

# Developing and Implementing Policies of Intercultural Education in Cyprus in the Context of Globalisation

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## Abstract

*Although the area of intercultural education, in general, has been widely researched, there is a shortage of published research examining the intersection of globalisation and intercultural education. In this paper, we try to answer the following question: What are implications of the global debate for intercultural education at the national level? To address this question, we have selected Cyprus as the case study of our examination. We draw upon previous research carried out in Cyprus across the macro-level of the state and meso-level of the school in order to examine the phases of the adoption and implementation of globalised intercultural education policies.*

**Keywords:** globalisation, intercultural education, Cyprus education, intercultural education policies, macro-level, meso-level

## Introduction

Sutton points out that ‘the “epochal” dimensions of globalisation, such as wide scale human migration and intensification of global communication, have complicated social identities within many nations and therefore stimulated public debate on how pluralism is recognised in the curriculum and pedagogy in national school systems’.<sup>3</sup> Despite such observation, Gibson contends that as intercultural education has not yet critically responded to the effects of globalisation, educational policies around the globe still perpetuate different forms of injustice.<sup>4</sup> Although the area of intercultural education, in general, has been widely researched, there is a shortage of published research examining the intersection of globalisation and intercultural education. Nevertheless, for modern societies to establish social cohesion, education research should examine issues of citizenship, democracy, and intercultural education under the

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3 M. Sutton, ‘The globalization of multicultural education’, *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, Vol. 12 No. 1 (2005), 97-108.

4 M. L. Gibson, ‘Are we “reading the world”? A review of multicultural literature on globalization’. *Multicultural Perspective*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (2010), 129-137.

lens of globalisation. After all, ‘throughout different countries, contexts and education systems, multiculturalism as a normative, as well as intercultural education as a diversity driven pedagogical strategy, have become truly global throughout the last decades’.<sup>5</sup>

What stems from our argumentation above is that we ought to address the question: What are implications of the global debate for intercultural education at the national level? To address this question, we have selected Cyprus as the case study of our examination. We draw upon previous research carried out in Cyprus across the macro-level of the state and meso-level of the school in order to examine the phases of the adoption and implementation of globalised intercultural education policies.

### **The Context of Cyprus**

Cyprus provides for a prominent context to set in a study examining the interrelationship between globalisation and intercultural education. From 1960, Cyprus has been an independent, sovereign republic of a presidential type. After 1974 that the island was divided, the Greek Cypriot government has controlled the southern part of Cyprus. Nonetheless, it is considered as the *de jure* government of the whole island. Cyprus has traditionally had a multicultural and multilingual character not only because of the two major communities, but also due to the presence of three religious minorities that are also recognised by the 1960 Constitution, namely Armenians, Maronites and Latins. Since 1974, the two major communities of the population that are constitutionally recognised have been living apart; Greek Cypriots (and the other minorities) were relocated in the south and Turkish Cypriots in the north. As a result of the Cyprus problem, education has been attached to the nation-building project aiming to prove political sovereignty.

What we argue is that the ongoing political problem and the subsequent internal conflict have influenced the development and implementation of intercultural education policies because of socio-cultural, religious, ethnic, and political reasons attached to the Cyprus political problem. More recently, and mainly after its accession to the European Union in 2004, Cyprus has received an unprecedented number of migrants furthering its multicultural character. Arguably, examining the influence of globalisation on intercultural education has particular salience in the socio-political, cultural and historical context of Cyprus. It should, nevertheless, be noted that the analysis included in this paper refers to policies developed and enacted in the areas

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5 N. Palaiologou and G. Dietz, ‘Introduction. Multicultural and intercultural education today: Finding a “common topos” in the discourse and promoting the dialogue between continents and disciplines’, in *Mapping the Broad Field of Multicultural and Intercultural Education Worldwide: Towards the Development of a New Citizen*, N. Palaiologou and G. Dietz (eds) (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 1-21.

controlled by the *de jure* government of the island.

Cyprus's accession to supranational organisations, such as the United Nations (UN), the Council of Europe (CoE), and the European Union (EU), has been regarded as an international proof of the sovereignty of the Cyprus Republic.<sup>6</sup> Even though the Republic of Cyprus acceded to the EU in 2004, the application of the *acquis communautaire* of the EU is suspended in those areas of the Republic of Cyprus where the government of the Republic does not exercise effective control.

With regards to the structure of the Cypriot education system, externally prescriptive policy interventions, directed by the central government, leave limited space for school initiatives.<sup>7</sup> There is a tendency towards forwarding reforms through a mechanistic, rational, discursive and controlling agenda due to the highly centralised character of the Cypriot education system. In the education system in Cyprus, head-teachers, teachers, parents, and students are trapped in a managerial and bureaucratic system, having limited freedom to exercise agency, to self-evaluate their practices, and to apply new ideas.<sup>8</sup> They are thus seen as having 'weak' power in co-constructing education reform by offering their professional views and judgments.

In this context, in the next sections, we examine the phases of adoption and implementation of globalised education policies. In terms of examining adoption, we discuss the four types of explanations of globalisation, including material, political, cultural, and scalar justifications. We then examine the ways in which issues of school leadership, teacher practices, and student voice influence implementation.

### **The Macro-Level of the State: Developing Policies of Intercultural Education**

Immigration issues first became intertwined in the educational agenda of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) of Cyprus in 2001.<sup>9</sup> Immigrant children may enrol in public schools, regardless of their parents' legal or illegal immigration status to the

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6 C. Hajisoteriou, 'Europeanising intercultural education: Politics and policy making in Cyprus'. *European Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (2010), 471-483.

7 C. Hajisoteriou, 'Duty calls for interculturalism: how do teachers perceive the reform of intercultural education in Cyprus? Teacher Development'. *International Journal of Teachers' Professional Development*, 17(1) (2013) 107-126; C. Hajisoteriou and P. Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education: The Politics of Macro-Micro Integration* (London: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2016a); C. Hajisoteriou and P. Angelides, 'Intercultural education in situ: Examining intercultural policy in Cyprus in the context of European integration'. *Journal for Multicultural Education*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (2016b), 33-52.

8 M. Nicolaidou and A. Petridou, 'Evaluation of CPD programmes: challenges and implications for leader and leadership development'. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (2011), 51-85.

9 C. Hajisoteriou, 'Europeanising intercultural education: Politics and policy making in Cyprus'. *European Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (2010), 471-483.

country. Despite these efforts, literature contends that public schools still remained ethnocentric and culturally monolithic.<sup>10</sup>

On that account, the state had to evidence its capacity to design an intercultural policy. To this end, during the school year 2003-2004 the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) launched the programme Zones of Educational Priority (ZEP) on a pilot basis. The policy of the ZEP constitutes a strategic choice of the MEC in order to fight functional illiteracy, school failure and school marginalisation in schools with high concentrations of immigrant pupils. Additionally, in 2004 the MEC began a campaign to address issues related to intercultural education. The slogan 'Democratic Education in the Euro-Cyprian Society' was adopted to describe the efforts to steer the national education system towards an intercultural orientation according to europeanised and globalised discourses.<sup>11</sup>

In addition, in 2008, the Council of Ministers in Cyprus approved the 'Policy Document of the Ministry of Education and Culture for Intercultural Education'. The 'new' policy directive aimed at creating an intercultural school that does not exclude but aims to promote immigrants' inclusion in the education system and society of Cyprus. Instead, intercultural schools should be conducive to the success of all students despite their socio-cultural, linguistic or religious diversity. The MEC declared its willingness to promote social justice in education, while eradicating stereotypes and prejudices.<sup>12</sup> Research in the Cypriot context has indicated that, although the MEC adopted the rhetoric of intercultural education, its documentation still failed to provide not only a concrete definition of intercultural education.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the MEC referred to the knowledge of other cultures, instead of the interaction and the interchange between Greek Cypriot and other cultures. Gregoriou<sup>14</sup> argues that the MEC still adhered to monocultural notions of education, as it conceptualised cultural difference as an

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10 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*; Hajisoteriou and Angelides, 'Intercultural education in situ: Examining intercultural policy in Cyprus in the context of European integration'.

11 CER – Committee for Educational Reform (2004). *Democratic and Humanistic Education in the Euro-Cyprian Polity. Prospects for Modernisation. Manifesto of Educational Reform. Overview of Philosophy and Recommendations* [in Greek] (Nicosia: Ministry of Education and Culture, 2004), 1.

12 MEC – (Cyprus) Ministry of Education and Culture, *Curricula for Pre-Primary, Primary and High-School Education*. Vol. A and B [in Greek] (Nicosia: MEC, 2010).

13 Hajisoteriou, 'Duty calls for interculturalism: how do teachers perceive the reform of intercultural education in Cyprus? Teacher Development', *International Journal of Teachers' Professional Development*, Vol. 17, No. (1) (2013), 107-126; C. Hajisoteriou and P. Angelides, 'Facing the "challenge": School leadership in intercultural schools', *Educational Management, Administration & Leadership*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (2013), 65-82.

14 Z. Gregoriou, *Policy analysis report* (Cyprus, 2010). Available at <http://www.gemic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/cyprus-wp3.pdf>.

exclusive characteristic of immigrant pupils. Thus ‘the migrant student and not the multicultural class, the cultural difference of the “other” and not ethnicity and ethnic borders became the focus of educational policy’.<sup>15</sup>

Last but not least, during the school year 2011-2012, a ‘new’ national curriculum has been put in practice in Cyprus on a pilot basis. Arguably, we can still not examine its impact on educational practice in Cyprus. Yet, we can draw some preliminary observations regarding the dimensions of intercultural education in the new curriculum. Discourses of intercultural education appear to emerge in the new curriculum. Hajisoteriou and Angelides<sup>16</sup> argue that intercultural education is mediated through the notions of the ‘democratic and humane school’, which are set to be the cornerstones of the new curriculum. As defined in the official curriculum, the democratic school is a school that includes and caters for all children, regardless of any differences they may have, and that helps them prepare for a common future. It is a school that guarantees equal educational opportunities for all and, most importantly, is held responsible not only for the success but also for the failure of each and every child. On the other hand, the humane school is a school that respects human dignity. It is a school where no child is excluded, censured or scorned. It is a school that celebrates childhood, acknowledging that this should be the most creative and happy period of the human life.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the MEC’s efforts for change, Cypriot research asserts that there is a gap between policy rhetoric and practice and between policy intentions and outcomes.<sup>18</sup> The official state policy draws upon the discourse of interculturalism as it includes humanistic manifestations about respect for human rights, justice and peace. However, what previous research showed is that in practice the MEC policy pertains to monoculturalism, as immigrant students are seen as in need of assimilation in order to overcome their deficiency and disadvantage.<sup>19</sup> In examining the reasons behind this gap, Cypriot research concludes that the development of intercultural education policy

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15 Ibid., 39.

16 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, ‘Facing the “challenge”’.

17 Ministry of Education and Culture, *Curricula for Pre-Primary, Primary and High-School Education*. Vol. A and B. (Nicosia: MEC, 2010), 6 [In Greek].

18 C. Panayiotopoulos and M. Nicolaidou, ‘At crossroads of civilizations: multicultural educational provision in Cyprus through the lens of a case study’. *Intercultural Education*, Vol. 18 No. 1 (2007), 65-79; M. Zembylas and S. Iasonos, ‘Leadership styles and multicultural education approaches: an exploration of their relationship’. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, Vol. 13 No. 2 (2010), 163-183.

19 E. Papamichael, Greek-Cypriot teachers’ understandings of intercultural education in an increasingly diverse society’. *The Cyprus Review*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (2008), 51-78; Gregoriou, *Policy analysis report*; Hajisoteriou, ‘Duty calls for interculturalism’; Hajisoteriou and Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*; Hajisoteriou and Angelides, ‘Intercultural education in situ’.

was not accompanied with the reconceptualisation and restructuring of the national education system and schooling. The state did not adopt a balanced governance model between school autonomy and centralised management.<sup>20</sup> Consequently, it did not communicate to schools coherent policies that allow for clear understandings of intercultural education, nor did the MEC translate this policy into clear organisational policies or practices for schools.<sup>21</sup> Last but not least, the MEC did not provide teachers and students with the opportunity to bring their experiences into the planning of such policies through the development of intercultural school-based curricula and initiatives.<sup>22</sup>

### **The Meso-Level of the Schools: Filtering Globalised Policies of Intercultural Education**

In the Cypriot context, we have extensively examined the development of intercultural education policies in Cyprus in the context of European integration, while also focusing on the Europeanisation of such policies by means of interviews with key stakeholders and policy-makers and through document analysis.<sup>23</sup> In our recent book, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*,<sup>24</sup> we have examined macro-micro integration, by means of school case studies across Cyprus, including head-teachers, teachers, and students. What our research over the last decade has concluded is that Cyprus, seen as a case of bi-communal conflict, was called by supranational organisations, such as the EU, the CoE, and the UN, to expand its intercultural education policies to address both the challenge of reunification of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, but also to promote immigrants' inclusion.<sup>25</sup> Such calls were addressed in a number of international or European reports that gave negative evaluations, for example UNESCO<sup>26</sup> or the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance.<sup>27</sup>

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20 Hajisoteriou, 'Duty calls for interculturalism'.

21 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*; Hajisoteriou and Angelides, 'Intercultural education in situ'.

22 C. Hajisoteriou, C. Karousiou, and P. Angelides, 'Successful components of school improvement in culturally diverse schools', *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2018), 91-112.

23 Hajisoteriou, 'Duty calls for interculturalism'; C. Hajisoteriou, L. Neophytou, and P. Angelides, 'Intercultural dimensions in the (new) curriculum of Cyprus', *Curriculum Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 3, (2012), 387-405.

24 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*; Hajisoteriou and Angelides, 'Intercultural education in situ'.

25 Ibid.

26 UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Appraisal Study on the Cyprus Education System* (Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning, 1997).

27 ECRI – European Commission against Racism and Intolerance. *Annual Report on ECRI's Activities Covering a Period from 1 January to 31 December 1999* (1999), available at <http://www.coe.int/t/el>

Secondly, our past research concluded that other supranational organisations, such as the Fundamental Agency of Human Rights (FRA), imbued the national socio-political environment with intercultural and inclusive discourses, while using various mechanisms of influence, such as legal and financial incentives (i.e., the development of Zones of Educational Priority via the EU structural funds), diffusion of ideas (i.e., through anti-discrimination campaigns), and elite learning (i.e., participation of Cypriot policy-makers in European committees).<sup>28</sup> Our findings also demonstrated that participation in the EU, but also in other supranational organisations, such as the UN, demonstrated by compliance to their European and international conventions, guidelines, and incentives, was seen as the only concrete evidence of the Cypriot state's sovereignty – meaning the need to prove its existence as a nation-state and the rule of the Greek Cypriot government despite the division of the island.<sup>29</sup>

Thirdly, our previous research has demonstrated that Cyprus has initiated education reform (including a reform of the national curriculum, leading towards a more intercultural orientation) in order to harmonise its policy discourse with the EU.<sup>30</sup> This was explicitly stated in the preamble of the 'Manifesto of Educational Reform', produced by the Committee for Educational Reform (CER), arguing that intercultural education was seen as part of the state's drive towards the creation of a 'Euro-Cyprian society'.<sup>31</sup> As a result, since 2008, the state and particularly the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) replaced the previously used terms of 'multicultural education' and 'integration' with the rhetoric of 'intercultural education' and 'inclusion'. As a result of the educational reform, Papamichael<sup>32</sup> concludes that the MEC deployed the discourse of intercultural education as the establishment of a school which provides equal educational opportunities for access, participation and success for all students. This turn was also ratified by the new 2010 curriculum, in which the MEC envisioned

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human\_rights/ecri/5-archives/1-ECRI's\_work/2Annual\_reports/Annual%20Report%201999.asp. ECRI - European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, *Second Report on Cyprus*. (2001), available at <http://www.hri.ca/fortherecord2001/euro2001/vol2/cyprusechri.htm>.

ECRI - European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, *Third Report on Cyprus* (2006), available at [http://www.coe.int/t/e/human\\_rights/ecri/1-ECRI/2-Country-by-country\\_approach/Cyprus/Cyprus\\_CBC\\_3.asp#TopOfPage](http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/ecri/1-ECRI/2-Country-by-country_approach/Cyprus/Cyprus_CBC_3.asp#TopOfPage).

28 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, 'Intercultural education in situ'.

29 C. Hajisoteriou, 'Europeanising intercultural education: Politics and policy making in Cyprus'. *European Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (2010), 471-483; Hajisoteriou et al., 'Intercultural dimensions in the (new) curriculum of Cyprus'; Hajisoteriou and Angelides, 'Intercultural education in situ'.

30 Hajisoteriou et al., 'Intercultural dimensions in the (new) curriculum of Cyprus'.

31 CER – Committee for Educational Reform, *Democratic and Humanistic Education in the Euro-Cyprian Polity*, [in Greek].

32 E. Papamichael, 'Greek-Cypriot teachers' understandings of intercultural education in an increasingly diverse society'.

the creation of a ‘humane’ and ‘democratic’ school which includes and does not exclude, by respecting diversity and cultural, linguistic and religious pluralism.<sup>33</sup>

Nevertheless, previous research in the Cypriot context has cautioned that the developed intercultural policies appeared to adhere to ‘simulated’ and ‘token’ Europeanisation<sup>34</sup> globalisation.<sup>35</sup> This research argued that although the MEC ‘markedly’ included the intercultural dimension of education in its national policy and curriculum discourse, it did not provide schools with necessary resources to implement such policies. The unavailability of sufficient funds, appropriate infrastructures, and adequately trained personnel operated as material constraints that turned schools into ‘simulated’ intercultural spaces.<sup>36</sup> Hajisoteriou,<sup>37</sup> in her research conducted in Cypriot primary schools, concluded that the MEC left the formulation and implementation of concrete intercultural initiatives to the discretion of the schools and their personnel. However, the extremely centralised character of the Cypriot education system does not allow the development of school-based curricula, leading schools to interpret the Ministry’s stance as the complete absence of intercultural policy.<sup>38</sup> It is thus no surprise that past research evidences the lack of clearly-defined, adequate, and successful intercultural policies in Cypriot schools, which often adopt superficial and folklore practices.<sup>39</sup> This observation brings us to the conclusion that it is inappropriate to ‘uncritically’ model policies that seem to be successful in developed, adequately-funded, highly professionalised, and well-regulated education systems to education systems that fall short in these dimensions.

More recently, Cyprus’s unsuccessful participation in the 2012 and 2015 PISA studies (resembling previous results in other international assessments such as TIMSS) has triggered an intense debate on the reasons behind such underperformance.<sup>40</sup> The news referred to the PISA results by using headings such as ‘Cypriot teen’s biggest dunces in the EU<sup>41</sup> or ‘Bottom in EU on OECD education league, again’.<sup>42</sup> Although

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33 Hajisoteriou et al., ‘Intercultural dimensions in the (new) curriculum of Cyprus’.

34 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, ‘Intercultural education in situ’.

35 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*

36 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, ‘Facing the “challenge”’.

37 Hajisoteriou, ‘Duty calls for interculturalism’.

38 Hajisoteriou, ‘Duty calls for interculturalism’.

39 Papamichael, ‘Greek-Cypriot teachers’ understandings of intercultural education in an increasingly diverse society’; Hajisoteriou, ‘Duty calls for interculturalism’; Hajisoteriou and Angelides, ‘Intercultural education in situ’.

40 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*.

41 Cyprus Mail, ‘Cypriot Teens Biggest Dunces in the EU’, *The Cyprus Mail* (2013, December 4), available at <http://cyprus-mail.com/2013/12/04/cypriot-teens-biggest-dunces-in-the-eu/>.

42 Cyprus Mail, ‘Bottom in EU on OECD Education League, Again’, *The Cyprus Mail* (2015, May 14), available at <http://cyprus-mail.com/2015/05/14/bottom-of-the-oecd-education-league-again/>.



Cyprus lags behind in meta-analysing such results, what public opinion and the media have suggested is that specific characteristics of Cypriot education are the ones to be 'blamed', namely: the centralisation of the education system, the lack of school autonomy, inappropriate teaching methodologies, and the high percentages of immigrant students in Cypriot schools.<sup>43</sup> Remarks on immigrants' presence seem to lead to the emergence of neo-assimilationist discourses, overemphasising Greek-language learning, the necessity to expand the programme of the Zones of Educational Priority to accommodate immigrant students, and lastly, immigrants' cultural and structural adjustment. Hajisoteriou and Angelides<sup>44</sup> also argue that the rise of neo-assimilationist (but also neo-xenophobic) discourses was furthered by the global economic crisis leading to Cyprus' bailout by the Eurogroup, European Commission (EC), European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Arguably, such discourses collide with the more inclusive discourses of the state's intercultural education policy.

What previous research has also shown is that beyond material reasons, political and cultural factors lie also behind the *symbolic* adoption of globalised policies of intercultural education in Cyprus.<sup>45</sup> In response to the Cypriot political problem, education has been used as a means of the nation-building project drawing upon cultural purification.<sup>46</sup> As education strictly patrols the boundaries of citizenry and belongingness, subordinated groups, including minorities and immigrants, have been purposively under-recognised and excluded. In this sense, previous research asserts the MEC, in serving the state's nation-building objectives, aimed to maintain immigrants' assimilation into the dominant 'native' culture, and thus it has deliberately omitted to develop effective initiatives leading towards successful implementation.<sup>47</sup> As a result, change has occurred only at the level of national policy rhetoric, but not in practice. In more detail, the political culture fostered access-based policies and practices of intercultural education, safeguarding all children's right to access school communities. Nonetheless, as such policies and practices were exclusive of outcome-oriented definitions of equity, they impeded action on social justice.

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43 Phileleftheros, 'Low Performances of Cypriot 15-year-olds in Reading and Mathematics', [In Greek], *Phileleftheros* (2013, December 3), available at <http://www.philenews.com/el-gr/top-stories/885/174365/chamiles-epidoseis-kyprion-15chronon-se-anagnosi-kai-mathimatika>.

44 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*.

45 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, 'Intercultural education in situ'.

46 Gregoriou, *Policy analysis report*. Cyprus; Hajisoteriou, 'Duty calls for interculturalism'; Hajisoteriou and Angelides, 'Intercultural education in situ'

47 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, 'Facing the "challenge"'; Hajisoteriou and Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*; Hajisoteriou and Angelides, 'Intercultural education in situ'.

## The Implementation of Globalised Policies of Intercultural Education

Moving from the phase of adoption to implementation, scalar factors contributed in the ‘illusory’ enactment of globalised (and/or Europeanised) policies of intercultural education in the Cypriot context.<sup>48</sup> Verger et al.<sup>49</sup> caution that head-teachers and teachers, who are actually responsible for making new policies work, often feel alienated to reforms coming from above and do not gradually progress from previous practices. In the Cypriot context, both Zembylas and Iasonos<sup>50</sup> and Hajisoteriou and Angelides<sup>51</sup> examined the ways in which school leadership influenced the implementation of intercultural education approaches. It is striking that the findings of both studies indicate that most of the participant head-teachers felt ‘uncertain’ and ‘insecure’ about how to react to diversity. They thus adopted a combination of assimilationist and cultural-deficit approaches, and transactional leadership styles. As a result of education policies emanating from standardisation in relation to the creation of the ‘knowledge economy’, these head-teachers emphasised the need for homogeneity in order to sustain the so-called smooth operation of their schools. Their leadership styles took the form of a business-as-usual approach, as they did not acknowledge their students’ diverse socio-cultural backgrounds in developing and implementing appropriate school cultures, policies, and practices.

What the two studies note is that most of the participant Cypriot head-teachers failed to implement inclusive socially-just policies in their schools. By adopting managerial types of leadership, these head-teachers reproduced ‘sometimes unwittingly, conditions of hierarchy and oppression, in particular by fostering compliant thinking rather than critical reflection’. On the other hand, both studies conducted by Zembylas and Iasonos<sup>52</sup> and Hajisoteriou and Angelides<sup>53</sup> ‘spotted’ exceptions of Cypriot head-teachers, who adopted cultural-pluralist definitions of diversity and inclined to transformational leadership styles. These head-teachers lent support to social-justice leadership by examining the institutional barriers, structural inequalities, and power dynamics that influenced inclusion (or exclusion) within their culturally-diverse school settings. They run their schools in more collaborative forms by fostering

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48 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*.

49 A. Verger, M. Novelli, and H. K. Altinyelken, ‘Global education policy and international development: An introductory framework’, in *Global Education Policy and International Development: New Agendas, Issues and Policies*, eds. A. Verger, M. Novelli and H. K. Altinyelken, (London: Continuum 2012), 3-33.

50 Zembylas and Iasonos, ‘Leadership styles and multicultural education approaches’.

51 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, ‘Facing the “challenge”’.

52 Zembylas and Iasonos, ‘Leadership styles and multicultural education approaches’.

53 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, ‘Facing the “challenge”’.

cooperation among their teaching faculty. Additionally, they often networked with other professionals, such as education psychologists, to develop school plans and programmes aiming to combat discrimination. They also prioritised on their school agendas increased student engagement, immigrant parental involvement, intercultural teacher training, and school self-evaluation.

The big gap between the new policy rhetoric on intercultural education and the previous ethnocentric character of the Cypriot education system further added to the decoupling between global and European policies on intercultural education and the local school 'reality'.<sup>54</sup> Previous research carried out in Cypriot schools illustrates that Cypriot teachers failed to implement new intercultural education initiatives, not only because they lacked appropriate training to do so, but mainly because they did not 'understand' the necessity and the content of the reform.<sup>55</sup> Additionally, research focusing on children voices cautions about the failure of the education system and the implementation of pertinent policies to address marginalisation and exclusion.<sup>56</sup> Despite the gradual development of friendships between Cypriots and immigrants, stereotypical behaviour and racist incidents against immigrant students continue to persist in schools.<sup>57</sup> To make a long story short, the way that different visions of national education have become confused in the MEC's policy (ranging from ethnocentrism to inclusion) was reflected in head-teachers', teachers', and students' understandings of intercultural education initiatives, thus, leading to 'problematic' implementation.

## Conclusion

The epicentre of this paper was the examination of the globalisation process of intercultural education in Cyprus. We, thus, examined the ways in which globalised intercultural policies are mediated by the national-state level and the micro-level of the school. To this end, we examined the socio-political, historical, and educational aspects of the Cyprus context. We then drew upon previous research conducted in the field to explore the formation of the issue of intercultural education at the stages of administration, adoption, and implementation; school leadership, and teaching for

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54 Hajisoteriou and Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*.

55 Panayiotopoulos and Nicolaidou, 'At crossroads of civilizations: multicultural educational provision in Cyprus through the lens of a case study'; Papamichael, 'Greek-Cypriot teachers' understandings of intercultural education in an increasingly diverse society'; Hajisoteriou, 'Duty calls for interculturalism'; Hajisoteriou and Angelides, *The Globalisation of Intercultural Education*.

56 K. Messiou, 'Collaborating with children in exploring marginalisation: An approach to inclusive education', *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, Vol. 16, No. 12 (2011), 1311-1322; Hajisoteriou, et al., 'Successful components of school improvement in culturally diverse schools'.

57 E. Partasi, 'Experiencing multiculturalism in Greek-Cypriot primary schools', *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (2011), 371-386.

intercultural education; and, childrens' voices on education policy for intercultural education.

Drawing upon our examination, we conclude that Cyprus provides for an example of the ways in which globalised policies of intercultural education have been mutated when it comes to the phases of adoption and implementation. What becomes apparent in the context of Cyprus is that socio-historical and economic parametres have greatly influenced the adoption and implementation of globalised intercultural education policies. The conclusion that stems from our examination of the Cyprus example is that, although globalised discourses of intercultural education seem to be adopted, as the amendment of policy rhetoric is not accompanied with reform of the systemic and school structures, immigrant students are still excluded within mainstream schools. In attempting to 'reconcile' international calls and national interests, Cyprus state authorities may have deliberately omitted to develop effective practical initiatives towards the globalisation of state-derived intercultural policies.

On the basis of our conclusions, we argue that the adoption and implementation of globalised policies of intercultural education is affected by the agreement between international and national interests and policy goals, communication between the different levels of the system and the availability of resources for implementation. In the examination of the adoption and implementation, we should take loose coupling into consideration, meaning that the coordination, monitoring, and communication of the system may be weakly connected. Loose coupling bears a neutral connotation for adoption and implementation as it may have both positive and negative implications. For Berman,<sup>58</sup> 'looseness' implies that different education institutions and the actors operating within these institutions have their own problems, perspectives, and goals according to their specific cultures and structures, and that institutions as such have more or less autonomy within the macro-structure of the education system.

Our examination bears implications for all the phases of globalisation in education, including development, adoption, and implementation. To begin with, at the phases of development and adoption, international and national actors influencing policy development should examine and take into consideration broader structures and parametres affecting the implementation of policy. For example, both international organisations and nation states should acknowledge that economic structures (i.e. productivity and funding) could potentially mediate policy. In order to facilitate the implementation of successful globalised intercultural policies, international and national organisations ought to institutionalise resource allocation in terms of funds and thereby space, materials and personnel.

At the phase of implementation, loose coupling has particular salience for the

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58 Berman, *The study of Macro and Micro Implementation of Social Policy*, (Santa Monica, RAND, 1978).

implementation of globalised policies of intercultural education. According to Ainscow,<sup>59</sup> in order to reach out to *all* learners, we should develop ‘a more tightly coupled system without losing loose coupling benefits’. That is, we should sustain coordination and cooperation within schools without restricting teachers’ autonomy to ground their own decisions in their classrooms according to the individuality of their students. The successful implementation of any globalised education policy for intercultural education at the grassroots relies upon teachers’ willingness and ability to tailor their practices to their students’ needs, interests, and learning styles.

In conclusion, we should acknowledge that the adoption and implementation of globalised intercultural education policies is facilitated, formed, and constrained by not only multiple variables but also by complex and often counteractive influences, such as policy and school actors’ values regarding diversity and social justice issues. What we suggest according to our study is that globalisation studies in the field of intercultural education should examine agency and the powerful role of actors beyond the macro-level, by combining supranational, international and national locus of analysis. What the Cypriot case material has shown is that a trajectory type of approach is necessary in the study of globalisation of education, in general, and intercultural education, in particular. In this type of research, globalised intercultural education policies should rather be seen as processes of negotiation, cooperation, and conflict between various organisations, groups, and individual actors operating across and within supranational (or international), national, and local levels, inside and outside the official mechanisms of policy development, adoption, and implementation. By viewing policies as authoritative and ‘powerful’ (or not) allocations of values and interests, examinations of the globalisation of intercultural education should encompass both systemic and structural, but also cultural analyses. To this end, future research aiming to achieve macro-micro integration in the field of globalisation should examine the four parametres of adoption and implementation that refer to material, political, cultural, and scalar explanations.

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59 M. Ainscow, *Reaching Out All Learners: Some Lessons from Experience*. Keynote address made at the International Conference on School Effectiveness and Improvement, Manchester (1998, January), 21.

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