The Humanistic Education in a Unique Pre-Service Teacher Education Program for Ethiopian Immigrants: A Foundation for Bridging Gaps

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Abstract

The unique pre-service teacher education programme for Ethiopian immigrants, operated at a Teacher Education College, encompasses two main approaches to value-oriented education, the pluralistic and particularistic approaches. The programme constitutes a challenging ladder which can reduce the educational, social, cultural, instructional and professional gap of Ethiopians in Israel. This paper presents the humanistic theory perception and displays its characteristics in the unique programme. In order to demonstrate the humanistic education principles in the unique programme, the interviews and documents which accompanied the programme were content analysed. Findings of the case study highlight the applicable and practical components of the humanistic education principle, thus enabling operation of the programme and the success thereof. The insights obtained from the study can facilitate development of unique pre-service teacher education programmes for minority groups that experience difficulties and a gap vis-a-vis mainstream groups.

Keywords: humanistic education, empowerment, Ethiopian immigrants, pre-service teacher education programme, case study

Introduction

The unique pre-service teacher education programme for Ethiopian immigrants was consolidated on the basis of the humanistic education principle, multiculturalism principles [1] [2] and the Freirean theory [3]. This paper relates to the implementation of the humanistic pedagogy principles which constitute an extensive conceptual framework. This framework facilitates reference to people's personality as a whole, knowledge and culture expansion, personal actualisation and equal opportunities for higher education.

The paper comprises five chapters. Chapter 1 describes the programme, Chapter 2 presents the humanistic education principles, Chapter 3 deals with the methodology, Chapter 4 discusses the findings and the manifestation of the humanistic theory in the programme and Chapter 5 summarised the paper.

1. The unique pre-service teacher education programme for Ethiopian immigrants

The pre-service teacher education programme organised by the college for Ethiopian immigrants was conceived on the basis of needs which emerged from the field. The programme aimed to educate Ethiopian pre-service teachers [hereafter – "Students"] in order to enable them to be integrated in the education system. These students have unique needs. Hence, this calls for a unique education programme designed to nurture, empower and grow

pre-service teachers among the Ethiopian community while being sensitive to the various collective and individual needs [4].

The programme mainly aimed to offer members of the Ethiopian community an opportunity to be integrated into the Israeli society by acquiring a familiar profession, responding to the unique needs of Ethiopian immigrant students who encounter difficulties in their absorption in Israel. The picture of the situation in 2000 indicated that **none** of the Ethiopian students complied with the admittance prerequisites for attending the teacher education pathways at the college. Moreover, it showed that in the district of the college there were **no** Ethiopian teachers in all the schools where Ethiopianimmigrant pupils were learning. The numerical-statistical gap illustrated cultural gaps and deprivations which require an initiative for changing the situation.

The principles of the programme were based on learning in a flexible education pathway in two study frameworks: a separate group of Ethiopian immigrants (according to the particularistic approach) and an integrated group with all the other students (according to the pluralistic approach). Furthermore, unique admittance prerequisites were defined and an emphasis was put on the development of the personal-professional image and an individual and group support. The programme included contents and sources taken from the heritage of the Ethiopian immigrants and they were studied in the different courses. This was done in order to draw the students nearer to their heritage, expose new aspects of their life being, establish identification with their heritage, be proud of it in the hope that they would also inculcate it to learners in the education system. The process of empowering the pre-service teachers was implemented throughout the education period at all stages.

The faculty members who taught in the education programme were meticulously chosen. They were aware of the multicultural perception in education and of the differentiation between the students at the college. The programme lecturers underscored the need to change and adapt the teaching methods to the Ethiopian students. The programme included unique courses and exclusive initiatives such as a trip to Ethiopia at the end of the studies. As part of the multicultural discourse of the entire college, a learning centre entitled 'The Legacy of Ethiopian Jewry' was set up for the purpose of organising workshops, educational activities and activities focused on the exposure of the community heritage [5].

After ten years of operations, the programme had about 150 graduates, 65% of whom were well integrated into the formal education system and in the informal education system. Some 5% of them continued their studies towards an M.Ed. degree [6] [7].

2. The humanistic education

This chapter is a literature review of the humanistic education principles: people's personality as a whole, enhancement of knowledge and culture, personal actualisation and equal opportunities for higher education. The conceptual framework of the **humanistic education** constitutes an important and solid foundation for the promotion and nurturing of the Ethiopian immigrant group that failed to be integrated into pre-service teacher education studies. The unique programme planned for the Ethiopian immigrants with the purpose of enabling them to bridge the gap between them and students from the Israeli society learning at the college, serves as a means and a model for developing similar programmes. Further on, the paper presents the essential fundamentals of the humanistic education and indicates some characteristics as they are manifested in the unique programme.

The humanistic education characteristics are grounded in a 2500-year humanistic legacy since Aristotle presented the ideal of humanity. These characteristics encompass qualitative features for a worthy humanity at its best: honesty, harmony, critical reflection, enhanced education, strong character, social involvement, personal and democratic sensitivity, empathic sensitivity, self-actualisation and meaningful existence.

These features find their expression in the extensive pedagogical literature. According to Aloni [8] [9], there are three integrated components: 1. Education for an active, democratic and responsible citizenship; 2. Cultural

nurturing of the pupil/student' personality through systematic exposure to the best human thought and creation; 3. Actualisation of the skills and tendencies embodied in the pupil/student' personality.

Darom [10] extensively describes the humanistic education and scholars' educational theories of thinking underpinning the humanistic education: Maslow, Rogers and Combs.

Maslow [11], one of the prominent pioneers of humanistic psychology at the end of the 2nd World War, argued against behaviourism and psychoanalysis. He wanted to learn about the nature of people not from pathology but rather from human success. Maslow minted the term 'self-actualisation'. That is, 'according to Maslow people who attained self-actualisation fully exhaust their talents, their ability, their potential. These people seem to actualise themselves and make the best of themselves" [10, p. 254]. Maslow underscores that he does not describe an absolute human situation. Rather, people are constantly undergoing a process of self-consolidation and the properties constitute a possible development orientation towards people who are 'human in the full sense of the word' [10,p. 254].

The Hierarchy of Needs conceived by Maslow [11] integrates the self-actualisation concept into a comprehensive model of human motivation. The model is founded on the analysis of people's basic needs, motivating them towards activities which can meet these needs. The model ranks the needs in a hierarchical way, the basic ones being on the physiological, safety, love and belonging level. At the head of the pyramid are the need for esteem and the need for self-actualisation. The human aspiration to grow and develop, exhaust their full potential,is perceived by Maslow as one of people's basic needs. This need is manifested, provided people have satisfied all the previous needs in the hierarchy. People can be attain this on condition that the individual and the society managed to create an environment without hunger and lack of safety, inter-personal alienation and disrespect of people's value. The hierarchy of needs model elaborated by Maslow in order to understand people is particularly relevant to issues of education. The revolutionary humanistic approach applied here is learners' internal motivation rather than coercion as well asreward and punishment policy. This is a perception and way of thinking about people and of the society that discusses moral, values and orientations of general human progress.

Rogers [12] introduced into the humanistic education the lessons learnt from his professional-therapeutic experience. He argued that the success of the therapeutic process resides in the nature of the inter-personal relations established between the therapist and the client. The essential means is the reflection . 'I am with you… I understand you… I do not judge you… On the contrary, I accept you… I cherish you as a person of value… whichever your feelings, fears, sensations are…" [10, p. 258].

The learner-centred focus is the approach which Rogers integrated into the field of education. Education must focus on learners. The essential process transpires in the learners. They will learn through independent activity, in an atmosphere which does not entail pressure, in a supportive and empathic climate. Teachers are the facilitators experience emotions and thoughts of appreciation, caring, trust and respect for the learners. One can distinguish five qualities leading to an experiential learning which is characterised by these qualities. The first quality is learners' personal involvement, both intellectual and emotional. The second is a learning which is initiated by the learners themselves. Even if the stimulus is an external one – by the environment and by a facilitator/teacher, the act of revelation and the flicker of the new comprehension focus on the learners. The third quality is a learning which permeates internally and leaves a mark on the learners' behaviour, attitudes and sometimes their personality. The fourth quality is associated with the learners' self-esteem. They know whether the learning has advanced them, developed them and satisfied their needs. The fifth quality is related to meaning. An experiential learning with the above mentioned qualities is the deepest approach to learning for the learners, leading to their personal growth. Rogers [12] sums up the characteristics of people who fully function: people open to experiences in their life. They are capable of living the moment, relating to their organism as to a trustworthy entity. People who are open to the entirety of the social impact factors, their own needs and perceptions. Their behaviour grows as a result of their awareness of the growth processes which they are undergoing.

The humanistic education principles [12], can draw educators nearer to exhaustion of the qualities required for people's full functioning, putting an emphasis on the nature of the inter-personal relations which constitute the infrastructure.

In addition to [11] and [12], Combs [13] is another theorist who is identified with the humanistic education fundamentals. He underscored the nature of learners' self-image as a major factor determining their learning. Combs specifies seven principles of the humanistic education: develops the learners' experiences that are associated with their unique capability; enhances learners' self-actualisation; develops acquisition of basic competences people need in a multicultural society (academic, personal, inter-personal, communicational and economic competences); involves learners personally in democratic processes of making educational decisions and implementing them; acknowledges the importance of emotions, individual perceptions and values in educational processes; develops learning environments which offer a challenge, comprehend, support and are free of threats; develops the learners' true concern for others and appreciation of values of the unique as well as for the skills of settling situations of conflict.

In fact, Combs (1983) integrated the ideas of Maslow [11] about self-actualisation and the theory of Rogers [12] regarding inter-personal relations. Thus, he described the humanistic education as a cognitive, effective, value-oriented and behavioural education.

Containing the entire humanity of the learner. According to Combs, education should teach young people to understand themselves, others and the human society in which they live. He connected education and the social change.

Moreover, Combs (1983) sets a link to the concepts of Dewey (1960) (see elaboration below), pioneer of the progressive education who had a strong impact on modern education in general and humanistic education in particular.

Darom [10] stipulates that it is difficult to find uniformity in the definitions and characteristics. Each of the scholars representing a theory has another hue and other emphases which form models and perceptions within the extensive field of humanistic education. He argues that there are four major qualities which are the common fundamentals of humanistic education: holistic, humanistic, relevant and experiential. The four qualities on which the humanistic education is based originate in the theory of Dewey [14]. Education according to Dewey is a process whose essence is the very practice and learning it involves rather than the outcome. Education is synonymous with growth, namely the objective of growth is another growth.

Darom [10] attempts to decode the humanistic education characteristics and the way to implement them from theory to practice. He presents 16 principles obtained from content analysis of tens of papers (about 100) and chapters from books (approximately 90). These principles which are common to most scholars yield a clearer picture of the extensive field of humanistic education. Below are the main points: effective (emotional) emphasis, personal growth, inter-personal proximity, integration (of emotion and intellect, of the individual and society, of the learning process and life), relevancy, autonomy (of learners), context (teachers and learners are not cut off from the environment which is a source of a multitude of effects on education – politics, social climate, norms, values, economic situation), change and innovativeness, diversity and creativity, orientation to the process (focusing on the process which combines two objectives: assists in building an infrastructure, atmosphere, climate which facilitate a deep approach to learning as well as raise the processes up to a learning content level which is consciously processed in class), individualism, democratic collaboration, reality (emphasising that people are real here and now with their emotions, awareness of themselves and of involving others in them), 'past-personal' factors (part of the whole personality), appreciation and focus on people.

These factors which are extensively specified [10], form the fundamental assumptions of the humanistic education and will serve as touchstones for analysing the programme designed for Ethiopian immigrants.

3. Methodology

The study was conducted according to the qualitative-interpretive approach of a case study. The case study enables an in-depth observation on occurrences in a small group [15]. The research population consisted of eight lecturers who taught in the programme and four college officials who were partners to the building and leading of the programme. The study included interviews of the 12 lecturers and programme leaders as well as an analysis of 11 documents such as: position papers, minutes of the steering committee meetings, programme assessment reports and annual summaries by the programme coordinator. The interviews and documents were content analysed. Definition of the categories was done on the basis of previous studies which explored pedagogical perceptions (ETIC) and of the collected data (EMIC) [16]. The categories were accepted after reaching a concurrence of at least 67% between the researchers. The analysis was performed on the following levels: the individual interview level and the group interview level, the single document and the entirety of the documents [15].

4. Findings

4.1 The humanistic education principles as they are manifested in the pre-service teacher education programme for Ethiopian immigrants

Aloni [8] indicates that pre-service teacher education programmes are grounded in findings of studies according to which teaching-learning processes develop if they are designed with reference to the humanistic discourse. Hence, the teaching method should be changed from both the theoretical and applied aspects. The pre-service teacher education programme for Ethiopian immigrantswas built according to the humanistic education fundamentals. Analysis of its development revealed humanistic components which led to the consolidation of the theoretical parts as well as the practice in the unique programme. Below are the major components manifested in the programme.

The world of contents

The programme comprises contents and sources from the Ethiopian immigrants' legacy which are studied in the various courses. During the authentic and relevant class discourse the students became acquainted with their heritage, learnt to be proud of it and even to hope that in future they would inculcate it to learners in the education system. One of the literature course lecturers expressed herself in the following way: 'It is very important to allocate room for the legacy. I use texts from their culture in my lessons…'. Another lecturer said: 'If I choose to teach poetry, these are poems written by Ethiopian immigrants. I help them to write poems and stories from their world, mainly narratives oftheir immigration to Israel'. Another example: 'In the computer applications course, the students were requested to surf the internet searching for information about the Ethiopiancommunity' (excerpts from the lecturers' interviews). A general view of the pre-service teacher education programme for Ethiopian immigrants ' illustrates the students' internal motivation to advance, both on the academic and personal levels. The students attest to their great desire to know more about their legacy and enrich their knowledge. They appreciate the value-oriented world, specifying the values of modesty, honesty, respect for grownups which are part of their culture and they wish to preserve and strengthen these values. In particular assertions of this kind were prominent in the roots-searching journey to Ethiopian and the encounter with the culture they left behind when they immigrated to Israel.

In fact, the world of contents which integrates the legacy and culture of Ethiopian Jews shows that the Ethiopian students perceive the humanistic education as a collective entity with a 'personal past' which enhances the creation of the learning process as a full partner to the content building. The distinguished place of the Ethiopian immigrants' unique contents manifests both overtly and covertly the criticism against the fact that these content areas are not studied and are being eliminated due to the wish to be rapidly absorbed in the Israeli society and

in the dominant mainstream. This way entailed building of 'stone upon a stone', namely building strata for reducing the gap between the Ethiopian immigrants and the other students.

Teaching strategies

The teaching processes in the Ethiopian immigrants' class are grounded in the understanding that students' learning styles are culture-dependent. Belief in the humanistic education and comprehension of creating a class dialogical system brought about teaching and learning strategies suitable to every individual, every student, according to their abilities and culture. One of the lecturers pointed out:'I devote manyhours to interpretation and finding of analogies'. Another example: 'Maximum attention should be paid to the language, basic competences in written and spoken expression'(excerpts from the lecturers' interviews). One of the principles in the vision of the unique programme, prominent in the documents summarising every year of activity, is the principle of seeing students in a holistic view. That is, 'Seeing students on all the levels where they are at simultaneously during the process of their pre-service teacher education. The human aspect, expansion of their general education, exposure to the culture of the world, to new competences, to their social, familial, economic and academic place' [21].
One of the humanistic education principles [8] [10] is manifested here, namely the holistic principle which puts the whole person at the centre. It engages in a wide variety of competences – from reading, writing and mathematics and up to problem solution, communication and understanding oneself and others.

The teaching staff

The staff was chosen based on a multicultural and humanistic orientation. 'He attended an in-service training course about the legacy of Ethiopian Jews and he is aware of the humanistic perception in education regarding students' differentiation and special needs. A procedure of continuous relation between the lecturers was designed, allowing personal follow-up and adjustment of the programme, so that the academic requirements are not undermined' [17].
In this context another humanistic education principle is highlighted [10]. This is the relevancy principle which is tightly connected to learners' life, aspiration to acquire knowledge, grow, love and find a meaning to their existence.
The roundtable discussion with the lecturers of the unique programme shows that in part of their lessons they embraced the theory of learning conceived by Rogers [12]. That is, manifesting the humanistic education principle according to which the learners were personally involved in the learning. Within the framework of their practicum they moved from the stage of active learning to practical experiences. They were requested to initiate special activities designed to consolidated their status as representatives of the Ethiopian community and as individuals with a professional knowledge of teaching in the schools into which they were integrated. They introduced into the training sessions at the Centre for the Legacy of Ethiopian Jewry their personal experience acquired by personal interviews of their families and relatives and by perusal of professional literature. They related to their pupils at school as to learners who trust them and want to be promoted by them. Thus, a sort of pyramid of deep approach to learning was formed on all levels, from studies at the college, learning from the tutors, learning from the mentor-teachers at school as well as support granted by colleagues and accompanying pedagogical instructors [5].

Practical experience in teaching

A special instruction and practical experience setup was designed, consisting of a group reflective discourse. The humanistic education principle [14], i.e. practical experience and full integration of practice and theory,

was manifested by the component of training through maximal attention by the programme leaders. The considerations stemmed from understanding the importance and contribution of the practical experience to the comprehensive education of the Ethiopian immigrant students. One example is a group which practiced in Kiryat Malachi, after a focused preparation for integration at school. The practical experience was performed on a special basis of a whole group that came to the school and also made a contribution to the school beyond the tasks of lesson observation and current experience. This was a way to attain personal empowerment and support already at the initial stages or as the students said: 'The practicum reinforced outself-confidence' and 'We felt what being welcome meant'. Moreover, power was encompassed in the very arrival of a whole group to school rather than of pairs or individual students.

As part of this approach and among the other activities of the students scheduled to practice in the 2nd-6th grades, the students participated together with the pupils in a national virtual quiz game entitled 'Discover its beauty' which engaged in the legacy of Ethiopian Jewry. The pupils reached the final stage of the competition and won the 4th place. The students organised visits to 'The Legacy of Ethiopian Jewry' learning centre at the College [18]. The learning centre constitutes part of the discourse at the college and it organises workshops and educational activities. The learning centre demonstrates the heritage of the Ethiopian immigrant community to the students at the college and to the pupils in the neighbouring schools. This is an actualisation of the fourth humanistic education principle [10]. The experiential principle of the humanistic education, which leads to a learning climate infused with both challenge and support as well as considers the uniqueness of all learners, their needs and objectives [10].

The successful practicum was a very beneficial experience in the learning process and the acquisition of the teaching profession. The positive reverberations of the practicum were highly satisfactory to both the programme leaders, the partners in the field of education and the students. This was a considerable challenging hurdle which they managed to overcome and which invigorated and encouraged them on their continued way.

Support setup

Within the framework of the individual support, the students learnt how to conduct themselves in the life areas of work, studies, family, personal counselling, learning disabilities diagnosis, personal and academic support and inculcation of basic learning skills. This manifested the humanistic view of seeing students as a holistic entity and the need to refer to everything associated with the needs. Shapira [in 10] indicates several principles, attempting to characterise the humanistic education: comprehensive holistic approach, emotion-intellect connection, social-democratic change, finding syntheses between essences such as relevant process and content as well as consideration of the 'personal-past' factor.

The individual mentoring was another form of accompanying the Ethiopian immigrant students. This was done by excelling students at the beginning of the way and by other students later on as peers. The mentoring was mainly manifested by individual academic assistance. The humanistic education by its very nature of being people-oriented applies here on both sides – the mentors and the mentees. The contribution was reciprocal and the mentors knew how to derive great satisfaction from the unique encounter. One of the mentors pointed out in a summing up conversation: 'I benefited and contributed, I made myself a friend' [18, p. 182].

The group mentoring engaged mainly in presenting common issues. It offered an opportunity to alleviate difficulties and a sense of distress and created a soil for consolidating new positions and approaches, being a support group. This support group illustrated from theory to practice the second principle of the humanistic education [10]. The humanistic principle assists learners to gain more esteem and respect for themselves and for others. It encourages collaboration and conflict settlement by way of negotiation and dialogue.

Moreover, the spirit of the humanistic education is illustrated by the research findings of Millet & Gilad [5]. The findings showed that the college and the lecturers played a meaningful role in the teaching and learning.

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The standards focused the belief in the students' capabilities and the commitment to lead them to the required attainments.

The students mentioned the components of the programme and the characteristics thereof: flexibility, gradation, enhanced fundamental studies, group and individual support setup and mentorship. According to them, due to these factors, the programme provided a response to their needs and enabled them to acquire education, profession and an opportunity to be well integrated into the Israeli society [5, p.44]. The humanistic perception of exhausting the students' potential was strongly manifested here in all the support setup in order to implement from theory to practice the ideas presented by various theorists [11], [14], [13], [10], [9].

To sum up, a brief review of the programme structure and components indicates that the humanistic education principles were encompassed in the programme as a basis for narrowing the gap between the weak minority group and the mainstream majority.

The programme was structured according to the needs of the Ethiopian immigrant students and was based on the principles of flexibility, gradation and individual support. As mentioned above, the programme integrated the approach of the particularistic multicultural education in the first year and the approach of the pluralistic multicultural education in the following years.

In the first year the programme underscored the academic contents on the one hand and the inculcation of the linguistic foundations and teaching strategies on the other. The choice of general academic contents allowed the students to build a wide basis of education as a preparation for the disciplinary learning in the specialisation studies. This emphasises the humanistic education view of exposing students to the general culture and of enriching their world.

As a result and according to the first objective (inculcation of linguistic foundations and teaching strategies) the curriculum included basic courses designed for preparing an infrastructure for the learning. For example: fostering mathematical thinking, English, writing skills, expression and comprehension, computer fundamentals, language basics, learning strategies and preparation for the SAT test. In accordance with the second objective (general academic contents) the following courses were chosen: history of the People of Israel in its country, pedagogy, Judaism, history-the classic world. In the disciplinary studies too an emphasis was put on the inculcation of basic knowledge and basic skills for academic learning. A holistic view of students in line with the humanistic education principles as well as an elimination of deprivations and gaps can be identified here. The courses and the accompanying activities which dealt with the legacy of Ethiopian Jewry manifest the principles of education for multiculturalism by learning about the 'self' and the 'other' in order to empower the weak individuals to express themselves.

In the second year the students learnt twice a week general pedagogical subjects of the pathway and on the other days they attended the specialisation courses according to their choice. At the same time they started their practicum: during the first semester a weekly workshop took place, dealing with pre-teaching processes. It aimed to prepare the students for the practical work at school by learning and experiencing teachers' field of engagement within a supervised framework. This illustrated the characteristics of the humanistic education: relevancy, experience, integration of intellect and the emotion and actualisation of the personal competences of the individual students.

In the third year the programme enhanced the teaching experience by expanding the knowledge of different teaching strategies, acquaintance with unique issues of education and practice with learners from different groups and ages. Moreover, the students practiced and attended an academic writing course (for writing seminar papers), based on independent search in bibliographic sources, headlines organisation, writing a scientific assignment. This was grounded in the humanistic education principle of developing and actualising the individual students' skills.

In the fourth year the studies underscored three foci: continued practicum at school, an end-of-year project and writing seminar papers. Furthermore, the programme included instructional tours which offered the students a window of opportunities for getting acquainted with the country and its various aspects. This fact was

validated by the very profile of the students: most of them were not Israeli-born and thuswere not acquainted with the geographic and historical aspects of the country. As future teachers, instructional tours and out-of-class studies will constitute for them important and meaningful educational tools in their teaching processes. These too emphasise the humanistic education principles, i.e. expanding the overall education of the students and manifesting the actualisation of their capabilities. Moreover, pedagogical principles of building a circle of knowledge and culture are manifested through a dialogical process between the lecturers and the students according to their needs.

Graduates' trips to Ethiopia

One of the salient examples of the empowerment process of the programme and its contribution to the personal, professional and cultural identity is the trips to Ethiopia [19] [20]. The students described these trips in the following manner: 'The trip and the visit to the villages, the synagogues and the Jewish cemeteries proved the existence of the ancient Jewish community'; 'The trip confronted us with the long way we had passed, from being shepherds to academicians. We are capable, we can, we did it'; 'In the poverty of Ethiopia we saw learning, pedagogical thinking in the crowded classroom and mainly politeness, serenity and respect for the teacher'; '…and then we thought a lot about the essence of education' [21, pp. 34-38].

The trips to Ethiopian were the peak of the pre-service teacher education programme. The students came to the roots-searching journey with an Israeli educational, instructional and cultural charge which was entirely different from the educational and cultural views they saw in Ethiopia. This educational, social, cultural and instructional gap was prominent throughout the journey and led to thinking and assessment of the trip by the students themselves. They did it, each of them alone and all of them together as a community, from Ethiopia to Israel and in Israel until they have completed the phase of acquiring education for teaching in Israel. The journey enabled the students to consolidate their personal identity and professional perception as new teachers who managed to overcome the gap between the beginning of their personal journey from Ethiopia and the journey to Ethiopia as teacher education college graduates.

5. Summary

Observing the programme through the prism of the humanistic education enlightened unique components in the pre-service teacher education programme for Ethiopian immigrant students, components associated with bridging the gap between the latter and other students at the college.

The programme was conceived out of criticism of the education system reality. That is, until ten years ago there was not even one Ethiopian teacher in all the schools in the area around the College. The position paper submitted to the Ministry of Education with an application to open a unique programme designed for Ethiopian immigrants illustrated that educators embraced the spirit of social justice and called for bridging the gap which existed in both the college and at the schools.

Generally speaking the programme aimed in fact to offer students an equal opportunity for learning and being integrated into labour market [22]. The programme engaged in the disciplinary and pedagogical academic subjects, learning the heritage as part of a multicultural perception, skills and practicum as part of humanistic education in parallel to general topics such as: gender, equality, education for values and enhancement of schooling. It consisted of individual and group support frameworks according to the students' needs and based on the characteristics of this population as part of implementing the humanistic education principles [8], [23], [26].

The implementation of the programme for more than ten years materialises the need for a curricular reform, aspiration to equalitarian pedagogy, exhaustion of individual and group potential. Furthermore, it increases the value of social equality as an essential and crucial essence in promoting and fostering a unique social-cultural

group as well as promoting the wider society's practice and awareness of values of social justice, equality and democracy as measures which are necessary for bridging gaps.

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