Intercultural Sensitivity of Primary School Teachers of Georgia

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Abstract
The research explored intercultural sensitivity of 395 teachers randomly sampled from Georgian primary schools. The questionnaire based on Bennett's Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity was developed as a research instrument and adopted to Georgian context in order to measure interculturalism among the teachers. According to the research, the majority of teachers are in ethnocentric phase of intercultural sensitivity as by Bennett; Specifically: (a) Teachers are differently sensitive towards sources of cultural differences whereas tolerance towards social or physical differences does not impact non-tolerant attitude towards racial, linguistic, religious, ethnic differences; (b) Teachers are selectively tolerant to different groups within the same source of cultural difference. (c) Teachers are more sensitive to so called "easily changed" differences as social background/status, geographical location, age, health state while sensitivity is low towards "steady/invariable" or "rarely changeable" sources as ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation.(d) The education level is positively correlative to the level of a teachers intercultural sensitivity.

Keywords: Education, primary school teacher, intercultural sensitivity

1. Introduction

Intercultural education is one of the most important areas of education in the 21st century. The education process should aim to educate and prepare citizens for living in a multicultural and diverse world and working in multicultural and diverse organizations and companies. This aim cannot be achieved without intercultural education. (Tabatadze, 2010).

Georgia is located on the Black Sea's eastern coast at the crossroads of Western Asia and Eastern Europe. Georgia borders Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, and Turkey. Georgia has a population of about 4,585,874 (Department of statistics of Georgia, 2002). Georgia is a multiethnic country. Ethnic minorities are composed of 15,8 % of the total population (2002 state census). There are two large ethnic groups Armenian and Azerians compactly residing in two regions of Georgia. 6.5% of population are Azeri, 5.7% are Armenian, and 1.5% are Russian. In terms of religion, the population is predominantly Orthodox Christian (83.9%), with a group of Muslims (9.9%). Approximately 53% of the population lives in urban areas (Tabatadze, 2010).

The educational system in Georgia is comprised of preschool, general, and tertiary education, as well as secondary vocational education and training. General education is offered in three levels: primary education (grades 1 to 6); basic education (grades 7 to 9) and secondary education (grades 10 to 12). The current general education system is based on the Law on General Education adopted in April 2005. The Law is the main provision of the principle rights and freedoms of students, their parents, and teachers. According to Georgian legislation every general education school in Georgia is recognized as an independent legal entity of public law. There are 2084 public and 230 private schools in Georgia with approximately 560 000 school students. The government of Georgia is accountable for ensuring the equal right for every individual to receive general education (Gorgadze & Tabatadze, 2014).

1.1. Diversity in Educational System of Georgia

There are about 72,000 non-Georgian students in Georgian public schools. The number of minority students composes more than 11 % of the whole student population (Tabatadze, 2010), while 67,953 of them (approximately 94%) go to non- Georgian schools and only 6% of students population is distributed in public school with Georgian language of instruction (Tabatadze, 2010). The distribution of students in public schools of Georgia with different language of instruction is as following:

Table 1: students' distribution in accordance with language of instruction

Language of Instruction	Number of Ethnic Minority Students
Azerbaijani	27442
Armenian	15592
Russian	24512

Ministry of Education and Science, 2009 (EMIS)

Georgian public schools have different language of instructions. Out of 2084 public schools of Georgia, there are 213 public schools with language of instruction other than Georgian. There are 77 non-Georgian sectors in public schools. The table below provides information about the distribution of non-Georgian schools in regions of Georgia:

Table 2: Non-Georgian Schools by regions of Georgia - 2013:

Region	Azerbaijani	Russian	Armenian	Total
Tbilisi	1	2	1	4
Kakheti	4	1		5
Samtskhe-Javakheti		4	96	100
KvemoKartli	80	4	20	104
Total	**85**	**11**	**117**	**213**

Ministry of Education and Science, 2013

Apart from ethnic diversity, Georgia has also a diverse religious landscape. According to the last census, 705,302 residents of Georgia (16.1% of the total) do not belong to the dominant religion,

Orthodox Christianity. These include atheists, nihilists and agnostics (National Department of Statistics, Census 2002). Religious minorities usually form their own enclaves and, consequently, their children are concentrated in schools located in these areas. This is not the case in Ajaria, which has a significant population of ethnic Georgian Muslims. Both students and teachers come from different religious groups there and, moreover, there are many religiously mixed families in the region (Tabatadze, 2010).

1.2. Aspects of Intercultural Education in Georgia

Intercultural education is integrated into many legislative and education policy documents of Georgia and basically covers the main principals of multiculturalism. Article 35.1 of the Constitution of Georgia entitles every citizen of Georgia to receive education and choose the form of education. Law on General Education confirms the right of citizens to receive the education (Article 9), as well as the 'equal access for all' (Article 3.2.A). The intercultural values are well integrated into the Law on General Education, stating that the schools must provide the education that is based on common values, democratic and equality principles (Article 33.1.A). This article is further elaborated in the National Education Objectives Document, adopted on October 18th of 2004, and in National curriculum of Georgia. Specifically, the National Education Objectives Document states that:

> *'The school education must ensure the development of general communication skills and organization and teamwork skills among the future members of the society, including those, for whom Georgian is not the native language. ... Become a law obedient and tolerant citizen: having mutual respect and understanding and learning skills have special importance in today's dynamic and ethnically and culturally diverse world. School must develop the human rights protection and respect skills among the youngsters, which they will use for protecting the identities of their own and of others. Youngsters must be able to utilize the knowledge that they received about the basic rights, and live with these rights".*

The Law on General Education covers the cultural diversity of the country and determines Abkhazian as a state language for Autonomic Republic of Abkhazia, (Article 4). .' The same article (Article 4.3) states that 'the citizens of Georgia, to which Georgian is not a native language, have the right to receive full general education in their native language. .". Article 7 of the Law on General Education entitles the students to receive the education in their native language in the closest proximity to their place of residence, and envisages the increase of the voucher and/or additional funding, to be approved by the Ministry of Education and Science within the frameworks of relevant targeted programs. The Low regulates the freedom of religious expression while stating that the schools should be free from religious indoctrination, proselytism and forced assimilation purposes. At the same time the Low does not prohibit the celebration of state festivals and historic dates in the school, neither conducting such activities that would be motivated by implementing the common and national values. Article 13.6 of the same law states that: 'the school must ensure and promote the tolerance and mutual respect among the students, parents and the teachers, regardless of their social, ethnic, religious, language or ideological belonging'. According to the article 13.7 of the same law, 'school, basing on the equity principle, must ensure the protection of individual and collective rights of the national minorities, and their right to use the native language, maintain and express their culture belonging.'

The Article 18 of the Law on Education guarantees the freedom of freedom of thought, conscience and religion for students, parents and teachers. Article 18.2 of the same law states that: 'it is prohibited to put any responsibility on the student, parent and the teacher that would be fundamentally opposing their beliefs, conscience and religion'.

The development of a student's intercultural competence is part of the National Curriculum of different subject or group of subjects, for instance National Curriculum of Social Sciences, Foreign Languages, Arts and Georgian language defines specific results and indicators for development of intercultural sensitivity of students. Demand for reflection of pluralism and dissemination of non-stereotypical opinions in Georgia within the textbooks was modified in the 2011 year textbook adoption rule. There was a clause in 2010 year textbook adoption rule, according to which, the textbook would not be approved if its "contents, design or any other sign includes discriminative elements (language, nationality, ethnical or social belonging, etc.)..

Professional teaching standards, introduced on 21 November 2008, which was amended in March 2014, also incorporated requirements of multicultural education for school teachers. On this background the research has a double significance in terms of determining: (a) fulfillment of decorated requirements in practice; (b) compatibility of good legislative framework with existing education human capacity.

2. Research Methodology

The overarching goal of the research was to assess the intercultural sensitiveness of primary school teachers. The following research questions were identified for the study: (1) What is the level of intercultural sensitivity of primary school teachers as measured against the Bennett Model; (2) How similar is the degree of cultural sensitiveness towards different sources of cultural differences; (3) How different is the cultural sensitiveness of teachers by gender, age, regional location, work experience and education

2.1. Teachers survey

Sampling

According to the data of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia provided for the sampling purposes, there are 27557 teachers instructing in primary schools. 400 teachers were considered as a valid number for the sampling. The target for the margin of error is 4,1% with the 90% of confidence level. Two-stage cluster sampling method was employed for sampling: (1) school sampling random stratification, considering the regional distribution of schools according to the ratio of the schools in the overall number of schools in the regions; and (2) purposive sampling to ensure sufficient representation of all territorial settlements (urban, rural). The table below represents the process of selecting teacher for survey through two stage stratification method.

Table 3 Teachers selection through two stage stratification method

Stratum	Region	Urban/Rural	Number of Teachers	Primary Sample	Secondary sample
1	Adjara	1 Urban	806	12	3
2	Adjara	2 Rural	2122	31	8
3	Guria	1 Urban	251	4	2
4	Guria	2 Rural	985	14	4
5	Tbilisi	1 Urban	4050	59	15
6	Imereti	1 Urban	1636	24	6
7	Imereti	2 Rural	2808	40	10
8	Kakheti	1 Urban	475	7	2
9	Kakheti	2 Rural	2054	30	7
10	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	1 Urban	151	2	2
11	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	2 Rural	739	11	3

12	Racha-Lechkhumi-KvemoSvaneti	1 Urban	73	1	2
13	Racha-Lechkhumi-KvemoSvaneti	2 Rural	475	7	2
14	Samegrelo-ZemoSvaneti	1 Urban	771	11	3
15	Samegrelo-ZemoSvaneti	2 Rural	2058	30	7
16	Samtskhe-Javakheti	1 Urban	497	7	2
17	Samtskhe-Javakheti	2 Rural	1943	28	7
18	KvemoKartli	1 Urban	958	14	3
19	KvemoKartli	2 Rural	2694	39	10
20	ShidaKartli	1 Urban	570	8	2
21	ShidaKartli	2 Rural	1441	21	5
	Total		27557	400	105

The "actual sample" for the survey was 400 teachers. Additional 105 teachers from both strata were selected to replace the primary sampled teachers in case of their absence. A total of 395 teachers participated in the survey from actual or additional sample (99% of sampled teachers took part in the survey). We were not able to replace 5 teachers from additional sample. Two stage stratification methods enabled us to ensure the participation of teacher's from schools of different type, size and language sector.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed based on the following conceptual frameworks; (a) Benett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity; (b) Twelve sources of cultural identity that influence teaching and learning. The questionnaire embodied 13 chapters and totaled 89 questions. The chapters were divided into one general and 12 specific topics corresponding to 12 sources of cultural identification.

According to Cushner, (Cushner et al, 2006), every individual tends to identify its cultural identity. He defines 12 specific sources of cultural identity that greatly influence teaching and learning. The figure below illustrates 12 sources of cultural identity. The cultural identity of all individuals
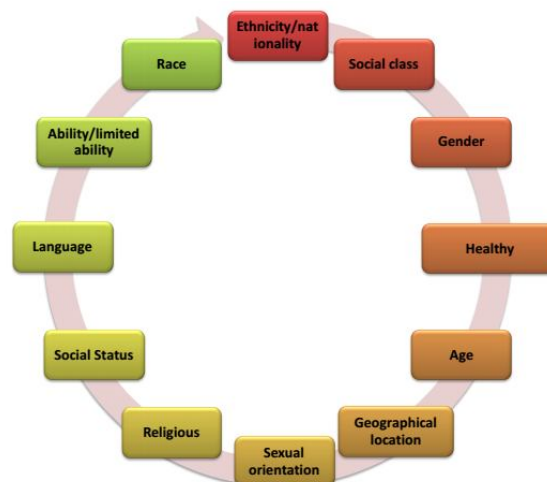

Figure 1. Sources of Cultural Identity Cushner, McClleland, Saford, 2006, p.70

(Knowledge, attitudes, values and skills) is formed through their experience. The experience is gained through contact with socializing agents (*Cushner et al*, 2006). Since the main purpose of the research was to study the preparedness of actual teachers for multiculturalism sensitive instruction, the questionnaire was built on topics related to the above mentioned 12 different sources of cultural identity and were considered as an effective instrument for measuring teachers' attitudes, perception, opinion and assumptions towards diversity. Consequently the idea of Cushner about the

significant impact of multiculturalism on teaching and learning style was considered as an anchor of the research.

The intercultural sensitivity teacher's questionnaire was based on Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bonnet 1993). The model created by Bennett's is acknowledged as one of the most acceptable theories in interculturalism. According to Bennett, and Allen (1999) the cultural difference is experienced by individuals in a series of predictable stages. In this model, the first three stages, denial of difference, defense of difference, and minimization of difference, are identified as ethnocentric stages of multicultural sensitivity. The latter three stages, acceptance of difference, adaptation to difference, and integration of difference, are belonging to ethnorelative stage of sensitiveness. The Bennett's model is based on Blooms Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains (Mahoney & Schamber, 2004). And it makes convenient of applying Bennett's framework of intercultural sensitivity to the assessment of intercultural sensitivity. We have modified slightly Bennett's six stage model in the instrument for assessing intercultural sensitivity of teachers in Georgia. The justification of modification of stages for research purposes was as following: From Bloom's perspective, the educational objectives of a curriculum can range from simple to complex levels. According to Bloom taxonomy, the knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation are those stages of cognitive domain where the synthesis and evaluation are considered as the highest levels of the development (Bloom, 1956) .. Nonetheless the fifth and sixth levels of Bloom's taxonomy are under the scientific debates (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001) and the transformative model of Bloom's taxonomy was developed with the focus on these stages, and it was decided to merge these two stages. This decision was important for using Likert Scale in the research analysis (Fully Agree; Agree; Partially Agree, Disagree; Absolutely Disagree). It was decided to merge the last two stages the fifth (adaptation of difference) and sixth (integration of difference) stages of intercultural sensitivity and use a unified stage for assessment of teachers' intercultural sensitivity in Georgia. The research instrument for assessing intercultural sensitivity of teachers in Georgia had 5 stages (1) denial of difference; (2) defense of difference; (3) minimization of difference; (4) acceptance of difference; (5) adaptation/integration to difference).

The survey questionnaire consisted of fourteen chapters. The first chapter consisted of the demographic information of participant. The second chapter consisted of the questions on general issues of tolerance and multiculturalism. The chapters 3-14 consisted of questions related to different sources of cultural identity (Race, Ethnicity, Nationality, Language, Religion, Gender, Health and Ability, Social Status, Social –Economic background, Age, Geographical location, Sexual Orientation). The questionnaire had 89 questions. The answers ranged from 1-5. The respondents had the following choice for answers: (a) absolutely disagree; (b) disagree; (c) partially agree; (d) agree; (e) absolutely agree. Teachers receive from 1 to 5 points for each question. Based on points, the assessment system was developed which included five stages.

Research Limitations
The study had several limitations. More specifically, first, the sample of teachers was 400 primary school teachers. Totally 395 teachers participated in the survey from actual or additional sample (99% of sampled teachers took part in the survey). We were not able to replace 5 teachers from additional sample. Second, we can generalize the results of the survey for the population of primary teachers of Georgia; however, the research cannot be generalized for separate region or district. Only different sample size and stratification random sampling method allowed us to generalize research results on separate region and/or district level. Third, the focus group of the research which encompasses inclusively teachers of primary schools limits us to generalize the research outcomes on entire target population of school teachers on country level. It's necessary to extend the

parameters of the research and cover teachers of upper school grade in order to talk about the total teachers' population in the country. This is especially true if we consider the finding of the study which shows that the multicultural sensitivity of the teachers is in positive correlation with the education level and the teachers of upper secondary school have higher education background."

3.   Research Results

The outcomes of the teachers' intercultural sensitivity survey are very interesting from various perspectives and create a large space for thorough analysis. In particular, the research make possible to argue the patterns of teachers' intercultural sensitivity generally as well as identify interesting trends of sensitivity scale which are related to differences within each of the twelve sources of cultural identity. Moreover, the survey revealed diverse attitude and assumption of the teachers not only towards the different sources of cultural identity but also towards the different groups and circumstances within the one source. Detailed analysis of the research results is given below:

3.1. Teachers' intercultural sensitivity

According to the results, primary school teachers are predominantly on the stage of ethnocentricity as by Bennett; in particular, 68,8% of the surveyed teachers are in ethnocentric stage, while 31,2% in ethnorelative stage. Interestingly, there is a distribution of teachers' attitudes within the concrete stages of cultural sensitivity. The majority of surveyed teachers showing ethnocentric view of intercultural sensitivity (67,3%) are at its highest level - *minimization of differences*, while only 1,5% of the inquired is at the second level of ethnocentric stage – *defense against differences,* and none of the teachers appear at the lowest level of intercultural sensitivity – *denial of differences*. This fact makes us think positively about the possibility to progress intercultural sensitivity of teachers through relevant work and training. Arrangement of teachers between the ethnorelative stage occurs to be logic continuation of the results; . Majority of teachers in ethnorelative stage is at its first *acceptance level* – the lowest stage of ethnorelativism – Only one teacher, i.e. 0,3% appeared at the highest position of ethnorelative stage – *adaptation to/integration of differences*. The table below represents the results received on common intercultural sensitivity of teachers:

Table 4. Intercultural Sensitivity of Teachers

intercultural sensitivity of teachers		
Level of sensitivity	**Number**	**Percentage**
Rejection	0	0 %
Defense	6	1.5%
Minimization	266	67.3 %
Acceptance	122	30.9 %
Adaptation	1	.3 %
In total	395	100.0 %

We found it interesting to review the distribution of the results disaggregated by regions. While dividing by regions and by ethnocentric and ethnorelative stages of intercultural sensitivity, the highest percentage of teachers in ethnocentric stage was observed in Guria: 82, 35 %, the lowest 53,45%– in Tbilisi. Accordingly, the highest percentage of teachers in ethnorelative stage 46,55 %are in Tbilisi; the lowest17,65%– in Guria. Below, the table presents redistribution of teachers' intercultural sensitivity by regions.

The research scope lacks an opportunity to make assumptions or generalize the results on a regional level. However it provides an interesting baseline for rigorous research of sub-cultural particularities in the regions of Georgia.

Table 5. Intercultural Sensitivity of Teachers distributed by regions of Georgia

	Region	Defense	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation
1	Guria	0	0	82.35	17.65	0
2	Samegrelo	0	2.63	78.90	18.42	0
3	Imereti	0	2.94	64.71	32.35	0
4	KvemoKartli	0	0	70	28	2
5	ShidaKartli	0	0	64	36	0
6	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	0	0	66.67	33.33	0
7	Samtskhe-Javakheti	0	2.94	73.53	23.53	0
8	Racha-Lechkhumi/KvemoSvaneti	0	0	62.5	37.5	0
9	Ajara	0	0	65.91	34.09	0
10	Kakheti	0	2.63	73.68	23.68	0
11	Tbilisi	0	1.72	51.72	46.55	0
	In total	0	1.52	67.34	30.89	0.25

Teachers' intercultural sensitivity in correlation with age

The teachers' age in the research ranged between 20 and 80. They were distributed in 9 categories. 5 teachers refused to name their age. In view of distribution of teachers' intercultural sensitivity by age, 80% of teachers aged between 20-25 and 80% of teachers aged between 76-80 are in ethnocentric stage, which is the highest indicator. As regards to the number of teachers in ethnorelative phase, 46,49% of teachers aged between 36-45 are in ethnorelative stage of intercultural sensitivity, which is the highest indicator among the existing age structures in the research. Below is given the distribution of teachers' intercultural sensitivity by age:

Table 6. Intercultural Sensitivity of Teachers distributed by age

	Age	Rejection	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation
1	20-25	0	0	80	20	0
2	26-35	0	1.59	74.6	23.81	0
3	36-45	0	1.75	51.75	46.49	0
4	46-50	0	0	72.88	25.42	1.69
5	51-55	0	0	78	22	0
6	56-62	0	0	79.63	20.37	0
7	63-70	0	6.45	67.74	25.81	0
8	71-75	0	11.1	66.67	22.22	0
9	76-80	0	0	80	20	0
10	37	0	0	0	100	0
11	No answer	0	0	0	100	0
	In total	0	1.52	67.34	30.89	0.25

Teacher's intercultural sensitivity by gender

Distribution of men and women in the research objectively reflects the number of men and women teachers in Georgia, this once again proves validity of selection. Out of 395 teachers, 36 were men and the rest 359 – women, i.e. 9,12% of the research participants was men, while 90,88% - women. Intercultural sensitivity of men and women is distributed this way: 61,11% of the research participant men is in ethnocentric stage, while 38,9% - in ethnorelative. Also, all the men in ethnocentric stage are at level of ***minimization of differences***, while all the men in ethnorelative stage – at level of ***acceptance of differences***. 69,67% of the research participant women is in ethnocentric stage and 30,33% - in ethnorelative stage. They are distributed according to stages, at the levels of defense, minimization of differences, acceptance of differences and adaptation to differences. In terms of general intercultural sensitivity, only slight difference is seen between

men and women. Detailed information on gender differences (in regard to intercultural sensitivity) are presented in the below table:

Table 7. Intercultural Sensitivity of Teachers distributed by gender

Gender	Rejection	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation
Men	0	0	61.11	38.9	0
Women	**0**	**1.67**	**68**	**30.08**	**0,25**

Distribution by settlement types

Out of 395 teachers (research participants), 240 were from village settlements (i.e. 60,76% of research participants), 14 teachers from lowland settlement (i.e. 3,54%) and 134 teachers from city settlement (i.e. 33,92%). 7 teachers did not name their settlements. In an intercultural sensitivity point of view, sharp distinction was less observed among teachers from villages, lowlands and city settlements. 70,85% of village teachers is in ethnocentric stage and 29,15% - in ethnorelative stage. A big percentage of teachers from lowland are in ethnocentric stage compared to village and city teachers. 85,7% of lowland teachers are in ethnocentric and only 14,3 % - in ethnorelative stage. City teachers have a relatively high indicator in intercultural sensitivity, though their majority also appears in ethnocentric phase. 64,15% of city teachers are in ethnocentric stage, while 35,85 % - in ethnorelative. Detailed information on intercultural sensitivity by settlement types is given below:

Table 8. Intercultural Sensitivity of Teachers distributed by Geographical settlements

Intercultural sensitivity according to type of settlements					
	Rejection	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation
Village	0	1.25	69.6	29.2	0
Lowland	0	14.3	71.4	14.3	0
City	0	0.75	63.4	35.1	0.75
No answer	0	0	57.1	42.9	0
In total	0	1.52	67.3	30.9	0.25

Distribution by working experience

The range of working experience of teachers participating in the study was from 1 to 57 years. Teachers were grouped into 4 categories: (a) 1-10 years; (b) 11-20 years; (c) 21-31 years; (d) more than 31 years. 4 teachers refused to give information about their work experience. It is worth of mentioning that the majority of the teachers under the 1-10 years of working experience category belong to the ethnorelative phase (38 %) and the least to ethnocentric phase (62 %). The share of teachers at the ethnocentric phases increases along with the working experience. The table below shows the distribution of teachers' intercultural sensitivity by working experience:

Table 9. Intercultural Sensitivity of Teachers distributed by working experience

	Professional experience	Rejection	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation
1	0-10	0	2	60	38	0
2	011-20	0	0	63	37	0
3	21-30	0	1	75	24	0
4	**31 and above**	0	3	72	25	0
5	**No answer**	0	0	75	25	0
	Total:	0	1,52	67,34	30,89	0,25

Distribution by the Educational Attainment

82, 78 % of participating teachers (327 teachers out of 395) had higher education degree, 11,1 % (44 out of 395) secondary or vocational-technical (music or arts schools). 24 teachers (6.07 % of participating teachers) refrained from giving details on their education attainment. 66,97 % of teachers fall under ethnocentric phase, while 33,03 % belong to ethnorelative phase. 81,81 % of teachers with secondary and vocational-technical education fall under ethnocentric phase and only 18,19% of teachers meet the characteristics of ethnorelative phase. Accordingly, teachers with more education are relatively at higher level of intercultural sensitivity. The table below shows the distribution of teachers' intercultural sensitiveness by their educational attainment:

Table 10. Intercultural Sensitivity of Teachers distributed by educational attainment

	Educational attainment	Rejection	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation
1	Higher Education (Humanities)	0	1,54	65,38	33,08	0
2	Higher Education (Hard Sciences)	0	1,85	64,8	33,35	0
3	Secondary professional	0	0	100	0	0
4	Secondary	0	0	76,47	23,53	0
5	Secondary professional (Musical)	0	4,55	81,82	13,63	0
6	Secondary professional (Arts)	0	0	80	20	0
7	Various	0	0	63,6	27,27	9,13
8	Missing	0	0	70,83	29,17	0
	Total	0	1,52	67,34	30,89	0,25

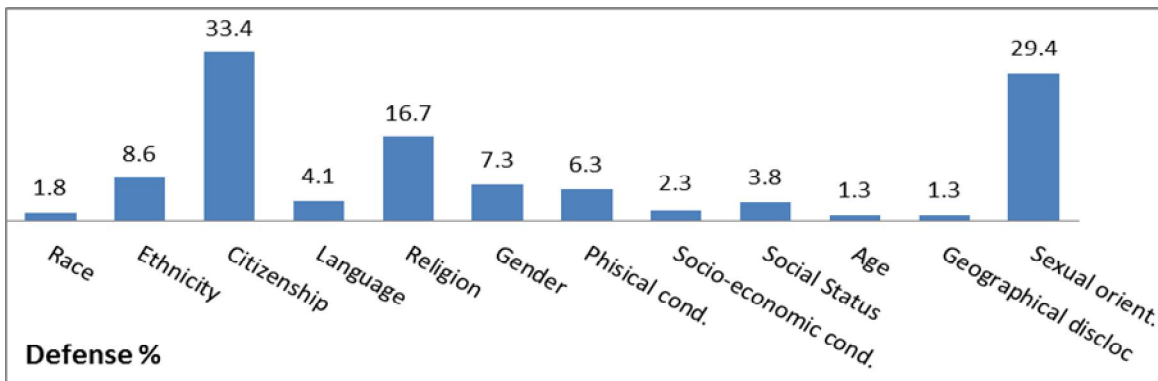### 3.2. *Teacher's sensitivity toward different sources of cultural difference*

The study revealed different levels of sensitivity towards different sources of cultural identity. The majority of the teachers belong to the ethnocentric phase with regard to sensitivity to such identities as citizenship, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, linguistic characteristics. Teachers demonstrated less ethnocentric to such cultural identities as age, health condition, gender, geographic location, race and socio-economic status. Such patterns illustrate different levels of sensitivity towards different sources of cultural identity. The majority of the teachers belong to the ethnocentric phase with regard to sensitivity to such identities as citizenship, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, linguistic characteristics. Teachers demonstrated less ethnocentric to such cultural identities as age, health condition, gender, geographic location, race and socio-economic status. Such pattern illustrates important tendencies. Cultural sensitivity is different towards various different aspects of cultural identity. Tolerance towards social status, disabilities or gender does not exclude non-tolerance towards racial, lingual, religious, ethnical or civil differences; on vice-versa. ***There is differentiated tolerance and intercultural sensitivity towards the different sources of cultural identity***; For example, with regard to sensitivity to citizenship, religion and sexual orientation up to 16,71% to 33,2 % of teachers belong to rejection and defensive stages of ethnorelative phase. In terms of sensitivity to age, geographic location, socio-economic status and race, only 1,27% to 2,28 % of teachers go to rejection and defensive stages of ethnorelative phases. Such pattern demonstrates ***selective tolerance*** towards cultural differences and different level sensitivity towards different cultural identities. The charts below demonstrate teachers' perception scale towards the sources of cultural identity:

Chart 1. Reflects percentile distribution of intercultural sensitivity of teachers towards different sources of cultural identity on Rejection stage of intercultural sensitivity
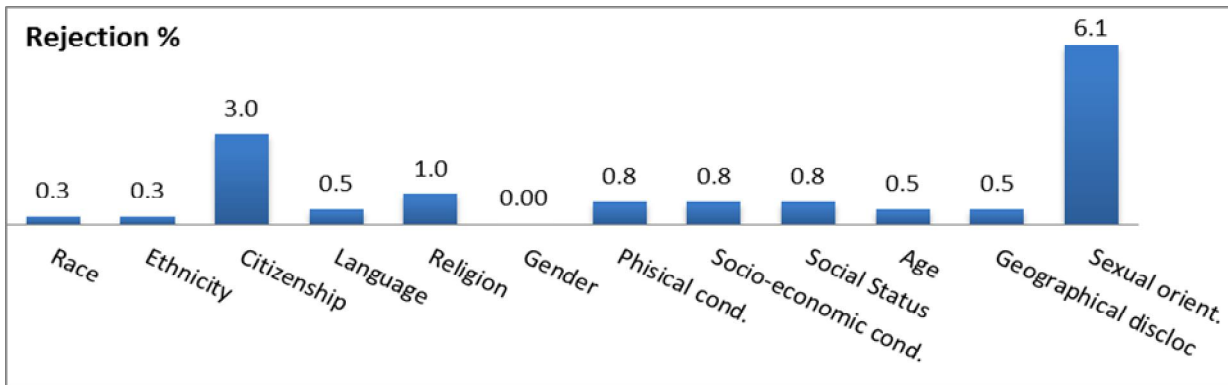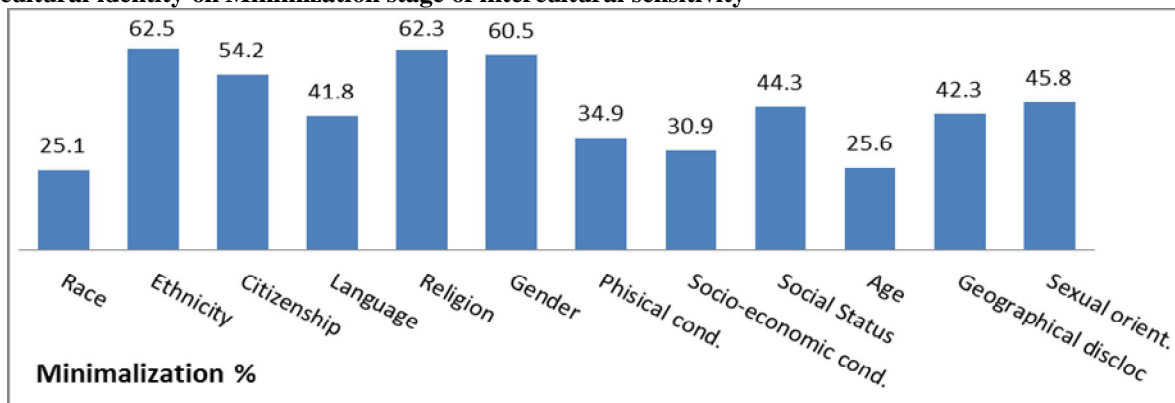

Chart 2. Reflects percentile distribution of intercultural sensitivity of teachers towards different sources of cultural identity on Defense stage of intercultural sensitivity:


The distribution of teachers at the minimization stage of the ethnocentric phase of intercultural sensitivity is the same. The detailed information on the distribution in percentages is provided in the chart below:

Chart 3. Reflects percentile distribution of intercultural sensitivity of teachers towards different sources of cultural identity on Minimization stage of intercultural sensitivity

As far as ethnorelative phase is concerned, teachers are ethnorelative to such cultural differences as age, health, socio-economic status, and geographic location. With respect to the mentioned cultural differences, the majority of teachers satisfy requirements of ethnorelative phase. The situation is different with such differences as sexual orientation, religion, citizenship, ethnicity, gender and language - only small percentage of teachers are at the phase of Acceptance or Adaptation/integration. Detailed information on the belonging of teachers to these cultural differences are also presented below.

Chart 4. Reflects percentile distribution of intercultural sensitivity of teachers towards different sources of cultural identity on Acceptance stage of intercultural sensitivity
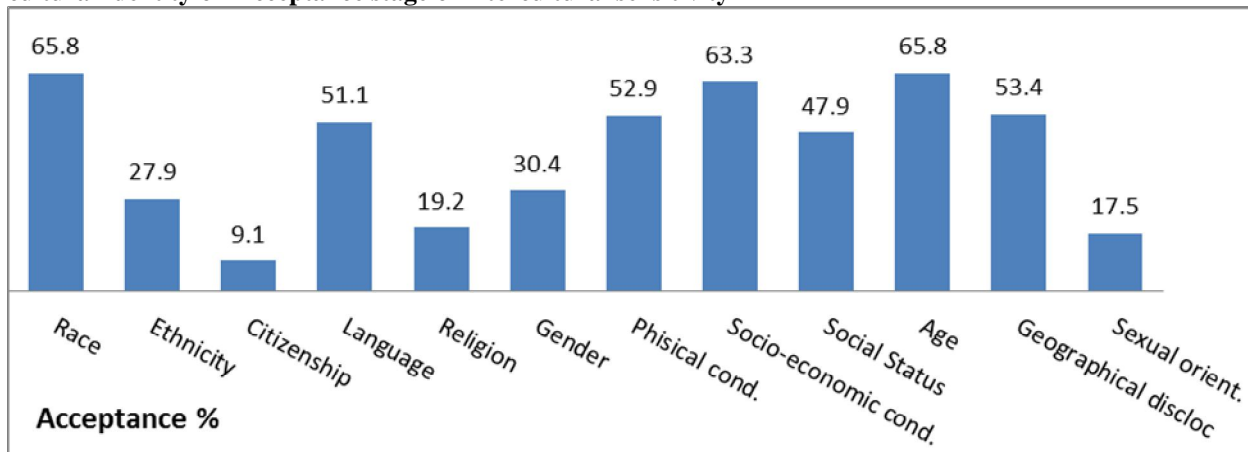
Chart 5. Reflects percentile distribution of intercultural sensitivity of teachers towards different sources of cultural identity on Integration/Adaptation stage of intercultural sensitivity
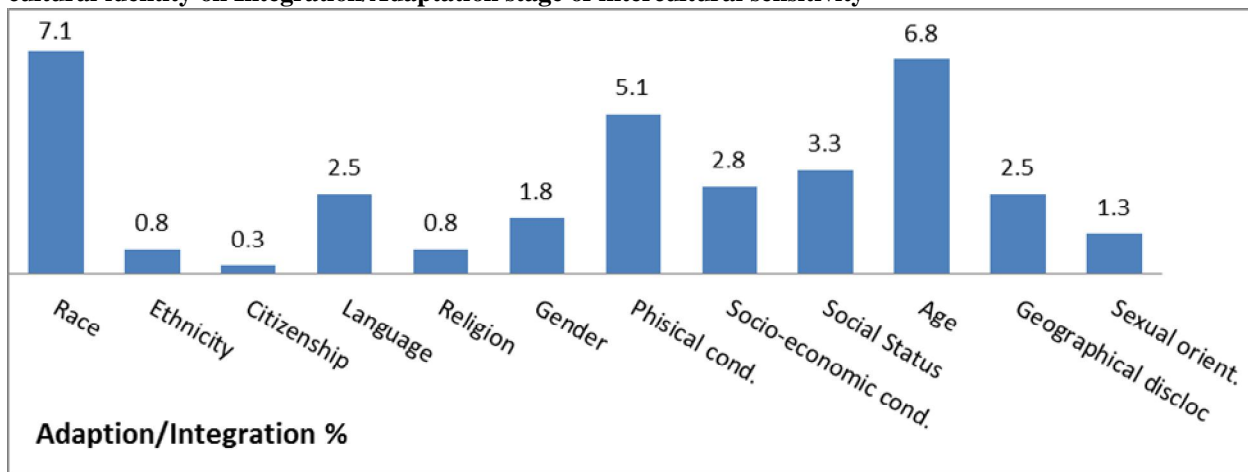
4. Discussion/Conclusions

The conducted research results revealed important findings. The research found that there are internal differences toward different sources of difference, i.e. Teachers display *selective tolerance towards different groups* within the same source of cultural difference. For example, teachers can be tolerant towards one specific ethnical group and non-tolerant towards another ethnical group; based on the research, teachers' intercultural sensitivity towards different ethnic groups are quite low, though the research also manifested diversity of teachers' attitudes towards different ethnical

groups. For example, the answer to the question regarding Abkhazians and Ossetians – "*We compromised a lot to Abkhazians and Ossetians and let them grow bolder*"- was distributed as follows: 76,6% absolutely agrees, agrees and partially agrees and only 23,1 % does not agree or absolutely disagrees with this thesis. Similar attitudes of teachers might become problematic for development of intercultural sensitivity towards Abkhazians and Ossetians in future generations:

Table 11: intercultural sensitivity towards Abkhazians and Ossetians

	Number	Percentage
Fully agree	59	14.9
Agree	103	26.1
Partially agree	141	35.7
Disagree	80	20.3
Absolutely disagree	11	2.8
No answer	1	0.3
In total	395	100.0

Interesting results are given in this case: "**only Georgians shall live in Georgia, other ethnic groups shall go to their historical homecountries**".28,9% of the inquired people agrees with this sentence to some extent, while 70,1% disagrees. The results clearly show that teachers' acceptance towards other ethnical groups is relatively high compared to Abkhazians and Ossetians.

Table 12: distribution of answers on the question: "only Georgians shall live in Georgia, other ethnic groups shall go to their historical home countries".

	Number	Percentage
Fully agree	15	3.8
Agree	20	5.1
Partially agree	79	20.0
Disagree	198	50.1
Absolutely disagree	83	21.0
In total	395	100.0

A similar situation is observed in regards to religious differences. The research revealed interesting facts within religious differences. Teachers have diverse attitudes towards representatives of nontraditional religion, representatives of other religions of ethnically Georgians and towards the deported. 88,8% agrees, absolutely agrees or partially agrees with this opinion – "**All ethnically Georgians are Georgians despite their religious affiliation**" - while only 11,2% disagrees or absolutely disagrees with it.
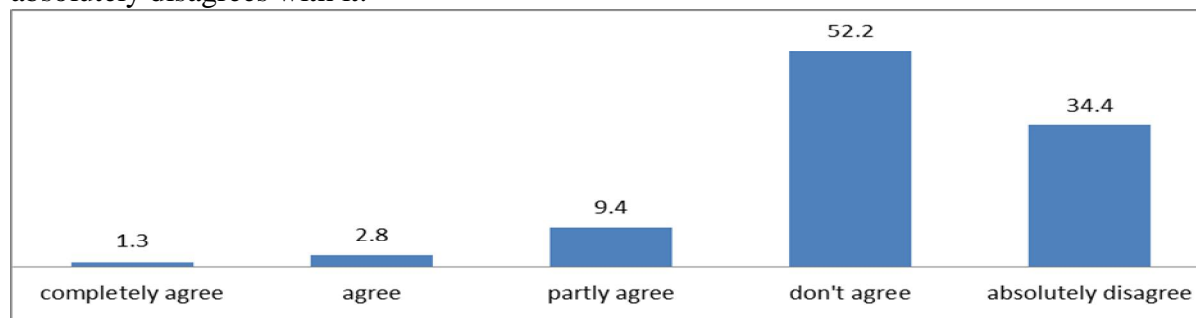
Chart 6: distribution of answers on the question "**All ethnically Georgians are Georgians despite their religious affiliation**"

Attitude of the inquired teachers towards followers of nontraditional religions, the so-called "sects" is worth noting. The majority of teachers (particularly 83,8%) agrees with the opinion "**Nontraditional religions (so called "sectas") create danger to the Georgian state system".**
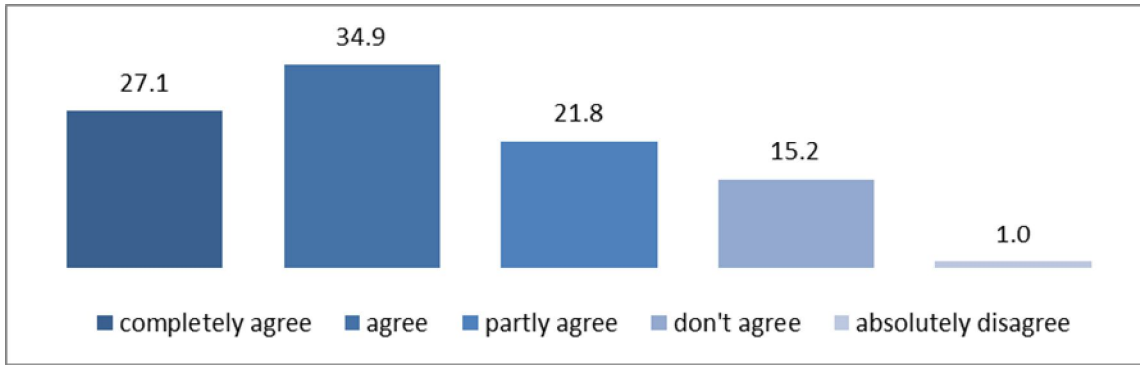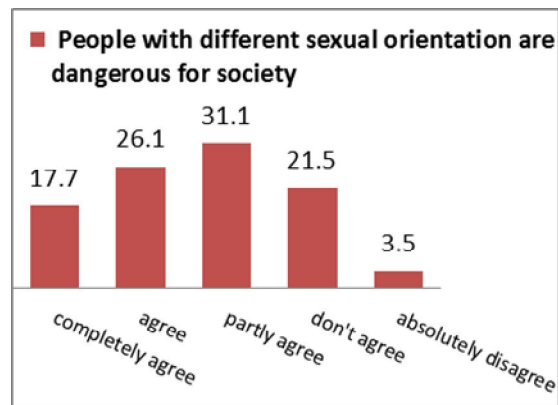
Chart 7: distribution of answers on the question "Nontraditional religions (so called sectas) create danger to the Georgian state system"

Accordingly, the research revealed that teachers have *the selective intercultural sensitivity or tolerance* within the same sources of cultural identity.

One of the important findings of the study is related to the differences between the answers of the teachers on the declarative provisions from legislative acts or policy documents and statements carrying the same content as in the provisions but formulated in the everyday language. Answers on the provisions from the legislative acts tend to be ethnorelative while answers on alternative statements are more of ethnocentric. This trend is illustrated by the diagrams on the attitudes towards religious and sexual diversity:
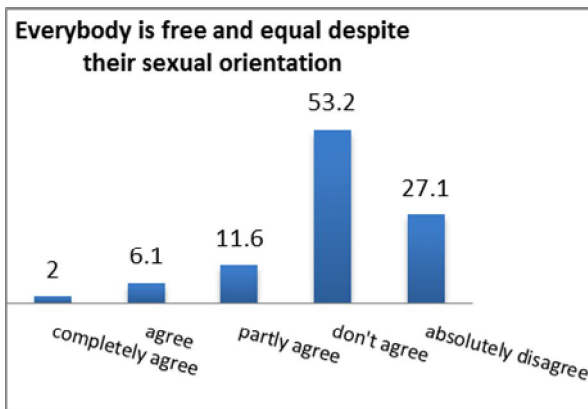
**Chart 8: Distribution of Answers on Non-declarative provisions**

**Chart 9 : Distribution of Answers on declarative provisions**
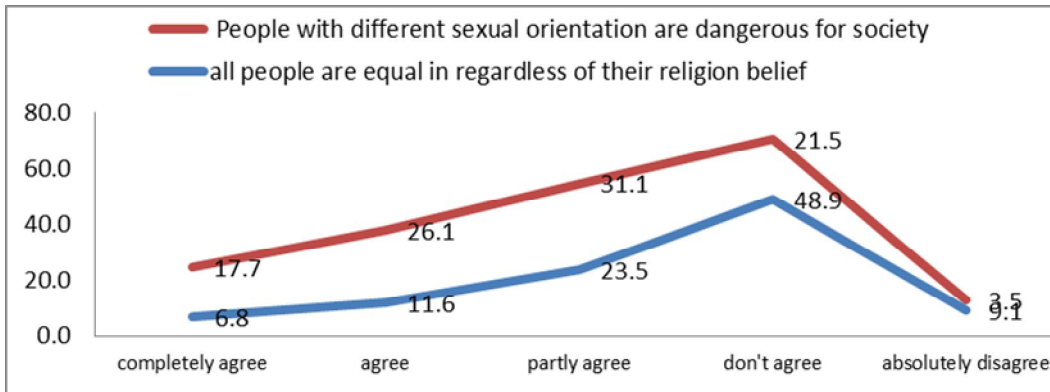
Chart 10. Comparison of answers on declarative and non-declarative provisions of questionnaire

This finding shows the importance of education and the role of various social agents (schools, media, and religious organizations) in changing the attitudes to cultural differences. Accordingly, if proper actions are taken by the above-mentioned social agents, it is likely that the level of intercultural sensitivity of teachers increases.

The other and very important finding of the study enables us to categorize the cultural differences by certain feature and to analyze teacher attitudes by these categories. Intercultural sensitivity is relatively high towards those differences that could be "easily (soft) changed", are daily and intensively interacted (social background, geographical location, social status, age, health state), while intercultural sensitivity is low towards those differences that are more or less "steady/invariable" or "rarely changeable"(ethnicity, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation).
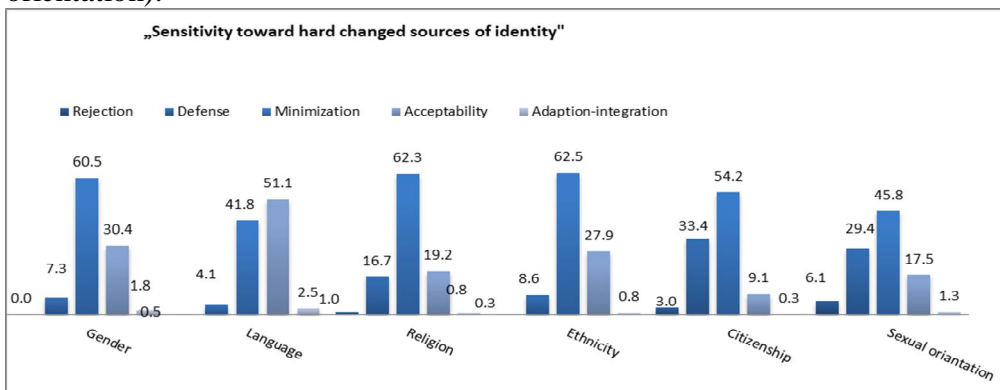
Chart 11: Sensitivity toward "Hard Changed" sources of cultural identity
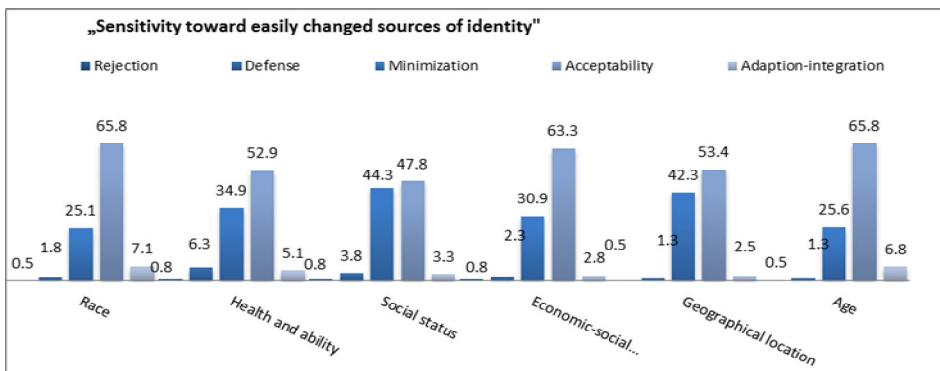
Chart 12: Sensitivity toward "Easily Changed" sources of cultural identity

The racial sensitivity is an exception in this classification; teachers showed high sensitivity toward racial difference. This fact could be explained by Georgia's context, where interaction between people with racial difference is minimal due to the fact that number of people with different racial identity is small and insignificant in Georgia, accordingly there is little interaction between people at all, which never existed before.

As part of the study the correlation of various variables (gender, age, geographic location, working experience, education) with the teacher intercultural sensitiveness was analyzed. This analysis did not reveal any significant correlation, however, certain trends were still observed in relation to the educational attainment. The study found that ethnocentric phase is mainly taken more by the teachers with secondary and vocational-technical education as compared to those with higher education. This trend is clearly presented in the table below.

Table 13: Intercultural Sensitivity by Educational Attainment

	Education	Rejection	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation	Total
Frequency	Secondary Education	0	1	35	8	0	44
Percentage %	Secondary Education	**0%**	**2,27%**	**79,55%**	**18,18%**	0%	100%
Frequency	Higher Education	0	5	214	107	1	327
Percentage %	Higher Education	**0%**	**1,53**	**65,44**	**32,72**	**0,31**	100

The above-mentioned trend demonstrates the importance of higher education for teacher education, as well as those opportunities, higher education institutions have for general preparation of teachers, and for the formation of their cultural sensitivity

Recommendations for Future Research

The study examined primary grades teachers' intercultural sensitivity. One of the suggested areas for future studies relates to examining the intercultural sensitivity of future teachers. It would be also very interesting to conduct a comparative analysis of intercultural sensitiveness of teachers of different subjects as well as study the regional/subcultural particularities of each region impacting intercultural sensitiveness of teachers. Similar to this, levels of sensitiveness of teachers with different work experience and educational attainments should be analyzed (for example, compare teachers with some of international experience to those of no experience at all; or identifying the level of cultural sensitivity of teachers working with minority students and those working in the regions resided by the majority). As mentioned in research limitations, there is an absolute need to identify the gaps in the formation and development process of teachers which have a greater influence on teachers' interculturalism. And finally, there is an urgent need to study the practical application of multicultural approaches by the teachers in order to elaborate the effective strategy of teachers' multicultural development as well as make general conclusions regarding the interconnection of attitudes and assumptions and practical application.

Main recommendations for improvement multicultural educational policy

In addition to the scientific researches, it is important to consider the findings of these studies for the development and implementation of the education policy. In this respect, it is recommended to implement the following policy changes. With the aim towards effective implementation of intercultural educational approaches and strategies at school level, it is crucially important to

undertake the following measures: (a) To support the development of intercultural sensitivity of in-service teachers and equip them with skills and knowledge for integration multicultural strategies in teaching process; (b) To improve teacher education programs at higher educational institutions of Georgia and incorporate aspects of multicultural education in teacher education program curriculum; (c) To improve school climate; (d) To make intercultural education part of the learning process through reflecting its necessity in legislative documents and orders regulating teachers' and school administrative staff professional standards and behaviors as well as school environment

Conclusion

To conclude, the study had valuable scientific and practical importance. The instrument for measuring teacher cultural sensitivity was created as part of this study. This instrument is adjusted to the Georgian context and measures the cultural sensitivity of the Georgian teachers for the first time. At the same time, within the mentioned scientific field, intercultural sensitivity towards 12 different sources, as well as within each source separately, was measured and identified for the first time. Therefore, this study makes valuable contribution to the development of the field of intercultural education in Georgia, as well as internationally.

Findings of this study carry valuable practical importance. These findings can be used for teacher preparation, professional development, and design of national curriculum and certification of school principals. Consideration of these findings will contribute to the implementation of national education goals, as well as national curriculum, as well as to the creation of effective learning environments for all students at all schools.

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Tables and Charts

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Table 2: Non-Georgian Schools by regions of Georgia - 2013:

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Table 4: Intercultural Sensitivity of Teachers;

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Table 6: Intercultural Sensitivity of Teachers distributed by age;

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Table 11: intercultural sensitivity towards Abkhazians and Ossetians;

Table 12: distribution of answers on the question: "only Georgians shall live in Georgia, other ethnic   groups shall go to their historical home countries;

Table 13: Intercultural Sensitivity by Educational Attainment

 Figure 1. Sources of Cultural Identity Cushner, McClleland, Saford, 2006, p.70

Chart 1: Reflects percentile distribution of intercultural sensitivity of teachers towards different sources of cultural identity on Rejection stage of intercultural sensitivity

Chart 2: Reflects percentile distribution of intercultural sensitivity of teachers towards different sources of cultural identity on Defense stage of intercultural sensitivity;

Chart 3: Reflects percentile distribution of intercultural sensitivity of teachers towards different sources of cultural identity on Minimization stage of intercultural sensitivity;

Chart 4: Reflects percentile distribution of intercultural sensitivity of teachers towards different sources of cultural identity on Acceptance stage of intercultural sensitivity

Chart 5: Reflects percentile distribution of intercultural sensitivity of teachers towards different sources of cultural identity on Integration/Adaptation stage of intercultural sensitivity;

Chart 6: distribution of answers on the question "All ethnically Georgians are Georgians despite their religious affiliation

Chart 7: distribution of answers on the question "Nontraditional religions (so called sectas) create danger to the Georgian state system;

Chart 8: Distribution of Answers on Non-declarative provisions

Chart 9: Distribution of Answers on declarative provisions

Chart 10: Comparison of answers on declarative and non-declarative provisions of questionnaire

Chart 11: Sensitivity toward "Hard Changed" sources of cultural identity

Chart 12: Sensitivity toward "Easily Changed" sources of cultural identity