TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON TOLERANCE EDUCATION. A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of teachers' perspectives on tolerance education. Our literature review is an attempt to reveal the current state of the art regarding studies and research on teachers and prospective teachers' perspectives on the concept of tolerance, pedagogical approaches to tolerance and the goals of tolerance education. We shall also try to highlight the degree of teachers' awareness of the need for tolerance education and the challenges of implementing it in today's mainstream schools.

Key words*: educational challenges, teacher, tolerance, tolerance education*

1. Background of tolerance

Tolerance as a key value may constitute a possible response of education and its ends to the tense transformation processes that society faces at the beginning of this millennium. Tolerance education may provide solutions to problems arising in today's society beset by economic, political, environmental, medical, climatic and ideological challenges that exceeded national and regional borders, an environment where individuals, groups and people who feel, think and act differently interact and express themselves.

Education has an undeniable social determination, being put into practice by each society in such a way as to suit its needs and possibilities, based on its demands and circumstances. Therefore, the analysis of contemporary education should consider the characteristics of the global society as well as those of the particular societies in which it is conducted. Reflecting on the peculiarities of today's society, the Club of Rome has synthesized and introduced the concept of the

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contemporary world problems. It refers to a set of aspects defined by features such as emergence, complexity, contradiction, interdisciplinarity, gravity and planetary scale, an area that keeps expanding to include more and more problems. These dilemmatic "nodes" were called global problems of humanity and the very fabric of their relations defines the contemporary world issues, including aspects such as environmental degradation, limited resources, food crisis, population boom, amplifying conflicts, proliferation of sophisticated weapons, moral crises, *intolerance*. The concept of contemporary world problems raises interrogations regarding the current and future capacity of human beings to cope with the challenges enumerated above. "How should education be achieved today in order to prepare individuals appropriately for successful handling of this problematic context?" is just one of the implied or explicit questions occurring increasingly often among the concerns of educators, precisely as an expression of such preoccupations. The educational solutions outlined in the context of increasingly intense discussions about a "moral crisis of education" that seek possible remedies can be summarized as follows (Cojocariu, 2004):

- changing the educational paradigm, of the general ways of understanding, designing and achieving education;
- broadening the scope and content of education through the emergence and implementation of the new educations;
- innovations in the design and implementation of education – permanent education and self-education.

The new educations represent the most relevant and useful response of educational systems to the imperatives arising from the problems of the contemporary world. Articulated around the value of tolerance, intercultural education is considered as one of these new educations able to empower people to deal with everyday challenges.

Tolerance (Lat. *tolerantia*, "endurance, bearing") is a social, ethical and religious term that may define a group or individual, designating respect of the freedom of others, their way of thinking and behaviour, as well as their opinions of any kind (political, religious, etc.) (Cojocariu, 2006). Tolerance is the common sense of being unselfish and aware of the fact that the same thing may be worthless to one person but of utmost importance to somebody else. Lack of tolerance is selfishness, which is the root of all evil in the world. Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the richness and diversity of our world's cultures, ways of speaking and expressing our quality of human beings. It is fostered by knowledge, openness of spirit, communication and freedom of thought, conscience and belief. Tolerance is the harmony of differences. It is not only an ethical obligation; it is also a political and legal necessity. Tolerance

is a virtue that makes peace possible, contributing to the replacement of the culture of war with a culture of peace. Tolerance is neither concession nor condescension or indulgence. Tolerance is, above all, an active attitude generated by the recognition of universal human rights and individual freedoms of others. Tolerance cannot be invoked under any circumstances to justify the violation of these fundamental values. Tolerance should be practiced by individuals, groups and states. Tolerance is the responsibility that supports human rights, pluralism (including cultural pluralism), democracy and the rule of law. It involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism and confirms the rules contained in international instruments on human rights.

According to human rights, the practice of tolerance means neither tolerating social injustice, nor giving up one's beliefs, or making concessions in this regard. It means accepting the fact that human beings are naturally diverse in their appearance, situation, speech, behaviour and values, have the right to live in peace and be as they are. It also means that no one should impose their own views upon others. In the modern world, tolerance is more necessary than ever. We live in an age marked by globalization of the economy and accelerated mobility, communication, integration and interdependence, large-scale migrations and displacement of populations, urbanization and changes in the social structures sphere. Since there is no part of the world that is not characterized by diversity, escalating intolerance and clashes constitute a potential threat to any region, a universal threat that would not be limited only to a certain country.

Education is the most effective means of preventing intolerance and intercultural education is one of the most relevant ways to promote a tolerant attitude and build tolerance as a key value to wider groups of people. The first step in tolerance education is to teach human and individual rights and freedoms to each person, in order to make sure that these are respected, as well as promote the will to protect the rights and freedoms of others. Education in the sense of being tolerant should be considered an urgent imperative; that is why systematic and rational methods of teaching tolerance should be promoted in order to address cultural, social, economic, political and religious sources of intolerance, the major roots of violence and exclusion. Tolerance policies and programmes are aimed at relations between individuals, ethnic, social, cultural, religious and linguistic groups and between nations. Education for tolerance aims to counter the influences that lead to fear and exclusion of others, and should help young people to develop their capacity to formulate their own opinion, have a critical reflection and judge in ethical terms. Worldwide, there should be activated research programmes in the social and education sciences for tolerance, human rights and non-violence. This means paying special attention to improving teacher training, curricula, the content of textbooks and courses and other educational materials, including new educational technologies, for the training of active and responsible citizens, open to other

cultures, able to appreciate the value of freedom, respect for human dignity and differences between them and prevent conflicts or solve them by nonviolent means.

However, the concept of 'diversity' is an all-inclusive ethical category that may equally comprise suicide bombers, internet hate sites or cultures that oppress women along with associations and organizations fighting for world peace or children's rights. Therefore, we need to distinguish between the various forms of diversity before proceeding to promoting an open attitude towards it, particularly if this is to be done through institutionalized educational programmes or courses. According to Likone (2016, pp. 3-4), conceptual clarity and intellectual honesty supports us in distinguishing between three types of diversity:

- "positive diversity", referring to different races, ethnic groups and cultural strengths that may be present in classrooms or communities;

- "negative diversity", referring to belief systems that approve of hatred or violation of human rights and that are expected to be rejected by all rational persons, on the basis of moral grounds;

- "controversial diversity", related to issues about which people often do not agree, for example abortion or the proper relationship for sexual intimacy.

Therefore, tolerance education should promote and build openness towards diversity as defined in the first category above, due to its positive and morally neutral stance.

2. Method

2. 1. Searching and selection procedure

This section of our paper is dedicated to outlining the current state of the art regarding studies and research on teachers and prospective teachers' perspectives on the concept of tolerance and tolerance education, as well as highlighting the degree of teachers' awareness of the need for a tolerance education and the challenges of implementing it in today's mainstream schools. The search for articles was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, we have used as key words the phrases 'teachers' perceptions' and 'tolerance education' to search in electronic databases and open-ended search period. Our research options were restricted only to these key words because we wanted to see what teachers think with regard to tolerance education and whether they believe that tolerance education is necessary and should be introduced as a study discipline in mainstream schools. The second phase of our search involved searching for papers cited in some of the articles. The electronic databases used for the literature search include: PsycARTICLES, ERIC, EdITLib Digital Library and Academic Search Premier, the latter of which is considered to be one of the most prominent databases in academic institutions (Blessinger & Olle, 2004).

2.2. Data analysis

The purpose of a literature review is to summarize the accumulated knowledge on a topic of interest and pinpoint aspects that have not been sufficiently studied or that still need further clarification (Creswell, 1994). One of the reference documents for our research was UNESCO's 1994 guide on tolerance that established the guidelines for an education based on, and aimed at promoting democracy, peace and human rights. The year 1995 was declared by UNESCO the United Nations Year for Tolerance; as part of its draft *Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy*, UNESCO also elaborated the document *Tolerance: the threshold of peace. A teaching/learning guide for peace, human rights and democracy*, which focuses on motivating the need for tolerance education and possible approaches to it in primary and secondary school; the guide is actually a "study manual for all who can help to educate for tolerance", since UNESCO's view is that there is a need for tolerance education not only in schools but everywhere (UNESCO, 1994: 4). Therefore, it can be used either as such or as a catalyst and facilitator of the development of further materials for particular social and cultural contexts by all agents and social actors who may get engaged in education for tolerance, namely: classroom teachers, teacher trainers and educators, community leaders, parents and social workers. Our literature review implied formulating a research question, derived from our statement of purpose, and several subquestions that break the overall research question into components that will be investigated (Johnson & Christensen, 2016, p. 98).

Our main research question or aim is to provide: An overview of teachers' perspectives on tolerance education?

The UNESCO document *Tolerance: the threshold of peace. A teaching/learning guide for peace, human rights and democracy* supported us in identifying the major topics of interest for the structure of our literature review, namely the 8 qualitative research questions (or subquestions) presented below:

1. Are teachers able to define tolerance, tolerance education and its goals?

2. Are teachers able to identify symptoms and forms of intolerance (in school and outside school)?

3. Do teachers believe in a stringent need for tolerance education?

4. What is the suitable age for starting tolerance education according to teachers?

5. What are the main reasons for which we need tolerance education or, in other words, what does tolerance education help us solve?

6. What could be the possible problems and/or obstacles in implementing and conducting tolerance education?

7. What would be the most suitable disciplines for the integration of tolerance education modules, lessons or activities?

8. What suggestions on how tolerance education should be conducted and/or examples of classroom activities were there offered by teachers?

Our data analysis implied reading and summarizing the articles that we have found related to teachers' views on tolerance education in order to identify the presence/absence of questions and/or answers related to the 8 research items enumerated above. In our data analysis we have also resorted to the constant-comparative method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3. Results

One of the challenges with which we were faced in elaborating our literature review was the scarcity of literature resources on teachers' perceptions about tolerance education (Afdal, 2004; Şahin, 2011; Țurcan, 2015; Albu & Cojocariu, 2015; Polat & al., 2016), which illustrates the need for further research and studies in this respect. Our first conclusion drawn while searching for our literature review articles is that compared to studies on teachers' perceptions about tolerance education there appears to be a greater number of studies on proposals and suggestions of teaching strategies and techniques focused on classroom activities that exploit cultural diversity and promote tolerance (UNESCO, 1994; Antonesei et al., 1996; Dasen et al., 1999; Cojocariu, 2006; Plugaru & Pavalache, 2007; Ivasiuc et al., 2010; Sampere, 2011; Hegarty & Titley, 2012; UNRWA, 2013; Gong, 2015; Goraş-Postică et al., 2015; Driel, Darmody & Kerzil, 2016; Likona, 2016 etc.). In quite a relevant number of studies, reports and books, tolerance education is associated with intercultural education: education for tolerance as a dimension of intercultural education (Plugaru & Pavalache, 2007); enhanced tolerance capacity as a means as well as goal of intercultural education (Ivasiuc et al., 2010; Cojocariu, 2004); (in)tolerance examples as teaching material to support the building of awareness of the various dimensions and meanings of tolerance (Museum of Tolerance. Teacher's Guide, 2002); tolerance as central value of the 21st-century education (Cojocariu, 2004). The results of the analysis of the studies identified above as related to teachers' perspectives on tolerance education from the standpoint of our main research questions and subquestions are briefly presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of the analysis of studies on teachers' perspectives on tolerance education

Study	Research question	Types of data, participants	Basic findings	Presence/absence (+/-) of discussions related to our 8 research subquestions							
				Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7	Item 8
Afdal (2004)	How is tolerance understood (by primary and secondary teachers) in Norwegian compulsory education?	Interviews of teachers in Norway; analysis of official curricula and of academic articles on tolerance and education	A successful teacher is tolerant, spontaneous; Tolerance is a virtue, a must-have for all teachers; A tolerant teacher is an able teacher.	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Şahin (2011)	What are the perceptions of prospective teachers about tolerance education?	Semi-structured, non-directed interview of prospective teachers	Prospective teachers are aware of the need for tolerance and tolerance education, both in society and within educational systems.	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Ţurcan (2015)	How do teachers understand tolerance education?	Tolerance and tolerance education evaluation and self-evaluation questionnaires applied to teachers from the Republic of Moldova	Tolerance in school is negatively affected by teacher and student aggressive behaviour, miscommunication between school/teachers and parents, and a depreciation of the status of teachers	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Albu & Cojocariu (2015)	What is the prospective teachers' view on the purpose of intercultural education (IE) and its relevance to the formation of human	Questionnaire with close-ended questions applied to prospective primary and pre-school teachers from two Romanian universities	41% of the 100 respondents appreciate the value of tolerance as having a relevant impact upon young people; 56% appreciate the role of IE in enhancing	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

	personality		openness towards people coming from other cultures and only 2% appreciate its role in making us more considerate towards people from other cultures								
Polat & al. (2016)	What are the prospective teachers' view on the qualities of a teacher of peace education?	Focus group interviews; 56 students; Turkey	A teacher who teaches peace education should be tolerant, understanding and patient, able to see diversity as richness, objective, respectful towards everybody, unprejudiced, empathetic.	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Of the studies enumerated above, the most comprehensive and elaborate paper on tolerance education with relevance for our research questions is that of Afdal Geir (2014), although all the other ones included discussions or references to our 8 subquestions, to greater or smaller degrees. We shall further discuss our most relevant findings in relation to each of the 8 research subquestions.

Regarding questions 1 'Are teachers able to define tolerance, tolerance education and its goals?' and 2 'Are teachers able to identify symptoms and forms of intolerance (in school and outside school)?', the study of Adal reveals the teachers' confusion, ambiguity, uncertainty and relativity in their attempts to define tolerance and to identify symptoms of intolerance [as defined by UNESCO (1994: 16), e.g. bad language, stereotyping, teasing, prejudice, scapegoating, discrimination, ostracism, harassment, desecration and effacement, bullying, expulsion, exclusion, segregation, repression, destruction] and forms of intolerance [as identified by UNESCO (1994: 19), e.g. sexism, racism, ethnocentrism, anti-semitism, nationalism, fascism, xenophobia, imperialism, exploitation, religious repression]. The distinction between tolerance/intolerance is most often based on the good/right vs. bad/wrong opposition, which is in

turn defined by uncertainty due to a feeling of difference. Reactions to difference include objection, rejection, feeling as a stranger or feeling overwhelmed, lack of understanding or misunderstanding, experiencing enlightenment or feelings of pity. As a conclusion, according to teachers in Goodland, Norway, an excellent teacher is a tolerant teacher, namely one that is both caring (physically proximate, emotionally present, empathic) and professional (in control, using judgment, responsible) (Afdal, 2004, p. 167). According to prospective teachers in Turkey, a tolerant teacher should be: unbiased, understanding and sensitive, empathetic, accept difference without trying to change it, be able to live together with people who have different opinions, love oneself and others (Şahin, 2011, p. 80). It seems that teachers are more able, or more inclined to define a tolerant teacher rather than tolerance education. Although one of the main goals and ends of intercultural education (IE) is to build openness and tolerance towards diversity and different cultures, Romanian prospective primary and pre-school teachers seem to disregard this finality, placing among the most important reason for undertaking IE self-knowledge and knowledge of others; 41% of the respondents believe that the value of tolerance has a significant impact on young people (Albu & Cojocariu, 2015, p. 57). This shows that either the respondents are not fully aware of the connection between intercultural education and tolerance – or tolerance education – or that they are not aware of the importance of tolerance in today's society and world. Regarding the research questions 3 'Do teachers believe in a stringent need for tolerance education?', 4 'What is the suitable age for starting tolerance education according to teachers?' and 5 'What are the main reasons for which we need tolerance education or, in other words, what does tolerance education help us solve?', the studies reveal that generally, teachers believe in the need for tolerance education from the earliest of ages, for several reasons. Regarding the age at which tolerance education should begin, the study of Petal et al. (2016) approaches this issue elaborately. In a brief literature review on this topic, the authors cite studies that support the introduction of peace education at each age group, especially at adolescents (Harris, 1943, cited in Sertel and Kurt, 2004; Demir, 2011, apud Petal et a., 2016, p. 37), primary and preschool students (Turnuklu, 2006, apud Petal et a., 2016, p. 37), or starting with the very birth of the child, according to Kamaraj and Aktan-Kerem (2006, apud Petal et a., 2016, p. 37), when education for peace and tolerance is done by the family, particularly in highly developed countries; in countries with middle or low levels of development, this type of education is done by families in early childhood, namely between the ages of 0 and 8. Thus, it is expected that teachers at all levels of the educational cycle should be trained and prepared to provide this type of education. In some underdeveloped countries, for example, Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Somali, Sudan, peace education is included in the official curricula starting with preschool level; in some countries, for

example Israel, although peace education is part of the main goals of basic education, it is observed in students' beliefs that this aim is not achieved (Vered, 2015, apud Petal et al., 2016, p. 37). Based on an analysis of examples from all over the world, Diazgranados et al. (2014) argue that the success in achieving the goals of tolerance and peace education depends to a great extent on the teachers (apud Petal et al., 2016, p. 37), a conclusion also supported by Țurcan (2015, p. 8). Elementary school age is seen as the age when children are supposed to have already started tolerance education, because "the earlier it [tolerance education] starts, the earlier it settles and strengthens", becoming effective later, helping them improve social relations and evolving into a lifetime attitude (Şahin, 2011, pp. 80-81). Pre-adolescence is another moment favourable for re-approaching and consolidating the values of tolerance with a view to acceptance of diversity and endurance in relation to environmental factors (Țurcan, 2015, p. 76).

Regarding the question of whether teachers believe in a stringent need for tolerance education, all the studies analysed in our literature review have concluded that teachers are aware of the need for a type of education that promotes openness, collaboration, acceptance of difference and diversity, whether we refer to it as intercultural, peace or tolerance education (Afdal, 2004, p. 9; Şahin, 2011, p. 77; Țurcan, 2015, p. 25; Albu & Cojocariu, 2015, p. 55; Polat & al., 2016, p. 37). Concerning the main reasons for which we need tolerance education, our literature review supports a systematization of several motifs. First and foremost, tolerance education is seen as the solution to handling conflicts in a peaceful and constructive way, by forming skills of cooperation and compromise or, at least awareness of the fact that adopting a positive attitude of acceptance of difference and diversity may constitute a valuable resource for concrete solutions to professional, and even personal issues (Afdal, 2004: 10; Şahin, 2011: 78; Țurcan, 2015: 8; Albu & Cojocariu, 2015: 56; Polat & al., 2016: 38). Secondly, by building cooperation, compromise, empathy, openness and acceptance of diversity and difference, the resulting effect of a positive, constructive approach expands, from the personal and professional level, to the national and international level, resulting in diminished risks of conflicts that transcend state borders and that are based on or fuelled by various types of difference (religious, ethnic, political, regional, social, economic etc.). Tolerance education helps establish social peace and welfare, builds an understanding and creative classroom atmosphere with harmony between students, promotes development in developing countries, highlights the relevance and value of difference and diversity, contributes to solving disputes and to the avoidance of jealousy generated by a competitive examination system (Şahin, 2011, p. 81).

With respect to the possible problems and/or obstacles in implementing and conducting tolerance education (question 6), there were highlighted several aspects that we shall further present. As

highlighted by Albu & Cojocariu (2016, p. 60) as part of a conclusion to their study, although the world we live in is defined by increasingly closer contacts between culturally different entities (institutions, groups, individuals), it appears that cultures do not mix but, on the contrary, grow more and more individualized; in turn, each person depends on certain types of specific concepts, beliefs and ways of perceiving and approaching reality, and thus culture represents the catalyst for the individual's growth and becoming; hence, we can neither say that culture is universal, nor that we, humans, could become fully 'universalized', so as to exclude conflicts based on difference from the start. However, according to the study of Polat et al. (2016, p. 40), it appears that prospective teachers understand the concept of peace education and know how to define it or its characteristics.

Another issue in implementing and conducting tolerance education is the fact that there are people (teachers, parents, students, other agents involved in the educational act and process) who do not have a clear picture of the goals, principles and utility of teaching tolerance (Albu & Cojocariu, 2015, p. 60). Insufficient and/or partial understanding of tolerance education was also a conclusion of the study conducted by Ţurcan (2015, p. 103).

Another aspect related to the implementation of tolerance education is connected to time: curriculum change implies time and the application of such changes in real classroom settings and activities requires even more time: curricular reforms "work in complex ways" and each domain/discipline of application has its own degree of autonomy (Afdal, 2004: 371), therefore facilitating the introduction of teaching-learning activities focused on tolerance to a greater or smaller extent. To this, there is also added the time needed for change to be accepted by all the educational actors and for prejudices and stereotypes to be overcome.

The most suitable disciplines for the integration of tolerance education modules, lessons or activities (question 7) are the following: Civic Education – activities for identifying and respecting diversity and the rights of others, by analogy with one's rights;   History – focusing on peaceful co-habitation between nations and ethnic groups/communities; analysis of socio-political documents that marked the course of history, dictatorship, international organizations, famous people that fought for human rights; History of Religions – the principle of confessional neutrality, tolerance as acceptance, the universality of the religious spirit; Philosophy – discussing human rights and equality between all people; Geography – intercultural education activities focused on the acceptance of diversity; Counselling and Orientation – encouraging students to improve their self-image (Ţurcan, 2015, p. 75). The study of Şahin (2011, p. 82) mentions the following hierarchy of disciplines suitable for tolerance education implementation: All disciplines (13 options from 30 teachers included in the study); Science of Life (8 options); Turkish language

(7 options); Social Studies (6 options); Counselling (3 options); Music (3 options); Visual Arts Education (3 options); Mathematics (2 options); Physical Education (2 options); Religion and Ethics (1 option); Citizenship and Human Rights (1 option); Traffic and First Aid (1 option); Drama (1 option).

Regarding suggestions on how tolerance education should be conducted and/or examples of classroom activities, there are provided examples of lesson contents for the purpose:

- national history and national consciousness, communication skills activities, activities focused on expressing feelings and thoughts, discussions/debates about basic human rights, democracy and freedoms (Şahin, 2011, p. 82); tolerance inside the family/groups of friends/class of students, the relationships between people and the community in which they live, the importance of open communication, accepting difference and diversity, mutual respect in the classroom, the social-political-moral particularities of the world in which we live (Ţurcan, 2015, p. 105). Moreover, the classroom should be decorated with multicultural images that showcase the different cultural backgrounds to which the students in the class belong.

Conclusions

Tolerance, as attitude and behaviour, is acquired on the basis of models from the earliest ages, the school becoming the main laboratory for practicing/exercising it, but also an agent for social integration and a cultural centre of the community. Creating a society that is really tolerant is a global educational ideal. The school is a small society, appropriate for raising awareness of the phenomenon of tolerance and practicing it in multiple circumstances and relationships. Tolerance is not a feeling inherited by birth, it is acquired through education, but for this we need an impressive arsenal of knowledge and the formation of new mentalities. The basic principles for practicing tolerance in schools, respectively, for building a pedagogy of tolerance are:

- the school assumes the responsibility to educate through and for tolerance;

- a positive approach to social, cultural, ethnic, religious diversity;

- building a positive way of thinking about others;

- the integration of cultural and intercultural education in school;

- a permanent focus on similarities, things that unite us and make us feel good together;

- the fight against nationalism and racism;

- creating a positive and supportive atmosphere in school.

Knowing how to live surrounded by diversity is one of the biggest challenges of the societies in which our children are growing. In a world where cultures are in contact with each other and intermingle increasingly, education should promote, first of all, the values and skills that are

essential to those who learn the art of living together. Thus, the goals of tolerance education should be:

- to inculcate in our children and youth a spirit of openness and understanding towards other peoples, towards their cultural diversity and history, towards the profound similarities that bring us closer and put us together into a single humanity;

- to teach them how important it is to refuse violence and adopt peaceful means of settling disputes and conflicts;

- to cultivate at the next generations feelings of altruism, openness and respect to each other, solidarity and participation, based on trust in their own identity and the ability to recognize multiple aspects of human personality in different cultural and social contexts.

Tolerance is necessary both between individuals and within families and communities. Promoting tolerance and shaping attitudes towards different opinions in the sense of mutual openness and solidarity should take place in schools and universities and through non-formal education, at home and at work. Mass media are able to play a constructive role in this respect, fostering dialogue and free and open debates, promoting the values of tolerance and highlighting the danger of indifference to the expansion of intolerant ideologies and groups. All measures must be taken to ensure equality in dignity and rights for groups and individuals everywhere, wherever needed. In this regard, particular attention should be given to vulnerable, economically and socially disadvantaged groups, in order to afford them the protection of law and social measures, especially in terms of housing, employment and health, as well as to the respect of the authenticity of their cultures and values in order to facilitate, through education, their promotion and professional and social integration.

The scarcity of literature resources on teachers' perceptions about tolerance education (Afdal, 2004; Șahin, 2011; Țurcan, 2015; Albu & Cojocariu, 2015; Polat & al., 2016) illustrates the need for further research and studies in this respect.

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