

# **INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION – OBJECTIVES, VALUES AND PERSPECTIVES**


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*Intercultural education* refers “to education training people able to appreciate different cultures, that are set in a traditional society and therefore able to accept to evolve in contact with these cultures, so that this diversity could become an asset enriching the cultural, social and economic life of the environment”.


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## *Objectives of intercultural education:*

- to enhance efficiency of intercultural relations;
  - to increase tolerance and acceptance towards those who are different;
  - to train people to make them perceive, accept and respect diversity for mediating social relations.
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*Intercultural education* requires to be carried out in a varied social environment, in which various differences and cultural events can be recorded.

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## Differences attested in different social environments:

- language of communication
  - religion
  - social practices of communication
  - ways of relating
  - clothing
  - diet
  - leisure
  - traditions, norms and habits
  - physical appearance and various disabilities etc.
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***Intercultural education*** is a dimension of education in a global perspective along with other forms of education:

education for peace

education for human rights

education for sustainable  
development

education for respect and  
protection of the environment)



*Fundamental values* underlying intercultural education:

- respect for human rights and rule of law
  - intercultural values
  - openness to world
  - democracy
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# Intercultural values

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graph TD; A[Intercultural values] --- B[Pluralism]; A --- C[Tolerance]; A --- D[Accountability and openness to others]
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Pluralism

Accountability and  
openness to others

Tolerance

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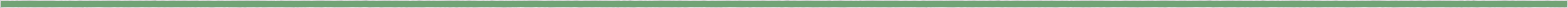
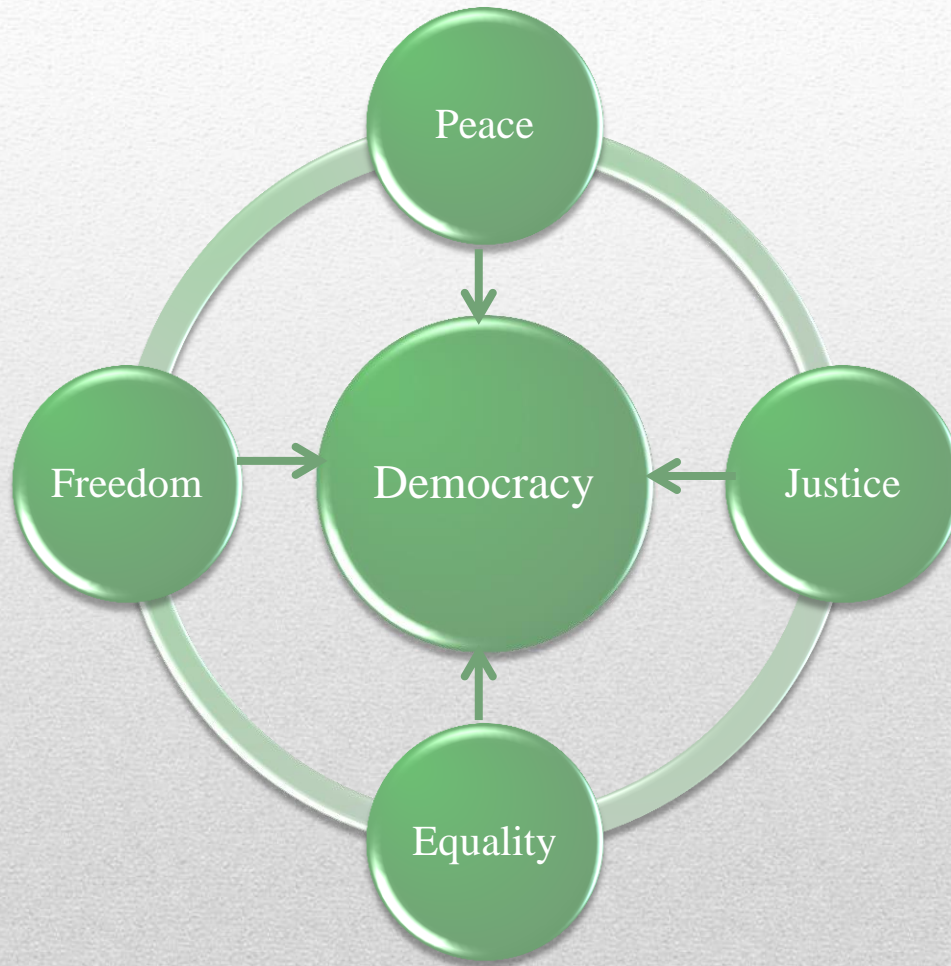
# Openness to world:

Solidarity

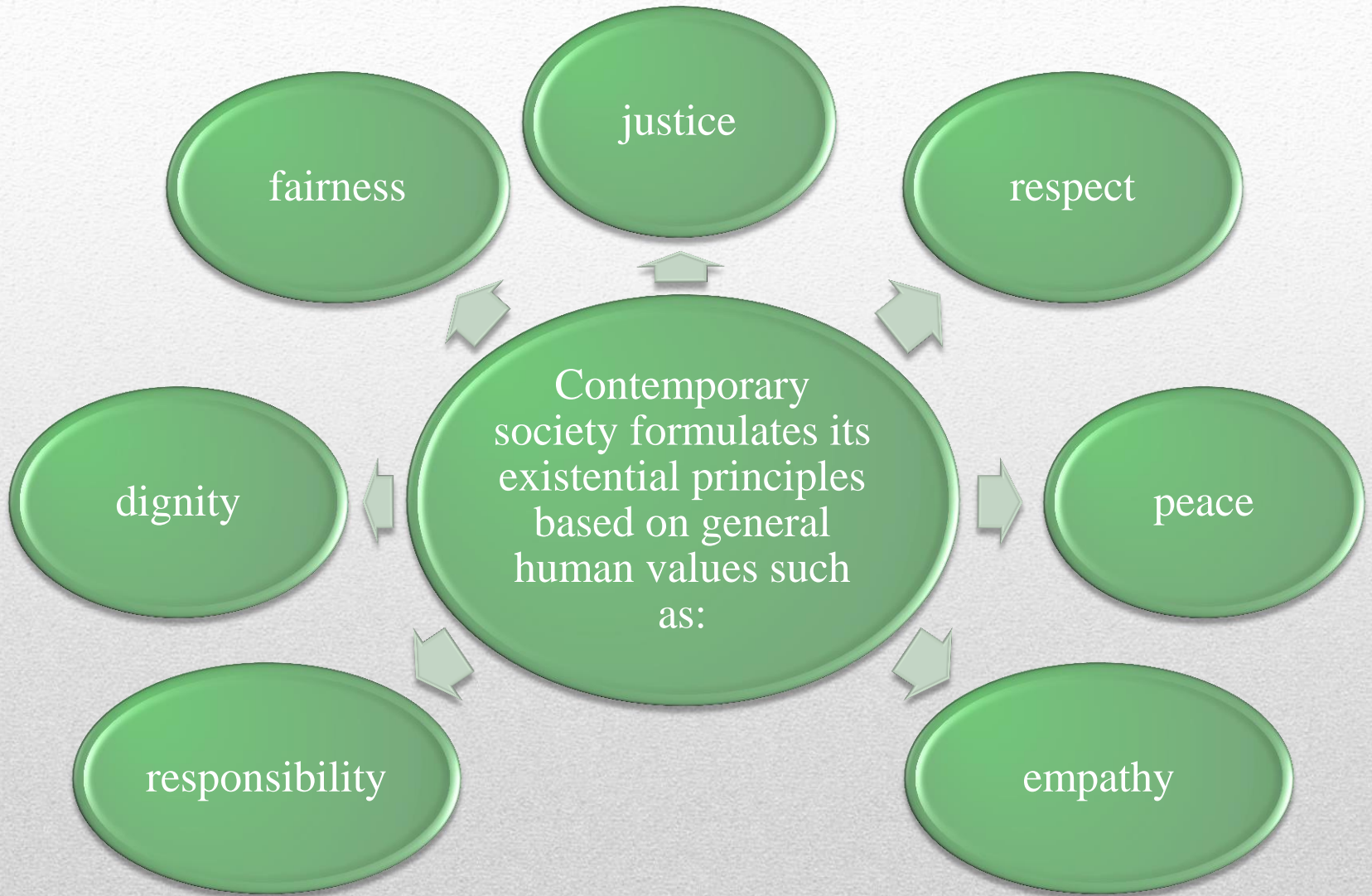
Cooperation


Commitment

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*Intercultural education* promotes socio-educational integration by:

- avoiding particularism
  - promoting intercultural dialogue
  - integrating diversity
  - fostering multilingualism
  - using anti-racist policies
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***Intercultural education*** means any systematic effort, in order to develop in the members of the majority groups as in those of the minority groups the following abilities:

- a better understanding of the situation of culture in modern societies;
  - a greater ability to communicate with people of different cultures;
  - attitudes better adapted to the context of different cultures and groups in a given society, thanks in particular to a better understanding of the mechanisms of psycho-social and socio-political factors, likely to possess xenophobia and racism;
  - a better ability to participate in social interaction, creating identities and common humanity.
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*Intercultural education* implies a pedagogical approach to cultural differences, a strategy through which the spiritual specificities or others are taken into account (gender, social or economic differences, etc.), avoiding as much as possible the risks arising from unequal exchanges between cultures or, worse, trends of culture atomization. Intercultural approach is neither a new science nor a new discipline, but a new methodology that seeks to integrate in the interrogation on the educational space, the data of psychology, anthropology, social sciences, politics, culture and history.

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*Interculturalism* is based on:


-understanding

-consideration

-appreciation of the own culture

-respect (based on genuine information and arousal of curiosity towards the ethnic culture of others).


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*Interculturality* is an action that occurs at the intersection of cultures, not being an end in itself. But it can become an end when unnatural transformations or harmful behaviors are sensed at this level of crossing of cultures.

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- *Intercultural education* deals with the educational process from the vision of cultural diversity and is focused on the phenomenon of cultural interaction (people, cultures, religions, speakers of different languages, people who have different views and opinions, etc).
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# Perspectives on intercultural education

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graph TD; A[Perspectives on intercultural education] --- B[openness to different values]; A --- C[solution to conflicts]; A --- D[diversity management];
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openness to  
different values

solution to conflicts

diversity  
management

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*Multicultural education* is intended:

- to build a person's ethnic identity
  - to promote appreciation of others
  - to reduce prejudices and stereotypes
  - to promote cultural pluralism.
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## ***MULTICULTURALISM* versus *INTERCULTURALISM***

**Multiculturalism** is a reality of existence in the same space-time horizon of some groups of individuals from many cultures that affirm their specific notes in isolation, usually avoiding contaminations. Interculturality is emerging as a concept having a broad content due to prefix *inter*, which links to "*interaction, sharing, openness, reciprocity, solidarity*".

The term ***intercultural*** was selected taking into account the polyvalent meaning of the prefix *inter* as well as (anthropological) meaning of the word *culture*. Thus, when we say ***intercultural*** we mean inevitably interaction, exchange, reciprocity, interdependence and solidarity. We also refer to: recognition of values, lifestyles, symbolic representations to which the human beings relate to, individuals or groups in relation to peers and in understanding of the world, recognizing the interactions that occur at some point between multiple aspects of the same culture and between different cultures in time and space.

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*Culture* is a set of distinctive spiritual characteristics, material and intellectual traits characteristic of a society or social group, embedded in lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions. It has been a central variable in all societies in building and implementing macromodels of change, an indicator of their efficiency and practically the essence of overall development.

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## *Features of culture :*

- it is not innate
  - it is acquired
  - it is shared
  - it has a collective dimension, delimiting various cultural groups
  - it is transmitted from one generation to another undergoing changes specific to era it manifests in.
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*Culture* is in close connection with *value*.

*Value* is assigned special meanings like:

- it is the result of human consciousness to assign the qualities of an entity or existential state as a result of a preference, desire or intention;
  - it is a situational and relational attribute which settles a specific human orientation in a transcendental order.
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*Cultural relativism* is a concept according to which any behavior can not be judged only by reference to the social context in which it occurs. Before valuing behaviors of individuals, they will be reported to the cultural background of beliefs and expectations implied by basic cultural environment.

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*Key elements* involved in intercultural education-culture report:

- culture and cultural identity are some dynamic phenomena;
- all people are carriers of culture and must freely choose identity development;
- intercultural education aims at interactions, communication, cultural proximity between different carriers of cultures open to all people.

Reporting culture to education involves designing education as a project of initiation of human being into cultural values, as a very demanding process of acquiring cultural tools essential in social foundation of human being-personality.

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## • **CONCLUSION**

- Summarizing the above mentioned ideas and trying to make a personal definition, we can mention that intercultural education is a complex of principles and practices related to the entire educational environment in all its components, oriented towards shaping through and for cultural diversity, with a direct effect upon knowledge and positive appreciation of cultural differences, promoting equity in education and equalization of opportunities.
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Thank you!

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