Short Research Article

Globalization, Sociology and Intercultural Pedagogy. What to Do in the School?

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Abstract

The present study aims to offer a new perspective through which to study the current phenomena of globalization, research and offer educational operations suitable for the elimination of the distances between the various cultures and the concept of mono identity and the achievement of the concept of poly identity. The study will focus in particular on the theoretical perspective of the intercultural approach, starting from a reflection of the relationship between sociology and globalization.

Keywords

globalization, sociology, intercultural pedagogy, multicultural society, school

1. Introduction

Globalization as a process of intense interconnection and exchange of goods, information and people at a global level is a powerful engine of contemporary cultural transformations that affects sociology and obviously intercultural pedagogy.

The globalized society increasingly qualifies as a multicultural society, with integration problems that can be accompanied by phenomena such as conflicts, forms of xenophobia and racism. Social policies towards migrants present a considerable variety in different countries. The most well-known models are assimilation, which requires migrants to adhere to the norms, lifestyles and dominant values of host countries, practicing their cultural forms only in private space, and on the contrary, multiculturalism, oriented to grant migrants the maximum possible space of cultural autonomy. An intermediate path is one of integration capable of reconciling respect for cultural identity and the construction of common rules and symbols with the receiving society.

Italy was the European country that has confront the issue of intercultural education with more delay than other countries, particularly in the 1980's, when, after the emigration phase and the immigration phase began, the announcements arriving in close to Italian schools the first foreign children. From this

moment in Italy starts its legislative course and guidelines that underline the importance of spreading intercultural education.

All that has brought about remarkable transformations to the composition of the population from the ethnic, cultural, and obviously also religious point of view, putting well in evidence the uniformity that had characterized Italy up to that moment and that saw the religious field entirely occupied by Christian cults.

If intercultural education conceives culture as a way of relating and interacting, according to which the encounter with the other—"the different"—should not be avoided, but it is necessary to go towards the other through a cultural fusion that generates enrichment, unfortunately we are still far from the realization of this scenario. The chronicles confirm this with the frequent episodes of racism and bullying.

The concept of interculturality was born out of a vision of global interdependence that first of all involves the educational and training system. Only a correct planning of educational work in the school can achieve an increasingly necessary "culture of coexistence" capable of generating a global identity: the "different" meet and communicate by building shared values and rules of coexistence.

Intercultural education intend to working for to identify, development and experiment the most suitable educational and didactic strategies to favor a positive insertion of foreign students into the school and, therefore, into society. The first part of the word interculture—"inter" —refers to the other side to interaction, exchange, openness, reciprocity and solidarity. The second part of the word interculture—"culture"—refers to the recognition of values, ways of life, symbolic representations to which human beings refer, individuals or societies, in their relations with each other and in their understanding of the world.

2. Methods

The study is based on two research methods, one theoretical research and the other documental research methodology. The ISTAT and CESNUR databases were consulted for documental research methodology. As far as theoretical research is concerned, the study was conducted by relating a cognitive practice (the sociology), and a phenomenological practice (the globalization).

Intercultural research is conducted by comparing two or more cultures, starting from the data observed by observing individuals of different languages and cultures that interact with each other.

The aim of intercultural education must not be solely to discover and interact with the differences inherent in the "different" that lies ahead, but should be aimed at wanting to enhance and work on the similarities that unite people together.

3. Discussion

The study was conducted with particular investigation between the Muslim culture and the Italian/Christian culture, this integration is the one that represents the most critical issues.

The migration from North Africa in the 1970's brings a first contingent of Muslim workers, mostly Moroccans, to Italy. In the 1990's, the number of immigrants increased markedly.
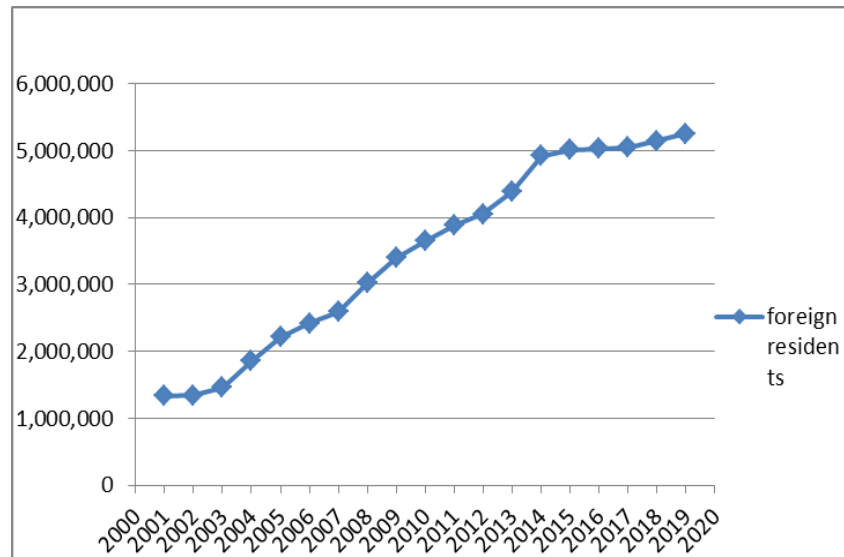
Figure 1. Foreigners Residing in Italy on January 1st of Each Year

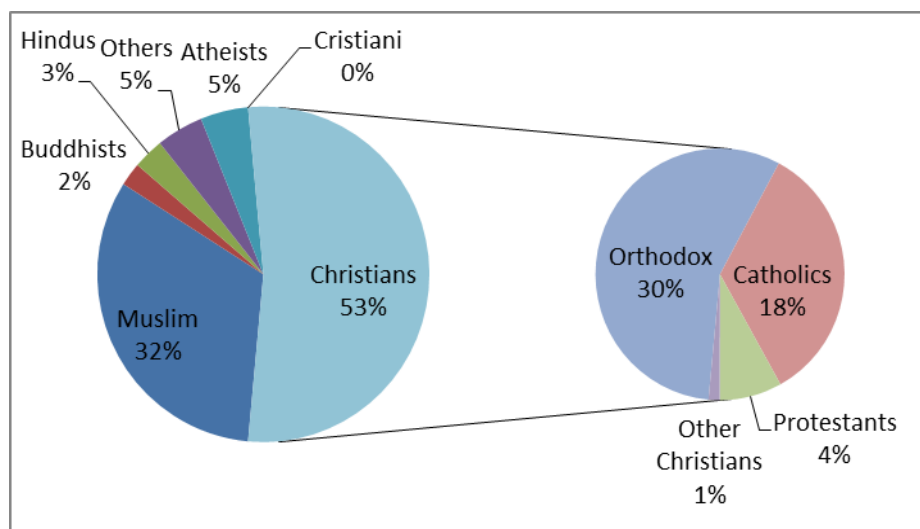*Data Source*: ISTAT Data processing: Personnel.

Immigrants arrive in Italy not only from Africa but also from Eastern Europe, Asia, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh.

Table 1. Number of Foreigners Residing in Italy by Country (Note 1)

Country	resident in Italy	%
Romania	1206938	24%
Albania	441027	9%
Morocco	422980	8%
China	299823	6%
Ukraine	239424	5%
Philippines	168292	3%
India	157965	3%
Bangladesh	139953	3%
Moldova	128979	3%
Egypt	126733	3%

Pakistan	122308	2%
Nigeria	117358	2%
Sri Lanka	111056	2%
Senegal	110242	2%
Peru	97128	2%
Tunisia	95071	2%
Poland	94200	2%
Ecuador	79249	2%
Northern Macedonia	63561	1%
Bulgaria	60129	1%

In the Figure 2 shows the religious affiliation of foreigners residing in Italy.

Figure 2. Foreigners for Religion as of 31 December 2017

Data Source: CESNUR. Data processing: Personnel.

Characteristic of Italian Islam is exactly its heterogeneity, which does not only concern the traditional divisions within Islam due to different tendencies, but also the variety of countries from which immigrants come, in each of which Islam has taken on connotations different, the circumstance is then important that many of these countries have somehow maintained the relationships with their citizens creating associations representative of their interests. All this, together with an individual culture that is at times racist and not very open to welcoming the "different", brakes and greatly hinders the integration of these communities.

In the 31 December 2017, 2,008,900 Muslims lived in Italy, of which 367,100 Italian citizens and 1,641,800 foreigners residing in Italy (Note 2), concentrated mainly in the regions of the North and the Center.

418

These are two profoundly different cultures that draw their origins from two different religious spheres: Islamic and Christian. In fact, while Christianity is set from the beginning by a clear separation between temporal power and religious power: "Give therefore to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's" (Matthew 22,21), in Islam the political and religious spheres are integrated and in some periods (classical era) and in some (fundamentalist) States there is even a subordination of temporal power over the religious one and in any case, even in modern times, political power needs of a religious legitimization (Note 3).

Religion, therefore, is reflected in every field: political and social, governing the life of the Muslim in all aspects, from family law to succession, even criminal law, which punishes transgressions of the Koranic law with corporal punishment, even extremely serious, which can lead to the death of the offender in a very violent manner. In the countries of the fundamentalists (Iran, Afghanistan, Sudan and Nigeria), the relationship between religious and social sphere means that the sacred law contained in the Koran is also the law of the State, which has the task of making it respected and can legislate only in the sectors that the Koran has not regulated.

The intercultural pedagogical approach allows to focus the similarity of ideas, feelings, emotions, traditions and values between different cultures.

Intercultural educational research proposes a model that tends to favor a vision of a-cultural education, emptying education and educational processes from specific cultural aspects that risk omitting the very foundations of the pedagogical assumption. Intercultural studies, while acknowledging the centrality of the cultural fact, tend to give a homogeneous and stereotyped reading for each country or ethnic group of reference. They essentially propose a comparative analysis and each time look for alleged differences between ethnic, religious and ethnic-cultural groups living in the same country.

The Ogden-based research approach consists of (Note 4):

- A principle of variety, which allows us to emphasize the variety by observing microcultures;
- a principle of individuality of the intercultural approach.

Intercultural pedagogy is based on the co-construction of knowledge in which educators and people to educate are together authors of the production of new meanings and practices (Note 5).

For the intercultural pedagogy, the encounter with the other ethnically and culturally different represents, a comparison, a reflection on one's own level of values, rules and behavior. Educating in an intercultural perspective therefore means working in the teaching and learning process of the principles of intercultural education and fully realizing the founding concepts of pedagogy (Note 6). The approach to teaching concepts that refer to intercultural education must be multifactorial.

The young people of foreign origin in Italy have a variety of stories: some, in fact, arrived to rejoin the family, others were born on Italian soil, others came through international adoptions, others are the children of mixed couples, others landed as refugees. They all have in common the need to combine within themselves the different messages and requests of the family culture and the host society. The first common space for dealing with this need is the school, which thus finds itself having to deal with

wide-ranging problems on which it is necessary to build appropriate strategies, pedagogies and specific policies. It is necessary that the school recognizes the different identity of these new students in order to integrate them into the class group. From these problems the intercultural pedagogy was born, reflecting on educational processes in the presence of different cultures. The teacher must become an "intercultural mediator" able to create pedagogical moments capable of going beyond each other's differences.

4. Conclusions

Although attention to intercultural education has been centralized for some time, the results have been those expected.

The results of a reflection on the relationship between sociology and globalization are far from obvious, and difficult to read because of the effects on global society.

The multicultural dimension in the Italian school is a constantly growing phenomenon, so it becomes necessary to intervene through pedagogical paths.

The practice of a multidimensional sociology can allow us to respond to the cognitive challenges posed by the globalization of modern society.

The school is the first space of social inclusion/exclusion, and therefore the school is the first place to act.

Training is fundamental, teaching respect for plurality, feelings, pain and multiculturalism, just as it is important to know the history of the most ancient and contemporary Islamic civilization, and of other cultures.

It is necessary to know from experience, from comparison, from books, images, films and not to be influenced by media propaganda, which often depicts a distorted picture of the Islamic world. Prejudice, distrust and even more ignorance create walls that can hardly be torn down.

Global education, according to the Maastricht Declaration on global education (2002), is an "education that opens people's eyes and minds to the realities of the world". Therefore "global education includes development education, human rights education, sustainability education, peace education and conflict prevention and intercultural education, being the global dimension of education to citizenship".

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Notes

Note 1. The table does not include countries with fewer than 50,000 residents. The data is updated to December 31, 2017. Data source: ISTAT.

Note 2. CESNUR (Centro Studi delle Nuove Religioni - data updated to 31 December 2017).

Note 3. Mancuso, A. S. (2012) *Stato, Chiese e pluralismo confessionale*. Rivista telematica n. 32/2012.

Note 4. Ogden, D. T. et al. (2004). *Exploring the Impact of Culture and Acculturation on Consumer Purchase Decisions: Toward a Microcultural Perspective*. Academy of Marketing Science.

Note 5. Strollo, M. R. (2013). *The Burqa of the West. Reflections for a School without Veils*. Civitas educationis - Liguori, Napoli.

Note 6. Portera, A. (2003). *Pedagogia interculturale in Italia e in Europa*. Vita e pensiero - Milano.