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MULTICULTURALISM DEBATES IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN PERIOD EDUCATION POLICIES IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES: THE UNITED STATES CASE*

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Abstract

The formation processes of "equal opportunity policies" and "positive discrimination" policies designed by modern liberal states to eliminate the effects of discrimination experienced in the world have always been a matter of debate. In the USA, which is an example of a purely pluralistic liberal democracy, it has focused on the effects of the "shaping" process of immigrants flocking to the USA from abroad, both within the framework of the liberal democratic ideal and throughout the modern period, on "education" policies in the world and the harmonization models realized by this understanding of education for a consensus at the national level. This study aims to analyze the education policies of the USA, a liberal democracy, based on national and international political, legal and administrative acceptances and practices, by reopening the political and social structure perspectives put forward in the modern period in the age of globalization, with the conceptual framework established in the 1960s, made a problem area in political philosophy and developed in the 1990s, from a multicultural perspective. Due to the nature of the subject in this study, the "in-depth content analysis method" was used as a social science method. Thus, the works of modern period writers, academics and thinkers who have important evaluations on the subject and are accepted as authorities were used and the subject was generally deepened through "interpretive reference" in the text. The study was limited historically and theoretically, especially within the framework of education, and within the context of the modern and post-modern period.

Keywords: Liberal Democracy, Multiculturalism, Education Policies, United States of America.

Jel Codes: I20, N30, N32

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1.Introduction

Today, the nature of language, identity and culture, the different meanings of diversity and different perspectives, together with the examination and detailed analysis of specifically the global and local levels, have become a general acceptance ofthe social sciences (Davis and Phyak, 2012: 2). In contrast to the "universal egalitarian"[1] liberal perspective that is accepted as "universal" and claimed not to discriminate based on this understanding, the understanding(s) that came to the fore in the 1980s, which are described as "anti-universal" and "highlight particular community and group differences", have begun to be the subject of certain group definitions within the political and ideological spectrum (Anık, 2012: 94). The views and perspectives[2]finding a place in the idea of " communitarianism", which developed and had a significant impact on the foundation of multicultural thought in the beginning within the liberal theory, have been evaluated with the facts and concepts in the context of "socially specific identities, lifestyles and traditions" with the normative essence of which liberal theorists have tried to re-explain in the period when we live in. The core of the theoretical tradition that the modern Western society has made great efforts to establish based on "liberal and democratic fundamental rights" has been formed within this framework. The understanding of "multiculturalism perspective(s)", which is highly debated phenomenon in many social science fields recently, can be evaluated based on a correct understanding of "liberal" ideas (Wellmer, 2006: 309). In this context, the term "multiculturalism", which found a meaningful place in social science dictionaries in the mid-1960s, still maintains its popularity despite the discussions suggesting that it cannot be fully defined as an "-ism" today. In particular, the use of the concept in the context of "a society freed from discrimination based on ethnic, racist, religious or national criteria; in short, evoking the idea of a society formed regardless of cultural differences" is considered the most favorable aspect in today's world (Baumann, 2016: 217).

[1]It is known that this phenomenon is generally discussed based on the basic assumptions put forward by Isaiah Berlin in his work *Concepts and Categorizations* (1978). With reference to Berlin, it is stated that "equality" is one of the many values considered by virtue of the human being, and that "the extent to which it is compatible with other purposes of humanity depends on the concrete situation." Within this framework, universal equality, which has been the subject of discussion in the global period and today, has come to the agenda especially through discussions in the field of education. It is discussed both theoretically and within the framework of policies implemented in the field of education, "to what extent universality can be taken and beyond which limits inequalities can come into play". Here, it is a conceptual framework evaluated for the "public interest", considered "artificial" to eliminate inequalities as much as possible, and "in the context where it can serve the interests of disadvantaged groups", in general, for the benefit of society (Beteille, 2001: 3619).

[2]Regarding the communitarian understanding, a detailed conceptual framework was put forward in the introduction of the title "A Look At The Phenomena Of Social And Education In Liberal Democracies In The Context Of Multiculturalism". For a comprehensive evaluation of the basic and distinctive conceptual framework on this subject(s) and more detailed information, see; de Lara, 2003; Pasquino, 2003; Doytcheva, 2009.

In this context, whether it is with or without the discussions, the issue of education has become one of the important political and economic problematic areas, especially in the context of rural-urban migration, urban and industrial lifestyle, and most importantly in the process of the formation of new heterogeneous societies that receive large migration and are formed because of this migration. This situation has become controversial place due to its social structure and that it first came to the agenda in the United States of America (USA) within the framework of "the definition of equality of opportunity and justice" (Feinberg, 2016: 334-335). This has also played an important role in the elimination of problems and related areas in question related to racial discrimination throughout USA history and in the issue becoming a "justice" issue[3]. In this context, the decision taken by the American Supreme Court in 1954 is considered as the first attempt to eliminate the system of racial discrimination in the education provided to black and white students in the southern states of the USA. It is stated that the step taken in this direction has a significant impact on all civil rights movements, particularly on the American liberal view and policies that emerged later on the subject of "racial equality" in the USA. The correction of a situation that was seen as a "paradigm of injustice", specifically on a racial basis, was accepted as a turning point in the beginning of the consideration of "color-blind laws", which were described as a new model of racial justice, replacing the "separate but equal treatment" view in the USA (Kymlicka, 1998: 105-106).

At this point, the concept of "education", which is primarily a matter of justice and then a barometer for the freedom of the political system, constitutes one of the most fundamental problem areas. Today, in the countries that see themselves as an example of multiculturalism, or trying to see themselves as an example, it is seen that the relations between representatives of different cultures are at the center of attention of politicians, - along with the scientists who work on culture - and pedagogical workers. It is thought that this focus emerges as a situation arising from the tendency of modern social structures resulting from the expansion of the relationship and mutual interaction between countries, societies and cultural understandings (Sultanova et al., 2020: 122).

[3]In the USA, it is observed that there is a tendency to understand the relationships between education and situation of immigrants, primarily within the framework of educational science studies and as an economic, political and therefore national problem area of the country. So, educational scientists who basically approached the subject of education with a focus on the "national interest" and psychologists in parallel to them, especially in the 1920s, "suggested that intelligence tests could determine which nations, races, and ethnic groups were suitable to contribute to the industrial process in order to serve the development of the industrial process and (they) used this to support the immigration restriction movements in the 1920s". Although this issue was first discussed in the USA in terms of educational strategies and academic quality of education, later (especially in the 1960s) the issue was opened to discussion as a justice issue through "failure(s) to ensure human rights and racial equality in schools" (Feinberg, 2016: 335).

Education is also one of the main topics in the discussions which are experienced in the sense of "public equality creation processes". Especially, within the framework of education processes that occur in the public sphere, it is important that social difference problems can be solved politically and socially in political, legal, and administrative terms. This text, which is discussed in this context, first, reveals how the subject will be addressed within the framework of the titles "purpose of the study", "research questions", "literature review", "methodology/method", and "results/outputs". Then, the first section discusses the discussions regarding the solution of the problems of different individuals and groups in the field of education in the liberal democracies as a philosophical and political problem area within the framework of multiculturalism. The second section deals with how the problem of education is addressed in terms of political, administrative and legal aspects on the US scale, and specifically the philosophical and social problem areas of the subject in this country, and finally the text concludes with an evaluation.

1.1. Purpose of the Study

This study aims to analyze the educational policies of the USA, a liberal democracy, through multicultural perspectives, based on national and international political, legal, and administrative acceptances and practices, with the conceptual framework that were established in the 1960s, which were turned into a problem area within political philosophy and developed in the 1990s, by reopening the political and social structure perspectives put forward in the modern era in the era of globalization. It is important to understand the effects of both universal-based philosophical discussions and the liberal policies executed by the USA, which hosts a sociologically pluralistic society within the framework of the country's founding philosophy and two hundred and fifty years of state history, on educational processes through the idea of multiculturalism. This study aims to (be able to) reveal the concrete situation of the USA, a political liberal structure, within the framework of the legal, political and ideological practices based on multiculturalism.

1.2. Research Questions

In order to understand the importance of the concept of education in the context of the sample country USA through multiculturalism in the historical, philosophical, and ideological framework of the study, the subject must first be theoretically based. Therefore, first, an answer is sought to the question "What is the place and importance of the concept of education theoretically and intellectually within the idea of multiculturalism?" Then, in to reveal the practical aspect of the subject within the framework of the political, social, administrative, and

legal context, an answer is sought to the question "Are the activities that the USA, as a liberal democracy, has put forward legally, administratively, and politically towards socially based education within its public policies, in accordance with the 'multicultural' understanding?".

1.3. Literature Review

The idea of multiculturalism, together with the commune, which is an important phenomenon in its foundation, has been a popular subject in the evaluation of world societies as structural units with political and social freedoms and autonomy within the form of liberal thought in which they are included for over fifty years. Many thinkers and academics have been conducting important and comprehensive studies in the context of multiculturalism. However, this study evaluates the subject through the texts of important theorists such as Taylor (2006, 2007), Rawls (2007), Kymlicka (1998), Kymlicka and Norman (2008), Doytcheva (2009), Gutmann (2005), Gray (2004), and Gunn (2007), who carry out multiculturalism through studies on both education and the US example and produce ideas or take part in these discussions. In addition, an attempt was made to deepen the subject through the texts of academics such as Zamroni (2021), Geng (2013), Li (2013), Davis (2012), Norley (2013), Banks (1993) and Bridges and Matas (2006), who have received a significant number of citations with their articles which were published in internationally recognized journals in the world, specifically addressing the phenomenon of education and multicultural education.

1.4. Methodology

Due to the nature of the subject and to qualitatively evaluate the views of the thinkers and academicians whose ideas are examined; this study uses the "in-depth content analysis method" as a social science method. So, the works of modern period writers, academicians, and thinkers who have important evaluations on the subject and are accepted as authorities areutilized, and the subject was generally deepened through "interpretive reference" in the text. In addition, primary and secondary sources mentioned on the subject are utilized with the encyclopedic descriptions and practices that constitute the theoretical framework of the subject, and the exemplary country USA, and the ideas regarding the purpose of the study are put forward in detail. For limiting the study historically and theoretically, while the subject is evaluated especially in terms of the post-modern period and the Global Age, it is tried not to go beyond the discussions where multiculturalism and education are discussed together through the actual policies implemented in the USA as the example.

1.5. Results and Outcomes

This study, as a result of both theoretical and content analysis conducted on the USA, has revealed the practical functionality of the understanding of multiculturalism within the structure of the legal, administrative, and political context of education policies offered under a liberal democratic administration. The capacity of the education policies suggested by the political system on the USA to (be able to) form an understanding of equal citizenship in a multicultural social structure and the discussions occurring on the exemplary country within the framework of the subject have been tried to be interpreted, evaluated, and interpreted in the chapter of "Results and Evaluation".

2. A Look at The Phenomena of Social and Education In Liberal Democracies In The Context of 'Multiculturalism'

Multiculturalism, when considered within the framework of the concept of "community" and the systematic thought of "communitarianism (communalism, collectivism)" as a problem area of political philosophy, is a phenomenon that can be discussed at a meaningful point. Multiculturalism, especially against the "atomistic individualism" of liberalism, "that liberal rights cannot be sacrificed for the good of everyone and that the principles of justice (rights) cannot derive from the concept of goodness", takes as its basis the question of "Should we think of social order based on the institutions and communes that constitute the structure of modern and traditional societies?", and it includes the search for answers to the questions of "can the discussions on the nation of human rights, which have an important place in democratic politics, be considered without taking into account concrete ties of belonging?" (de Lara, 2003: 513-514). It is more possible to seek the basic meaning and understanding of the point of revealing new parameters in this form, primarily in the discussions within the framework of the Western political philosophy and state perception, inside the "contradiction between society and commune", and especially "in a polemical context targeting the political philosophy of modern natural law beyond the French Revolution" (Pasquino, 2003: 520).

Parallel to the liberal policies implemented by some countries, "cultural recognition demands" have been placed at the center of discussions. In general, the pursuit of "vital" resources that individuals should use for a group or its members has come to the fore. This situation is evaluated in close relation to the formation processes of "equal opportunity policies", "positive action", and "supportive action policies" designed by the liberal states in the modern times. Because the policies and practices developed against all kinds of social discrimination have been seen as encouraging elements for the recognition of groups considered

as “minorities” in society with all the services provided by the public. Today, the liberal state policies executed in some countries have been transformed into the tools provided for the achievement of both collective and individual goals for ethnic identities in the multicultural societies (Fenton, 2001: 244). Liberal policies through these tools have also paved the way for the evaluation of political and social pluralism in particular as a historical destiny for countries. Thus, a more culturally specific life came to the forefront as it became more important than a single social reality claimed to be universal (Gray, 2004: 347-348).

Although the social and political developments in the second half of the twentieth century are important in terms of multiculturalism, the globalization and migration that have been visible worldwide since the 1990s have brought about situations such as “diversity and recognition of diversity” on a societal basis all over the world. While the main core of the discussions, both on a global scale and specifically on a European scale, is “migration and citizenship”, the main problem area of these discussions has been “nationality and integration”. The concepts of multiculturalism and “interculturalism” are also at the forefront in the conceptual concept in which these discussions are addressed. However, as emphasized in the introduction chapter of study, there are serious difficulties in clearly presenting the issue through these two conceptual frameworks, especially multiculturalism, and even in fully defining these two concepts (Batool et al., 2022: 10).

It is seen that ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious differences that occur socially go hand in hand with demographic, social, and economic changes in today’s world. These developments continue through the phenomenon of education, with students and other people receiving education trying to form a globally interconnected society within their own perspectives and understanding and discussing common problem areas of humanity. This situation is read through the facilitation of new ideas that can be revealed on common social, ecological, political, and economic issues on behalf of humanity and the development understandings of societies. In addition, this process is also seen as very important in the social acceptance of democracy (Li, 2013: 1).

This understanding has also brought to the forefront conceptualizations such as “philosophy of education” inside a certain framework today. It has been seen the efforts to be made to provide a basis for a global-based meaning for the philosophical infrastructure of education, especially in supranational organizations such as the United Nations (UN) in the context of “ideals of freedom, equality, and human dignity” through this concept. This situation, in connection with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), brought up the issue of

education as one of the important acceptances in terms of accepting the universal position of human rights in the world (Nourbakhsh, 2016: 54). In parallel with this initiative and with the aim of "transforming society and eliminating (some) injustice(s)", "the necessity of using education as a tool" started the process that gave rise to the practical handling of the multicultural education process in the 1960s (Norley, 2013: 103).

In particular, the importance of multicultural education has been (can be) discussed through these regimes, especially in liberal democratic systems through the historical process earlier. The process shows that it is possible for a practical liberal system to be accepted as a meaningful political concept, when pluralism and equality are expanded socially. In this sense, it is possible for a society to face many pluralisms in many descriptive senses within a liberal political system.In this context, the idea that "political pluralism indicates voter choice and the existence of a competitive party system. Moral pluralism refers to the multiplicity of moral values. Cultural pluralism implies the diversity of lifestyles and cultural forms" has become a theoretical preconception (Heywood, 2011: 251). From a perspective that can be considered ideal, it can also be stated that multicultural education, together with pluralism, has an important mission for the future of the world. In fact, when considering the phenomenon of multicultural education in a pluralistic society within the framework of the globalization perspective, it can be stated that the aim is "to develop students' skills to adapt to a multicultural world." This situation can be considered as an important parameter for "world peace" (Chen, 2005).

It is a possible situation that these theoretical assumptions can be put into practice in "liberal democratic systems", which are a regime of theoretical and acceptable measures of democracy in the current sense. For most of the twentieth century, the fact that state schools and "private schools", which are seen as public schools, are present with the education process played an important role in terms of "equality of opportunity" in the liberal democracies through a struggle to prevent the aim of keeping the upper classes in society and the working classes, which constitute the majority of the society, in an apart way. At this point, how "citizenship education", which is tried to be given at a certain standard, has occupied the agenda of liberal states for a long time (Heater, 2007: 200-201).

Liberal democracies focus primarily on the theoretical solution of multiculturalism problems in the liberal societies through the understanding of raising "virtuous" citizens today. Especially in the liberal societies, the issues regarding the acceptance of social diversity are opened to discussion through the "education system" and the conditions for solution are being sought. It is hoped that states come to an understanding such as "how to acquire critical

reasoning styles and moral perspectives that define public reasonableness should be taught in school curricula to be developed inside the framework of liberal policies and in educational institutions." Here, education should not only develop individuals who act in accordance with authority but also constitute the necessary conditions for thinking critically about authority. These issues are seriously discussed in the systems of the world evaluated as liberal today (Kymlicka and Norman, 2008: 202-204).

In a conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Geneva in 1994, when it began to be discussed as a "global commitment" of countries under the name of "multicultural education", the process of transition from theory to practice came to the agenda in terms of the subject, and an understanding was put forward that included countries first making sense of the four ideas and then implementing them. These are, firstly, "education should acquire the ability of individuals to accept the values of societies and to develop the ability to communicate, share, and cooperate with each other and cultures". Secondly, "education should generate an identity and promote convergence of ideas and solutions". In other words, it should ensure the establishment of peace and brotherhood in society. Thirdly, "education should increase the ability to overcome conflicts peacefully". Finally, the fourth one offered as "education should promote peace in the minds of students so that a high society can be built" (Zamroni et al., 2021: 598).These four ideas are important in terms of the theoretical acceptances in the 1960s when the phenomenon of education is conceptualized through multiculturalism and in transforming and changing the understandings that guide today's understanding of education with this perspective. In addition to the education-focused conceptualizations, especially on those carried out on multiculturalism, there is an effort to constitute both legal regulations and school curricula through some new and expanding conceptualizations such as "bicultural education, intercultural education, and pluralistic cultural education" (Raţă, 2013: 3).

The initiatives on the four ideas set forth by UNESCO, the transformations experienced in the social and political sense today, and the evaluation of the education received by individuals and their cultural identities are still on the agenda and it will lead to the absoluteness of opening up all kinds of authority or tradition to discussion. It is evaluated that a philosophical discussion area emerges based on the idea that students who grow up with the education of a democratic society carried out in a liberal multicultural dimension develops a world of mind to be formed with "the free, open, pluralistic, and progressive" attitudes encouraged by liberal education, even if the existence of groups based on an uncritical acceptance of tradition and

authority does not become completely impossible" (Kymlicka and Norman, 2008: 204, cited from Macedo).

The claims on an education system that operates in political and social theories according to liberal state policies may eventually drag individuals to a "choice" between society and good living conditions are also leading to a new discussion environment. Because, especially due to the difficulties of designing "public education" completely focused on the individual and the community, it is still not possible to evaluate whether positive results are seen inside liberal policies based on clear data. Because the thesis that an individual understanding questioning many political and social authorities in this process can reach a function at a community and societal point is a serious handicap for today's liberal democracies (Rawls cited in Kymlicka and Norman, 2008: 204-205).

3. The Status And Position Of Educational Policies In The USA As A Liberal Democracy Within Multiculturalism

By the global era, such countries that stand out in the discussions in the context of multiculturalism as Canada, Australia and the USA are some liberal democracies that have partially or comprehensively established constitutional frameworks on this issue. Although the issue is addressed through some specific characteristics of these countries, the fact that these three countries are industrially developed, the rapid aging of their resident populations, their encouragement of (potential) migration to their own countries at certain periods in international migration, their high social welfare levels compared to many other countries in the world and their high potential to accommodate more than their population due to their large geographical area[4], highlight that these countries have quite positive conditions for immigration (Anık, 2012: 122). In particular, the constitutionalism movement in the USA, which is the main subject of this text, is accepted to have put forward an understanding of "managed democracy" that has developed within itself and has operated "moderately" within the "institutionalization of social conflict" and the phenomenon of "factionalism" as a liberal system since the foundation of the country (Kervégan, 2003: 193).

This acceptance confirms that the political structure where the foundations of multicultural education were originally laid in the USA. It is also a general acceptance that the issue was addressed in other countries of the world, and certain practices were implemented,

[4]For a comprehensive study that includes detailed analyses of many general and special features of these countries within the framework of multiculturalism and evaluates detailed information, global discussions and various ideas on multiculturalism in general, see; Anık, 2012.

especially through the example of the USA, and that the issue could be exemplified on a global scale within the framework of the practices carried out within the framework of legal and administrative regulations that emerged in this context (Geng, 2013: 53). Therefore, only after a long-term change and transformation phase that the USA experienced with multicultural policies, the American legal system was able to stabilize the understanding of education to a certain extent. So, the most frequently cited situation in the text is that a decision taken by the American Supreme Court in 1954 ensured the overthrow of the system of racial discrimination in education provided to black and white students in the southern states of the USA[5]. This step taken in the legal direction is generally stated to have had a significant impact on the social movements for civil rights and the liberal education policies issued by the USA on the subject of "racial equality" in the USA. The correction of a situation that was initially seen as a "paradigm of injustice", albeit on a racial basis, was seen as very important for later developments for this issue. This development was considered as a turning point in the USA in the beginning of the consideration of "color-blind laws", which were described as a new "racial justice model" instead of the "separate but equal treatment" view (Kymlicka, 1998: 105-106).

In addition to being accepted as a pure liberal democracy in terms of practical applications, the ability of the philosophical and social basis of constitutional developments regarding education is always important for the United States, which is a federal state, in terms of addressing education as a social multiculturalism issue. It is the oretically evaluated that the American constitution, which is known to have its own unique application forms, strives to focus on providing a framework that protects the freedoms of each of the religious and cultural differences that have sharp distinctions in the social framework and provides each of them with more or less the same "political power" in the public sphere. For Rawls, who emphasizes that the US constitution tries to become an "agreement" that protects internal peace in this way, the American political structure is designed not to lead to religious, ethnic, etc. conflicts (2007: 482-483).

[5]Following the colonization of the USA and then its emergence as a federal political structure, the Black population has always been positioned outside of an identity concept by the state. After the American Civil War, which took place between 1861 and 1865 in the USA, the issue could be evaluated through positive references through the abolition of the institution of slavery for the Blacks. However, even though legal and political discrimination ended for the Blacks in the North in terms of cultural and political differences at the regional level during this process, their negative conditions continued for a long time in the South through slavery. In the context of Blacks, the uncertain situation of their rights, which should have been spontaneous in a pluralistic system in terms of social, legal, economic and political aspects, including education, ended only with the legal regulations implemented after the mid-20th century (Chang, 2011).

Parallel to the political structure of the USA interpreted in these ways, the views that consider the concepts of "individual freedom" as a political "moral ideal" have seriously linked individual freedom to society in the eyes of the state and evaluated it as a requirement of the liberal state apparatus. The USA, which is shown among the countries that try to produce liberal policies within the points of these goals and ideals, is a frequently emphasized evaluation of an "exemplary" country that has tried to sustain the concepts of freedom and equality in a stable manner throughout the modern period and up to the present day. The understanding of individual independence in the USA particularly has been perceived as the most important part of the vitality and strength of the modern "American patriotism" and as a result of the liberal policies presented by the country (Taylor, 2006: 149). Because the USA has built a wide area in the fields of speech, press, religion, and organization of liberal democracy in the perspective of the "pluralistic" practical application of liberal democracy. However, while this perspective foresees recognition for representing the "cultural community" in the public sphere, the issue of whether the state's neutrality is ensured in the state institutions, including the schools that are considered reliable for the state to be democratic, is not a resolved issue. Here, Guttmann says that one of the most important institutions in the focus of the discussions that constitute the source of the problem is "state schools"in the evaluation of theory and practice (Gutmann, 2005: 30-31).

As an inconfused state policy, the USA has never hesitated to put the immigrants who have flowed into its country throughout the modern period through a "moulding" process within the framework of the republican liberal democratic ideals. In the reflection of this situation in the educational dimension, it is important to reveal both political consensus and "adaptation models" on a national basis. Since the 1840s, the "civics" course has taken its place in the curriculum as one of the most important courses at the primary and secondary school levels in the USA. The content of this course emphasizes the importance of students seeing school as a democratic element in terms of the implementation of the USA's state policies. It has also been insistently stated that these courses aim to encourage students who are raised as citizens to reason and analyze, rather than learn by rote. In the 60s and 70s, many curriculum "reforms" were implemented in the USA in the field of education. However, it is also claimed that these efforts have caused today's citizenship education to become problematic. Because today citizenship courses that instill pride in the liberal democratic traditions of the republic in the USA have also been subject to serious criticism due to their negative effects on the "assimilation" of immigrants (Heater, 2007: 196-198). However, it is a fact that various legal

regulations were made in the USA during the 1960s and 1970s to reassert the American national identity. First, the "Immigration and Nationality Act" enacted in 1965 and later the "American Civil Rights Movement" during the 1970s, and the implementation of practices described as "measures" regarding social and political equality and non-discrimination are also important. At this point, a number of federal and regional legal regulations were made for acceptance of bilingual education curricula for Hispanic immigrants, the establishment of "ethnic studies" branches of science in universities, and "positive discrimination" for social groups considered as minorities in trade and business life (Doytcheva, 2009).

The "multicultural education definitions" accepted constitutionally in the USA have generally been tried to be presented with a broad definition of culture andbe determined through criteria and certain parameters such as "variables such as gender, age, social class, place of residence, ethnic origin, religion, mother tongue, and ability". These are presented as a state policy that the USA tries to implement by defending multicultural theories and presenting a character. The USA tries to standardize a pedagogical understanding in all schools, especially since the last quarter of the twentieth century. In this process, the USA evaluates the concepts of education and culture within a certain package. In multicultural education discussions, it has mostly focused on solutions within the framework of the concepts of "ethnic city, social class, and mother tongue" in a way that the issue will be in the students' favor academically (Bridges and Matas, 2006). Experts of this field assess that the main purpose of multicultural education models is an ever-repeated positive effort to "provide educational equality" to students from different social groups within the framework of the quantitative increases in "different race, ethnic, and social class groups" that have occurred in the United States in the last century and continue to do so "in schools and other educational institutions" (Banks, 1993: 3).

It is accepted that this situation in mention is a reflection of the view that "education is at the center of American ideology." However, while this situation constitutes the essence of the US political system as a national preconception, it has also paved the way for a critical situation to emerge because causing groups seen as minorities in the US to see school as the only place where such concepts as politics, morality, and society can be taught more strongly. The public-school policy in the US, examined in this study, has also been at the center of much-discussed constitutional disputes in the last thirty years. In this context, the curriculum(s) updated in public schools in the name of a pluralistic society can sometimes receive serious reactions from some segments of society. The focus of these reactions is particularly on the issues of "the role of religion in public schools" and "abortion." What is seen today is that a large segment of

society in the US has come to a general acceptance that, with the decisions of the US Supreme Court regarding education, "the worship and the Bible are taken out of school" in order to ensure integration with other segments of society. Another situation is that these types of state policies and legal decisions implemented by the USA (with the assumption that they are in favor of immigrants) also cause a decline in the American moral values when read in reverse (Gunn, 2007: 97). However, according to Gutmann -from the opposite perspective- there is still a certain opposition in the government institutions and schools that provide fine arts education, state-affiliated colleges, and universities on the grounds that citizens' unique cultural identities are not recognized or that the necessary respect is not shown towards their identities (2005: 23).

4. Conclusion and Evaluation

Since the USA is a liberal democracy, liberal policies implemented through pluralism are seen to have a structure that is somewhat problematic, including difficulties between theory and practice due to the sensitivity of the issue that can be evaluated through the concepts of equality and freedom. It is still an important problem area that the "education policies" that the USA historically sets forth, and theory and practice regarding the extent to which it cares about or ignores minority or disadvantaged groups in the field of education within the context of its multicultural perspective need comprehensive analyses.

The USA, which contains a controversial situation between the theoretical perspective and practical applications in the field of education, is a clear example of a pluralistic liberal democracy that theoretically provides us with the appropriate data to achieve a "pluralistic" society. However, even when only one side of the US's perspective on other cultural structures in the country is examined through multiculturalism, an acceptance such as "... a very healthy assumption has developed that different religious beliefs, although very different from what is claimed in the legends, should be protected by the state and (especially) respect for religious freedom will positively contribute to the well-being and peace of the state" is presented as an important situation. The US, in particular, should be examined as a consistent example in the world through the discourse that "policies and attitudes in the multicultural education system do not only consist of international human rights standards protecting religious freedom; they also contain a deep respect for the freedom of individuals who devote themselves to religion and for the fact that they are honorable beings because they are human" (Gunn, 2007: 133).

It is a fact that the owners of political power in the USA generally accept rights and diversity in all their aspects and evaluate them as a liberal understanding aimed at protecting them in a positive context as well. Additionally, the political power holders in the USA clearly

emphasize that the country was founded as a republic based on "popular sovereignty". Although this situation, which is accepted as the founding philosophy of the USA, seems like the expression of a new theory in the period when it emerged, it has also been accepted as a reflection of the belief that traditional practices can be institutionalized in general (Taylor, 2007: 197-198). With this political and legal structure, the USA is a rare country that has a specific position such as being able to establish a multicultural social structure as an integrative or divisive understanding to shape education policies in the world. However, it is not possible to say that there is a clear situation today regarding whether education policies, which are generally considered within the framework of liberal "universalist" policies in the world, will serve a multicultural social structure? or a social structure consisting of atomized individuals. Because the practices that the US has put forward with liberal multicultural education policies implemented by governments, which are emphasized in this text, have unfortunately made the claims that education structurally serves pluralism in the US quite vague and difficult in the eyes of the public opinion from time to time. In this process, it is an important reality that there are those who want an education system that supports pluralistic social elements in the US, as well as social groups that are more conservatively against this understanding and are reluctant to support it.

Especially when the subject is evaluated based on the parameters handled with this study, it is seen that the constantly changing and transforming intellectual and political structure of the Global Age has made the efficiency of the education policies implemented by the US on an individual and social basis significantly debatable in terms of the formation of a multicultural structure. However, the role of the liberal multicultural state policies developed by the US for religious-ethnic-communal minorities in terms of education, for many countries that take the western pluralistic liberal representative democratic tradition as a guide, presents it as an important example in terms of its ability to present a situation that needs to be analyzed through its practice rather than its theory.

The extent to which this process can determine the capacity of the state structures claiming to be liberal, especially the USA, to make sense of and take into consideration all public political processes, including the cultural identity and the recognition of these identities, and then the education in terms of the legal status of these identities, within the framework of the dominant state apparatus, is still an ambiguous issue and constitutes an important area of discussion today.

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