

Fostering inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia

The importance of pre-service teacher training



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Master thesis Education, Socialization and Youth Policy

- Education and Child Development in the Context of International Humanitarian Cooperation and Aid -



Organization for Security and
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Utrecht University

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In cooperation with the OSCE mission to Skopje

In honor and loving memory of my father, Frank Deenen
From whom I learned important life lessons
Who shaped my character and taught me to always persevere

I am blessed and thankful for having you as my father
Thank you for all your love and support
Miss you so much

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Abstract

One of the most important challenges for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is overcoming ethnic tensions. To tackle this issue, the ethnic attitudes of people have to be altered and stereotypes and prejudices need to disappear from society. One important social mechanism in society with the capacity to achieve this, is the education system. Schools are unique psycho-social spaces that have the potential to foster inter-ethnic relations. The current segregated education system does not live up to this potential and therefore changes have to be made. In the development of a more integrated education system, teachers play a key role. Their level of competency for working in a multi-ethnic environment are crucial for the success of an integrated education system. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has therefore developed a program to improve the competencies of student-teachers for working in a multi-ethnic environment. This mixed-methods study examined the effect of this project on the competencies (consisting of dispositions, knowledge and skills) of student-teachers. Both the qualitative and quantitative results showed that the competencies of student-teachers improved because of their participation in the project. The quantitative analysis (N=150) compared the self-reported level of competencies of a group of students who participated in the project to the level of competencies of a control-group of students who had not participated. The project-group scored significantly higher on competency than the control-group. Focus groups with students who participated in the project and interviews with representatives of involved faculties and NGO's demonstrated an increase in the level of competencies of student-teachers when they participated in the project. Further research in the future is needed to verify and generalize the results to the entire population and to explore the effects of the project and the improved competencies of student-teachers on the inter-ethnic relations in the country. Several practical implications based on the results of this research and the studied literature were formulated.

Key words: Teacher competencies, multi-ethnic teaching competencies, multi-ethnic education, integrated education, student-teachers, teacher education, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, dispositions, knowledge, skills, ethnic tensions, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Samenvatting

Een van de grootste uitdagingen voor de Voormalige Joegoslavische Republiek van Macedonië is het verminderen van etnische spanningen. Om dit te bereiken, moeten de etnische attitudes van de bevolking veranderd worden en stereotypingen en vooroordelen moeten verdwijnen uit de samenleving. Eén sociaal mechanisme met de capaciteit om dit te bewerkstelligen, is het onderwijssysteem. Scholen zijn unieke psychosociale omgevingen die in potentie de interetnische relaties in een land kunnen verbeteren. Het huidige gesegregeerde onderwijssysteem vervult deze potentie echter niet en daarom moeten er veranderingen worden doorgevoerd. In de ontwikkeling van een meer geïntegreerd onderwijssysteem spelen leraren een belangrijke rol. Hun competenties voor het werken in een multi-etnische omgeving zijn van grote invloed op het succes van geïntegreerd onderwijs. De Organisatie voor Veiligheid en Samenwerking in Europa (OVSE) heeft daarom een programma ontwikkeld om de competenties van studentleraren om te werken in een multi-etnische omgeving te verbeteren. Deze mixed methods studie heeft de effecten van dit project op de competenties (bestaande uit disposities, kennis en vaardigheden) van studentleraren onderzocht. Zowel de kwantitatieve als kwalitatieve resultaten lieten zien dat de competenties van studentleraren verbeterden dankzij deelname aan het project. De kwantitatieve analyse (N=150) vergeleek de door hen zelf gerapporteerde niveau van competenties van studenten die deel hadden genomen aan het project met het niveau van competenties in een controlegroep van studenten die niet hadden deelgenomen. De projectgroep scoorde significant hoger op competentie dan de controlegroep. Uit interviews en focusgroepen met studenten die deel hadden genomen aan het project en vertegenwoordigers van betrokken faculteiten en NGO's bleek ook dat de studenten een hoger niveau van competentie hadden verkregen door hun deelname aan het project. Vervolgonderzoek in de toekomst is nodig om de resultaten te verifiëren en generaliseren naar de gehele populatie en om te onderzoeken of het project en de verbeterde competenties van leraren ook daadwerkelijk effect hebben op de interetnische relaties in het land. Enkele praktische implicaties gebaseerd op de resultaten van dit onderzoek en de bestudeerde literatuur zijn opgesteld.

Trefwoorden: Competenties van leraren, multi-etnisch onderwijs competenties, multi-etnisch onderwijs, geïntegreerd onderwijs, studentleraren, leraarsopleiding, Organisatie voor Veiligheid en Samenwerking in Europa, disposities, kennis, vaardigheden, etnische spanningen, Voormalige Joegoslavische Republiek van Macedonië

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (from now on referred to as Macedonia) is a small landlocked country in the heart of the Balkans. Macedonia is bordered by Kosovo, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Albania. The modern-day state of Macedonia was born in 1944, when the Anti-Fascist Assembly for the National Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM) established the People's Republic of Macedonia. In the following year Macedonia entered the People's Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Macedonia declared its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. Macedonia has struggled with various international disputes, for example the conflict with Greece about the name Macedonia, but also faces problems within its borders (Petroska-Beska & Najcevska, 2009).

Domestically, one of the most important challenges for Macedonia is overcoming ethnic tensions. Macedonia is a multi-ethnic state, consisting of approximately 64 percent Macedonians, 25 percent Albanians and 4 percent Turks. The remaining population groups are Roma, Serbs, Vlachs and Bosnians (Anger, van't Rood & Gestakovska, 2010) (These definitions of the population groups of Macedonia refer to ethnic groups, not nationalities. Henceforth all ethnic groups in Macedonia will be referred to as such. When these definitions refer to nationalities, this will be explicitly mentioned). Especially the relationship between Macedonians and Albanians has been difficult since the independence of Macedonia and the accompanying adoption of the Constitution of the Macedonian state in 1991. While total equality of all nationalities was promised, the constitution created a symbolic hierarchy based on ethnicity, with the Macedonians being the 'owners of the state'. Despite being a relatively large minority group, the right to education in their own language was denied to the Albanians and the Cyrillic Macedonian became the only official language in the country. The implementation of this constitution brought structural inequality to the country and created a sense of dissatisfaction among the Albanian community (Reka, 2008).

The tensions between these two ethnic groups reached a peak in 2001, when armed conflict erupted between Macedonian security forces and the Albanian National Liberation Army (Petroska-Beska & Najcevska, 2009). Ethnic inequality, cultural differences and political underdevelopment laid the ground for the conflict, and the spillover of refugees from Kosovo was the final incentive for the mini-war. Armed clashes erupted in the north of the country and it brought Macedonia to the brink of civil war. Under international pressure from the EU, NATO and US actors, and with intensive international mediation the Albanian and Macedonian parties negotiated on a diplomatic and political solution to resolve the conflict (Hislope, 2003; Reka, 2008).

In August of 2001, the *Ohrid Framework Agreement* (OFA) was signed by the government of Macedonia and Albanian representatives and this covenant ended the fighting. This agreement addressed the discrimination of minority groups in Macedonia and called for an ethnically neutral and liberal constitution. The Albanian language was recognized as an official language on a national level. One of the most influential provisions in the agreement was the law on local self-government. It stipulates that every ethnic group that comprises more than 20 percent of the population in a municipality, has the right to have their language formalized and the right to receive education in their

mother tongue. The signing of the OFA reduced the immediate tensions between the Albanians and Macedonians and possibly saved Macedonia from a full-blown civil war (Reka, 2008).

Despite this success, the OFA also faces some challenges. Although the agreement was an important and necessary step to reduce the inter-ethnic tensions and has provided (more) protection of minority rights, it also seems to have contributed to the division and segregation of ethnic groups (Anger et al., 2010; Reka, 2008). Firstly, the Ohrid process was dominated by the Albanian party, which has left the Macedonians regarding the OFA as a defeat and other minority groups feeling left out. Although the latter also benefit from the provisions in the agreement, they feel excluded since they were not part of the negotiations. Secondly, the OFA has not decreased ethnic distance, even though inter-ethnic tensions declined. Stereotypes, prejudice and distrust are ever-present among all ethnic groups and the bad situation of the economy in Macedonia creates even more resentment among the people. Lastly, and probably most importantly, the provisions in the OFA have made inter-ethnic communication more difficult. Most minority groups do not speak the Macedonian language properly because they receive education in their mother tongue. This creates distance between the different ethnic groups and that distance only instigates the already present stereotypes, prejudice and distrust (Reka, 2008).

The challenge of overcoming ethnic tensions that Macedonia faces, does not have a clear-cut solution. Signing the OFA was a first step in the good direction, but there is a long way ahead for Macedonia. The problem needs to be addressed on a political, economic and social level. Socially, the ethnic attitudes of people have to be altered and stereotypes and prejudice need to disappear from society. It is very difficult, however, to change the mindset and behavior of adults who have completely internalized this way of thinking. It would be more effective to teach a different frame of mind to the adults of the future, to teach children to live in a peaceful and constructive way with each other in a multi-ethnic society. The most influential social mechanism in society with the capacity to achieve this, is the education system. Schools are unique psycho-social spaces that have the potential to foster inter-ethnic relations (Duffie VanBalkom, & Beara, 2012). The education system in Macedonia should live up to this potential to have a shot at changing the society. Unfortunately, most of the schools currently do not contribute to the efforts to improve the multi-ethnic society of Macedonia.

Theoretical background

The education system in Macedonia

Following the Ohrid Framework Agreement, Macedonia's education system provides children the opportunity to receive education in their mother tongue. Therefore, an increasing number of schools in the country are divided along ethnic or linguistic lines (Anger et al., 2010). Most children attend either mono-lingual schools, where the instruction is given solely in their native language and almost all students are from the same ethnic group, or so called mixed-schools. In most of these mixed-schools, students are divided in different time shifts. Each shift provides instruction for a single

ethnic group in their own language. This way, different ethnic groups do not have to share the same space at the same time. In either of these cases, children are physically separated from each other based on their ethnicity and this limits the possibilities for contact between different ethnic groups severely. Even in mixed schools without the time shifts-system where different ethnic groups share the physical space in a school or classroom, separation between ethnic groups is obvious during breaks and extra-curricular activities. Children from different ethnicities do not communicate or interact with each other and friendships between them are extremely rare (Petroska-Beska & Najcevska, 2009).

The education system has increased ethnic distance by following this model of separation rather than a model of integration (Anger et al., 2010; Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia, 2010; Unicef, 2009). The importance of attention to multiculturalism in education and the need for improvement of inter-ethnic relations through education is now widely acknowledged in Macedonia, but schools continue to use the strategy of separation to prevent inter-ethnic conflict from occurring (Unicef, 2009). This approach has resulted in a vicious cycle. The ethnic distance prevents children from meeting and getting to know peers from other ethnic groups. There are almost no opportunities for interaction or cooperation at school, and even if there were, the inability to communicate with each other because they do not speak each other's language would make it practically impossible. So because of ethnic distance, negative stereotypes and prejudices towards 'others' continue to prevail among children in Macedonia. They do not have an opportunity to get to know children from other ethnicities and disprove the stereotypes and prejudices. Fear for members of other ethnic groups is common among the youth and there is little inter-ethnic tolerance (Unicef, 2009). This results in conflicts between ethnic groups and it generates a lot of physical and psychological violence in schools. For example, in the population of school-aged children, 15 percent of the girls and 40 percent of the boys have been engaged in physical fights (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia, 2012). Most schools and teachers do not have the resources or capacities to deal with these conflicts and the violence in a constructive manner and therefore they often choose for physical segregation (Unicef, 2009).

Education and fostering social cohesion

To understand the major influence this education system has on the Macedonian society as a whole, the ecological model of Bronfenbrenner (1992) will serve as a framework. This model posits the theory that the development of a child is affected by the entire ecosystem he or she grows up in. This ecosystem is comprised of four dimensions. The first dimension, the microsystem, refers to the environment closest to the child and entails the elements a child has direct contact with, like family, neighborhood and school. The second dimension, the mesosystems surrounding a child, consists of the connections between the elements of the microsystem, for example the relation between the child's parents and school or teacher. The third dimension, the exosystem, is the social system which a child does not have direct contact with. This dimension influences his or her development by affecting the elements in the microsystem of the child, an example would be the effect of local politics on the

school. The fourth and final dimension is the macrosystem. This system incorporates the values, beliefs, customs, laws and ideologies dominant in the society a child lives in. These four different dimensions influence the socialization of a child and it's perception of the world and the society he or she lives in (Bronfenbrenner, 1992).

According to Bronfenbrenner's model, transactional processes occur within and between these dimensions. The dominant ideologies in the country regarding the multi-ethnic society influence national and local politics, which in turn affect the education system, and the education system eventually shapes the relationship between a child and his or her peers. The tensions between the ethnic groups in Macedonia resulted in the OFA, on the basis of which the education system has been altered, and the current segregated education system defines the relationships between children from different ethnicities. However, this mechanism does also work the other way around. A change in the peer-interactions and the school system, can lead to a change in policies on the political level, which can alter the dominant ideologies in society (Bronfenbrenner, 1992).

Currently, the education system in Macedonia reinforces the societal trend of ethnic segregation. It does not promote inter-ethnic contact and reinforces negative stereotypes and prejudices. Such a biased education system is a threat to the security in a country on the long term. When schools do not promote positive attitudes towards other ethnic groups, there is a great risk of disintegration and inter-ethnic conflicts (Du Pont, 2005). This possibly predicts a perilous future for Macedonia, which might be avoided if the education system would be deployed in a positive manner. With Bronfenbrenner's model in mind, the education system in a country is, potentially, the most effective mechanism to induce reconciliation and to create a cohesive society ((Petroska-Beska & Najcevska, 2009).

Social cohesion is a requirement for a properly functioning modern democracy (Anger et al., 2010). Social cohesion can be defined as 'the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members by minimizing disparities and avoiding polarization' (McGinn, 2008, p. 291). Harmonious inter-ethnic relations and trust among citizens are distinctive features of social cohesion (Green, Preston & Sabates, 2003). An education system is very important for the creation of social cohesion in a society through the socialization of children. Inculcating social norms and values, teaching a communal language, promoting multiculturalism and addressing inter-ethnic relations through education, contribute to the social cohesion in a country (Anger et al., 2010; Heyneman & Todoric-Bebic, 2000; Unicef, 2009). Currently, most schools in Macedonia do not adequately socialize children, considering these conditions. So to have the education system in Macedonia function as a facilitator of social cohesion in the country, changes have to be made.

Transformation of the education system in Macedonia

The Macedonian government has therefore, in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), initiated a strategy towards an integrated education system. The strategy was developed to reduce ethnic distance, and it aims to 'bring about a tangible and

considerable change in the general approach within the education system in accordance with the multi-ethnic reality of the country' (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia, 2010).

Desegregation of education often has a positive effect on inter-ethnic relations. Although the short-term effects of desegregation on prejudices and stereotypes are not always unambiguous, for they seem to be different for majority and minority groups, the long-term effects of integrated education are positive. Students from a desegregated education system tend to choose to live a desegregated environment when they grow up more often than peers from a segregated education system. This desegregation, at school and later in life, ensures that people come into contact with members of other ethnicities. And according to Allport's contact theory (1954), interpersonal contact is one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudices and stereotypes among ethnic groups. If people have the opportunity to communicate with each other, they will understand and appreciate differences between them better. This understanding and appreciation should diminish their prejudices. However, contact between people is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for improving inter-ethnic relations. (Schofield & Eurich-Fulcer, 2008).

Getting children from different ethnicities to sit together in a classroom is thus necessary to improve their relationships, but it is not enough. When children are just being in each other's proximity, no friendships are established between children from different ethnicities and there is often still discrimination and stigmatization in the classroom (European Training Foundation, 2010). The structure of the contact situation is key to have positive results, and this structure is influenced by several factors according to Allport's theory. First of all, there have to be opportunities for close personal contact. Secondly, this contact has to be focused on cooperation rather than competition. Thirdly, all children need to have an equal status. And finally, the factor most relevant for the scope of this research, there needs to be support of relevant authority figures (Schofield & Eurich-Fulcer, 2008).

Within the education system, teachers are the most important authority figures for children, and they are the most important school factor influencing the inter-ethnic attitudes of children (OSCE, 2010). Children spend a lot of time at school, and teachers are very important role models (Duffie VanBalkom & Beara, 2012). According to Bandura's social learning theory, children learn by observing the behaviour and attitudes of others. This happens through a mechanism called modelling. Children observe the behaviour and attitudes of others, imitate this and thereby model their own behaviours and attitudes (Bandura, 1977). With teachers being important role models for children and children spending a lot of time with teachers, children model their behaviour and attitudes at least partly by the behaviour and attitudes of their teachers. Teachers are therefore important socialization agents for children. The way they present ethnic groups and whether they promote or oppose inter-ethnic relations, has a great influence on the ideas of children (Duffie VanBalkom & Beara, 2012). Besides this moral role of teachers, they are also responsible for the classroom environment. They are the designated persons to prevent conflict from occurring and to facilitate communication and contact

between children (European Training Foundation, 2010). Teachers are therefore a crucial factor in the succeeding of multi-ethnic education and establishing social cohesion in a country.

At this moment, however, teachers in Macedonia often do not have a positive influence on the ethnic attitudes of children (European Training Foundation, 2010). Teachers are not adequately prepared for the diversity of the country and they are not capable of resolving conflicts in a constructive manner (European Training Foundation, 2010; Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia, 2012). Often they contribute to inter-ethnic intolerance by confirming prejudices and stereotypes (Unicef, 2009). Almost half of the respondents in a study by the OSCE (2010) reported having heard their teacher make derogatory comments about other ethnic groups. Without the motivation, willingness, and capacities of teachers to work in a warm and friendly manner with students of all ethnicities, the social cohesion in the country cannot flourish (ETF, 2010). That is why the government has made teachers' qualifications one of the five thematic strands of the strategy towards an integrated education system (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia, 2010).

Competencies of teachers for multi-ethnic education

To develop teacher's capacities for working in an integrated education system, they need to be trained in recognizing and challenging their own personal prejudices and stereotypes regarding other ethnic groups and they need to be taught certain competencies to function well in a multi-ethnic classroom (Unicef, 2009). Several studies have investigated the competencies a teacher needs in a multicultural or multi-ethnic classroom (European Training Foundation, 2010; Vasallo, 2012; Hong, Troutman, Hartzell, & Kyles, 2010). All studies distinguished knowledge and skills as two important aspects of the multicultural competencies of teachers. The knowledge and skills teachers need for multi-ethnic education are aimed at the improvement of the learning experience of all ethnic groups and they should strengthen the capacity to remove specific barriers that inhibit the education and participation of children (European Training Foundation, 2010). Cultural knowledge includes for example knowledge about the cultures of diverse ethnic groups and cultural skills are certain behaviours that cultivate culturally sensitive interactions with all ethnic groups (Vasallo, 2012). Besides knowledge and skills, there is a value-related aspect which is important for the multicultural competencies of teachers. In this study, the concept of dispositions will be used. Dispositions can be described as the way in which an individual acts in certain circumstances. This behaviour of teachers is effected by their attitudes, which refer to the degree an individual likes or dislikes something, and awareness. In the case of teachers in a multi-ethnic classroom, this for example involves attitudes regarding the importance of multi-ethnic education and the awareness of issues specific for a multi-ethnic classroom (European Training Foundation, 2010). For the scope of this study, competency for working in a multi-ethnic environment can be seen as a result of the interaction of dispositions, knowledge and skills (see figure 1). When a teacher possesses these competencies, he or she will be able to act adequately and effectively in a multi-ethnic environment.

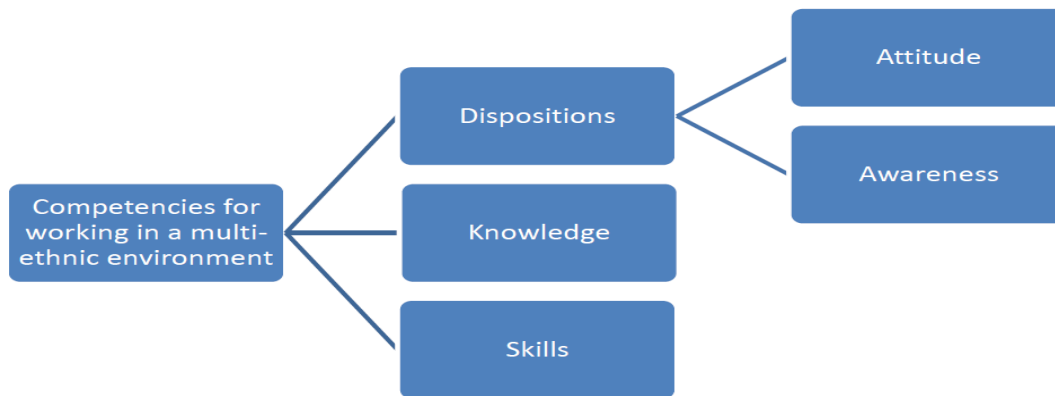


Figure 1. Competencies for working in a multi-ethnic environment

Multicultural education for student-teachers improves these competencies in future teachers and enhances their willingness to work in a multi-ethnic environment (Vasallo, 2012). When teachers complete effective multicultural education courses and trainings, they show increased levels of multicultural knowledge, pedagogical skills and ability to engage in constructive and meaningful relationships with students from other ethnic groups (Bell, 2000; Gorham, 2001). Teachers who have participated in courses focussed on multicultural competencies, score significantly higher in regard to cultural competency than teachers who have not participated in such courses (Vasallo, 2012). The current schooling of student-teachers, however, often does not provide this multicultural education in an adequate way. The curriculum in teacher-education often does not exceed the knowledge-level. It contains elements that touch on multi-ethnic characteristics of the country and the differences between ethnic groups in the society, but this knowledge is not translated to the practice and there is no development of values regarding the multi-ethnic society or tolerance of differences (Centre for Education Policy, 2008; European Commission, 2013). A study by the European Training Foundation (2010) concluded that the teacher-education for integrated education in Macedonia is generally inadequate. Most participants in the study did not have a satisfactory level of competencies needed for teaching in a socially and ethnically diverse environment and in-service teachers declared in interviews that the teacher-education only provided them with general knowledge on multiculturalism and that they developed the other competencies on their own during their working experience (ETF, 2010).

So there is a need for proper multicultural education courses and training for student-teachers in Macedonia, to provide student-teachers the possibility to achieve the level of competencies necessary for working in a multi-ethnic environment. In accordance with the strategy towards an integrated education system, the OSCE mission to Skopje has therefore developed a project called 'Strengthening the pre-service teacher training system in a multi-ethnic society'. This project has been running since 2009 and is aimed at 'assisting the teacher training institutions and the Ministry of

Education and Science to prepare future teachers better for their profession in a multi-ethnic context'. The project involves students from all five teacher training institutions in the country, situated in Skopje, Tetovo, Stip and Bitola. It is made up of two parts, an introductory seminar and a practicum carried out in one of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) cooperating with the OSCE in the implementation of this project. The five-day introductory seminar provides the student-teachers theoretical knowledge about the following topics: Working with children from marginalized groups, teaching and learning in an inter-cultural context, communication skills, conflict resolution skills, recognizing signs of domestic violence and trafficking in human beings. Directly after the seminar, the students-teachers commence their six-month practicum at one of the NGO's. During this practicum, that takes up four hours per week, they come into contact with children from different ethnicities and they work with them in small groups of one to five children, helping them with their homework and giving them other learning support when needed. Students are selected for the project based on their motivation to work in a multi-ethnic environment and their readiness to cope with complex social situations. The final objective of the project is to increase the competencies for working in a multi-ethnic environment of the student-teachers involved in the project (OSCE, 2013).

Previous research shows that programs similar to the OSCE-project were effective in improving the competencies for teachers to work in a multi-ethnic environment. Reyes and Bishop (2005) studied a program that involved a partnership between a teacher training institution and an urban after-school program. It provided the student-teachers an opportunity to experience working with students from diverse backgrounds and the study showed that the program was effective in overcoming the challenges teachers face in multicultural education. Taylor and Sobel (2003) also found that opportunities for interaction with other ethnicities and chances for applying the theoretical knowledge in practice, were highly valued by student-teachers. Teachers thus seem to develop competencies for integrated multi-ethnic education when they have possibilities to interact with diversity in a practical context (European Training Foundation, 2010). This practical work, however, is not sufficient to develop the competencies of teachers in all domains. Hong, Troutman, Hartzell and Kyles (2010) found that practical work on itself, had some positive effects on multicultural teaching competencies, but only in skills and dispositions, not knowledge. Specific activities designed to increase the theoretical knowledge of student-teachers should therefore accompany the opportunity to do practical work in an ethnic diverse environment. The OSCE-project provides the seminar to enhance the theoretical knowledge of student teachers and the practicum to provide the student-teachers with an opportunity to do practical work in an ethnic diverse environment. Thus theoretically, the OSCE-project should contribute to the development of multi-ethnic teaching competencies in students who participate in the project.

Present study

This study examines whether the OSCE-project is actually successful in its efforts to improve student-teachers' competencies for working in a multi-ethnic environment (henceforth these

competencies for working in a multi-ethnic environment will be referred to as ‘competencies’ or ‘competency’. If these descriptions refer to any other kind of competencies, this will be explicitly mentioned). To find this out, a mixed-method design was used. A questionnaire was administered to collect quantitative data among students. To complement this quantitative data, semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted among students who participated in the project, faculty-members and NGO-coordinators.

The differences in the level of competencies of student-teachers who participated in the project and student-teachers who did not participate were assessed by a questionnaire that was handed out among students who participated in the project and students who did not participate. The level of competency was assessed in three areas: dispositions, knowledge and skills. The dispositions of student-teachers were measured through assessing the level of awareness and attitudes of student-teachers regarding multi-ethnic education. Possible differences in the level of competencies with regard to the gender, age, ethnicity and region of participants will be explored. These factors will also be included as control variables for the difference in competencies between students who did and students who did not participate in the project.

Because students are selected for the project based on their motivation to work in a multi-ethnic environment and readiness to cope with complex social situations, it is feasible that the students who participated in the project, already had more positive ethnic attitudes than their fellow students before they started in the project. This could influence their level of competency measured in this study. Therefore the level of inter-ethnic contact and ethnic attitude of the participants during primary and secondary school (henceforth referred to as ‘ethnic contact and attitude as a minor’) was assessed in the questionnaire and added to the analyses as a possible control variable.

It is possible that some NGO’s are more successful in aiding the development of the competencies of the students they work with than others. Therefore, possible differences in the level of competencies of students who participated in the project at different NGO’s, will be examined.

The studied literature has shown that besides professional competency, personal ethnic attitudes of teachers are important for their capacity for working in a multi-ethnic environment. This research therefore also examines whether the OSCE-project possibly contributes to improving the personal ethnic attitudes of student-teachers, although it is not an explicit aim of the project. To test this, the current ethnic attitudes of the participants were measured and the data was checked for differences in the scores between students who participated in the OSCE-project and students who did not participate.

In the interviews and focus groups that have been conducted, students, faculty-members and NGO-coordinators were asked about their experiences with the project, whether they have noticed a change in the competencies of students involved in the project (or their own competencies in the case of the students), and other relevant topics in the scope of this research (see Appendices A and B).

Research questions. The central research question is this study is: *Is there a difference in the level of competencies of student-teachers who participated in the OSCE-project compared to student-teachers who did not participate in the OSCE-project?* The following additional sub-questions have been formulated:

- Are there differences in the level of dispositions, knowledge and skills of student-teachers who participated in the OSCE-project compared to student-teachers who did not participate in the OSCE-project?
- Are there differences in the level of competencies of students regarding gender, age, ethnicity and region?
- Are there differences in the level of ethnic contact and attitude as a minor between students who participated in the OSCE-project and students who did not participate in the OSCE-project?
- Are there differences in the level of competencies between student-teachers who participated in the OSCE-project and student-teachers who did not participate in the OSCE-project controlled for gender, ethnicity, region, and inter-ethnic contact and attitude at a younger age?
- Are there differences in the level of competency between student-teachers who participated in the OSCE-project and did their practicum at the different project-NGO's?
- Is there a difference in the level of personal ethnic attitudes between student-teachers who participated in the OSCE-project and student-teachers who did not participate in the OSCE-project?

Considering the theoretical background, it is expected that the project will have a positive effect on the competencies of the student-teachers involved in the project. The following hypothesis can be formulated:

H0: There is no difference in the multi-ethnic teaching competencies of student-teachers who participated in the OSCE-project compared to student-teachers who did not participate in the OSCE-project.

H1: There is a difference in the multi-ethnic teaching competencies of student-teachers who participated in the OSCE-project compared to student-teachers who did not participate in the OSCE-project.

Methodology

Participants

This study focuses on students from the pedagogical faculties and faculty-members and NGO-coordinators who were involved in the project 'strengthening teacher competencies for working in a multi-ethnic environment'. The students and professors come from all pedagogical faculties in Macedonia that have participated in the project 'strengthening teacher competencies for working in a

multi-ethnic environment'. These faculties include the Faculty of Pedagogy St. Kliment Ohridski of the Saint Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, the Institute of Pedagogy of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Saint Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, the Study group of Pedagogy of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Tetovo State University in Tetovo, the Faculty of Education of the Goce Delcev University in Stip, and the Faculty of Pedagogy of the Saint Kliment Ohridski University in Bitola. The students involved in this study carried out the practical part of the project at one of the following NGO's: Association of Citizens Sumnal in Skopje, Happy Life and Aurora in Tetovo, Association for Human Rights Protection of Roma in Stip, and Lifestart and Bairska Svetlina in Bitola. The students who were selected were in their third or fourth year of study or had graduated. This selection was made because of the presumed greater ability of these students, in comparison to first or second year students, to rate their competencies because of the (practical) experience they gained in their previous years of study.

The sample for the questionnaire consists of 150 students, containing 139 females and 11 males. 71 students (47.3 %) participated in the project, 79 students (52.7 %) did not. The students were aged 20 to 47, with a mean of 23.20 (SD = 4.362). Seven different ethnic groups were represented in the sample (68 % Macedonian, 22 % Albanian, 5.3 % Turkish, 2 % Roma, 1.3 % Bosnian, 0.7 % Serbian and 0.7 % Macedonian/Serbian). Most students were in their third (35.3 %) or fourth (59.3 %) year of studies, 5.3 % of the students had graduated.

Semi-structured interviews were held with five faculty members (of the Faculty of Pedagogy of the St. Kliment Ohridski of Saint Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, the Institute of Pedagogy of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Saint Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, the Faculty of Education of the Goce Delcev University in Stip, and the Faculty of Pedagogy of the Saint Kliment Ohridski University in Bitola) and five NGO-coordinators (of the Association of Citizens Sumnal in Skopje, Happy Life in Tetovo, Association for Human Rights Protection of Roma in Stip, and Lifestart in Bitola). Three focus groups were held with a total of 17 students who had participated in the project (five from Skopje, five from Tetovo and seven from Stip).

Procedure

The English questionnaire was first translated into Macedonian and Albanian, and then translated back into English to check for inconsistencies in the translation. To maximize the sample, the questionnaire was offered to students in two different ways. A link to an online version of the questionnaire was sent to the email-addresses of approximately 250 students, of which 53 completed the questionnaire. A paper version of the questionnaire was offered to 97 students at the faculties and NGO's. Both the online and paper version of the questionnaire included instructions for properly filling out the questionnaire. These instructions also informed the participants about the subject of the questionnaire and the guarantee of anonymity when participating in the research (see Appendix C). The average time to complete the questionnaire was approximately ten minutes.

The semi-structured interviews were held with faculty-members and NGO-coordinators who were involved in the project. A topic list was used to structure the interviews (see appendix B). The interviews were conducted in English and recorded using a mobile device. The interviews took place at the respective faculties and NGO's and they took approximately thirty minutes on average.

The focus groups with students who participated in the project included five to seven persons and were recorded with a mobile device. A topic list was used to structure the focus groups (see appendix A). At all focus groups, a translator was present to translate for the researcher and students. Two focus groups took place at an NGO and one took place at a faculty. The average time of a focus group was thirty minutes.

Measurements

Based on scientific literature and existing scales regarding multicultural competencies, a questionnaire was developed specifically for this study to collect the quantitative data. Based on the studied literature, the level of competency of the participants is measured by assessing the dispositions, knowledge and skills through three different subscales. The questionnaire (Appendix C) consists of 59 questions, including demographic questions and the measures described below.

Ethnic contact and attitude as a minor. This scale was developed to measure the degree of inter-ethnic contact and the ethnic attitudes of the participants at the age of primary and secondary school. It consists of eight items (number nine to sixteen). Item nine and ten are scored with either a 'one' (no) or a 'two' (yes). An example item is: "Were you friends with children from a different ethnicity than your own in the period you were attending primary school?". The remaining items (number eleven to sixteen) are scored on a four-point Likert-scale. This ranges from one (never) to four (always) for questions eleven to fourteen and from one (strongly disagree) to four (strongly agree) for questions fifteen and sixteen. An example item is: "I had positive feelings towards children from a different ethnicity than my own in the period I was attending primary school".

A mean score for this subscale could not be computed, since the scores on items nine and ten (i.e. yes or no) were incompatible with the scores on the other items in this scale (i.e. four-point Likert scale). Therefore, a component-score was computed by executing a factor analysis with a one-factor solution for this subscale and saving the factor score for each participant as a variable. The factor accounted for 49.4 percent of the total variance. All items loaded well above .30 (ranging from .55 to .83). The Cronbach's reliability of this scale as measured in this study was high ($\alpha = .85$) (see Appendix D for a detailed description of the statistical tests used in this study and their interpretation).

Ethnic attitude. The Other Group Orientation scale (OGO scale) (Phinney, 1992) was used to measure the personal ethnic attitudes of the participants. This scale consists of six items (e.g. "I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my own"), rated along a four-point Likert-scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to four (strongly agree). One item was reverse scored (i.e. "I sometimes feel it would be better if different ethnic groups didn't mix together"). The validity of the OGO-scale was examined in various studies, and Worrell (2000) found a Cronbach's reliability

coefficient of .76. The Cronbach's reliability of the scale in this study was high ($\alpha = .76$) and it even increased significantly after removing the reverse scored item ($\alpha = .82$). The reverse scored item has therefore been excluded from the scale in further analysis.

Dispositions. To measure the attitudes and awareness of participants regarding multi-ethnic education, the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) was used. Originally, this scale consists of twenty items, scored on a five-point Likert-scale. For the scope of this research, several adaptations were made to the TMAS. Items five and fifteen of the original TMAS were removed since they were not applicable to the Macedonian situation and item nine was slightly altered to fit the Macedonian situation better. Two items were added to the scale. The contents of these items (i.e. the language issue in Macedonia and awareness of prejudice and stereotypes) were extensively discussed in the literature and it therefore was deemed appropriate to include them in this scale. Finally, the scale in this study was scored on a four-point Likert-scale (instead of a five-point Likert-scale) ranging from one (strongly disagree) to four (strongly agree). Previous studies on similar subjects in Macedonia, reported signs of indifference in participants when participating in a study. By using a four-point Likert-scale, participants were encouraged to genuinely consider their answers since there was always a valuation attached to them. An example item of this scale is: "I find the idea of teaching a culturally or ethnically diverse group rewarding". Seven items in the final scale were reverse scored (e.g. 'multicultural/ethnic training for teachers is not necessary'). For the original TMAS, internal consistency ($\alpha = .86$), test-retest reliability (coefficient of .80) and convergent validity were examined (Ponterotito, Baluch, Greig, & Rivera, 1998). For this study, a Cronbach's alpha of .75 was calculated for the dispositions-scale. After removing several items from the scale (items 25, 27, 30, and 36) the Cronbach's alpha increased significantly ($\alpha = .82$).

Knowledge. This scale was developed to examine the knowledge of participants regarding multi-ethnic education. It is based on scientific literature on multicultural competencies and the Multicultural Teaching Scale (MTS). The original MTS consists of 37 items, scored on a seven-point Likert-scale. The MTS was designed to assess student-teachers self-reported competencies for teaching children from diverse cultural backgrounds (Wayson, 1993). An inter-item reliability of .90 was reported for the MTS (Gorham, 2001).

The knowledge-scale in this study consists of six items (e.g. I have knowledge on the culture, habits, norms and values of other ethnic groups), scored on a four-point Likert-scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to four (strongly agree). The Cronbach's reliability of this scale was high ($\alpha = .81$).

Skills. This scale was developed to examine the skills of participants regarding multi-ethnic education. It is based on scientific literature on multicultural competencies and the MTS (Wayson, 1993). The skills-scale consists of eleven items (e.g. I can identify stereotypes and prejudices in learning materials), scored on a four-point Likert-scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to four (strongly agree). The Cronbach's reliability of this scale was high ($\alpha = .90$).

Factor analysis

First, exploratory factor analyses of the three separate subscales of competency-scale were executed to investigate whether the items on these subscales together actually measure only one and the same factor per subscale, respectively dispositions, knowledge and skills (see Appendix D).

A factor analysis, carried out using an oblique rotated factor solution, of the dispositions scale initially showed five factors with an eigenvalue above one. After inspection of the scree plot, a three-factor solution was determined, with the three factors together accounting for 42.81 percent of the total variance. A second factor analysis with a three-factor and oblique rotated solution was executed. According to the component correlation matrix, the third factor correlated negatively with the first factor (-.03). After checking the items that loaded high on the third factor (item 30, 36, 41), the conclusion was drawn that these items might have been difficult to understand or interpret for the participants and therefore were not representative for the dispositions-scale. The items that loaded the highest on the second factor (item 25, 27, 33 39 and 40), were all items that needed to be reverse scored. Supposedly, some of the students did not notice the reversed formulation of the items and this affects the scores on these items, making them seem like a different factor. It therefore seems plausible that the dispositions-scale, when these items are disregarded, does have only one underlying factor. All remaining items score well above .30 on this factor.

The factor analysis of the knowledge-scale, carried out with an oblique rotated factor solution, revealed one factor with an eigenvalue above one, accounting for 52.04 percent of the total variance. The factor loadings of the items in this scale vary from .64 to .80. The knowledge-scale thus has only one underlying factor.

The factor analysis of the skills-scale, also executed with an oblique rotated factor solution, produces two factors with an eigenvalue above one. Based on the scree plot, a one-factor solution was most suitable for this scale, with the factor explaining 51.32 percent of the total variance. Another factor analyses was executed with a one-factor solution and all items scored above .30 on this factor, ranging from .47 to .82. So, the skills-scale measures one underlying factor.

To verify the supposed three-factor structure of the competency-scale as a whole, with dispositions, knowledge and skills as the underlying factors, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed using a orthogonal rotated factor solution (see Appendix D). The factor analysis produced ten factors with an eigenvalue of more than one. The scree plot suggests a one-factor solution, with this factor explaining 29.64 percent of the total variance. Therefore, another factor analysis was executed with a one-factor solution. Most items loaded above .30 on this factor, ranging from .31 to .75. Items 25, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39 and 41 loaded below .30. This results of this factor analysis indicate that the dispositions-scale has only one underlying factor, which suggests that the dispositions-, knowledge-, and skills-scale are highly correlated. To test this suggestion, the Pearson correlations of these three scales were computed. The test shows that all three scales are significantly correlated, The dispositions-scale correlated positively with both the knowledge-scale ($r = .52, p < .01$) and the

skills-scale ($r = .63, p < .01$). And a positive correlation was also found for the knowledge-scale and skills-scale ($r = .70, p < .01$). This means that when participants score high on the knowledge-scale, they also score high on the knowledge- and skills-scale, and vice versa. Because the three subscales are thus highly correlated and only one underlying factor of the dispositions-scale was found in the factor analysis, it would be trivial to make a distinction between dispositions, knowledge and skills in any further analyses. Therefore, the competencies of the participants will be measured by using their mean score on the competency-scale as a whole. This mean-score on the competency-scale was computed by using the scores on all items on the dispositions-, knowledge-, and skills-scale, with the exception of items 25, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, and 41. These items loaded below .30 on the factor analysis of the competency-scale and, based on the results of the factor analysis of the dispositions-scale, the scores on these items were not representative for the participants' dispositions.

Strategy of analysis

Several analyses were implemented using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 to answer the research questions of this study. To look for differences between some of the independent variables (e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, region) in ethnic contact and attitude as a minor, ethnic attitude and competencies, several t-tests and ANOVA's were executed (see Appendix D). To investigate differences between the project-group and the control group in ethnic contact and attitudes as a minor, ethnic attitude and competencies, several t-test were performed. Multiple hierarchical regression was then applied to see whether possible differences in the level of competencies between the project-group and control-group would still exist when controlling for the independent variables and ethnic contact and attitude as a minor (see Appendix D). Finally, two ANOVA's were executed to look for differences between some of the independent variables (e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, NGO) in ethnic attitude and competencies within the project-group. All analyses were run with a .05 alpha level and because of the amount of data, only statistically significant results will be reported.

Conditions

To perform these analyses, some conditions have to be met. According to Field (2009), the following assumptions have to be considered before performing parametric tests. First, the data has to be normally distributed. Second, there needs to be homogeneity of variance. Third, the data has to be of at least interval level. And finally, the observations need to be independent. The assumptions regarding interval level and independent observations were taken into account in the research and questionnaire design. The assumption of homogeneity of variance will be checked and reported in each analysis separately, by using a Levene's test (see Appendix D). A normal distribution implies that the distribution of the scale is relatively symmetrical on either side of the mean and that there are very few extreme scores. The normality of the distribution of the data can be checked visually or by examining the skewness and kurtosis of the data. The closer the skewness and kurtosis are to zero, the more normal a sample is distributed. The Z-scores of the skewness and kurtosis need to be between -1.96 and 1.96 (Field, 2009). The ethnic attitude-scale violates the assumption of normality with the z-

score of skewness being -2.39 and the z-score of kurtosis being 2.37 ($M = 3.13$, $SD = .51$). The high negative z-score of skewness indicates a build-up of high scores and the high z-score of kurtosis indicates a pointy and heavy-tailed distribution. A set of outliers in the left end of the histogram explains the high kurtosis (see Appendix E, figure E1). The competency-scale also violates the assumption of normality with the z-score of skewness being .01 and the z-score of kurtosis being 3.37 ($M = 3.15$, $SD = .35$). This high z-score of kurtosis indicates a pointy and heavy-tailed distribution. A set of outliers in the left end of the histogram explains the high kurtosis (see Appendix E, figure E2). The possibility of generalization of the results is limited because of the violations of the assumption of normality, but the results will still be relevant for the sample used in this study.

Results

Quantitative results

Descriptive statistics. Table E1 (see Appendix E) show the means and standard deviations of the examined variables. Because the scale on ethnic contact and attitude as a minor is measured by a component-score consisting of the z-scores of the items in the factor analysis, no mean and standard deviation can be given for this scale. The tests found no significant differences based on gender, age or region in the three dependent variables (i.e. ethnic contact and attitude as a minor, ethnic attitude and competencies). There were also no significant differences between ethnic groups regarding ethnic attitude and competencies. The ANOVA did show a significant difference between ethnic groups on the ethnic contact and attitude as a minor-scale, $F(6,139) = 2.28$, $p = .04$. No post-hoc tests were possible because of the small sample size ($N < 2$) in some categories. Looking at the mean z-scores on the scale, Macedonian (.11), Turkish (.43), Roma (.81) and Bosnian (.11) students score above the expected z-value and Albanian (-.49) and Serbian (-.65) students score below the expected z-value on this scale (see Appendix D). This means that Albanian and Serbian students had less contact with other ethnicities as a minor and scored lower on ethnic attitude as a minor than the other ethnic groups. These results have to be interpreted with caution, however, because of the small sample sizes in some of the categories.

Between group comparison. The independent samples t-test showed homogeneity of variance for all measured scales with all Levene's tests being non significant (ethnic contact and attitude as a minor, $p = .55$; ethnic attitude, $p = .97$; competencies, $p = .37$). Significant differences between the project-group and control-group were found for each scale. Participants in the project-group scored significantly higher on ethnic contact and attitude as a minor ($M = .17$, $SE = .12$) than participants in the control group ($M = -.16$, $SE = .11$), $t(144) = 2.01$, $p = .05$. The project-group scored higher on ethnic attitude ($M = 3.26$, $SE = .05$) than the control-group ($M = 3.01$, $SE = .06$), $t(148) = 3.07$, $p < .01$. Finally, the project-group also scored significantly higher on competencies ($M = 3.30$, $SE = .04$) than the control-group ($M = 3.01$, $SE = .04$), $t(144) = 5.55$, $p < .01$. All dependent variables were significantly correlated with each other. The ethnic contact and attitude as a minor-scale correlated positively with positively with the ethnic attitude-scale ($r = .50$, $p < .01$) and competency-

scale ($r = .44, p < .01$). The ethnic attitude-scale also correlated positively with the competency-scale ($r = .66, p < .01$).

Multivariate analyses. A hierarchical regression was executed to test whether the significant difference between the project-group and the control-group on the competency-scale would still exist when the control variables were taken into account. The demographic variables were entered first (gender, age, ethnicity and region), the ethnic contact and attitude as a minor-scale was entered in block two, and finally the experimental variable 'participation in the project' was entered in block three (see Appendix E, table D2). Model one, with the demographic variables as predictors, did not produce a significant result, $R^2 = .01, p = .91$. Neither of the independent variables were significant predictors. Model two, with the scores on ethnic contact and attitude as a minor included, did produce a significant result, $\Delta R^2 = .19, p < .01$. The ethnic contact and attitude as a minor-scale was the significant predictor in this block ($\beta = .44, p < .01$). This means that there is a positive correlation between this variable and the competency-scale, when controlled for the demographic variables. Participants who score higher on ethnic contact and attitude as a minor, score higher on the competency-scale. Lastly, model three, with the experimental variable 'participation in the project' included, also produced a significant result, $\Delta R^2 = .18, p < .01$. Both ethnic contact and attitude as a minor ($\beta = .35, p < .01$) and participation in the project ($\beta = .49, p < .01$) are significant predictors. This means there is a positive correlation between participation and the competency-scale. Students who participated in the project score higher on the competency-scale than students who did not, independent of their ethnic contact and attitude as a minor.

Within group comparison. The ANOVA showed no significant results for either of the independent variables on the ethnic attitude-scale within the project-group. There were also no significant results for gender, age and ethnicity on the competency-scale within this group. The ANOVA did produce a significant result for NGO on the competency-scale ($F(3,71) = 5.69, p < .01$). This means that the scores on the competency-scale are significantly different between participants who performed their practicum at different NGO's. However, the Levene's test on this ANOVA was significant ($p = .04$), meaning that there is no homogeneity of variance. Violation of this assumption implies that the results cannot be generalized, but they are still valid for this particular sample. Students from Happy Life in Tetovo ($M = 3.45, SD = .36$) and Association of Citizens Sumnal in Skopje ($M = 3.45, SD = .30$) scored highest on the competencies scale, followed by students from AHPRP in Stip ($M = 3.43, SD = .36$), students from Lifestart in Bitola ($M = 3.14, SD = .24$), students from Aurora in Tetovo ($M = 3.11, SD = .13$) and students from Bairska Svetlina in Bitola ($M = 2.84, SD = .18$). A post-hoc Tukey test shows that the scores of students from the NGO's with the highest scores (Happy Life Tetovo, Association of Citizens Sumnal Skopje, and AHPRP Stip) differ significantly from the score of the students from the NGO's with the lowest scores (Lifestart Bitola, Aurora Tetovo, and Bairska Svetlina Bitola). Within these two groups, there are no significant

differences. This results have to interpreted with caution however, because of the small sample size in some categories ($N < 5$).

Qualitative results

All the interviewed stakeholders were very positive and enthusiastic about the project and its results. The NGO- and faculty representatives emphasized the importance and relevance of this program for the education system and the country. They are greatly concerned about the segregation in schools and the little contact between children from different ethnic groups. They believe that these kind of projects that educate student-teachers on multi-ethnic education are very important and necessary, because many in-service teachers are not open to multi-ethnic education and some of them bear negative attitudes towards other ethnicities.

“Teachers are more reserved when you ask them to teach students from other ethnic groups.”

“Some of the teachers still have prejudice and stereotypes towards Roma children.”

The most mentioned qualities of the project are the opportunity for student-teachers to interact and work with other ethnicities and the chance to work more intensively with a small group of children during the practicum.

The main effect of the program that was reported by all stakeholders, concerned the change in the dispositions of the student-teachers. The stereotypes and prejudices regarding other ethnic groups that prevailed among the students seemed to vanish during the project. They learned to accept and respect the differences between them and people from other ethnicities, while acknowledging the equality of all ethnic groups. They were made more aware of and sensitive to the problems and issues that other ethnic groups face.

“Students from Stip meet students from Tetovo for the first time and say: ‘wow, they are normal’.”

“For example, it is very often that [students] comment: ‘oh, first we thought that working with Roma children would be disgusting, they are dirty, they are stupid’. You know, all those prejudices. Then [during the project] they [the prejudices] just vanished and they [the students] saw that they were children like all other children, that they have the needs that all the children in the world have. Now they will be prepared for... a class of children from different ethnic groups.”

With regard to their dispositions, there was also a change in the professional attitudes of the student-teachers towards multi-ethnic education. Before the project they were very skeptical about the idea of teaching a multi-ethnic class, but after their participation in the project, they were far more positive about this concept.

“Definitely we will choose to work in a multi-ethnic environment, because in contrast to students who were not participants in the project, and do not know how to deal with the students from other ethnic groups ... we do not have any prejudice and would like to work with them.”

“Our attitudes towards having a classroom full of different multicultural nationalities and learning together in the same classroom changed. That is also regarded as normal now. When beforehand we thought of it as impossible.”

All interviewees mentioned knowledge of other cultures as the greatest intellectual asset of this project. Student-teachers learned about the lifestyles, rules, and norms and values of other ethnic groups in Macedonia, both during the seminar as well as during the practicum in the NGO's. Besides this, the student-teachers gained theoretical knowledge on conflict resolution, problem solving and communication.

Another aspect regarding knowledge that was often mentioned in the interviews and focus groups, was the language issue. The fact that children do not speak each other's language, is a huge impediment in the integration of the education system. Because of this project, students were made aware of the fact that not being able to speak each other's language severely limits the possibility for interaction between people. Realizing this, they attempted to learn some words of the languages they did not speak, to be able to communicate with each other.

“...students who did not know the Macedonian language were trying to communicate in Macedonian and Macedonians who did not know the Albanian language were trying to communicate in the Albanian language and so they began using this language of the two different nationalities in the seminar, which was a good experience.”

The skills for multi-ethnic teaching that the student-teachers developed during the practicum at the NGO were primarily problem solving- and conflict resolution skills. There is a greater risk of problems or conflicts between children from different ethnicities, and the student-teachers learned how to deal with these issues.

“So, through this project they [the students who participated in the project] are ... prepared to deal with these situations. So there might be some problem, for example, between the children of different ethnicity at school, and if the teacher is well prepared, then he will resolve the problem easily.”

Furthermore, the student-teachers learned to communicate with both children and their parents, suited to their specific needs and style in communication. For example, the Roma children at the NGO in

Skopje were very reserved and shy. The student-teachers practiced during the practicum how to approach them and gain their trust.

“Because these kids from here [NGO in Skopje], they are very closed and shy and they do not want to share their feelings. So you have to make, to find a way to get to them. That was difficult, but with time we did it. And they are open for us now.”

Other skills that the student-teachers acquired during the project were general teaching-skills, important for but not directed specifically at multi-ethnic education, like interactive teaching methods.

Interaction of the competencies. The three types of competencies (i.e. dispositions, knowledge and skills) are not acquired separately of each other. These competencies are related to and dependent on each other. And in the interaction between these three types of competencies, a fourth defining factor seems to be present. This factor, namely contact with other ethnicities, seems to be a requirement for the development of the competencies. The student-teachers came in contact with students from other ethnic groups during the seminar and with children from a different ethnicity during the practicum. This contact increased their knowledge on the other ethnic groups and changed their perceptions of these groups.

“We would sit around together and talk about different issues regarding religion, regarding culture, regarding language and history and everything else. And we maintained to actually get to know each other better and put aside the clashes and attitudes that we had beforehand”

The dispositions, knowledge and skills of the student-teachers were interrelated. Knowledge seems to be the prerequisite to change the dispositions of the student-teachers and to develop their skills. The student-teachers need to know about the culture and life of other ethnic groups to understand them better, and consequently change their perceptions of these groups.

“We discussed about some problems that they [students from a different ethnic group; Albanian] are dealing with, when they face ... prejudice that occurs between them and us, because for example their religion is more strict and they must wear a head scarf. That was like a ... problem that was shown to us and how we can solve that [the prejudice]. And how do they feel and how we feel about that.”

The skills that the student-teachers developed during the practicum, were based on the knowledge students gained during the seminar. The student-teachers were taught at the seminar how they should deal with certain situations, and during the practicum they could bring this knowledge into practice and develop these skills.

“They really wanted to perfect their skills and become better at what they were doing. Implementing what they have heard there [at the seminar].”

Based on the interview and focus groups, the following model is developed to depict the acquirement of competencies for working in a multi-ethnic environment by the student-teachers in the project (see figure 2).

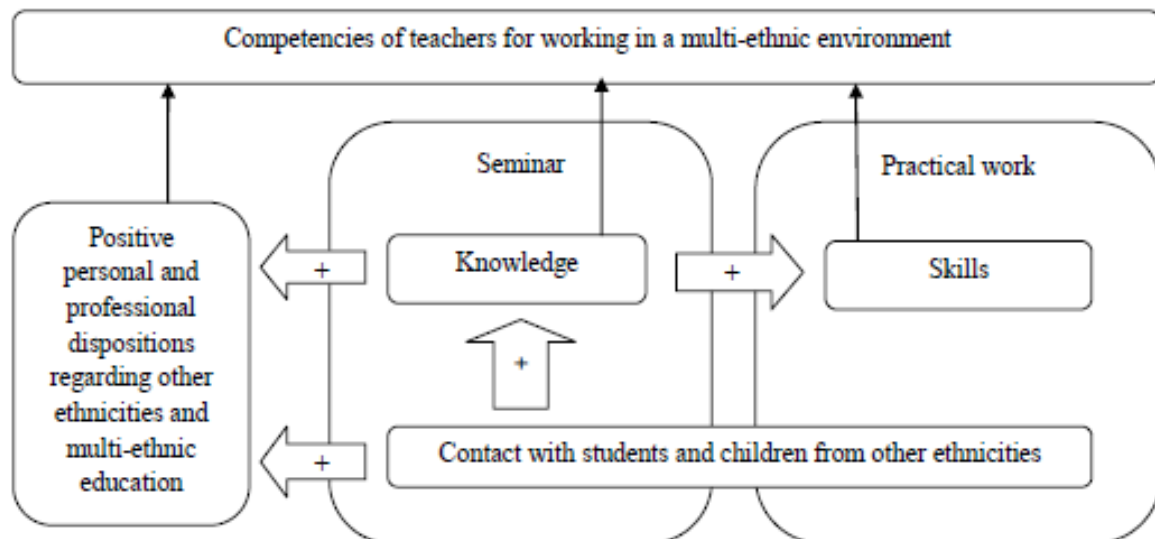


Figure 2. Interactions between competencies and between contact and competencies.

Conclusion and Discussion

Students that have participated in the OSCE-project score significantly higher on the competency-scale than students who did not participate in the OSCE-project. The subscales dispositions, knowledge and skills were highly positively correlated to each other, which implies that the students who score high on the competency-scale, score high on all three subscales. This correlation between the three subscales is consistent with the findings in the interviews and focus groups. The three competencies were interrelated and the dispositions and skills seem to be dependent on the level of knowledge a student-teacher has. There were no significant differences in scores on the competency-scale with regard to gender, age, ethnicity, and region.

Assuming all students were on the same level with regard to the multi-ethnic teaching competencies prior to the project, this outcome would mean that the competencies of student-teachers were significantly improved because of the project. However, a significant difference was found for the ethnic contact and attitude as a minor-scale between the project-group and the control-group. Students who participated in the project already had more positive attitudes and more inter-ethnic contact at primary and secondary school than students who did not participate. This could have a

considerable effect on the competency scores in this study. But, after controlling for this difference in ethnic contact and attitude as a minor, the difference in scores on competencies between the two groups was still significant. This means that, although ethnic contact and attitude as a minor has a significant positive effect on the scores on competency, participation in the project is still producing a significant additional difference in the competencies of students. This outcome is supported by the qualitative results. The students claim that they have gained more knowledge, developed more skills and have more positive dispositions because of the project. They mostly mentioned the acquirement of knowledge of other cultures, the development of problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills, and the diminishing of prejudices and stereotypes as the most important merits of the project. One important factor in achieving these results was the contact they had with students and children from other ethnic groups. This contact increased their knowledge of the other ethnicities and disproved their prejudices and stereotypes towards other ethnic groups. This is in line with the contact theory of Allport (1954), which states that interpersonal contact is one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice and produce greater understanding of each other.

Based on these results the H₀ hypothesis can be rejected. A significant difference was found in the competency-scores of students who participated in the project and students who did not. This result matches the results of Vasallo (2012), who found that teachers who have participated in courses focussed on multicultural competencies, score significantly higher on cultural competency than teachers who have not participated in such courses. That the OSCE-project was at least partly responsible for this difference is statistically plausible and this is supported by the statements of the project-students and other stakeholders involved. The students have increased levels of competency because of the project, a result which was also found by Bell (2000) and Gorham (2001) for student-teachers in other multicultural education courses and trainings. The success of the project can be explained by the provision of knowledge at the seminar, the opportunity to develop skills in the practicum, and lastly, and arguably most importantly, by providing the possibility for contact with students and children from other ethnic groups during both the seminar and the practicum.

With regard to the ethnic contact and attitude as a minor, a significant difference was found between the ethnic groups. When looking only at the two ethnic groups that were represented by a considerable amount of respondents, Macedonians and Albanians, the Macedonians scored noticeably higher on this subscale than Albanians. This can be explained by the fact that Albanian students are the most isolated group, because of the segregation based on ethnicity and language. Macedonian children have more opportunities in primary and secondary school to interact and communicate with other ethnic groups, because there is a considerable amount of children from other ethnic communities that attend schools with instruction in the Macedonian language. Albanian children, however, almost always attend primary and secondary schools with the Albanian language as the language of instruction. Almost no children from other ethnic groups attend these schools, making the

opportunities for Albanian children to interact and communicate with other ethnicities very slim (Unicef, 2009).

There were significant differences in the scores on the competency-scale between students who did their practicum at different NGO's. This could indicate that some NGO's have a more successful approach in developing the competencies of the student-teachers. However, because the representation of some NGO's was really small in number of participants, no unambiguous conclusions can be drawn from these results.

Finally, a difference was found in the ethnic attitudes of students who participated in the project and students who did not participate. This would indicate that the project also contributes to the improvement of the personal ethnic attitudes of student-teachers. However, because the ethnic attitude- and competency-scale are positively correlated, it is difficult to make a clear distinction between these two and explicit conclusions cannot be drawn from this result.

Limitations and strengths of this study

This study has several limitations. The first one is the use of a self-evaluation instrument to assess the competencies of the students. Self-evaluation involves some inherent limitations, which can influence the results of a study. Self-reports tend to bring about socially acceptable answers, particularly in sensitive matter such as inter-ethnic relations and integrated education. Especially the students who participated in the project and were aware of the purpose of this study, may have felt obliged to assess their competencies relatively positive. The problem of socially acceptable answers was partially intercepted by assuring anonymity to the participants, but the risk still remains. Another problem when using self-evaluation to evaluate competencies, is that the participants may not be able to assess their own competencies adequately. The students could be over- or underestimating their capacities, and thereby the results would not be representative for their actual abilities (Wayson & Moultry, 1988).

A second limitation of this research is the design of the quantitative study. Due to a limited amount of time to collect the data, the choice was made to compare the project-group to a control-group. This approach makes it difficult to determine the actual effect of the project, since there are a lot of other factors that could explain some of the differences between the project-group and control-group. Moreover, using this type of research-design, only correlations between variables can be distinguished, the direction of these correlations cannot be statistically proven.

The development of the questionnaire is the third limitation of this study. The limited amount of time that was available for the completion of this research, made it impossible to run a pilot study for assessing and, if necessary, adapting the developed questionnaire. Some of the items that now proved to be unusable, possibly could have been altered and used in the questionnaire if a pilot study was carried out. A pilot study could also have been useful to determine issues relevant to the scope of this research, which were not included in the questionnaire of this study.

The fourth limitation of this research is the sample used for the quantitative results. Firstly, a relatively small sample was used. This influenced the reliability of the study and this small amount of participants is most likely the reason for the violation of the assumption of normality, which makes the results unsuitable for generalization to the entire population. Moreover, the sample was not equally distributed among the universities and NGO's. This could have influenced the results by magnifying the possible effects of university-related factors on the results, and made it difficult, so not impossible, to compare the NGO's in their ability to aid the development of competencies of the students.

The final important limitation of this study is the influence of the language barrier between the researcher and the interviewees on the qualitative results. Though the level of English of the NGO-coordinators, faculty-members, and translators for the focus groups, was sufficient to conduct the interviews and focus groups, it is very probable that more useful information could have been extracted from the interviews and focus groups when a certified interpreter would have been present.

This study also has several strengths, of which the two most important ones will be discussed here. First of all, this research uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Such a mixed methods design provides the best and most complete understanding of a research problem (Creswell, 2003). Flaws of a quantitative analysis, for example the impossibility for participants to elucidate on their answers, are neutralized by the strengths of qualitative analysis, and vice versa. In the case of this study for example, the somewhat flawed research design of measuring differences in competencies by comparing the results of the project-group to a control-group, is at least partly compensated by the use of interviews and focus groups. The interviews and focus groups provide the reassurance that competencies of students actually increased because of the project.

Another strength of this study is the involvement of all stakeholders in the qualitative analysis. If only the students involved in the project were asked about their experience and their opinion on whether they gained more competence, the risk of over- or underestimating their capacities would be on hand. The involvement of the NGO-coordinators and faculty-members provides a more subtle and diverse view on the abilities of the students.

Future research

Based on this study, some suggestions for future research can be given. At first, it would be advisable to carry out a study with similar research questions as this present research, but a different approach. To overcome some of the limitations in this study, a different design would be preferable. The competencies of the participants in the project should be measured before they start in the program and compared to their competencies when they finished the project. This pre-test post-test design would give a more clear picture of the competencies acquired through the project than the design used in this study. The competencies of students should be measured by a questionnaire that is thoroughly evaluated in a pilot study. Moreover, a larger sample would make the results more representative and the outcome of the study could very likely be generalized to the population. A larger sample, with an equal distribution of the participants across the NGO's, would also make a

comparison between the NGO's possible. And finally, and among other things to compensate for the flaws of self-evaluation reports, the quantitative methods will have to be complemented with qualitative methods, for example interviews and observations.

Secondly, a follow-up study on the students who participated in the project when they have a job as a teacher would be a good way to see if they are able to put their acquired competencies in practice. Students can be convinced they have adequate competencies to work in a multi-ethnic environment, but this can only be proven right in their daily practice as a teacher. Observations of the teachers who participated in the project and are working in a multi-ethnic environment are necessary to get a clear picture of their abilities to create a positive and harmonious atmosphere in the classroom. A comparison of these observations to observations of teachers who did not participate in the project is then necessary, to evaluate if they actually have more competencies than the average teacher.

Thirdly, the effect of the competencies of a teacher on the inter-ethnic relations in a classroom should be evaluated. The aim of the project to improve the competencies of teachers by, is a part of creating a more integrated education system to improve the inter-ethnic relations in the country. Though previous research and similar projects have demonstrated the influence of teachers on inter-ethnic relations between children, future research is needed to examine the exact effect of improved competencies of teachers on inter-ethnic relations in the classroom. Only then, can the necessity of this and other similar projects be fully endorsed.

Practical implications

There are some practical implications that can be derived from this research and the studied literature. Because of the positive results of this study, it is recommended to maximize the number of participants to the largest extend possible. In an attempt to achieve this, the OSCE has developed a handbook that contains the information discussed in the seminar, and this handbook has been distributed amongst all teacher training institutions. However, as the studied literature has shown, it is precisely the combination of theoretical knowledge and practical work that is effective in improving teacher competencies. Therefore it is necessary to explore all possibilities to involve more students in the seminar and to increase the number of practicum-spots in the NGO's. If the capacity of the project can be enlarged, it is advisable to involve in-service teachers and student-teachers that are trained to be subject-teachers in secondary school. Right now, the focus of the project is only on future primary school teachers. For now, also considering the limited number of participants that can take part in the project, this is practically and logistically the most logical target group. But involving in-service teachers and student-teachers for secondary schools, will magnify the effect of the project on society.

However, preparing teachers for working in a multi-ethnic context through these kind of projects is not enough. Because of the low esteem and appreciation of the teacher profession in society and the low salaries, there is little motivation amongst teachers to make positive changes in the education system. These issues need to be addressed on a national level, if the government wishes to see teachers use their influence as a role model for children in a positive way (European Commission,

2013; European Training Foundation, 2010). Within the current teacher training institutions changes need to be made with regard to the curricula and the selection of students. Firstly, more attention should be given to an interactive approach in teaching. Teacher training in Macedonia tends to be mainly didactic and authoritarian, leaving student-teachers little opportunity to learn interactive teaching methods. As a result, most teachers in Macedonia are authoritarian in their teaching and are solely focused on transferring knowledge to their students (European Training Foundation, 2010). This kind of teaching leaves almost no room for interaction between students and teachers, which for the latter results in little awareness of social issues in the classroom, for example inter-ethnic tensions, and limited opportunities to address these issues. Secondly, there needs to be more attention for the language issue in Macedonia in the curriculum. Student-teachers need to be made more aware of the problems arising because of the language barrier between children, and they need to be provided with the opportunity to learn at least the basics of the languages of other ethnic groups. Finally, teacher training institutions can alter their selection procedures to ensure a more culturally diverse student-body, that is more willing to teach in a multi-ethnic environment. To achieve this, the faculties could determine desired percentages of students from different ethnicities and select their students on these criteria. This way, student-teachers will come into contact with students from different ethnic groups during their training, which will supposedly make them more open and willing for teaching in a multi-ethnic environment. Moreover, a more diverse teaching workforce would serve the needs of an integrated education system better (European Training Foundation, 2010).

This focus on teachers and teacher-training, should be complemented by enhancing parental involvement in an integrated education system. Parents are, alongside peers, the most influential factor for the ethnic attitudes of children. Although the ethnic attitudes of children are not exact copies of their parents' attitudes, parents are very important role models and authority figures and their behavior and attitudes can make a considerable difference (Flanagan, Gill & Gallay, 1998 as cited in Schofield & Eurich-Fulcer, 2001). So the attitudes of parents towards inter-ethnic contact and integrated education are of great influence on the attitudes of their children concerning these issues. The involvement of parents in the planning process of desegregation, the creation of multi-ethnic parent-committees in schools and communities, the provision of information to parents on the education of their children, and the support of parental contact with schools and teachers are all helpful mechanisms to improve the attitudes of parents towards these issues (Hawley et al., 1986 as cited in Schofield & Eurich-Fulcer, 2001).

Towards the future

Every single teacher with adequate competencies for working in a multi-ethnic environment can make a positive difference in the lives of about thirty students, every day of his or her career. Children can internalize and adopt their teacher's way of thinking, and in their turn make a difference in the society of the future. An integrated education system has the potential to make prejudices and stereotypes disappear. It can provide children the opportunity to live in a peaceful and harmonious

society, with all ethnic groups living together, and not alongside each other. Competent teachers are essential for the success of this proposed integrated education system. Of course, it cannot be expected of teachers to solely overcome the challenge of inter-ethnic tensions that Macedonia faces. The entire society has to step up to change the future of Macedonia. However, teachers are key agents for the changes that need to be made. The way in which Macedonian teachers carry out their profession is crucial for the children of today and the society of the future.

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Appendix A

Topic list focus group

Introduction

Thank you all for coming, it is great that you are willing to join this focus group. I am Hanneke, a master student from the Netherlands. I study ‘education and socialization in an international context’. I am an intern at the OSCE and I am conducting a research about the OSCE-project on ‘strengthening teacher competencies for working in a multi-ethnic environment’. You were all participants in the project and I would like to ask you some questions about the project and what you have learned from it. I am interested in your personal opinions, experiences and ideas. In particular, I would like to know more about the competencies you gained because of the project. For my research, I have distinguished three components in competencies for multi-ethnic teaching: dispositions (attitudes and awareness), knowledge and skills. I will ask you questions about the progress you have made while participating in the project in the light of these three aspects . Please remember that this is a focus group and not an individual and/or structured interview. Please feel free to tell anything you wish regarding the subject and feel free to react on the statements of the other students, because the aim of a focus group is that you can interact and discuss your opinions and feelings with each other. If you don’t understand a question or have any other questions, please feel free to ask. Before we start, I would like to ask you all to introduce yourself shortly (name, age, when and where did you participate in the program, what is your current occupation and if you are employed as a teacher, in what type of school do you work?)

Introduction questions

How do you feel about the project?

What were your expectations for the project?

Did it rise to your expectations?

Dispositions

Do you think your dispositions (attitudes and awareness) towards multiculturalism and multi-ethnic education/teaching have changed since you were in the project?

Yes: In what way are they different?

What were the reasons for the change?

What part of the project was the most influential with regard to this aspect?

No: Can you think of reasons why your dispositions have not changed during the project?

Knowledge

Do you think you have more knowledge about multiculturalism and multi-ethnic education/teaching since you were in the project?

Yes: What knowledge did you acquire during the project?

What part of the project was the most influential with regard to this aspect?

No: Can you think of reasons why you have not acquired more knowledge during the project?

Skills

Do you think you have more skills with regard to multiculturalism and multi-ethnic education/teaching since you were in the project?

Yes: What skills have you gained during this project?

What part of the project was the most influential with regard to this aspect?

No: Can you think of reasons why you have not acquired more skills during the project?

Motivation

Did you apply for the programme or were you assigned?

Why did you apply for the programme?

Do you think you already had different dispositions towards multiculturalism and multi-ethnic education/teaching (since you applied for the programme) than most of your fellow students?

In what way were they different?

Competencies

Do you think you are better prepared for working in a multi-ethnic classroom than before you joined the project and why?

Do you think you are better prepared for working in a multi-ethnic classroom than fellow students who were not involved in the project and why?

Do you prefer to work (in the future) in a multi-ethnic or mono-ethnic environment and why?

Effect on classroom environment

Do you think your acquired competencies as a teacher will be beneficial to the classroom environment and inter-ethnic relations between your (future) students?

Yes: In what way do you think your acquired competencies will be beneficial?

No: Why do you think it will not have a beneficial effect?

Recommendations/comments

What possible improvements could you recommend for the project?

Did you experience any barriers for a successful completion of this project?

Do you any additional comments or questions?

Appendix B

Topic list semi-structured interview

Introduction questions

What are your experiences with the project?

Why do you think the project is important for the education system in Macedonia?

What do you think are the most important things students learn during the project?

What is important for teachers to learn with regard to working in a multi-ethnic environment?

In what way do you think students will be better prepared for working in a multi-ethnic environment because of the project?

What kind of reactions do you get from students in the project?

Dispositions

Do you experience a change in the dispositions (attitudes and awareness) of students towards multi-ethnic/multicultural education during the project?

Yes: In what way have their dispositions changed?

No: Can you think of reasons why their dispositions have not changed?

Knowledge

Do you experience students gaining knowledge regarding multi-ethnic/multicultural education during the project?

Yes: What kind of knowledge have they gained?

No: Can you think of reasons why they have not gained knowledge?

Skills

Do you experience an improvement in the skills of students in multi-ethnic/multicultural teaching?

Yes: How are their skills improved during the project?

No: Can you think of reasons why their skills have not improved?

Competencies

Do you think, overall, the students acquire competencies for multi-ethnic/multicultural education during the project?

Do you think they possess more competencies for multi-ethnic education at the end of the project than fellow students who did not participate in the project?

Effect on classroom environment

Do you think the competencies students acquire in this project will improve the classroom environment and the inter-ethnic relations between children they will teach?

Recommendations/comments

Could you name the challenges you have experienced in carrying out this program?

Are there things you would like to change about the project in its current form?

Do you have any additional comments or questions?

Appendix C

Questionnaire

Instructions

In front of you is a questionnaire about dispositions, knowledge and skills regarding multi-ethnic education.

This questionnaire consists of fifty-nine questions.

The first twenty-two questions are about your background, including for example your gender and age. Questions twenty-three to fifty-nine are about your dispositions, knowledge and skills regarding multi-ethnic education.

For questions twenty-three to fifty-nine, we would like you to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

When answering the questions about your skills (questions forty-nine to fifty-nine), please try to imagine yourself as currently being employed as an in-service teacher (with the skills you have attained up to this moment in your education or career).

Make sure you answer every question and read the questions carefully. Select only one answer per question.

To select an answer, just draw a cross through the little square, like so:



There is no right or wrong answer, what matters is what you feel.

Try to answer as honestly as possible.

Don't think too long about a question, follow your first impression.

All data are strictly confidential and will remain anonymous.

When you are finished, check once again if you have answered all questions.

Good luck!

1. Are you a male or female?

- Male
- Female

2. What is your age?

I am years old.

3. In terms of ethnic group, I consider myself to be:

- Macedonian
- Albanian
- Turkish
- Roma
- Serbian
- Bosnian
- Vlach
- Other, namely _____

4. What university are/were you in?

- Faculty of Pedagogy St. Kliment Ohridski of Ss Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje
- Institute of Pedagogy of the Faculty of Philosophy of Ss Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje
- Study group of pedagogy of the Faculty of Philosophy of Tetovo State University
- Faculty of Education of Goce Delcev University in Stip
- Faculty of Pedagogy of St. Kliment Ohridski University in Bitola

5. In what year of your bachelor are you?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- I have graduated

6. If you have graduated from your bachelor, what is your current occupation?
- I have not yet graduated from my bachelor
 - I am currently enrolled in a master
 - I am currently working in the education sector
 - I am currently working outside the education sector
 - I am currently unemployed
7. Have you participated in the project 'Strengthening the Pre-Service Teacher Training System in a Multi Ethnic Society'?
- Yes
 - No, I signed up but was not selected for the project
 - No, I signed up for the upcoming 2014 project
 - No
8. If you participated in this project, in which NGO did you do the practicum?
- I did not participate in this project
 - Happy Life (Tetovo)
 - Aurora (Tetovo)
 - Lifestart (Bitola)
 - Association for Human rights protection of Roma (AHPRP) (Stip)
 - Association of Citizens Sumnal (Skopje)
 - Interactive Education and Resource Network (IMOR) (Bitola)
 - Bairska Svetlina (Bitola)
9. Were you friends with children from a different ethnicity than your own in the period you were attending **primary** school?
- Yes
 - No
10. Were you friends with children from a different ethnicity than your own in the period you were attending **secondary** school?
- Yes
 - No

Question	Never	Sometimes	Regularly	Often
11. How often were you in contact (e.g. being in the same school or neighborhood) with children from a different ethnicity than your own in the period you were attending primary school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. How often were you in contact (e.g. being in the same school or neighborhood) with children from a different ethnicity than your own in the period you were attending secondary school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. How often did you interact (e.g. playing together) with children from a different ethnicity than your own in the period you were attending primary school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. How often did you interact (e.g. playing together) with children from a different ethnicity than your own in the period you were attending secondary school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
15. I had positive feelings towards children from a different ethnicity than my own in the period I was attending primary school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. I had positive feelings towards children from a different ethnicity than my own in the period I was attending secondary school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I am involved in activities with people from other ethnic groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I enjoy being around people from ethnic groups other than my own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
21. I sometimes feel it would be better if different ethnic groups didn't mix together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. I try to become friends with people from other ethnic groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. I find the idea of teaching a culturally or ethnically diverse group rewarding.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Teaching methods need to be adapted to meet the needs of a culturally or ethnically diverse student group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Sometimes I think there is too much emphasis placed on multicultural or multi-ethnic awareness and training for teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Teachers have the responsibility to be aware of their students' cultural or ethnic backgrounds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. It is not the teacher's responsibility to encourage pride in one's culture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. As classrooms become more culturally or ethnically diverse, the teacher's job becomes increasingly challenging.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. I believe the teacher's role needs to be redefined to address the needs of students from different ethnic backgrounds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. When dealing with students with a different mother tongue, some teachers may misinterpret different communication styles as behaviour problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. As classrooms become more culturally or ethnically diverse, the teacher's job becomes increasingly rewarding.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. I can learn a great deal from students with culturally or ethnically different backgrounds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Multicultural/ethnic training for teachers is not necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
34. In order to be an effective teacher, one needs to be aware of cultural or ethnical differences present in the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Multicultural/ethnical awareness training can help me work more effectively with a diverse student population.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. Today's university curriculum gives undue importance to multiculturalism and diversity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. I am aware of the diversity of cultural or ethnical backgrounds of students I am/or maybe will be working with.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. Regardless of the ethnic make-up of a classroom class, it is important for all students to be aware of multicultural diversity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. Being multiculturally/ethnically aware is not relevant for students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. Teaching students about cultural or ethnic diversity will only create conflict in the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. The language issue in Macedonia (i.e. students from different ethnicities speaking different languages) is a barrier in teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. I am aware of prejudices about and discrimination against other ethnic groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. I have knowledge of the contributions other ethnic groups make in our society.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. I have knowledge on the culture, habits, norms and values of other ethnic groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. I have knowledge about the prevailing stereotypes and prejudices about different ethnic groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. I have knowledge about the (position of) marginalized groups in Macedonia.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
47. I have knowledge about the key aspects of multiculturalism.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48. I have knowledge on methods of conflict resolution.				
49. I can identify stereotypes and prejudices in learning materials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50. I can present different ethnic groups in a manner that will build mutual respect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
51. I can present multiculturalism as a strong positive feature of Macedonia.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
52. I can identify the similarities between different ethnic groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
53. I can adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of children from different ethnic groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
54. I can provide instruction showing how prejudice affects individuals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
55. I can assist students to understand the feelings of people from other ethnic groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
56. I can get students from different ethnic groups to work and play together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
57. I can teach students of different ethnicities to communicate in a positive manner with each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
58. I can resolve conflicts between students in a constructive manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
59. I can communicate adequately with children from different ethnic groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for filling out this questionnaire!

Appendix D

Description of statistical analyses

Factor analysis

Factor analysis is a technique that is used for identifying clusters of variables. For the scope of this research, factor analyses were used to compute a component-score for the 'ethnic contact and attitude as a minor'- scale and to check the underlying structures of the subscales dispositions, knowledge and skills and the competency-scale as whole. A factor analysis distinguishes the separate factors in the data by providing several factor solutions (that is the number of factors that can be distinguished in the data by a factor analysis). An adequate factor solution reduces the data to the smallest possible number of items, that together account for a significantly large percentage of the variance that is present in the data. The most adequate factor solution can be determined by examining the eigenvalues of the factors (according to Kaiser's criterion these should be greater than one) and the scree plot of the factor analysis. The cut-off point for the selection of the number of factors, is the inflexion of the curve of the scree plot. The separate items have a factor loading for each of the factors distinguished in the factor analysis. This factor loading indicate the importance of the item for the factor. A factor loading above 0.3 is generally deemed as significantly important. A factor analysis can be executed with either an orthogonal rotation (this is most commonly used and it presumes that the underlying factors are independent, like in the case of the competency-scale) or an oblique rotation (which presumes that the underlying factors could be interdependent, for example in the different subscales). To compute the component-score for the 'ethnic contact and attitude as a minor'-scale, the factor score of each participant was saved as a variable (Field, 2009).

Cronbach's alpha

Cronbach's alpha is the most common method to measure the reliability of a scale, which indicates whether an instrument can be used and interpreted consistently in different situations. When the Cronbach's alpha is above .7, the reliability of the scale is supposed to be adequate (Field, 2009).

Levene's test

A Levene's test tests the H0 hypothesis that there are equal variances (average errors between the mean and the observations) in the different groups that are being examined. If a Levene's test is significant ($p \leq .05$), then the H0 hypothesis is rejected and this means there is no homogeneity of variance. When a Levene's test is not significant ($p > .05$), than the H0 hypothesis is not rejected and homogeneity of variances is assumed (Field, 2009).

T-test

A t-test tests the H0 hypothesis that the difference between the means of the groups that are being tested is zero. When a t-test is significant ($p \leq .05$), the H0 hypothesis is rejected, which means that the means of the two groups differ significantly. When a T-test is not significant ($p > .05$), the H0 hypothesis is not rejected and the means of the two groups do not differ significantly. In this research,

independent samples t-test were used, because the two groups examined in the t-test consisted of different participants. If the same participants would have been tested in two different conditions, then a dependent-samples t-test should have been used (Field, 2009).

ANOVA

An ANOVA is similar to a t-test, only it compares three or more means with each other. When an ANOVA is not significant ($p > .05$), the means do not significantly differ from each other. When an ANOVA is significant ($p \leq .05$), the means of the different groups are significantly different from each other. However, an ANOVA does not show which means differ significantly. To examine that, a post-hoc test is necessary. This test shows for each mean-difference whether it is significant or not (Field, 2009).

Multiple hierarchical regression

T-test and ANOVA's can only compare the means of categorical independent variables. A regression can incorporate continuous independent variables as predictors of the dependent variable. In hierarchical regression, the independent variables are entered in several blocks. The regression tests whether the different blocks are significantly predicting the dependent variable. Then for each block, the effect, whether or not significant, on the dependent variable will be displayed for each separate independent variable. By comparing the effects of the different blocks, you can determine whether the independent variable that is entered in a new block is still significantly predicting the independent variable, while controlling for the previous block(s) (Field, 2009).

Z-scores

A Z-score is a standardized value, that can be compared to other Z-scores. The Z-score of a variable is the number of standard deviations that a variable is situated from the expected Z-score, which is always zero. Negative z-scores are situated left of the mean in a normal distribution, and positive z-scores are situated right of the mean in a normal distribution (Field, 2009).

Appendix E

Figures and tables

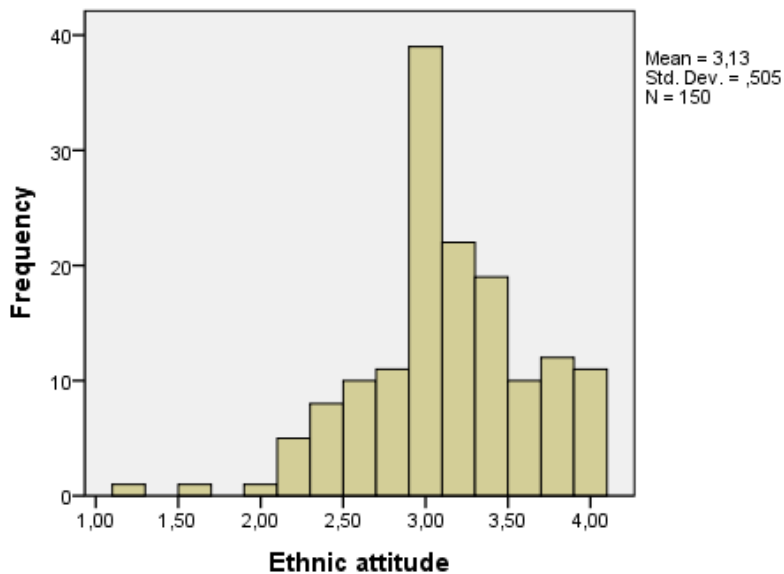


Figure E1. Histogram of ethnic attitude-scale

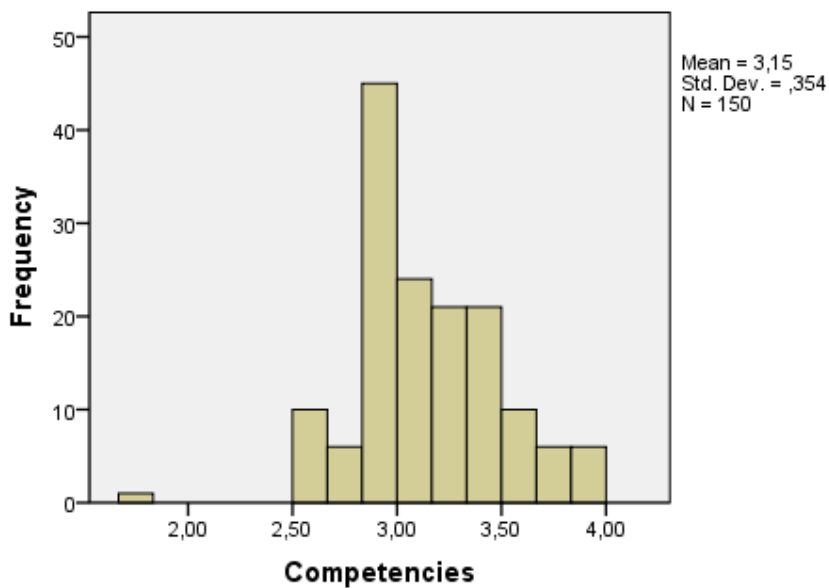


Figure E2. Histogram of competency-scale

Table E1

Means and standard deviations of examined variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age	23.20	4.63
Ethnic attitude	3.13	0.51
Competencies	3.15	0.35

Table E2

Summary of regression analysis with predictors for competency.

Predictor	R^2	ΔR^2	B	SE	β
Model 1	.01	-.02			
Gender			.04	.12	.03
Age			.01	.01	.06
Ethnicity			-.02	.03	-.04
Region			-.01	.03	-.02
Model 2	.19	.17*			
Gender			.09	.11	.06
Age			.00	.01	.03
Ethnicity			-.01	.03	.02
Region			-.00	.02	-.01
Inter-ethnic contact child			.15	.03	.44*
Model 3	.37	.34*			
Gender			.14	.10	.10
Age			.00	.01	.05
Ethnicity			.01	.02	.02
Region			-.07	.02	-.22*
Inter-ethnic contact child			.12	.03	.35*
Competencies			.35	.06	.49*

Note. * $p < .05$.