Preparing Early Childhood Students for Future Active Citizens

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Abstract

Students and teachers learn about citizenship through the identification of the world they live in, injustices of life, and joint actions to create the right conditions for democratic life. Early childhood education can play a key role in the development of a child's citizenship. However, factors such as the insufficient training of teachers in matters of citizenship education in combination with the unclear goals in the early childhood education curriculum make this task particularly difficult and make it hard for early childhood education teachers to decide to engage further, as shown by findings from a previous study.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the concept of citizenship on its theoretical basis and specifically to highlight how citizenship education is outlined in early childhood. We examine practices for the age group of 4-6 years, where in the Greek educational system they attend kindergarten. We developed a series of activities that can take place in a kindergarten for citizenship education, on issues regarding decision making, behavioral evaluation, rules, dispute resolution, management of material and natural resources, democracy, tender, dialogue, peaceful coexistence, and contact with different cultures.

These activities can serve as a guide for early childhood education teachers, who feel insecure to introduce the concepts of citizenship in the early childhood education area, and we hope that they will be a trigger to realize that in a playful and easy way they can approach these demanding concepts.

Keywords: citizenship education, early childhood education, practical applications, Greek kindergarten

1. Introduction

In Ancient Greece, the idea of political life and the conception of man as a being limited by nature to live a political life emerged for the first time, as well as the idea of their liberation from the necessity, and above all their freedom (Balias, 2008, p.13).

According to Banks, Castles and Gutman (2012, p. 56), a person to be called citizen must work against injustice and not for the sake of individual recognition or personal gain, but for the benefit of all people. To operate through a process of recognition of duty, ignoring the privileges, but ensuring information and the ability to act for all. Certainly, someone to become a citizen of a nation-state, according to law, does not necessarily mean that they will achieve integration into the prevailing society, or that they will be recognized as an equal citizen by its most members, and this is probably because racial, cultural, linguistic, and religious characteristics of an individual can significantly affect this recognition (Banks 2011; Banks, Castles, & Gutman, 2012).

Regarding the concept of citizenship, Marshall describes it as a social position granted to all those who are full members of a community, by the law. All those who hold it are equal in terms of rights and obligations arising from it, without a universal principle that determines what those rights and obligations will be (Marshall & Bottomore, 1995, p. 62; Millei & Imre, 2009; Gollob & Weindinger, 2010).

In modern societies, the concept of citizenship in (nation) states dates to the late 18th century and is specifically linked to the French and the American Revolution. During this period, the hereditary kingdom was replaced by the sovereign will of the people, and the concept of active citizens came to the fore (Castles, 2012, pp. 73-74). Thus, in the present age of globalization, the modern citizen could identify with the person who adopts the principles of social justice, social cohesion, cooperation, and is possessed by a spirit of cooperation, flexibility, autonomous thinking, judgment, and action (Nicolaou, 2006, p. 447).

We therefore conclude that the key to the concept of citizenship is basically participation in social actions, as a process and not as a result (Glover, 2004) since it is a concept structured both socially and individually (Haste, 2004). In particular, Haste refers to the way in which politics and ethics are intertwined, as there is a link between a person's motivation to politicize, and their moral sensitivity, which is related to a sense of individual responsibility for taking action or motivating another person to act (Haste & Hogan, 2006).

2. Citizenship education

The growing racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity in several countries around the world, as well as the growing recognition and legitimacy of diversity in them, re-emphasizes the need to address issues related to citizenship (Banks, Castles, & Gutman, 2012, p. 55). This is because citizens in a democratic society are important to maintain stable bonds with their cultural communities as well as to participate effectively in the common culture (Banks, 2011).

In this endeavor, the concepts of multiculturalism and diversity seem to hold a special place

in education, as they help young people to understand multiple perspectives and worldviews, to realize that it is possible to see the social global phenomena as socially constructed belief systems. In addition, they enable them to understand that their own point of view is one of those, contributing to the improvement of social knowledge, self-knowledge in their freedom, so that eventually they manage to appreciate diversity and create synergies with others for a common and creative problem solving (Berg & Goncalves, 2007, p. 325).

But what do we define as active citizen nowadays? He is a person who actively participates in the events of the world in which he lives, such as volunteering and voting, who consistently exercises his democratic rights and responsibilities, while at the same time showing self-respect, mutual respect, accepting the diversity and peaceful coexistence of people (Hoskins, 2014; Karakatsani, 2003; Balias, 2008; Christou, 2010). From the above definition it becomes clear that the need for active citizens is considered more urgent than ever due to the many and great crises that humanity is facing.

The concept of citizenship regarding children is related to the idea of them being active members of society and specifically through the actions they implement (Ocana, 2003). This implies that it encourages them to think about what they are doing and the reactions that may result from it (Baker, 2013). We therefore conclude that it is particularly important for children to develop those skills, attitudes and behaviors that will enable them to be able to face any challenges that may arise in their later life (Baker, 2013).

But to achieve this, the cooperation of the family and the school is required, since the children spend a large part of their everyday life in it. After all, according to scientific findings, the knowledge resulting from early learning is necessary for the active participation of citizens in their later life, and this is because pre-school education plays a vital role in the development of a person's character and social capacity (Katz & McClellan, 1997).

Citizenship education as a lifelong process contributes to all the above, as it requires continuous learning and is related to the overall development of the individual, without being a result of the curriculum for a specific time (Ailwood et al., 2011). Education seems to play a decisive role in the development of citizenship for a new global citizen who will be characterized by new virtues, so that they can live together with other human beings in the new reality (Banks, 2011; Banks, Castles, & Gutman, 2012; Christou, 2010). Education as a citizen from an early age is of paramount importance, as their sense of belonging and identity grows rapidly during this age, because of their experiences, activities and relationships with others (Ben Arieh & Boyer, 2005; Brooker & Woodhead, 2008).

The success of school lies in the preparation of students to take on the role of citizen, something that is a special honor and privilege, since the school is one of the most important institutions of political socialization for them (Konstantinidou, Kyridis, & Tsioumis, 2017). But for citizenship education to be effective, it must emphasize into active and participatory ways of learning and teaching, giving the child the opportunity to explore and develop their skills through the exercise of their rights in society (Voet, 1998). It is therefore necessary for a curriculum to be experiential and to help children interact and think (Siraj-Blatchford & Clarke, 2000).

A weakness of the current understanding of citizenship education, is that teachers know what to teach, but do not know why, while according to Penderi (2018) they find it difficult to understand how to understand the concept of citizenship through their educational activities. This is where the big ideas come in handy.

• The first idea is related to the values and their promotion, such as information, critical thinking, responsibility, taking duties, and respecting the identities of others.

• The second idea is related to the development and shaping of the identities of young people by providing them with help now, or later in life.

• The third idea deals with active participation and education in voting.

• The fourth idea is related not only to rights but also to duties.

• The fifth idea deals with the responsibility of all participants in the educational process, and not only teachers.

• The sixth idea is related to the right balance between knowledge, understanding, skills, values, and attitudes, and its success is based on the interaction of all these elements.

• Finally, the seventh idea supports the seriousness with which the project of education in the capacity of citizen must be approached, to bring the desired results (Tate, 2000, pp. 69-73).

It is worth mentioning that to be educated as a citizen, children must be able to observe adults cooperating with each other and learning how to play fair, share, express their views and accept critically someone else's ideas (Baker, 2013).

In addition, according to the Atkinson (2000, p. 97) approach, citizenship education is not defined as a separate subject, but should be a set of coordinated processes, policies and activities that incorporate many of the elements of citizenship.

But the question that arises is how can all this be achieved through teaching? And the answer comes from Banks (2008, 2002), citing several ways that can contribute to this, such as textbooks and multicultural oriented teaching materials, transformative and innovative teaching methods, as well as extracurricular activities that can contribute to development and cultivating democratic and intercultural skills.

Only in an equal school environment, students are taught to share their experiences of their perceptions and attitudes, towards people of different backgrounds, to interact with their classmates from different cultures, and to choose them as friends more easily, to be able to develop democratic attitudes, to cooperate and compete, to care for society and their fellow human beings, and to be able to act (Banks, 2008, pp. 135-137; Banks, 2002, p. 88).

So, we conclude that being responsible is not just a skill, but a way of life, that teachers can instil in themselves based on how they handle everyday situations with children during their caring, since teachers play a key role in building student self-esteem (Claxton & Carr, 2004).

In summary, Crick (1998) in his report argues that effective civic education requires action on three axes. In particular, young people should be encouraged to develop values of social and

moral responsibility, to seek local involvement in the community, and to be educated in political education by acquiring skills and knowledge for critical engagement with policy issues, in order to ultimately become effective in public life and believe that they are able to influence government locally and nationally (Condor-Gibson, 2007, p. 117).

3. Citizenship education in early childhood education

The issue of citizenship, in the first years of formal school education (children aged 5-8), raises several discussions with strong social, historical, cultural and educational aspects. At the core of these are adults' perceptions of children, their abilities, and the way in which they should be socialized in the dominant culture of the society where they live. As a result, the issue of citizenship in early childhood is associated with sociological theories of childhood, and theories of children's rights (Ailwood, et al. 2011, pp. 641-642). According to the sociology of childhood, the fact that children participate democratically in society, has the effect of being treated by others as active members, citizens with rights and responsibility for their own lives (Turnsek, 2009; Nichols, 2007).

Citizenship education in early childhood education reminds us of what Gerhardt (2004, p. 18) rightly states, that "babies born now are the adults who will take care of us in our old age, who will run our businesses, and they will live next to us." So, we wonder, what kind of citizens do we want to be? Emotionally balanced to be able to perform their talents or helpless from their hidden sensibilities? (Gammage, 2006, p. 236). For students ready to face tomorrow's challenges according to Paulo Freire (1998, p. 3) we should dare to speak to children scientifically and not with "blah blah".

The above project concerns a challenge that is considered more suitable for childhood, as it allows a combination of elements of social education, health education, and citizenship. Since through this combination development is allowed without discrimination, the development of the student in a rational / emotional person is encouraged (Hill & Robertson, 2009, pp. 260-261).

On the other hand, children's participation in citizenship issues is a tension, as it moves between the need to support children's developing abilities, and their treatment as participants, based on which a debate is raised about what kind of protection should be ultimately provided to children (Ailwood, et al. 2011, p. 643).

Nowadays, pre-school civic education is considered a sensible choice (Millei & Imre, 2009; Phillips, 2010). And this is since today it is more necessary than ever to build the concept of citizenship, since children from an early age are called to coexist with students from different cultural backgrounds and gradually build an open and tolerant mentality (Nicolaou, 2005; Torney Purta & Vermeer, 2004). The process of learning to be an active citizen is complex and continuous, starting at a very young age and continuing until the end of a person's life (Keser, Akar, & Yildirim, 2011), more specifically the involvement of children aged 5-6 in group activities, sharing responsibilities, and working together (Oikonomidis & Eleftherakis, 2011). This involvement of children in community problems has the effect of giving strength to their voices (Phillips, 2010). After all, as Danner and Jonyniene (2012) reasonably point

out, kindergarten is a place where children can experience the principles of democracy and democratic decision-making.

Citizenship education aims to give children the opportunities, skills, and knowledge to become good and active citizens, who will develop democratic skills and a sense of care and respect for others.

It is a type of education through which students will be able to express their views in various ways, but always with respect and self-expression (Tsioumis, Kyridis, Papageridou, & Sotiropoulou, 2015). The whole process involves the knowledge of political and social institutions, since it is important for people to understand the decision-making processes, their nature, their obligations, the way in which they are called to handle them, and to participate in them. Finally, it is a type of education that teaches students knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes (Berg and Gonçalves 2007, 326; Banks, Castles, and Gutman 2012; Torney- Purta & Vermeer, 2004; Atubra, 2009 as quoted in Boadu, 2013; Tassoni et al., 2002).

Of particular interest in the Crick (DfEE / QCA 1998) report is the table of concepts, skills, abilities, values, dispositions, and knowledge that the children's contact with citizenship issues can offer.

• the ability to use reasoned reasoning both orally and in writing.

• the ability to collaborate and work effectively with others.

• the ability to consider and appreciate the experience and perspective of others.

• the ability to accept other views.

• the ability to develop a problem-solving approach.

• the ability to use modern media and technology critically to gather information.

• a critical approach to evidence and the ability to look for a "fresh" proof.

• the ability to recognize forms of manipulation and persuasion.

• the ability to identify, respond to, and influence social, moral, and political challenges; (DfEE / QCA, 1998, p. 44).

In its side, the school gives the child the opportunity to acquire knowledge through the formal curriculum and its experiences in the school community, since it interacts with peers, is involved in participatory decision-making processes and learns rules of self-discipline and respect (Papakonstantinou & Katsiras, 1998), with the result that its political formation starts from childhood, where it is called to accept the political culture of the group to which it belongs (Givalos, 2005, pp. 22-23; Terlexis, 1975, pp. 21-23).

Thus, the school in its own way prepares students to participate in society by providing them with the necessary skills to take part in public debates always respecting the principles of freedom and equality (Konstantinidou, Kyridis, & Tsioumis, 2017). However, it is observed

that in most curricula, the principles and objectives of citizenship are limited to issues such as environmental and intercultural education, while demonstrating an obvious lack of teacher training in this area (Penderi, 2018).

Clough and Holden (2002, p. 3) cite a series of contents for the practical teaching of civic education:

1) Truth. Teachers and students should be interested in local research and policy issues by gathering evidence from a full range of courses, including information that reflects different perspectives and understandings of themselves and their relationship with the others.

2) Honesty. Teachers and students should be concerned about investigating how the media presents information and identifying stereotypes and other forms of misrepresentation.

3) Justice. Teachers and students should be interested in understanding that resources can be allocated in different ways. These economic choices affect individuals and communities, and reflect critically on their own views, those of people living in other places and times as well as individuals with different values and customs.

4) Trust. Teachers and students should be interested in recognizing that the voices of children should be heard, recognizing the worlds law and the Conventions on Human Rights. Protect citizens from understanding how teams can work together, to solve problems locally and globally.

5) Sense of duty. Teachers and students should be interested in ensuring that children can participate in the school decision-making process, and challenge stereotypes and other forms of injustice (Korhonen & Graeffe, 2007, p. 170).

The kindergarten is the first meeting place for children from different environments, who are called to interact and communicate, developing their sense of belonging into a group, but each carrying their own biography (Strantzali & Tsioumis, 2020). This implies that children are "Already early citizens" in their societies, therefore the role of pre-school education is to create the necessary conditions for children to contribute in essential ways to their quality of life now, and in the future (Turnsek, 2009). The critical involvement of the early childhood education teacher with citizenship issues acquaints students with the dimensions of statehood, both positive and negative, but for the teacher to be able to succeed this it is necessary to precede his education in it (Dagkas, 2014). The early childhood education teacher is therefore required to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to manage questions related to human relationships (Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford, & Taggart, 2004).

This means that for teachers to be able to support their students in such an endeavour they will have to express the reasoning behind their decisions, helping them to develop a rudimentary argument, promote ways to deal with conflict, and boost self-esteem, which is essential for the development of active citizens. In addition, it is the teacher's responsibility to analyse their own position, and then take the necessary steps to make teaching more inclusive, providing students with strategies to challenge and address prejudices, helping them become familiar with their own identity, and the challenge of stereotypes, so that students can not

only know themselves from their own perception, but also find ways to recognize how others see them (Hill & Robertson, 2009, pp. 268-269).

Considering all the above, as well as that research on civic education has shown that the concepts of politics are built from an early age and this continues, children face the whole project individually and positively, emphasizing the need to implement civic education from pre-school (Brett, Mompoint, & Salema, 2009). According to Nichols (2007), the above is also supported by international children's advocacy and service organisations that are in favour of their participation in decision-making processes, as well as their active citizenship.

Although education on the ideas of ethics, the values of citizenship, and democratic participation can be considered in common sense as unquestionably 'good', however in one field pre-school education still has a long way to go in order to unhook and to analyse what these words can mean in practice, or how this language structures young children and teachers in the first years of their schooling (Ailwood et al., 2011, p.5), but this does not negate the importance of starting from early childhood education (Korhonen, 2005). After all, the time has come for young children of early childhood age to stop being an obstacle to the implementation of education as citizens and the understanding of their rights, as supported by relevant scientific findings (James & Prout, 1997; Hallet & Prout, 2003).

4. Applications of citizenship education for kindergarten

In a Karadimou et.al (2014) survey, regarding primary school teachers views on citizenship education, among other things they were asked whether they consider certain citizenship actions important, and how often they apply them. The results of the survey showed that on the one hand teachers consider education important as a citizenship, but unfortunately on the other hand their responses to how often they implement relevant actions were not as encouraging.

This thought served as a springboard for the writing of a small but concise action guide for early childhood education teachers, to overcome the thought and fear of dealing with the issue of citizenship from the age of early childhood, and to include them in their daily routine.

The proposed activities have been implemented in the Greek public kindergarten with great success. They are part of a personally designed larger group of activities and those were chosen because they attracted the most interest of the students and brought the expected learning outcomes. The activities took place in a kindergarten class consisting of 27 students (15 aged 5-6 years, and 12 aged 4-5 years), where 4 of them were bilingual.

The following 15 indicative activities are divided into five main axes:

4.1 Actions for respect of the principle of the majority

4.1.1 The activities train

This activity aims to help students to make decisions regarding their daily educational programming. Specifically, students are given the opportunity to engage in a process of

selecting actions that are related to their interests at a present time. In each case a set of options is given to the students, programmed by the teacher, who tries to balance the curriculum and the learning needs of the students.

Specifically, the teacher with the children designs and places in the classroom a train with wagons. The first wagon has the role of locomotive. Inside each wagon there is a topic to be studied that will take place in a quarterly time frame. The topics can be posed after a discussion with the children regarding their interests, and after the guidance from the teacher. Each time they are going to work on a subject, the voting process takes place, where through democratic procedures the most popular topic is selected and placed in the locomotive. A new subject is placed in the empty wagon for exploration, and the process is repeated in the same way for the other subjects.

By completing this activity, the children will have practiced the value of responsibility, democracy, and the cultivation of their critical ability.

4.1.2 Which way will Goofy choose?

Through this activity, students come across the concept of democracy, and respect for the principle of majority. The activity aims to cultivate the student's ability to choose whether to agree or disagree with a proposal, through a pleasant voting process, and then to be called upon to respect the majority decision.

Specifically, an activity or topic is put up for discussion in a playful way. Goofy's dummy is placed at the beginning of a drawn path. The path in its course meets a fork. The children are asked to place a Yes or No sign on Goofy path, indicating which path to take. The route with the most preferences is the most prevalent and will be followed by all the students in the class.

Upon completion of the activity students will be able to respect democratically made decisions and manage dilemmas.

4.2 Actions to promote communication and dispute resolution through dialogue.

4.2.1 The discussion wheel

The discussion wheel is designed to teach students to respect each other's opinion and to be able to engage in dialogue.

Specifically, the teacher along with the children builds and places a wheel in the discussion corner. It is divided into as many parts as the students in the class. They stick a photo of each child on each part of the wheel and write its name. On each topic discussed, they turn the wheel and make sure that all children are given the same time to express their views.

Upon completion, students will be able to recognize the need to respect each other's opinion and the value of dialogue.

4.2.2 Courtroom table

Through this activity, the goal is to involve students in processes of resolving disputes

between them.

To achieve this goal, the teacher creates a corner in the classroom called the courtroom table. This is a small table with two chairs. In case of an argument or disagreement between two children in the play area, the teacher encourages the students to sit on the chairs facing each other, to talk and to present their arguments to each other to persuade the opposite side for the correctness of their arguments. In case they still cannot resolve their dispute, other children who attend the courtroom table as public intervene stating their opinion regarding the issue.

After completing the activity, students will have been trained in resolving their differences using a constructive dialogue.

4.2.3 The News Stand

Through the stand activity, students are asked to inform their friends about something new they have learned.

To achieve the above goal, the teacher prepares and provides empty ready-made sheets having a form of a newspaper. Every morning those children who believe to have a special new to present to their classmates, take one form of "newspaper" and draw what concerns them, or what they saw and want to discuss in class. Then they hang the newspaper with pegs on a rope in the classroom, and whoever wants to learn about a presented subject can pull and examine the corresponding drawing.

After the activity, the children will be able to understand the necessity of communication with their fellow classmates, and to appreciate the value of information.

4.2.4 The riddle of the day

The aim of this activity is to enable students to think combinatorically to solve a problem. They state a problem in a playful way, either using supervisory material, or through a small event, and the students are invited in a discussion to solve it. Indicative ideas for reflection:

• The frog is in the pond. The bridge broke. Near it there are only water lilies and wood sticks. What will the frog do to get to his mom?

• Little Kiko went to the forest with his grandfather. Suddenly he saw a beautiful flower and ran to cut it, when he returned, he did not find his grandfather. He has only one flute with him. How will he manage to find him?

• A small boat travels to Bananaville. Suddenly a terrible storm breaks out on its way. How will the boat manage to avoid the storm and reach its destination safely?

• A grandfather has 7 candies and 3 grandchildren that he loves the same. How will he distribute the candies for they are all happy?

At the end of this activity, students will be trained to think in combination to solve a complex problem.

4.3 Voluntary and environmental actions

4.3.1 Recycling, Our school garden, I clean the neighborhood park

It is an activity that aims to stimulate children's interest in issues related to the protection of the natural environment.

For the needs of this activity, one of the classroom boards will be used for social activities that will be carried out jointly with the children. The table will record their ideas and will be organized per month. At the beginning of each month, they will check the action plan and see what action they have recorded. They will then jointly organize how they can do it.

Ideas with possible actions for the classroom board entitled "Protect the environment" could be the following:

• Construction of recycling bins for the school

• Design of a small garden in the yard, or a plant climbing wall with bottles.

• Organizing the action "I clean the park, or the beach near my school".

After the activity, the children will have developed their ecological sensitivity and their respect for the natural and man-made environment.

4.3.2 The painting keeper

This activity aims to engage children in activities related to the management of classroom materials, with the ultimate goal of understanding the value of natural resources.

The teacher has a discussion at the beginning of the year with the children about the management of the classroom materials. They decide together to give a name to the corner of the visual arts, for example, PaintingLand and the doll PainterMan, who will be responsible for the safekeeping of materials, and will inform each time when he will give new materials, and until when they will have to work with what they possess.

Upon completion of the activity, students will be able to assess the value of materials and will have practiced in their proper management.

4.4 The development of critical abilities and the value of roles and rules in life

4.4.1 The piggy bank line

This activity aims to make students understand the value of help and offering.

To achieve the above goal, a place in the classroom is decided along with the children, where a piggy bank will be placed along with a wide piece of paper with a red line, and the opportunity for this can be the "day of saving". Then, the teacher performs a discussion with the children to organize some fund-raising actions for charity. Such examples can be an old toys bazaar at school, carols, or a school celebration. The earnings are placed by the children into the piggy bank, and they draw a note on the line regarding their progress, and the amount of money they managed to collect.

The children will have been trained in the process of saving and working together to achieve a common goal.

4.5 Actions to develop critical thinking, and the value of roles and rules in life

4.5.1 Mrs Bobox who reads the box, Captain spaceman

Through this activity the goal is for the children to be involved in behavioral evaluation processes, and to be able to use elementary arguments to substantiate their decision.

The process can be developed in two ways:

• Inside the classroom in a conspicuous place there is a box with a slot. In this box the children throw pieces of paper with their drawings about something good or bad they did during the day. At the end of the day, a doll named Mrs Bobox comes out and reads the box. She opens the box and has a dialogue with the children to help them to evaluate their behaviour.

• In a specially designed area of the classroom that looks like a spaceship, a chair, and a hat with two springs are placed. Each child sits on the high-chair at the end of the day wearing the magic hat that reads thoughts, the others ask him questions and the child evaluates his effort for that day.

By completing this activity, the children will have developed their critical ability and will be able through the statements and the dialogue between them to draw important conclusions.

4.5.2 Singing with rules

Through singing with the rules, the children are given the opportunity to understand the value of the rules in their life for their smooth coexistence, in a pleasant and different way.

Specifically, the teacher, after discussing the rules of the class with the children, records them on a CD/mp3. Each time the teacher notices non-compliance of the rules in the classroom, she presses the play button, and the corresponding rule is heard. It goes without saying that the recording is done in a playful way, since the goal is to follow the rules and not to intimidate children.

Upon completion of the activity, students will have practiced the value of rules in our lives, their observance and evaluation.

4.5.3 I wear my hat and instantly take act

The activity aims at understanding the roles that a person can have in his life.

The activity begins with a discussion with the children about how they should take care of the class. They make hats with the aid of the teacher on which the children have drawn the activity they can do in the classroom. In a circular way each child wears a hat with the role he plays that day.

By completing the activity, children will be able to understand the value of roles in life and recognize how much they help them to achieve a goal.

4.6 Actions for the acceptance of the different, and the peaceful coexistence of peoples

4.6.1 The board of different

Through this activity students are asked to learn to appreciate the different in their lives.

To achieve this goal, at the beginning of the day when the routine actions of the kindergarten are carried out, each child mentions something different that did the day before. Something different that it ate, saw, learned, did, wears, etc., and the teacher records them on the board. Then, by the voting process, the king of the different is chosen. On that day, this child will wear the crown of the king of the different.

Through this activity students will be able to appreciate the value of the different in their lives.

4.6.2 What's prettier than peace?

This activity aims to make children understand the value of peaceful coexistence of people, and this can be achieved through actions that take place throughout the year, and not just on national anniversaries.

More specifically, the teacher brings to the children newspapers and videos that focus on elements of (proper) violent everyday life. The children with the teacher process the material and are encouraged to express and use rudimentary arguments against war and hostile actions.

After this activity, the students will be able to appreciate the value of peace, and to concern about the phenomenon of violence in life.

4.6.3 I learn the world.

The activity "I learn the world" aims to provide contact of children with other cultures, and this can be achieved by the teacher inviting parents of all nationalities to the class. Afterwards, a discussion is held about their various customs and traditions, and they design a double entry table. On the one hand there will be the names of the countries participating in the discussion, and on the other hand topics such as sleep, food, school, game. Finally, the similarities and differences that were identified are recorded and commented.

By completing the activity, students will be able to understand the multiculturalism of today's society, and the need to respect the different to achieve a harmonious coexistence.

5. Conclusion

From all the above we conclude that the role of teachers is not to prepare students to respond to an economic reality, which was designed by others and which they must serve, but instead to prepare them to be able to form a social reality that embraces the principles of progress and justice for all people (Koutselini 2009, 2010, 2011).

The rationale for the above actions focuses on the construction of values and attitudes by children, through the negotiation of their experiences and beliefs on issues of social becoming,

such as issues related to their educational routine, interactions, their participation in decision-making processes, etc. The above actions basically relate to the area of the early childhood education, but in any case, with the appropriate adaptation, they could be utilized by primary school teachers to nurture in their students the concept of citizenship.

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