

# **TEACHING PERSPECTIVES OF APPROACHING INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL CONTEXTS**

Author **Mihaela Badea**

Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiești, Romania , [mbadea@upg-ploiesti.ro](mailto:mbadea@upg-ploiesti.ro) [ORCID: 0000-0002-5113-6982](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5113-6982)

Co-author **Gina Florentina Tudorache**

Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiești, Romania , [gina.tudorache@upg-ploiesti.ro](mailto:gina.tudorache@upg-ploiesti.ro) [ORCID: 0009-0008-6672-3507](https://orcid.org/0009-0008-6672-3507)

## **Abstract:**

*In an increasingly globalised world, intercultural education represents one of the pressing needs for adaptation and development. To create social harmony and cohesion, education in the spirit of diversity and respect for different cultures is the key to intertwining multiple identities, values, traditions and customs.*

*This multicultural reality that we are going through imposes a new dimension focused on 'learning to live together with others' on the educational paradigm. Achieving this goal raises the openness of educational design to various cultural contexts, aiming at the development of the capacity to value one's own culture and to appreciate various other cultures, to critically report to one's personal life, to different groups and communities, to responsibly and cooperatively participate for the achievement of activities/problem solving of different groups and communities.*

*The purpose of this study is to identify the didactic approaches of intercultural education applied in secondary education, in formal and non-formal contexts, to facilitate the development of skills to act in the spirit of diversity and multiculturalism.*

*In order to collect relevant information regarding the calibration of the teaching design on the dimensions of intercultural education, a questionnaire-based survey was used, applied to teachers in both rural and urban environments. Also, a focus group discussion proved to be useful to identify details about the forms of organisation of intercultural activities and the frequency of their implementation.*

*The analysis of the data provided by the questionnaire and the focus group highlighted the discrepancy between the dimensions of designing intercultural education in rural and urban environments, as well as the difficulties faced by teachers in the implementation of these activities.*

*Since it is the school that provides the individual with the necessary skills to deal with social complexity and diversity, it is necessary for teachers to pay more attention to the design and implementation of intercultural education activities, both in formal and non-formal contexts. Through the interactive approach to the concepts of diversity, discrimination, multiculturalism in practical activities, students learn to critically treat these social phenomena, defining problems, outlining hypotheses and plausible solutions.*

*Therefore, the study highlights the complexity and importance of intercultural education in secondary school, underlining the need for well-thought-out and sustained strategies to maximise the positive impact on students. Intercultural education is not just a complementary element in the curriculum, but an essential component that contributes to the formation of informed, responsible and respectful individuals, capable of contributing positively to the society in which they live. By integrating teaching methods and practices that value cultural diversity, students are encouraged to become more open and tolerant, thus preparing themselves to successfully live in an interconnected world.*

*Introducing intercultural education in a period when young people are shaping their identity and forming their values and attitudes has a significant impact on their integral development. This not only promotes understanding and mutual respect between students from different cultural backgrounds, but also contributes to improving social cohesion and preventing discrimination and stereotyping.*

*However, the effective implementation of intercultural education is not without challenges. Lack of resources, resistance to change and inadequate teacher training are just some of the obstacles that must be overcome to ensure the success of this initiative. However, through concentrated efforts from teachers, parents and the community, but also through the adoption of appropriate educational policies, these challenges can be overcome.*

**Keywords:** *Adaptation; Didactic contexts; Diversity; Multiculturalism; Educational design.*