



Life Skills for Primary and Secondary School Children – Development of a Multilingual, Inclusive Education Program

Wiltrud Weidinger

Prof. Dr., Head of Centre for Teaching and Transcultural Learning, Zurich University of Teacher Education, Switzerland

Abstract.

The presented paper combines applied research and development in the field of cultural diversity and inclusive education. It addresses the improvement of primary and secondary school children's transversal skills through a specific personal development teaching and learning program and presents an ongoing study as an accompanying action-based research element. In a first step, the theoretical frameworks for life skills and inclusive education programs are discussed and combined with the claim for lifelong learning and the need for making pre-existing competencies visible. The presented personal development program tackles the view on individual learning processes and transversal skills and shifts the teaching and learning culture towards a child-oriented and cooperative learning. This shift can bear challenges for teacher trainers, teachers, students, and the entire educational system as not only belief systems, traditions, standard teaching practices and the individual child's view is under change. In a second step, the development of the inclusive personal development program is discussed, focusing on the participatory process and stakeholders of the three partner countries Kosovo, North-Macedonia, and the Republic of Moldova. Alignment to curricula, integration into curricula, development of teaching and learning material, and training programs are presented as relevant issues and stepstones. The personal development teaching and learning material for grades one to nine is explained as an open-source material in different languages. In a third step, the ongoing action-based research study is presented and discussed, highlighting the first results and consequences for the development of teaching and learning materials and training programs.

Keywords: inclusion, international cooperation, personal development, transversal skills, teacher training