

The essence and principles of ethno-cultural education

Zhang Yan, graduate student

Mozyr State Pedagogical University named after I. P. Shamyakina (Belarus)

Gapanovich-Kaydalova Yekaterina Viktorovna, candidate of psychological sciences, associate professor

Gomel State University named after F. Skaryna (Belarus)

Ethnocultural education is an important aspect of modern education, aimed at promoting cultural diversity and understanding among students. The essence of ethnocultural education lies in the recognition and appreciation of different cultures, traditions and values. Each culture has its own unique strengths and contributions to society. The principles of ethnocultural education include respect for cultural diversity, the promotion of intercultural exchange, and the development of cultural competence. Ethnocultural education also emphasises the importance of social justice, equity and inclusion in education.

Keywords: ethno-cultural education, cultural inheritance, cultural identity, principles of ethno-cultural education.

Problems related to cultural diversity in the modern globalized world, with economic volatility, political fluctuations, and increasing social diversity, the field of culture faces significant challenges. International competition permeates the cultural sphere, posing a serious threat to ethnic traditions and cultures. A singular universal culture will not emerge; instead, there will be a coexistence of multiple diverse cultures. However, this also brings risks of cultural assimilation and conflicts.

The Issue of Educational Equity. In many regions, specific ethnic groups face social and educational injustices. Students from diverse cultural backgrounds may encounter unique challenges and barriers to academic success, such as language barriers, cultural biases, or a lack of representation in the curriculum. This may involve issues of unequal resource allocation, unequal opportunities, and cultural discrimination. Ethnocultural education needs to be dedicated to eliminating these inequalities and ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for all students.

Declining Ethnic-Cultural Education Activities. The impact and dilution of the dominant culture (majority culture) on marginalized cultures (minority cultures) is evident, even within school campuses. In China, the lifestyles of ethnic minority students have become indistinguishable from those of the Han majority. The carriers of ethnic culture, such as ethnic clothing, traditional arts, and customs, are gradually fading into history.

Lack of Ethnic Emphasis in School Curriculum. Currently, there is minimal reflection of ethnic characteristics in the school curriculum schedule, limited representation of minority cultures and traditional lifestyles in the content of curricula for students from ethnic minorities. Limited representation of minority cultures and traditional ways of life in the curriculum content for ethnic minority students. One can note the monotony in the current curriculum of education of ethnic minorities.

Loss of Ethnic Cultural Resources and Lack of Successors for Cultural Inheritance. Under the impact of economic globalization and market economy, the loss of ethnic cultural resources is intensifying. This can be explained by the following reasons:

historical neglect, limited understanding and superficial research, and commercialization and tourism industry.

In the 1980s, the publication of «Multicultural Education in Western Societies» by James A. Banks, an expert in multicultural education in the United States, marked the emergence of a cultural approach in the field of international education research. According to Banks, multicultural education typically refers to the education provided to students from different ethnic groups (especially minority groups) in multicultural countries. The aim is to provide equal educational opportunities, enable students to understand their own ethnic culture, receive the cultural respect they deserve, and improve their academic achievements [1].

J. Lynch, the founder of the globalization theory of multicultural education from the United Kingdom, believes that multicultural education is an educational transformation in multicultural societies to meet the cultural, consciousness, and self-evaluation needs of various ethnic and minority groups. Its purpose is to help culturally diverse groups and members of different ethnicities learn how to enjoy a harmonious and positive life in a culturally diverse society, achieve relatively balanced development in intergroup education, and promote respect and tolerance among each other [2].

S. Nieto, P. Bode in the book «Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education» [3] emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing students' ethnic and cultural identities. The authors advocate the creation of an inclusive educational environment that celebrates diversity and promotes social justice. They argue that educators should actively engage with students' cultural backgrounds, incorporate their experiences into the curriculum, and foster positive intercultural interactions. Researchers also emphasize the importance of combating stereotypes, eliminating power imbalances and promoting equality in education.

In our opinion, ethno-cultural education is an inclusive and equitable approach to education that values and incorporates students' cultural backgrounds, promotes cross-cultural understanding, and seeks to address the unique needs of diverse learners. It plays an important role in fostering inclusive-

ness, cultural appreciation and academic success in diverse educational settings. Not only does it encompass disadvantaged groups outside the ethnic context such as people with disabilities and homosexuals, but even members of the dominant strong culture are also its targets.

Ethnocultural education is an important approach that emphasises inclusivity, equity and cultural relevance in educational settings. The principles of ethnocultural education have been developed by leading scholars such as James A. Banks, S. Nieto and G. Gay.

James A. Banks proposes the principle of inclusion, which emphasises the significance of creating an inclusive learning environment that respects and values students' cultural backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. There is also the principle of equity: James A. Banks advocates for educational practices that address inequality and provide equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their cultural or ethnic background [4].

S. Nieto proposes the principle of cultural relevance, where curriculum and teaching practices need to be meaningful and relevant to students' cultural identities and experiences [5]. The principle of social justice, she advocates for ethnocultural education to challenge and address social inequalities, discrimination and oppression in schools and society [3].

G. Gay proposes the principle of cultural competence, where emphasises the importance of educators developing cultural competence in order to effectively engage with students from diverse backgrounds and create inclusive learning environments [6]. The principle of culturally responsive pedagogy promotes teaching practices that are relevant to students' cul-

tural backgrounds, experiences and ways of knowing in order to enhance learning.

The principles of ethnocultural education, as proposed by scholars such as James A. Banks, S. Nieto and G. Gay, emphasise the significance of inclusivity, cultural relevance, social justice and cultural responsiveness in educational practice. Incorporating these principles can help create equitable and inclusive learning environments that meet the diverse needs of students.

Thus, ethno-cultural education is characterized by its inclusive and equitable approach to education. It values and incorporates students' cultural backgrounds, promotes cross-cultural understanding, and addresses the unique needs of diverse learners.

The content of ethno-cultural education encompasses various areas, including multi-ethnic education, anti-racial education, and education for marginalized groups.

Its objectives focus on developing intercultural adaptation skills, fostering cultural acceptance and respect, empowering students to make cultural choices, and promoting the harmonious development of social groups.

Ethno-cultural education is closely intertwined with broader issues of social justice and aims to challenge systemic inequalities and promote equity in education. It recognizes that educational opportunities and outcomes should be accessible to all students, regardless of their cultural or ethnic backgrounds.

By embracing these principles, ethno-cultural education contributes to creating inclusive learning environments that celebrate diversity and empower students to thrive in a multicultural society.

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