

The Impact Of Cultural Diversity On The Creation Of Social Skills In Children

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ARTICLE INFO ABSTRACT

Social skills are an integral part of the child's development. Every child should be exposed to social environments that influence and develop the proper perception. The more the child is in contact with others, the greater the possibility for that child to create the correct worldviews for himself and others. Interaction with others can be explained as an opportunity to be close to different individual or group cultures, and to understand and accept these cultures. What is known is that we cannot have a comprehensive definition for all cultural categories. In this way, many cultural diversities must be respected and integrated as an operational component. At the very beginning, everything starts with the family, therefore parents should be aware of the correlation between the cultural diversity and the social skills of their children. In conclusion, to emphasize the positive correlation between culture and children's social skills, we rely on the theory of Bandura and Vygotsky, who have promoted these two components as direct or indicator factors of the development of cultural diversity to the child's social skills development, since through culture children learn values, norms, beliefs, interaction, responsibility towards others, and responsibility towards the environment in which they live.

Keywords: children, parents, social skills, cultural diversity.

1. Introduction

Culture is a substantive and complex structure that includes various definitions. We have many dimensions of our daily lives that are attributed to culture. In cases where we want to define a certain culture, we must first know, or maybe read and gain knowledge about the group we are going to write about (Birukou et al., 2009). In an initial explanation, if we base ourselves on deciphering the basic notion, culture is defined as an abstraction that comes from a behavior, which "consists of n signals of social change, in correlation with m different responses" (White, 1959, p. 227). While in a second explanation, any behavior performed has a cultural basis (Cartledge & Loe, 2001). APA Dictionary of Psychology (2015, p. 273) gives another definition and dimension of these notions, in which case "cultural diversity means the existence of societies, communities or sub-cultures that differ profoundly from each other or that retain their characteristics of distinct". While culture means "customs, values, distinctive beliefs, knowledge, art and language of a society" (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2015, p. 274).

The biggest difficulty is in defining culture as it presents multiple meanings and this difficulty is not only conceptual. In the simplest sense, a researcher can explain the culture of a certain group but has many difficulties in logically understanding how that group is built like (Spencer-Oatey, 2012). Cultures in their content are diverse and have dynamic social systems, whose members differ significantly from each other and are considered to be typical attributes of their culture (Bandura, 2002). Cultures can differ based on the customs and beliefs they have, which means that certain behavior can be interpreted differently depending on the culture, namely if behavior is adaptive in one culture it may not be so for another one, therefore, certain behaviors can be encouraged or discouraged depending on the culture in which they are found (Rubin & Menzer, 2010). The identification of the individual's culture enables the creation of a social relationship, based on the cultural ideologies of the group to which he belongs, but also his own attitudes on certain issues.

Culture is a phenomenon that can be learned over time, therefore the greatest possible exposure of the child to an environment with qualitative culture is necessary. Each person should keep in mind that children come from different social cultures and they already have their own ways of doing things (Macintyre, 2017). On this view, teachers and other people who may influence children should be well informed about the cultural range

that that child possesses. Based on the description made by Chen and French (2008), cultural values have a very strong relationship with the social aspect of the child, since they influence the emergence, understanding, and development of specific behavior, cooperation, challenges, and the functioning of social relations. A very important aspect of culture is education as it is related to the continuous provision of culture created by society and that created by the individual (Koç & Turan, 2018).

When we talk about cultures that are even regulated based on legislative documents, and especially school culture, we can affirm that they are cultural elements that the child learns over time, namely they can be established based on the repetition of actions until to take the crystallized form as a habit that will last a lifetime. In the educational and educational aspect, the education of children at school is supported by the Law on Pre-University Education in the Republic of Kosovo (Law No.04/L – 032, 2011) and the Curriculum Framework for Pre-University Education in the Republic of Kosovo (2011), where both of these documents promote aspects of children's development and rights based on culture, equality, and inclusiveness. These two documents support the cultural aspect in small group units, including the family and children's culture, but also the collective culture that includes the school along with the rules it defines. Based on the Curricular Framework for Pre-University Education in the Republic of Kosovo (2011), each individual is obliged to respect his own culture, values, and beliefs, but also that of others, whether they are ethnic or not, to respect the culture of the school and the practices that emerge from it. Even the Law on Pre-University Education in the Republic of Kosovo (Law No. 04/L - 032, 2011), obliges each person involved in the education system to respect the rights and inclusion of all persons in this system, regardless of ethnic culture, cultural identity, culture in school, culture in cooperation.

1.1 Society and children's social development

Based on the statement of Spencer-Oatey (2012) who asserts that the culture of each society is a snapshot at a certain time, therefore even if we researched the same social culture after a certain time, we would not find the same features we found last time. Culture at the social level is a field of human life that is perceived as a key element in the processes of designing education and interpreting social and educational issues (Alhosani, 2022). Culture can also be defined as leading in the construction of social relations in the first place, but also in maintaining relationships and patterns of children's development (Chen & French, 2008). From early childhood, children should get used to different cultures. If children are educated based on multiculturalism, they will find it easier to reduce and resolve conflicts in society and beyond (Safita & Suryana, 2022). Regardless of the culture in which the individual is located and which culture society imposes on him, he must reach the appropriate intellectual and human maturity to judge, evaluate, and implement the culture reasonably and appropriately.

Social culture has a great impact on every aspect of the child as it can be verbal, non-verbal, or observed and absorbed based on what is surveillance. This means that we have a clear connection between the identity that the child will carry with the social identity or the group to which he belongs, but both must be created on the values of tolerance, democratic values, equality, and justice values (Safita & Suryana, 2022). The social construct of the child is a product of his social interactions with others, of course, the biological and physical characteristics of the child cannot be denied, but simply forms of behavior identifiable for a certain group (Westwood, 2013).

1.2 Family and children's social development

The family is considered the first social institution to which the child belongs. The environment in which the child grows up is of great importance for his cultural development. The possibilities of systematic learning, the provision of resources in the environment in which the child spends the day, and what are the conditions of natural learning, are some of the points that the environment can offer (Harkness et al., 2013), in this case, the family. "Family relationships are embedded in a certain socio-cultural context that provides specific conditions for the transmission process" (Albert & Trommsdorf, 2014, p. 6).

Studies have shown that children take on the cultural traits of their parents or guardians, therefore, when certain documents on the child's development are being worked on, the family's cultural aspect must always be taken into consideration and in this way, they can be understood, since the parents and caregivers bring with them their cultural beliefs, values and behaviors, which they pass on to children (Maschinot, 2008). Nowadays, we have a modern family system which is mainly composed of the immediate family. The close family provides greater opportunities for the child and his development. Therefore, based on cultural and subjective meaning, the child's development depends on the cultural context that the nuclear family gives him (Albert & Trommsdorf, 2014).

1.3 Correlation between culture, moral reasoning and social cognition of children

Based on the APA Dictionary of Psychology (2015, p. 667) "morality determines the orientation of good and bad behavior". Social cognition on a cultural basis is closely related to morality, namely, it is an integral part of it, since it is the process of understanding social situations. In this context, children are aware of thinking, understanding, and acting based on the reasoning of a given situation. The relationship between these three variables can also be explained by prosocial behavior. On another hand, a prosocial behavior will benefit the

person who is doing it because they are accepting an external motivation, and also others are learning from this good behavior by imitating it or observing it (Denham, 1986).

In a research conducted by Ongley et al. (2014) emphasized that separation or determination is an element that makes children's morals develop, however, children's giftedness is likely also dependent on a cognitive process in which one attends to and evaluates the specific characteristics of the recipient and the consequences of the decision not to donate information. Therefore, higher levels of moral reasoning may produce an increased tendency to donate because children understand that it is their duty toward individuals in need. All of these elements also have a cultural content, which can eventually influence decision-making, but also in terms of conception and perception.

Morality is constructed in full social and cultural interaction, and the analysis of morality should focus, accordingly, on the complexities of everyday discourse. Through a thorough analysis of descriptive practices and mechanisms of daily interaction, but also of the functioning of morality which may have been discovered (Bergmann, 1998; Niemi, 2016). If you are not focused on the behaviors or culture that a child manifests, you can say that a child is making constant and uncoordinated movements that are not likely to show any significant impact. But if we stop and observe all the movements of children, we can realize that children are probably surprised, excited, and in constant communication with the world around them, verbally or non-verbally. Children develop by imitating adults.

2. Theory review

2.1 Lev Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory

When we talk about the cultural aspect and the social aspect of child development, Vygotsky's theory is very significant and comprehensive. The main word of Vygotsky's theory is about the interaction that a child carries out with his social environment or with his cultural environment. His theory is known as the socio-cultural theory and the focus falls on social and cultural interactions, specifically the more the child performs social interactions, the more he tends to develop cognitive skills and learning. Vygotsky (1978) puts a special focus on cooperative activities and argues that children's development is stimulated by these cooperative activities which must have a genuine culture of interaction. Cooperative activities between children promote growth because children of the same age work with each other, which is a much more effective way than children working individually (Slavin, 2011).

From the perspective of Vygotsky (1978, p. 6) "functions are first formulated in the consensual form of relations between children and then become mental functions for the individual". In the learning process, an important element is that it should stimulate the internal growth that occurs only when the child joins, in cooperation and interaction, with his peers (Vygotsky, 1978). Based on the explanations given by Vygotsky, every child is born with some psychological skills that he reaches over time, such as memory and perception, if these two components develop in the right way, then it means that we have a so-called "Social Product" because cognitive processes are the result of cultural and social interactions (Vygotsky, 1978). To reinforce the importance of the role of social interaction, Vygotsky (1978) asserts that students learn first through individual interaction with others, in particular social aspects, and then knowledge is individualized in a unique way.

A theory that empowers social and cultural interaction is supported by many other researchers who assert that social interaction should be encouraged in the learning process because if social interaction or group interaction does not exist, children cannot achieve goals or common achievements (Johnson & Johnson, 2008). Vygotsky's notion creates a solid foundation for modern trends in learning practice, as this theory emphasizes reciprocity and interaction in learning (Beck & Chizhik, 2008).

2.2 Albert Bandura's social learning theory

Children learn in different ways, and these ways can be structured or unstructured. Free-form information acquisition by children affects quality learning based on awareness and unconsciousness. The form of observation and the creation of habits and skills by observing others has an irreplaceable role in social learning. Social learning theory emphasizes "the central roles played by vicarious, symbolic, and self-regulatory processes in psychological functioning" (Bandura, 1977, p. vii). The approach of this theory is concerned with explaining behavior based on continuous and reciprocal interactions between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental determinants, such as a limit of self-direction (Bandura, 1977). Albert Bandura's theory focuses on the individual, the environment, and behavior, and all three together provide a decent explanation for the use of self-regulation strategies and their influence on each other.

Bandura (1977) bases his theory on observation and modeling, a person is able to change his behavior based on observing the behavior of others, absorbing these behaviors, and consciously or unconsciously improving his behavior. People are not driven by internal forces, they function as contributors to their motivation, and behavior, and thus they develop a network of mutually interacting influence (Bandura, 1987). As people age, they become more complex in their standards of thinking, but the complexity lies in increasing autonomy and self-regulation as it is another nature that needs to be developed (Bandura, 1991). Bandura gives a special role to self-judgment and self-reaction (Bandura, 1993).

Based on the conclusion of Bandura (2002), the genetics of people have changed significantly in the last decades, and this is due to the rapid cultural and technological evolution of their beliefs, customs, social roles,

and behavioral styles. From this, we can say that the same cultures are being created within common communities which above all have integration and respect for oneself and others. Based on this logic, we can affirm that there are many institutions at the local and international levels that share common cultures. The biggest dilemma has to do with inheritance and society. According to Bandura (2002), people possess different potentials, e.g. hereditary potential for aggression, but they have a different variation of the manifestation of aggression based on culture, which means that it is more related to ideology than to biology.

2.3 Culture and creating social relationships with others

Everyone must understand their role in society, but also be able to understand the requirements for changing certain social actions (Isidienu, 2017). Culture also presents the quality that a person possesses, his development in various social fields, and above all, social behavior (Isidienu, 2017). People are social beings and as such they feel the need to interact with others (Wirman & Elkhaira, 2022), therefore the creation of certain cultural models, whether at the individual level, are created in a natural and consequential way.

Listed below are some of the components that influence the development of children's social skills.

-Companionship and its influence - Socializing with others gives us a clear picture of children's social skills and cultural perspectives or beliefs. Practically, children change a lot their socializing styles and the people they associate with over time, this change can be explained as the influence of the child's belief in different cultures, whether it is mental or behavioral, but also changes in perception and persuasion (Gummerum & Keller, 2008). On the aspect of the child's culture and the creation of social relations, there is always a potential risk of bias. According to Wang et al., (2011) on the one hand, the environment can offer you positive and negative relationships with friends or with strangers, but according to the results of the research, the tendency to condemn others concerning friends is always much greater, which implies the bias effect.

If we rely on the statement of Lu et al., (2021) genuine association with others affects better health and well-being, but of course, we also have a cultural impact. The way a group is organized, how that group is coordinated, and what actions are taken within that group, create a system of symbolic relationships among members of the same group (Stolp & Smith, 1995). In different literature, the culture of peers can be identified by whether they share common characteristics regarding the way of dressing, lifestyle, and music, and who tend to cultivate respect for the rules of the group (Woolfolk, 2010).

-Helping instruments - Helping others is an act based on individual culture and collective culture. Children should be oriented to help others, i.e. their altruism should be encouraged. According to the study done by Levine, Norenzayan, and Philbrick (2001), it is a characteristic that must be understood as the characteristics of a certain personality influence the helping behavior of that individual, but from another point of view, it can be affirmed that helping others can also be classified by the economic status of the person who needs help. Even before adolescence, children are taught some cultural norms that are based on helping others, sharing things with others, and keeping others' secrets (Gummerum & Keller, 2021).

Socio-economic status - Socio-economic status is one of the factors that affect the social integration of the child (Bandura, 2002). If parents are not able to provide many opportunities for their children, which are mainly financial issues, the children may not be accepted by certain groups. This is a culture of groups who manage to identify this factor in the child and do not integrate that child even at the game level. According to Mohan and Bhat (2022), some of the main factors affecting the social aspect of the child's development are culture, socio-economic status, and the characteristics of the child with whom the child in question is cooperating.

Despite all possible dilemmas regarding the provision of social conditions by the relevant institutions, the responsibility goes to the institutions that deal with maintaining and improving well-being, but also to social policies. Based on research in the literature of Bradley and Corwyn (2002), the socio-economic aspect is important for the child's development in different areas, mentioning the positive correlation between the child's well-being concerning the three domains of his development, cognitive, social-emotional, and health. On the other hand, Li et al., (2020), in their study have concluded that children who come from families with low socio-economic statuses have much lower social relations toward children who come from families with high socio-economic statuses.

Social acceptance - Social acceptance is related to the inclusion of all persons equally. Based on the view of Jay (2010), in the framework of social acceptance, the acceptance of other's ideas is also included. Children should be taught to respect any opinion that may be different from his or her own. The family and the school have their role at this point as they must educate and educate the child in the social acceptance of all other children. Regardless of the development a child may have, he should be accepted as he is. The basis of admissions or non-admissions of children who have any physical or learning difficulties always falls on the family or the education system and the culture of acceptance promoted by these two institutions. In the research done by Karaca and Toprak (2022), it was found that always the acceptance or rejection of children who had any difficulty in learning or physical difficulties had an external driver that made them act in a certain way. Vannatta et al., (2009) present social acceptance from these points of view, the child's behavior, his socio-cognitive process, and the socio-economic aspect. Even the gender element can play a role in social acceptance, especially when we are dealing with a small age group of children, where according to the publication of Musun-Miller (1993) there is a significant relationship between gender and acceptance.

Conflicts and their management - Conflicts can be defined as a clash of ideas, thoughts, desires, and interests (Gierstsen, 2015), which means that a conflict can also have a verbal connotation and not necessarily a connotation built based on violence. This implies that a genuine culture should be conveyed to children in conflict management as it hinders the development and building of a peaceful culture within certain groups (Markosyan & Ghazaryan, 2014). Conflicts and their management come within the framework of the child's personality traits and the created individual and group culture in which the child is located. When a conflict occurs, it always determines individual needs and views, the formal structure, and how that conflict will be handled (Stolp & Smith, 1995). An inappropriate behavior is very often manifested by crises and conflicts, which the child can ignore (Doosterlinck et al., 2009), this overcoming or avoiding conflicts can come as a result of maturity, the ability to manage situations, and the culture of the child. According to the point of view of Boiger and Mesquita (2012) who claim that conflicts usually occur when the individual has a very high level of negative emotions.

Children's emotional regulation and understanding of the other - In the first place, an emotional adjustment will always have a purpose. The goals that guide emotional regulation in children have two main focuses, the child's focus and the other's focus (Boiger & Mesquita, 2012). For a child to have proper social and cultural development, he must first know and understand himself, then others. Self-awareness is closely related to emotional regulation since each child and adult has its internal methods to regulate emotional conflict, which has to do with the individual's internal ability. Boiger and Mesquita (2012) assert that the connection between emotional regulation and culture has to do with the promotion of autonomy that culture promotes and the definition of different emotions as acceptable or not. According to Zhang (2019), there are a significant number of social factors that influence emotional regulation, including family, school, workplace, skills for creating relationships with others, and cultural aspects.

Parents, teachers, and all persons who are directly or indirectly connected with children must give them ample space and instructions for proper emotional regulation of children. The lack of adequate regulation, in addition to the cultural aspect of the child's development, can be manifested by various physical and cognitive phenomena in the child. From this we understand that emotional regulation can ensure the strengths and weaknesses of its development and in cases where the child is not supported for proper emotional regulation, various disorders can manifest in him, even disorders of a pathological nature, which pathology is based on emotion, social competence, cognitive performance, and individual or group culture (Thompson & Calkins, 1996).

Prosocial behavior - Prosocial behavior means positive social behavior and includes various processes that the individual goes through to perform a prosocial behavior (Salerni & Caprin, 2022). The family and the prosocial culture that it transmits to the child, are quite orienting for certain behaviors that the child does. For an individual, the sense of identity and being part of a group with which he will share common values is very important (Marana, 2010). The aspect of prosocial behavior has a very strong basis in the orientation of the child's values, where prosocial behavior is claimed to raise individual responsibility by emphasizing equality (Levine et al., 2001). An important part of prosocial behaviors that should be taken into consideration is related to the normative models of help given, sharing, and cooperation among children and the conditions in which prosocial reactions occur. However, when we discuss the child's abilities for social interaction with others, we must always consider the place in which the interaction takes place, the purpose of the social interaction with others, and the fulfillment of the other's requirements, elements that determine that prosocial behaviors have different time frames and development, but also variable correlation (Laible & Karahuta, 2014).

The influence of family culture on children's social relationships - The family has an irreplaceable role in educating their child on creating and maintaining social relationships. It has its role as a unique unit and creates and maintains certain cultures within itself (Roostin, 2018). As a cultural unit, it directly and indirectly gives their children clear instructions in the classification and determination of their children's behavior with other children or adults outside the family, with whom they should associate (Bennett, 1979). On the other side of its role, the family, based on the cultural values it has, tends to make orientations for children, by investing in children through education, which seems to help in setting priorities in children, until the family manages to create a cultural capital in their child. (Brooker, 2000). Considering that the family is built on norms and values, it affects the social development of the child very early, since it makes orientations and determinations that are respected by the children, in the end, we have to take into account and justify the great influence of the family on the development social environment of the child since the child stays much longer in his family environment, compared to his exposure or stay in a social environment outside the family (Setiawati, 2020). Children also learn based on observation, so even if we do not have a verbal orientation of the child towards creating social relations with other children, we have the non-verbal language of the family which conveys its internal culture.

Group work culture - Each group must have its own group work culture to have productivity and quality. The purpose and idea of group work culture has to do with the development of that group on an intuitive level and to give space to cultural stereotypes to give explanations on their content (Marana, 2010). Supporting the child to work in a group with others is the beginning of his social, emotional, and cultural preparation. Working in a group presents a child's personal culture, family culture, and the potential impact that the educational system can have on that child. Children should be supported while they carry out a task in cooperation with others until they manage to learn the culture of working in groups, since any group work is even more qualitative

when, in addition to group members who push each other, there is also an external supporter (Ranta et al., 2023). From this, we can say that the role and responsibility of the family and teachers is very present. To have a compact functioning of groups within the school, teachers must create a well-organized culture and that culture to be functional, so that every child, regardless of his cultural background or cultural beliefs he may have, functions in a unique harmonized school culture (Khanfar, 2021).

3. Conclusion

Based on the facts and arguments that were presented above, we can affirm that culture has a fundamental importance in all dimensions of a child's life and as such should be treated adequately. The complexity that characterizes culture means that it is not deciphered and applied or implemented with any difficulty, and is conveyed with specific characteristics. Considering the fact that a definition of culture is not always applicable to all categories or groups of people means that it must be applied with great finesse to be adequate and efficient. From birth, children are exposed to different cultures, starting from the family, then social groups, school, community, and so on. All these communities have an impact on the creation of the child's social skills, some with a weaker impact and some with a stronger impact.

Based on the theory of Bandura and Vygotsky, who provide clear insights into the importance of culture in the development of children's social skills, but also from other researchers presented above, we can affirm that culture has a direct impact on the creation of social skills of the child, regardless of the group. Through cultural influence, the child learns values, norms, trust, interaction, responsibility towards himself, responsibility towards other people, and the environment in which he lives. Regardless of the culture in small groups which have a big impact, respectively the family or certain social groups, everyone should help the child to develop based on these elements, which are: inclusion or comprehensiveness, mutual respect, equality, and acceptance of each person regardless differences that they may have. In conclusion, if children grow up in an environment that promotes socialization, the prosocial aspect of child development, the help that children should offer to people in need means that children learn to regulate their emotional state and know how to manage conflicts, respecting different opinions, respecting other children's social-economic statuses, etc., with other words, we are dealing with children whose culture has influenced the adequate development of their social skills.

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