Diversity in Elementary schools in Hungary
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Abstract
This article reports on views among Hungarian administrators, teacher educators, mentor teachers and teacher candidates concerning diversity, and explores their related life-experiences. The views of 28 participants were examined with Q methodology and follow-up interviews. Results of the Q methodology suggest there were three distinguishing viewpoints. Viewpoint 1 tended to be supportive of diversity issues, Viewpoint 2 appeared to have ethno-centric attitudes, and Viewpoint 3 tended to be culturally sensitive, yet, focused on family responsibilities. Follow-up interviews indicated that the life-experiences of participants associated with the three viewpoints were significantly dissimilar. This investigation provides directions in developing more effective teacher preparation to better address the challenges of increasingly diverse students in Hungary.

Introduction

The social, political and economic changes in Hungary during the past fifteen years along with Hungary's joining to the European Union generated an emerging research interest in the investigation of views about diversity issues. These topics of study including behaviors and dispositions toward minority groups, dissimilar to majority groups in Hungary, are critical, specifically in the context of education, from preschool to higher education.

A rich body of literature has explored the impact of teachers' views on students' academic and social performance, communication, instruction and assessment. Fundamental research studies about teacher expectations (Clark, 1963; Ganter, 1997 Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968) clearly indicate that low expectation results in poor student performance and motivation. Furthermore, studies also point out that teacher expectations often vary in terms of students' gender, race, ethnicity, native language and socio-economic status. These studies also suggest that classrooms in which the teacher is dissimilar to the students in terms of social class, race, language and ethnicity often lack effective communication, differentiated instruction and fair assessment) (Cooper et.al, 1975; Tettagah, 1996). Likewise, Roma leaders note that Romani children's educational failure in Hungarian schools is closely related with the low expectations held by Hungarian teachers (Choli-Daroczi, 1996; Lazar, 1999).

Hungarian studies exploring views and dispositions propose a wide range of attitudes toward minority groups, from strong prejudices to culturally acceptance. Laszlo & Simon (2001) found that 40% of the teacher candidates in the study demonstrated anti-Roma views. Similar high rejection rate toward the Roma minority, the largest ethnic minority group of Hungary, was explored by Bordacs (2001). In addition to negative disposition regarding the Roma population, Csepeli, Fabian & Sik, (1998) and Eros (1998) found strong prejudices against immigrants, people with alternative lifestyles and members of religious sects.

Research suggests that previous personal experiences impact beliefs, assumptions and prejudices. Allport (1954), for example, hypothesizes that factors such as family

atmosphere, parental styles, and school and community experiences during childhood would result in bias or tolerance. In addition, later experiences might also impact beliefs and stereotypes Allport (1954. Further, more recent studies have focused specifically upon teachers. Such research (e.g. Hanrahan & Tate, 2001) suggests that teacher beliefs are strongly influenced by personal experiences with schooling and instruction. Therefore, as Johnson (2002) proposes, a critical exploration of life-experiences which might account for views related to diversity in education would contribute to the knowledge base of culturally responsive pedagogy.

The purpose of the study

The purposes of this study are (1) to identify and explore beliefs among administrators, teacher educators, mentor teachers and teacher candidates concerning diversity in Hungarian education and (2) to explore their life-experiences that might account for similar/differing diversity beliefs.

The following research questions guided this investigation:

1. What are the shared viewpoints among administrators, teacher educators, mentor teachers and teacher candidates regarding diversity in elementary schools in Hungary?
2. Within the shared viewpoints, which statements are viewed as the most agreed/disagreed regarding different areas of diversity?
3. What life-experience of administrators, teacher educators, mentor teachers and teacher candidates might account for similar/differing views regarding diversity in education?

This study contributes to the knowledge base regarding diversity issues in educational settings from an international perspective. The findings of this study might help educators clarify their own views as well as develop curricula more likely to promote diversity awareness and reduce biases. In addition, this study also proposes directions for higher education policy-makers to better meet the changing needs of future teachers and children.

Methodology

To investigate the research questions, 54 statements analyzed with Q methodology were used (Brown, 1996) followed by interviews interpreted with the method of constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). When interest is in uncovering subjective phenomena such as attitudes, beliefs, and values from a person's unique point of view, Q methodology is a powerful tool. Q methodology uses quantitative analysis for grouping people based on their shared ideas or beliefs, and qualitative analysis for uncovering subjectivity inherent in the factor arrays. In this way, Q methodology "combines the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research traditions" (Dennis & Goldberg, 1996, p.104).

In Q methodology, there are two samples including the P sample (participants) and the Q sample (statements).

P sample: For both practical and statistical reasons, Sexton et al. (1998) suggest that half of the number of items in a Q sample is considered satisfactory for the number of P sample. Ernest (1999) notes that while a larger P sample might lead to additional

viewpoints; it would not negate the existence of the original viewpoints. For this study, the Q sample consists of 54 statements; therefore 28 participants including five administrators (ADM), nine teacher educators (TED), six mentor teachers (MENT) and eight teacher candidates (TCAN) were selected from a College of Education in Eastern Hungary.[1]

Q sample: This investigation utilized 54 statements that were drawn from existing instruments (e.g. Pohan & Aguilar, 2001), along with statements from prior interviews, and published articles on diversity (e.g. Uj Pedagogiai Szemle, Teaching and Teacher Education). Further, for this study, a structural design of the Q sample was deemed appropriate. These factorial structural areas, partially deduced from prior theories regarding diversity areas, included the following, Roma Minority, National Minorities, Multicultural Education, Gender, Sexual Orientation/Family Structure, Religion, Language, Socio-economic Status, Special needs/Exceptionalities. To reduce the item pool of 250 to 54 the following was taken into consideration: (1) selecting representative items for each dimension to maintain a factorial structure, (2) selecting items according to their relevancy in the Hungarian context, and (3) selecting items expressing negative and positive views toward a similar issue. The following pair of statements indicates the nature of the Q sample, *Children with disabilities should be placed into special schools where they can learn basic skills at their individual pace.* and *Children with disabilities need to learn to be with normally developing children, because they will live their whole lives among healthy people.*

Data Collection: In this study, quasi-normal forced design was used. In this conventional method (Thompson & Dennings, 1993) design, participants are asked to sort the statements (one statement per card) into a fixed number of categories. The participants are requested to distribute the cards in the following fashion: Two piles of three cards were placed at both ends of the distribution, followed by four cards at the next pile at each end, and then a pile of six cards at each end, followed by a pile of seven cards at each side, and a pile of eight cards in the middle (see Figure 1). The left end of the continuum was referred as "Most Disagree", the right end of the continuum was referred as "Most Agree" and the center of the continuum was referred as "Neutral." Finally, each participant's sorting was recorded on a separate score sheet.

Figure 1 Quasi-normal Distribution of Q Cards

The number of cards shows the number of items from the Q sample to be placed.										
The Number of cards in each category										
3	3	4	6	7	8	7	6	4	3	3
The scores below indicate the numeric value of the card based on the placement.										
-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5

[1] Participants in interviews will later be identified by these initials.

Most Disagree					Most Agree			

   To investigate the second and third research questions, this study utilized interviews based on the results gained from the Q sort. After the viewpoints were identified, three participants with the highest association with each viewpoint were selected for interview to gain a better insight into their beliefs related to diversity along with their life-experiences regarding these beliefs.

   Interviews: Two interviews of approximately one hour each were conducted with each participant. In the first interview, all interview participants were asked the same questions based on the most agreed and most disagreed statements in the viewpoint factor and on distinguishing statements to elicit similarities and differences among viewpoints. Further, the second interview, administered five months afterwards, was employed to explore the life-experiences behind the themes with the following questions: "In the first interview you talked about the importance of mandatory diversity preparation for teachers. Can you recall any memory or event which might have made you believe that diversity preparation is important?" Notes were also taken in addition to tape recording the interviews.

Findings
The three different viewpoints
   The data from the Q sort were analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics with PQMethod Version 2.09 (Schmolck, 1999). The inspection of the principal component analysis suggested that there were three main viewpoints concerning the diversity beliefs of the participants: (1) *Inclusion and Teacher Responsibility, (2) Ethnocentric Approach, (3) Sensitivity toward Diversity and the Importance of Families* The examination of the different sets of beliefs indicated the following distinguishing characteristics of the viewpoints:

   *Inclusion and Teacher Responsibility v*iewpoint was represented by 2 administrators, 2 teacher educators, 2 mentor teachers and 2 teacher candidates. The ten most agreed and ten most disagreed statements indicated that the participants associated with this viewpoint had strong interest in national and ethnic minority students' education. They seemed to emphasize teachers' and schools' responsibility in conveying diversity knowledge and in nurturing culturally responsive views among children.

   Ethnocentric Approach viewpoint was represented by 1 administrator, 2 teacher educators, 2 mentor teachers and 4 teacher candidates. These participants appeared strongly concerned about the role of socio-economic status (SES) in education. They also seemed to be supportive of national minority education, yet they placed the school failure of Roma children beyond educational resources. Further, they rejected the need for

reforming Hungarian schools to better welcome Roma children.

*Sensitivity toward Diversity and the Importance of Families v*iewpoint was represented by 1 administrator, 2 teacher educators, 2 mentor teachers and 2 teacher candidates. They expressed a strong belief in the family's responsibility for conveying knowledge and awareness regarding religious issues, sexual orientation, customs and national identity. Further, they acknowledged Romas' socio-cultural background as a barrier in education; however, they failed to recognize teachers' role in promoting Roma culture and identity.

To make a comparison among the three viewpoints, first the consensus statements were reviewed. The consensus statements were those that received similar scores on all three viewpoints. Then, distinguishing statements differing by a z-score of 1.0 or more were reviewed.

Participants associated with *Ethnocentric Approach* viewpoint believed that Roma children's educational difficulties can be explained by Romas' genetic make-up; on the contrary, the other two viewpoints strongly disagreed with this view. Participants associated with *Sensitivity toward Diversity and the Importance of Families v*iewpoint expressed the responsibilities of Roma parents related to the maintenance of Roma culture, while *Inclusion and Teacher Responsibility* viewpoint participants emphasized the role of teachers and schools in this issue. Participants on *Sensitivity toward Diversity and the Importance of Families* viewpoint strongly believed that families and parents have the sole right and responsibility to discuss issues of sexual orientation and various family models with their children, while the other two groups seemed to be neutral on this question. Exclusively, the *Ethnocentric Approach* viewpoint participants advocated for standardized curriculum regardless of students' individual and cultural needs.

The analysis of the Q sort clearly indicated the three distinguishing viewpoints among the 28 participants. The further examination of the demographical data explored a wide variety of age, professional area, and teaching experience among participants associated with the same viewpoint. This finding suggests that attitudes, dispositions and beliefs related to diversity might not solely be determined along these demographical characteristics.

Diversity Views of Participants and Life Experiences

The follow-up interviews were used for triangulating and for further exploring and the data from the Q sort. In addition to the diversity views, these interviews were administered for exploring the life-experiences that might have accounted for the participants' views.

Inclusion and Teacher Responsibility viewpoint

Participants associated with *the Inclusion and Teacher Responsibility* viewpoint express great concern regarding school and teacher responsibility for fostering diversity awareness among students. From the interviews with the three participants (ADM1, ADM3, and MENT3), the following four themes emerged, (1) Mandatory diversity preparation, (2) Bi-directional learning about cultures, (3) Meeting children's individual needs, and (4) Community and society's responsibility.

(1) Mandatory diversity preparation: All three interview participants agree that Hungarian teachers are not prepared for working with diverse children, therefore mandatory diversity teacher preparation incorporating meaningful field experience with diverse population is needed. Participants argue that current Hungarian teacher preparation targets "ideally-operating schools" and "average" students. They also recognize Hungarian teachers' lack of knowledge and skills related to minority cultures, as well as their unwillingness to work with diverse students. In the light of this, ADM3 strongly advocates for a mandatory diversity teacher preparation:

> I think all teacher-candidates need preparation for working with minority children. Given rampant discrimination against the Roma, I think this preparation should be mandatory. Any future teacher might be in a situation when she/he teaches minority children. Therefore, all of them need to be prepared for this role. (ADM3)

The finding above is in harmony with data reported by Lisko (2002) who found Hungarian teachers unprepared for teaching children with lower socio-economic and/or minority backgrounds. In addition, teachers in Lisko's survey demonstrated little interest in teaching diverse children. Such unwillingness and unpreparedness, she notes, might impede teachers from ensuring quality teaching for all students. Likewise, diversity research in numerous countries also documents the urgent need for diversity teacher preparation (Ball, 2000; Bordacs, 2001, Santos Rego & Nieto, 2000).

(2) Bi-directional learning about cultures: Participants highly associated with the *Inclusion and Teacher Responsibility viewpoint* argue that both majority and minority students and teachers should become familiar with each other's culture, values and backgrounds. They also emphasize teacher responsibility for fostering this process. Specifically, MENT3 describes a case of her implicit way of making children understand what Roma culture meant:

> So I read them Roma stories and poems and they liked them. After reading the folk stories I asked them to guess what nation the stories come from. They were surprised to learn that the stories were Roma folk stories. I believe it is essential to open their eyes to other cultures, and guide them. (MENT3)

In line with the above comment, researchers (Morrow, 1992; Tromski et al., 2003) suggest that sharing cultural values of other groups might facilitate children's diversity awareness. In addition, MENT3 repeatedly underlined her view that all parties, healthy/disabled children, majority/ethnic minority, and children with diverse language background or diverse SES, should develop accepting attitudes toward those who are unlike them. In addition, MENT3 focused on benefits that mainstream children gain from the inclusive experiences. Similarly, Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) proposed that around half of all participants (N= 3,348 teachers) agreed that students with/without disabilities could benefit from inclusion.

(3) Meeting children's individual needs: The *Inclusion and Teacher Responsibility viewpoint* participants expect teachers to meet children's individual needs

(i.e. those stemming from diverse backgrounds in terms of their ethnicity, abilities, languages, socio-economic status and gender). All three interview participants find it critical for teachers to become familiar with their children's backgrounds, and to build the curriculum on children's previous experiences and needs. While discussing needs due to gender differences, MENT3 advocates for gender-sensitive educational standards based on maturational differences between sexes. She suggests:

> I am certain about gender differences in maturation at different ages. Girls mature faster than boys. Yet, standards are the same for everyone. Consider their fine-motor development at the age of 6-7. Even their bones develop differently. Yet, all children are expected to fulfill the same requirements in cursive writing, for example. (MENT3)

In accordance with this view, Freire (1998) expressed the essence of culturally relevant teaching in the form of a question. "Why not establish an intimate connection between knowledge considered basic to any school curriculum and knowledge that is the fruit of the lived experience of these students as individuals?" (p. 36).

(4) Community and society's responsibility: Although all three participants focus on schools' responsibilities for promoting children's culturally sensitivity, they also point out that schools could succeed only with the support of the whole community. To support the idea of working with families in community, MENT3 chronicles her struggles with parental prejudices regarding ethnicity and lower SES:

> Once I asked parents to help me integrate a little girl [one with lower SES] into our classroom. I told them stories about how children excluded a particular child and called her names. The parents were astonished. But just for a minute. Then, they said "I do not want my daughter to sit next to this girl either, because she might have lice in her hair". Comments like this have a big impact on children. (MENT3)

This example illustrates that these participants expected positive changes and accepting attitude toward diversity from a wider scope that includes the children's micro and macro environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). They also believed that teachers' commitment to diversity can be productive only if the whole community, including parents, community members and governmental directives, support teacher initiatives.

Life-experiences in Inclusion and Teacher Responsibility viewpoint
A variety of direct, positive experiences with diverse people seem to have resulted in culturally sensitive views among participants associated with *Inclusion and Teacher Responsibility* viewpoint. Specific experiences included: being schooled with diverse children, growing up in a culturally diverse environment, and studying in a liberal atmosphere at university and 4) teaching diverse students.

While discussing possible origins of their diversity views, all three participants recalled their school memories and experiences with diverse children. For example, ADM1 and ADM3 attended integrated elementary schools where they had good relationships with Roma children. Furthermore, ADM1 indicated that his teacher played a

crucial role in establishing a culturally accepting atmosphere in the classroom.

Growing up in a culturally diverse environment was also identified as an important source for learning about diversity. For example, MENT6 grew up in the capital, where she was exposed to ethnic, religious and language diversity from a very young age. She considers these early experiences to have had a major impact upon her diversity views. This finding is consistent with Allport's Contact Hypothesis (Allport, 1954) which proposes that prejudice can be reduced by participating in activities with people from different races. Further, the liberal intellectual atmosphere of higher education institutions was also considered an important experience. ADM1, for example, recalls his Hungarian Literature professor who shaped his views on minority groups. Specifically, ADM1 emphasized this long-term exposure to diverse ideas (e.g. ADM1 spent five years at the university) and the open, culturally respectful environment created by the professors. This notion supports previous research (e.g., Barry & Lechner, 1995) which suggests that only long-term, comprehensive diversity preparation produces long-term results in students' diversity views.

Finally, teaching experiences with diverse children was mentioned as shaping force of diversity views. Interestingly, even challenging teaching experiences were perceived as opportunities for reflecting on views, developing empathy and refining skills for teaching minority children. For example, as a young teacher ADM3 realized the lack of his diversity preparation, which resulted in his current commitment to mandatory diversity preparation programs.

Ethnocentric Approach viewpoint

Participants associated with *Ethnocentric Approach viewpoint* express sensitivity to the impact of socio-economic status on students' educational opportunities; however, they demonstrate strong ethnocentric views in terms of other facets of diversity. From the interviews with the three participants (TED5, MENT6, and TCAN5) the following three themes have emerged, (1) Awareness in achievement gap from a discriminative perspective, (2) Anti-inclusion, (3) Ethnocentric perspective on teacher role.

(1) Awareness in achievement gap from a discriminative perspective: Participants associated with the *Ethnocentric Approach viewpoint* seem to be aware of the need for meeting academic needs of children with lower SES but they fail to recognize other needs emerging from diversity constructs addressed herein. Specifically, both MENT6 and TCAN5 indicate that children with lower SES do not have equal educational opportunities in current Hungarian society; therefore they argue that schools and teachers should be more supportive of lower SES children in schools, unless those children were Romas:

> I think teachers could do a lot for poor children. For example, if the family cannot afford to buy the textbooks the teacher could photocopy them. I would do it for a lower SES child, but not for a Gypsy child. (MENT6)

Further, TCAN5 feels that Roma parents are rarely supportive of education, and that their lifestyles and attitudes fail to result in good educational role models for their children. These views indicate that MENT6 and TCAN5 accept no responsibility for

failure of Roma children in schools. These views are consistent with work by Nagy (2002) who found that Hungarian teacher participants in her study tended to shift educational responsibilities to Roma families. Similarly, Sleeter, in her study (1993) concluded that many White teachers associated minority people "with dysfunctional families and communities, and lack of ability and motivation" (p. 162).

(2) Anti-inclusion: All three participants rejected inclusive practices, albeit from different viewpoints. For example, as a general education teacher, MENT6 expressed her unwillingness to teach children with special needs. On the other hand, TCAN5 did not consider inclusion as the best way for educating children with special needs because of their inability of progressing at the same rate in academic areas as other children. She states:

> I think special institutions would be better for special education students. In this way, they can study at their own speed. If they are integrated, they might feel badly about not keeping up with other children. (TCAN5)

Consistent with TCAN5's comment, Schuttler (2001) reported that student-participants of a cross-cultural study of inclusion indicated that children with disabilities preferred to spend time with students who had similar disabilities.

(3) Ethnocentric perspective on teacher role: While exploring the role of teachers and schools in responding to the needs of diverse children, interview participants from *Ethnocentric Approach* viewpoint express biased views about optional diversity preparation, the supremacy of Hungarian traditions and culture, and showed unresponsiveness to Romas' needs. Despite their support for lower SES children, the *Ethnocentric Approach* viewpoint participants feel that only teachers interested in minority groups should be prepared to teach diverse children. MENT6, for example, expresses strong aversion to Roma children and her avoidance of teaching them. "I am not willing to teach them" she stated. "The only reason is that I do not like them". Like MENT6, TED5 also believes that not all teachers should be concerned about diversity:

> I do not think that transmitting cultural awareness is my task. It is the responsibility of faculty teaching pedagogy. I teach linguistics and cultural studies. I teach the same content to everybody. After the first interview, I was thinking a lot of what majority teachers could do for minority children. I do not think there is anything we should do differently. I definitely think that they [minority people] should behave differently. (TED5)

Garcia and Pugh (1992) found similar attitudes among American teacher educators and reported that the majority of teacher educators feels that multicultural education is an issue only for minorities. Although these interview participants seem to be aware of the diverse features of minority and Hungarian cultures, they all agree that only Hungarian traditions, customs and culture should be taught in Hungarian schools. Further, they consider assimilation of Romas into Hungarian culture as the only way for Romas to successfully participate in Hungarian education. Specifically, MENT6 advocates placing Roma children into segregated special education classes if they are unable to fit in:

We live in Hungary; Roma children should fit into the traditional educational model. If they are not able to fit, they can leave our schools. They can attend special education school. Even if a Hungarian child fails to fulfill the requirements s/he will be placed in special education classes. (MENT 6)

Her proposal to put failing Roma children in special education classes appears consistent with the current trends in Hungary. Babusik (2001), for example, found that Roma children were overrepresented in Hungarian segregated special education classes. Further, other researchers (e.g., Haga, 2000; Rado, 1997) note that placing Roma children in special education programs is a widely used method of segregating the Roma from mainstream classrooms.

Life-experiences in viewpoint Ethnocentric Approach viewpoint
Participants associated with *Ethnocentric Approach viewpoint* refer to the following life experiences as those that might have impacted their diversity views: coming from lower SES family, limited and/or no experiences with diverse people and anti-Roma attitudes in the family.

The three interview participants, who have demonstrated strong awareness in the impact of SES on educational opportunities, grew up in lower SES families. For example, MENT6's parents had little money, and she bitterly adds, even though she is a mentor teacher, she too lacks financial stability. Likewise, STU5 grew up in a lower-income foster family because she lost her Mom at a very young age. As suggested by participants here, Johnson (2002) also found "being an outsider due to class background" was an important factor in reconstructing diversity views.

Participants in the *Ethnocentric Approach viewpoint* seem to have limited sensitivity toward issues with which they had limited or no personal experiences. For example, they expressed strong anti-Roma sentiment, however, they did not attend integrated schools, they never taught Roma children, and they lived in segregated Hungarian communities. Consistent with this finding, Aboud (1988) indicated that lack of familiarity and the existence of distance among certain groups might elicit negative attitudes, or even hostile relationship between groups.

In addition to the lack of direct contact with minorities, MENT6 and TED5 suggest that anti-Roma attitudes of their parents had an impact upon them. MENT6, for example, indicates that she learned negative attitudes toward the Roma from her father:

My father detests Romas and wants nothing to do with them. I remember a time when we were walking in the street and saw Romas searching for food in the garbage. My father's derogatory comments about this had a lasting impact upon me. (MENT6)

In line with this finding, Cameron et al., (2001) suggest that children's diversity views are greatly affected by significant people in their lives (e.g., parents, teachers, and peers).

Sensitivity toward Diversity and the Importance of Families viewpoint

Participants associating with *the Sensitivity toward Diversity and the Importance of Families* viewpoint express sensitivity toward diversity issues and focus on the families' rights and responsibilities for transmitting anti-biased attitudes to their children. From the interviews with the three participants (TED3, MENT1, MENT3), the following three themes emerged, (1) Family is the primary source for promoting diversity attitudes in children, (2) Importance of national identity for all, (3) Society is unprepared for inclusion.

(1) Family is the primary source for promoting diversity attitudes in children: Interview participants believe that the family has a primary right and responsibility for educating children about diversity. They also argue that schools should not discuss certain diversity topics because of the sensitive nature of most related issues. Participants further note that Roma families also have ethnic-specific responsibilities such as maintaining their language and traditions and supporting their children in the schools. Further, participants unanimously state that topics of sexual orientation, gender model and religion should be mainly addressed within the family. They state:

> While I am OK with teachers who discuss family structure and sexual orientation with children, I believe it is the parent's primary responsibility to discuss such intimate and sensitive issues. (TED2)

> I think teachers should not talk about religious principles. It is important for religion and public schools to be separate. I do not like the idea that some religious affiliations have after-school classes in the school building. Each child whose parents want him/her to take religious classes should go to that church to which the family belongs. (MENT1)

While discussing gender diversity, for example, TED2 also realizes that some families might have biased beliefs that are likely to hinder children from developing sensitive diversity views. TED2 for example, further mentions that the topic of "homosexuality" is anathema to Hungarian sensibilities. The prevalence of this view is consistent with the findings of Eros (1998). Thus, the majority of Hungarian families, TED2 continues, is unable to convey accepting views regarding sexual preference. However, participants do not feel that teachers are responsible for modifying the diversity views of the families.

(2) Importance of national identity for all: All three participants associated with *Sensitivity toward Diversity and Importance of Families viewpoint* considers it important to help children develop both a healthy national identity and self-identity. MENT1 expresses this view in the following:

> If children are brought up with a strong national identity, they will maintain it as adults. But if national identity does not matter, and everything is identical, they will not develop a feeling of belonging. I think it is important to have a strong foundation in terms of who you are. I think you should have a clear mind about your own national identity if you want to accept diverse people. (MENT1)

In addition, TCAN3 appears very supportive of maintaining Roma's ethnic identity. She seems to feel that Romas' deprivation of trade and loss of culture and traditions have led to a situation in which Romas have lost their roots. To improve the Romas' situation, all three participants suggest that education should promote Romas' self-awareness. Further, they propose that quality education programs supported by both governmental and community sources might result in better explored national and ethic self -identity. The above view has much support in literature. For example, Phinney et al. (1997) argued that ethnic self-awareness might facilitate positive relationships among ethnically diverse people.

(3) Society is unprepared for inclusion: All three participants of *Sensitivity toward Diversity and Importance of Families viewpoint* feel that current Hungarian schools and society are unable and unwilling to take into account the needs of children with disabilities. Therefore, these interview participants express limited support for inclusive practices. For example, being a mother of a child with Down syndrome, TED2 finds Hungarian inclusive classrooms dysfunctional as well as she points out the society's strong aversion to inclusion:

> I don't think that healthy and disabled children should be integrated. Further, people in this society are not willing to welcome disabled people. You cannot take these children to a beach or any public place because people stare at them and make rude comments. While people may try to accept such children with their conscious mind, they instinctively have an aversion to children who appear different. Since this view will change very slowly, disabled children currently feel more comfortable in their sheltered environment. This is a shame. (TED2)

Consistent with this view, Salne (2000) interviewed teacher participants who had concerns about the quality of integrated education in schools lacking trained professionals, appropriate physical environment, and accepting attitudes.

Life-experiences in Sensitivity toward Diversity and the Importance of Families viewpoint

Participants who associated with *Sensitivity toward Diversity and the Importance of Families* viewpoint appeared to have culturally sensitive views regardless of their limited personal experiences with diversity. The following life-experiences seemed to have an impact on their diversity views: culturally sensitive family in a majority environment, diversity issues in the family as adults, unbiased reflection on childhood experiences, and conscious use of books and media.

All three participants appear to hold culturally sensitive views. Despite their mono-ethnic villages and schools, their parents conveyed anti-biased attitudes toward diversity. TED2 and TCAD3 emphasize their parents' influence on their diversity views. This finding is in line with the previous findings of this study regarding the importance of parental modeling. Participants on all three viewpoints argue that their diversity views were molded by those of their parents.

Participants associated with this viewpoint often refer to their adulthood family experiences with diversity. As noted above, TED2 had a seventeen year-old child with

Down syndrome. Experiences while nurturing her son led her to reject inclusion due to the lack of circumstances for productive inclusion in present Hungarian society. Further, all three participants recall negative childhood experiences with Romas. Yet, these experiences do not appear to impact their present diversity views. These experiences were perceived as traumatic as a child. However, after reflecting upon them as adults, experiences were not considered negative. Rather, early experiences appear to be re-evaluated in adulthood. This might suggest that even negative childhood experiences can result in less biased attitudes through reflection (McCall, 1995).

Both MENT1 and TED2 indicated that their diversity views were strongly influenced by books, reports, radio and TV. These media sources have supplemented their limited personal experiences with diverse people. For example, MENT1 shared that a radio report with the Dalai Lama made her realize that even the head of a world religion could demonstrate sensitivity toward differing religious viewpoints. Similarly, EDU2 referred to sociological studies on Romas that made her reconsider her views and deepen her interest in diversity. The impact of media sources on diversity views is widely discussed in literature. For example, researchers (e.g., Zilmann et. al., 1994) suggest that media, especially television, and movies, might have a strong influence on people's approach to diversity.

Implications

The current investigation has explored the following three distinguishing viewpoints related to diversity among participants of Hungarian teacher education: 1) Inclusion and Teacher Responsibility, 2) Ethnocentric Approach, 3) Sensitivity toward Diversity and the Importance of Families. In addition, the analysis of the data pointed out differing life-experiences in each viewpoint that might account for certain diversity views.

Of the nine areas of diversity explored in this study, issues regarding Roma and national minorities, special education, socio-economic status, and religious diversity were discussed to a larger extent than the remaining facets. The lack of discussion of other issues such as sexual orientation/family structure and gender, suggests that more attention and publicity should be given to these issues in order to challenge people's views about these areas of diversity.

The examination of ethnocentric views makes these educators' professional standing questionable. Those who openly express their prejudices toward certain diversity areas might fail to prepare future teachers and young children for becoming culturally responsive professionals and citizens of the global world. Therefore, for those holding biased views toward diversity, extensive, long-term diversity intervention initiating more positive experiences with diverse people appears warranted. For example, self-reflection, conscious exploration of in-depth beliefs and behavior with culturally diverse people, direct positive contact with diverse people, conferences and workshops on cultural and linguistic diversity present in Hungarian schools might be beneficial components of the intervention.

In general, life-experiences appeared to have an impact upon diversity beliefs. Participants who had extensive positive experiences with diverse people appeared to hold more culturally sensitive views. Therefore, teacher preparation institutions should offer

teacher preparation programs combined with field experiences in various settings that serve children with diverse backgrounds. With numerous positive and direct experiences with children from diverse backgrounds, these field experiences out of comfort zone seem to have good potentials for enriching teacher candidates' knowledge and skills related to diversity as well for molding their diversity dispositions.

Interview data indicated that experiences in early childhood seem to strongly influence the participants' views about diversity at a later stage in their life. This suggests that educators and parents should ensure that children at a younger age are exposed to a great variety of positive experiences with diverse people and diverse cultures. Further, the family's attitude toward diversity appeared to be highly influential upon participants' views. Therefore, educators should take actions to assist families holding biased views to reconstruct their understanding of diversity. Specifically, these initiatives might include a more active teacher-parent partnership, and a more focused diversity intervention in the community.

Participants felt that education, itself, was incapable of responding to the extensive challenges regarding culturally diverse children in schools. Thus, many felt both Hungarian society and the government should greatly increase support to mitigate the current Roma education situation. Based on the participants' awareness of supportive factors other than education, national policy-makers might initiate increased collaboration with agencies, local and governmental foundations and professional organizations to improve Roma education and Romas' socio-economic status.

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