



Learning-centered Education - Autonomy and Responsibility

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Autonomy and responsibility are significant values of democracy. Equal access, active participation, and autonomy in decision making together promote responsible actions of democratic citizens. Education for democratic citizenship and human rights education ought to be an organic part of teacher training both in theory and practice. As an integral feature of general competences of teachers the implications of these values may provide learning environments in which these aspects of autonomy and responsibility are built into the steps of the teaching-learning process irrespective of students' majors.

This Special Issue is dedicated to the most challenging questions students and educators of universities and teacher education have been facing in the recent and future decades, such as self-representation, problem of becoming an autonomously and responsibly acting adult. The issue considers questions of autonomy and responsibility: what active citizenship means; how civic education is related to it and what the obstacles of the progress ought to be. This volume contains initiatives and recommendations representing models and possible further directions of development reports suggesting good practices of implementations of political responsibility in teacher education; covers curriculum-development and aims at implications of methodological changes as well.

Ágnes Bálint in her paper aims at contributing to the deconstruction of the "black legend" of adolescence, joining efforts that try to elaborate the positive psychology of this age period on the base of fiction stories written by adolescents. The study suggests that these stories reflect on adolescents' identity crisis and serve as a tool for identity construction. She states that the society, however, seems to be more and more impatient towards adolescents. During the last century, reference books and studies tended to depict young people as delinquent, selfish, abusive, irresponsible and deviant. The protagonists of these stories, depicted as Mary Sues, fulfill the function of identity projects. I conclude that adolescents are creative by nature, and speculate on mending the "dislocated world" while fighting on the "right side," and visualize themselves as morally right and competent adults. Ágnes Bálint also suggests her findings' practical

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implications in education: teachers ought to exploit more consciously the creative power and speculative inclinations adolescents possess and they may also appreciate adolescents' ambitions in order to live a meaningful life and help them find reasonable goals.

Ana Žnidarec Čučković considers questions in her paper such as: the role of schools and universities in social stratification of society and its change; whether we value students' voices and provide critique of society; whether they are participatory members of a society. She states that today, the situation in many states does not allow whole fulfilling of one's potential for happiness and freedom in context of their race, class and gender. The idea of incorporating human rights and democracy stems from many educational reforms in the 21st century. Educational systems with their context of political and economic changes at the same time provide place for human rights and democracy teaching without any critical consciousness and on-going development of young people as citizens. Access to quality education is a basic right. Consequently education of democratic citizenship focuses on social, emotional, physical and cognitive development for enhancing active participation in democracy. Educational systems are not necessarily responsive to several aspects of the Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Declaration of Human Rights. Critical theorists see education as a tool used by the privileged to sustain oppression along the lines of race, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, so the environment is not conducive to children rights supportive educational systems.

Ferenc Arató in his paper examines the paradigmatic features of cooperative learning and its impact on practice and cognition of education from the viewpoint of inclusion and equal access to public knowledge and resources that may be accessed through schooling. The study outlines how the basic principles of cooperative learning fulfill the criteria of a scientific paradigm following and re-reading Kuhn's theory. Also a possible extension of the cooperative model is suggested from classroom level to public education system level. Ferenc Arató argues that the post-structural approach of cooperative learning leads to a scientific shift in education. He states that one can deconstruct hierarchical, racist and anti-democratic structures within classrooms, schools, school districts and public education system, by the means of cooperative structures.

Julianna Mrázik's paper focuses on recent challenges of Hungarian student teachers preparing for their career. The aim of the study is to reveal issues influencing novice teachers' roles deriving from dis/functions of teacher training. She suggests the deconstruction of traditional, sometimes obsolete structures in training. The author aims at exposing the real obstacles of efficient teacher education identifying challenges: indicating their stressful nature and their possible impact on student teachers' self-confidence. Transition between the former and the recent structures of higher education have not been examined from this aspect yet, therefore an additional income of her considerations may be the introduction of more appropriate ways of relevant education

and the initiation of teaching practice in teacher training adding applicable contents and advanced structures.

Renáta Anna Dezső's present study is both a theoretical introduction to and a sample of possible implementations of concepts rarely known and realized in Hungarian educational sciences and teacher training. Her study focuses on the possible educational applications of Gardner's multiple intelligences (MI) theory applying Productive Learning (PL) in teacher training. MI in classrooms of public education and teacher training may be interpreted as a consequence of neurodiversity. Concerning the ethical dimensions of Gardner's theory related to a spot on relevant narratives in Hungarian public life this paper gives an introduction to an example of a curriculum development program and its realization of teacher students at the University of Pécs coordinated by the author between 2011 and 2013.

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