cultural indifference which is not what Turkey aims to achieve. For Turkey to succeed as a member of the European Union, cultural understanding, not cultural indifference, needs to occur. Turkey needs to acknowledge the suboptimal nature of the exclusive club implied by nationality and alleviate the non-divisibility and non-transparency of the cultural issues (Verkuyten & Zaremba, 2005).

Despite the reluctance of the European Union to take Turkey into its wings, Turkey has remained steadfast in keeping its society heterogeneous. For many years, Turkey has avoided major political conflicts, slowed down its economic regression for the last few decades, grown its economy, minimized the role of its military in politics and in political conflicts, and extended its minority rights (Arnesto, 2002). It is easy to notice that these end results are aligned with the EU's minimum requirements for qualification. These moves highlight the commitment of Turkey to achieve a healthy and harmonious multicultural society.

4.1. International Students in Turkey

Internationalization of higher education is an effort between and among political entities, assisted by multilateral agreements and policies to create, design, and implement activities in order to exceed or transpire political domains as well as strengthening international research efforts (Van Damme, 2001). One of the best and most effective ways to achieve this internationalization of higher education is through international student mobility, or the movement of students from one academic institution to the other beyond their country's borders. In the context of international mobility of students, Turkey is seen as a leading supplier of students to various universities and academic institutions abroad. In 2006, UNESCO ranked Turkey as the 7th highest ranking country in terms of the gross outflow of students (Terry, 2006). Additionally, Turkey is no longer a country that only sends students abroad, particularly to United States and European Union; its prestigious universities are also accepting international students from all over the globe. As Turkey has matured in terms of cultural diversity, students within Turkey that come from various racial and ethnic backgrounds flock the academic institutions. This makes multicultural education a very important requirement for Turkey to develop further.

The internationalization of education in Turkey is based mainly on the principles incorporated in the Bologna Process and the Sorbonne Declaration. The Bologna Declaration aims to eliminate the barriers to student mobility across Europe, improve the attractiveness of European higher education to the rest of the word, and establish a common structure of higher education across Europe (King, 2006). In the same manner, Turkey's pursuit to provide the same level of quality of education to students from all cultural dimensions in various European universities is embodied in the Sorbonne Declaration. This Declaration underscores the creation of the European Area of Higher Education as a body that oversees the mobility and employability of students throughout the member states of the Union (Terry, 2006). Since Turkey has made strides towards entering the European Union, the country has begun implementing these educational systems in accordance to both principles.

The hope behind the international mobility of students is that significant increase in the probability of free flowing qualified labor across borders either during the duration of the study or right after the students' graduation. With learned and skilled individuals from different countries collaborating with professionals and students from other countries, an economy of scale in the higher educational system can be created and sustained. This will be noticed in especially the creation of additional areas of learning with sufficient funds to backup the creation (King, 2006). Moreover, if the number of foreign students increases over a period of time, they will have a positive impact on local economies since they will also become consumers to the locale where they are located (Terry, 2006).

5. Importance of Multicultural Education in Turkey

In recent years, in Turkey many schools have been adopting a multicultural curriculum, which "teaches the value of cultural diversity" (Slavin, 2006, p.116). Banks (as cited in Slavin, 2006) defines multicultural education as educational equality in schools regardless of a student's background. Both domestic and international diversity and unprecedented immigration have created a vibrant mixture of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, religious, educational, and socioeconomic backgrounds (Gay, 2011). Thus, experiential plurality becomes essential for Turkish education. However, the highly intensive central management of Turkish education does not meet the needs of such a diverse society. In sum, first, the Turkish society has become a multicultural society whose members have different needs, backgrounds, perspectives, and educational requirements. Second there is a need for the education sector of Turkey to align its goals, objectives and processes towards meeting various cultural needs, which often translates to social tolerance. How can Turkey be able to meet the need for cultural tolerance especially in this age and time? The answer is simple: in order for Turkey to be able to truly become a melting pot of cultures, it needs to educate the present and future generation to become more tolerant and acceptant of the cultures of other individuals living in Turkey.

From this context, the importance of education in Turkey becomes a major concern. Despite the growing movement towards globalization, education in Turkey is formed and created in national contexts (Eldering, 1996). How a state through its various agencies creates educational policies depends largely on local knowledge, social heritage, communal experience, and exposure to international audiences as much as they depend on various economic factors such as labor force, economic growth, and commercialization (Grant, 1997). In the case of multicultural societies, successful education programs can be achieved if a sense of respect of inherited boundaries established through one's affiliations with one's own ethno-racial group is protected at all cost (Kang, 2010). Thus said, Turkey must be able to get past the nationalistic conception of education in order to provide its multicultural society the quality of education it needs in order to progress and move forward.

6. Development and Changes of Multicultural Education in Turkey

Prior to the 1980s, Turkey's educational system was largely focused on militarization of civilians. Educational system in Turkey has been widely affected by economic and political pressures since that time (Tural, 2007). Despite these changes, the educational system in Turkey remains centralized and nationalized under the guidance of the military regime. The Ministry acts as a centralized body that makes decisions about schools, administrators, teachers, students, and even textbooks regardless of the type of schools and the geographical locations of the school within Turkey. That being said, private, religious, technical, minority, and public schools depend on the directives of the Ministry. The Ministry decrees things like what curricula will be implemented and what the setting of each classroom for its normal day-to-day operations will be like. In other words, the educational system in Turkey has been strictly controlled by official policies through state-imposed programs and guidelines and the degree of control and centralization of the educational system in Turkey.

However, educational system in Turkey has gone through myriad changes. At first, many of these changes seemed to be cosmetic, but in time, curriculum reformers recognized a need for contextual adaptation (Turkmen & Bonnstetter, 1997). In Turkey, education is perceived to be upmost priority. Since the Erdogan Government, which was elected in 2002, education at all levels has been regarded as the most important factor in reaching the level of most other developed countries. The funding of education is highly centralized, more than the European educational system (World Bank, 2005). After Turkey became a democracy, all schools were annexed to the Ministry of National Education. The Ministry of Education is in charge of implementing a contemporary mode of education training for all citizens through primary and secondary education and other institutes. Through the changes, the Turkish Education System has developed democratic, modern, secular and coeducational characteristics. The aims of the system are to increase prosperity and welfare of Turkish citizens and society, to support and accelerate economic, social, cultural development in accordance with national unity and integrity, and to make the Turkish Nation contemporary civilization's constructive and creative (Eginli, 2010). According to the Global Monitoring Report (2010), the major improvements in the Turkish Education are first; Turkey doubled its gross enrolment ratio in pre-primary education from 2002 to 2010. Second, adult literacy rate increased. Turkey is now at an average 89% estimated literacy rate (96% among men and 81% among women). However, Kurdish languages is banned in public schools, therefore, Turkish State should change a constitutional which made by military regime in 1982 and new constitution should include all minority ethnic identities rights and should lift Kurdish language into schools to allow Kurdish children to learn their mother tongue.

7. Setting New Directions for Multicultural Education

The major challenges experienced in multicultural education are (a) the lack of proper academic structure to address the different needs of students from various cultural backgrounds and needs to forward multicultural curriculum transformation (Eldering, 2006; Gorski, 1995), (b) the inability of the students to participate in meaningful academic processes (Oikonomidoy, 2011), and (c) the experience of prejudice and segregation directed to students from multicultural background by teachers, classmates, and the people from the community (Kang, 2010). These factors along with other factors hinder multicultural societies from achieving high quality education especially the education provided to students not of the dominant culture. The same thing can be said about the educational system in Turkey. In Turkey, the attention of the educational system to the diverging cultural needs of each student group has remained asymmetrical and inadequate (Cinoglu, 2006) resulting in inappropriate and irrelevant education received by students in all levels of education (Andrews, 2002). Multicultural education in Turkey needs to be reconsidered in accordance with allowing the right to education for all people and in keeping with global justice. Development of multicultural education curriculum in Turkish higher education should focus on protecting the cultural heritage of each of the international students and people from different backgrounds to encourage tolerance. In addition, Banks (2006) suggests, the school curriculum should be reformed so that students will view concepts, events, issues, and problems from different ethnic perspectives and points of view. He argues that conceptualizing the curriculum and making ethnic content an integral part of a transformed curriculum should be distinguished from merely adding ethnic content to the curriculum. Ethnic content can be added to the curriculum without transforming in or changing its basic assumptions, perspectives, and goals.

7.1. Setting the Definitions

One of the most obvious reasons why multiculturalism and its impact on the Turkish educational system has not yet been fully understood is because of the lack of proper and appropriate definition of multiculturalism and interculturalism. Most governments think that multicultural education involves only the educational process that takes into account the difference in culture and ethnicity of students. However, it is more than this. Eldering (1996) emphasizes multicultural education "can be approached at different perspectives... [which can be based] on the position of minority cultures, the curriculum, and to the attention paid to individual or collective inequality" (p.319). Defining multiculturalism from these various perspectives ensures that all aspects of the society can be addressed by multicultural education.

So what is a multicultural education? More specifically, what should multicultural education be all about? In this context, multiculturalism in Turkey is more than just the gathering of individuals from different cultures with different perspectives, belief systems, prejudices, and biases. Multiculturalism in Turkey is also more than just cultural tolerance and cultural indifference. Rather, multiculturalism in Turkey means social integration and genuine cultural interaction rather than social tolerance built on cultural indifference. Hence, multicultural education in this context must be a social approach that teaches the citizens of a democratic society to value diversity and differences, aid in the cultural integration of socially diverse communities, and reinforce the need to coexist and harmonize within the given society (Kuzio, n.d.). By setting the definition of a multicultural Turkish society, we are able to identify the needs and requirements of this type of society. This implies that the creation or modification of educational programs and policies can be aligned to this definition just made.

7.2. Multidimensional Intercultural Understanding

Education sits best when one of its main goals is multidimensional intercultural understanding (Horst & Pihl, 2010). According to Hurst and Pihl (2010), interculturalism emphasizes intercultural dialogue and social inclusion which are primary requirements for having a biased-free and non-discriminating society. For Turkish society to develop more tolerance and to integrate more fully with individuals from various cultural and ethnical backgrounds, its educational system must be able to address the different dimensions involved in intercultural understanding. That is to say that the curriculum should not only be focused on instructing nationalism, it should also protect the cultural identities of individual students. It should also be geared towards successful social and communal experience between and among students from different racial, cultural and ethnical backgrounds. As Turkey is one of the countries that has rich diversity and many international students from different ethnic backgrounds, the multicultural educational curriculum development should include: 1) redesign and organization of new multicultural education curriculum 2) exploration of various approaches to structuring and sequencing multicultural learning activities 3. Instruction awareness of a wide variety of resources in multicultural curriculum and learn how to evaluate and select materials for diverse students 4) curriculum which should

apply various multicultural approaches to teaching, including those that utilize dialogical and cross-cultural techniques, and 5) examination of culturally-sensitive methods of assessing student needs and learning preferences, evaluating the effectiveness of multicultural curricula, and assessing student learning.

7.3. The Enrichment Approach

One way of improving multicultural student learning is the enrichment approach. The aim of the enrichment approach as was discussed by Eldering (1996) refers to a policymaking approach that does not judge individuals through their social or cultural origins but rather looks at individuals with fair, assessing eyes. That is to say that enrichment programs take on individuals based on how they could potentially improve in terms of their academic performance in order for them to become integral parts of the society. One way of using the enrichment approach in multicultural education is to allow students, irrespective of their cultural backgrounds to participate in programs that could boost their competence or increase their skills which they can use while at the academic program or after graduation. For example, if the Ministry of Education wanted to produce a competent and culturally sensitive workforce, it has to integrate cultural diversity programs in their curriculum or the Ministry may require students to be immersed in multicultural societies before graduating. This way, multicultural biases can be smoothened and can be reduced on a much wider scale. Apparently, the Turkish educational system has yet to create successful and efficient enrichment programs. In addition, self-awareness is an essential skill. As we understand our own culture and the biases we may have about other cultures, we will be able to maintain positive relationships with others. This includes an investigation of our own values, practices, and beliefs surrounded by culture. Knowledge about others' cultures is also essential. Students should learn the values, practices, and beliefs of other cultures. In doing so, students will be able to see the similarities and differences we share with other cultures. Everyone has a culture, not just people who are different from us.

7.4. Bicultural Competence Approach

Unlike the enrichment approach that aims to solve multiculturalism issues by creating programs that expose students to all the cultural groups within their society, bicultural competence focuses only on two other cultures. In principle, bicultural competence would work better than the enrichment approach on the basis that an individual can only learn so many cultural differences. For all practicality of purpose, competence in one or two cultures is a step big enough for social reform to occur. Thus said, Turkish government can also begin to look at the advantages of implementing a bicultural competence program within its educational system in order for it to address the growing need for effective and successful multicultural education.

7.5. Collective Equality Approach

The collective equality approach is somewhat the comprehensive application of all the approaches discussed, with strong emphasis on the involvement of the community in achieving such high levels of success in social and cultural integration. This approach strongly emphasize the need for all stakeholders to implement and practice collective equality of all cultural groups rather than focus on the equality of social and economic opportunities for individual groups. In a way, this collective equality approach can be divided into two smaller approaches. These are to assume the equal rights of the diverse cultural groups in the society, and to make the schools the center for multicultural education. The first approach means that the society must be actively involved in addressing the needs of multicultural societies. The second approach means that multicultural education is not and should not only be focused on curricula but also on teaching methodology, approach to teaching and instruction, administration, and the selection of staff. This is very useful suggestion considering the nature of the educational system of Turkey. With a highly centralized and autocratic educational body, the aim to achieve multicultural education through factors aside from the curriculum can easily be achieved.

8. Recommendations for development of multicultural education curriculum and activities

As Turkey continues to exhibit great diversity, the need for understanding and accepting the differences among all people has never been more important. Thus, the challenge for educators is to present an effective multicultural education foundation by means of which all children can learn to accept others (Gomez, 1991). Compell (1999) underlined that the goal of multicultural education is not only to teach children about other groups or countries. It is also to help children become accustomed to the idea that there are many lifestyles, languages, cultures, and points of view. According to

Dimidjan (1989), the purpose of multicultural curriculum is to attach positive feelings to multicultural experiences so that each child will feel included and valued, and will feel friendly and respectful toward people from other ethnic and cultural groups. One key to helping young children develop a sense of being citizens of the world lies with the early childhood teacher. The disposition exhibited by this individual in promoting everyone's culture will be the successful factor in the child's development of a multicultural perspective.Through multicultural curriculum, Norton (1985) indicated that students discover that all cultural groups will make significant contributions to alliance of civilization. She advocated that a well-balanced multicultural curriculum programs should include literature that depicts people with a variety of aspirations, from different sociometric levels, with different occupations, and with a range of human characteristics. In addition, Gorski (2010) argues that multicultural education curriculum should be accompanied by commentaries that explain their cultural context and it should always be chosen on the basis of developmental appropriateness. Several scholars including Banks (1999) and Gorski (2010) argues that multicultural education is designed to develop citizens in democratic society-by considering the needs of all students which makes explicit how issues of race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, gender, and abilities/disabilities are intertwined with educational process and content. Therefore, a rich diverse population of Turkey needs a multicultural curriculum development in its education. They should prepare students for diverse workplaces and multicultural environment, exposes biases, stereotypes, and policies that can restrict achievement, content is fair accurate, and inclusive, accommodates for diverse teaching and learning styles of teachers and students, and helps students, faculty, and staff to become advocates for multicultural awareness.

Moreover, Banks (2008) also argued the multicultural education curriculum should be implemented with teaching strategies that are involving, interactive, personalized, and cooperative. The teacher should listen to and legitimize the voices of students from different racial, cultural, language, and gender groups. Throughout the teaching materials for multicultural educators, government should develop and implement a policy for selecting teaching materials that describe the historical and contemporary experiences of various ethnic, language, and cultural groups. And that present issues, problems, and concepts from the perspectives of these groups Banks (1999; 2008). Furthermore, many multicultural scholars, including (Banks, 2008; Bennett, 1999; Gay, 2000; Grant, 1995; Nieto & Bode, 2011) recommended that successful implementation and improvement of a multicultural education program within a school or district require an effective monitoring plan. Ways must be developed to determine (1) whether the multicultural education goals established by the Minister of Education are being attained, (2) steps that need to be taken to close the gap between the goals and actual program implementation, and (3) incentives that needed to motivate educator in the educational offices to participate in the efforts being undertaken to attain the government's multicultural education goals and objectives. Through participation, educators, teachers, administrators, and parents will be able to discuss students' needs and it will be more consistent with the multicultural realties of the country.

9. Activities and Suggestions for Multicultural Educators

Multicultural activities should be integrated in all curriculum areas, including social studies, language arts, science, humanities, etc. Administrators, teachers, faculties, and staffs should create an educational climate in which different cultural, ethnic, and linguistic patterns are accepted and nourished throughout the curriculum (Ortiz & Travieso, 1977). Teachers need to understand the importance of multicultural education and provide opportunities for their students to learn about the many cultures represented. In addition, educators should be creative, flexible, sensitive, equitable, and supportive and utilize all available valuable resources for their students. Through this integration, the classroom atmosphere will ensure the uniqueness of each child and, children will be able to share their unique experiences and stories based on their culture, language, religion, geographical, and ethnic background with their peers. Campbell (1999) advises that curricula used for the educational programs must be concise, well defined and engaging. Multicultural education programs should create a spirit of inclusion (particularly in groups that have a history of being discriminated against, and between groups that have a history of antagonism), as well as address and diminish stereotypes, prejudice and racism. Moreover, Gorski (2010) suggests that multicultural educators should encourage students to develop critical thinking skills, as well as increase their self-understanding. Educators can best encourage this development by modeling critical thinking skills. Encouraging students to recognize their values, feelings, privileges, and biases can facilitate development of self-awareness.

10. Conclusion

(a)   Turkey's multicultural society has existed for many centuries already, but the effects of its educational system towards the cultural diversity are still not effective.

(b)   A possible reason for this ineffectiveness is the inability of the Turkish educational system to realign its goals and objectives to the changing attribute of the society;

(c)   Turkey can take advantage of the structure of its educational system by implementing approaches that caters to various socio-cultural levels discussed above.

The need for the government to address deeper issues related to cultural diversity such as the issue on education is a fairly novel concept for the Turkish government. As far as the government is concerned, social and political tension within its domains are avoided as much as possible by tolerating individuals from other cultures. One of the many ways of solving the subtle yet existing social and cultural inequalities is through education. A successful multicultural education means that the educational program implemented in the Turkish educational system must and should be able to take into account the different cultures and cultural needs. Educators must also make use of professional development in order to increase their understanding of different cultures. If Turkish educators utilize these approaches and strategies, Turkish education might indeed become a model utopia.

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