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**ARE POLISH PUPILS OF OLDER SCHOOL AGE OPEN
TO „OTHERNESS”?
SOME COMMENTS ABOUT PUPILS’ ATTITUDES
TO “OTHERS” IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL
DETERMINANTS**

CZY POLSCY UCZNIOWIE W STARSZYM WIEKU
SZKOLNYM SĄ OTWARCI NA „INNOŚĆ”?
KILKA UWAG NA TEMAT STOSUNKU UCZNIÓW DO
„INNYCH” I JEGO UWARUNKOWAŃ SPOŁECZNYCH

Abstrakt

W artykule przedstawiono rezultaty badań dotyczących stosunku uczniów w starszym wieku szkolnym do „Innych” w kontekście uwarunkowań socjodemograficznych i szerzej – społecznych. Wskazałam na cztery wymiary „inności” i sześć kategorii „Innych”. Grupa badawcza objęła piętnastoletnich uczniów

Abstract

The article presents results of the research affects older school age students’ reference to the “Others” in the context of sociodemographic and – more broadly - social determinants. I pointed to four factors of distinctness and six categories „Others”. Research group involves pupils of older school age (15-year-old)

ze szkół integracyjnych i szkół nieintegracyjnych w Krakowie.

Badania pokazały, że uczniowie ze szkół nieintegracyjnych są bardziej przychylnie nastawieni do „Innych” niż uczniowie ze szkoły integracyjnej. Może to oznaczać, że obecność w klasie integracyjnej nie wpływa na wyższy poziom akceptacji „Innych”. Analizy wykazały, że istnieje kilka aspektów wpływających na pozytywne nastawienie uczniów w starszym wieku szkolnym do „Innych”, m.in.: kontakt z „Innymi” w grupach rówieśniczych, a także w sąsiedztwie (środowisku lokalnym).

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

uwarunkowania socjodemograficzne i społeczne, „Inni”, uczniowie w starszym wieku szkolnym, wykluczenie społeczne

from inclusive school and non-inclusive school in Cracow.

Research has shown that students from school for all are more accepting toward „Others” than pupils from inclusive school. It means, that attendance to inclusive class does not have an influence on higher level of „Others” acceptance. Analyzes have shown that there are some aspects affecting older school age student’s positive attitude towards „Others”, e.g.: contact with the „Others” in peer groups and also in neighbourhood (local environment).

KEYWORDS

sociodemographic and social determinants, “Other”, pupils of older school age, social exclusion

1. Introduction

The main tasks of the school include the implementation of long-term training of socially desirable skills, values and norms of charges, as well as multidimensional shaping of their personality. This institution, with its specific physical and material features, is experienced by students as a diverse and comprehensive field of experience, as a model of actions, activities, roles and interpersonal relations (Noelle 1995, 27). The school’s task is to prepare students for life in a diverse world. It presents an offer to enter the world of many manifestations of reality: often conflicting ideas, views, opinions, norms and values. The difference becomes a characteristic that accompanies entities referring to school and out-of-school interpersonal relations. The microenvironment of each educational institution is thus a space in which differently understood “otherness” manifests itself. This is particularly noticeable in inclusive facilities, which are one of the representative examples in Poland of implementing the idea of educational inclusion. In terms of the literature, the school can be described as a “miniature of society” and “lens” in which important social issues are focused. Among the most important are the issues of discrimination and exclusion, as well as institutional and non-institutional activities aimed at counteracting these phenomena. This is reflected in the legally sanctioned rules of the functioning of educational institutions and in informal initiatives, and its significant element is the quality of interaction and social relations - at school and beyond. The basis for the successful implementation of the inclusion process is acceptance and openness to diversity, which is reflected in, among “Others”, attitudes

expressed by students towards representatives of minority groups. The diagnosis of these respondents becomes an indispensable condition for the implementation of the idea of educational, and more broadly, social inclusion.

In this article I will present the results of research, the subject of which was to analyze the attitude of Polish older school students from inclusive classes to representatives of minority groups. The obtained data will be compared with the results obtained from older school age students from non-inclusive classes. This will enable us to answer the question of whether students from inclusive classes present more positive attitudes towards members of minority groups than students from the indicated comparative group. In addition to the diagnosis of attitudes, their determinants will also be included - in particular factors that positively affect the attitudes of older school students towards "Others". Capturing the latter becomes a contribution to planning actions adequately addressing the problems revealed by the analysis of the statements of older school students.

2. School inclusiveness in Poland - an outline of the issues

Social inclusion is a process related to the inclusion of previously excluded individuals and groups. It reveals the collective intention of support necessary for the existence and survival of the weakest members of society (Dykcik 1996, 210). A particularly important area of inclusion is the sphere of school education, which in its assumptions should be an area that implements the ideal of education for openness and tolerance. Educational institutions should become open to all students today, with particular emphasis on members of minority groups. This conviction is included in formal records, including the content of the Salamanca Declaration, which points out that: (...) schools with an open orientation are the most effective means of eliminating discrimination, creating open communities, shaping an open society and implementing education for all. This issue was seen, of course, even earlier, for example under the Convention on combating discrimination in the field of education (Paris, 15/12/1960), which points out that the aim of world politics should be to create equal opportunities and the same treatment in the field of education. Such provisions have become the basis for the creation of legislation on educational inclusion in European countries. Nowadays, it adopts many forms on this basis - from the system of numerous solutions suited to the degree of students' disability, to the almost complete elimination of special education (Szumski, 2013).

In turn, the inclusive education currently functioning in Poland can be assigned to the "countries of many paths", which is associated with a multi-directional approach to the inclusion of students with special educational needs. Thanks to this, students with disabilities have the opportunity to fulfill their schooling obligation in various types of institutions.

This requires proper organization of work at school and methodical, technical and psychosocial support adapted to the needs and pace of student development (<http://pedagogikaspecjalna.tripod.com/notes/fromexclusiontoinclusion.html>), enabling them to “grow in the circle of healthy peers” (Hulek, 1980, 492). The beginnings of formally established inclusive education in Poland date back to the 1990s (Karwowska 2007, 158). They were reflected in the Act on the Education System of September 7, 1991 (Journal of Laws No. 95, item 425), which states, among other things, that the school should provide each student with the conditions necessary for their development, and prepare them for the fulfillment of family and civic duties based on the principles of solidarity, democracy, tolerance, justice and freedom ([http://isasejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id = WDU19910950425](http://isasejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU19910950425)). This recognizes the principle of equal opportunities at all levels of education for children and young people with special educational needs.

One of the institutions in which the impacts described here are implemented are popular inclusive classes in Poland, functioning as branches in mainstream schools or in inclusive schools. In this class there are from 15 to 20 students, including from 3 to 5 pupils with a decision about the need for special education (Gajdzica 2011, 100). The special educational needs of these pupils may concern the motor, intellectual, visual and motor realms; they are also associated with motor hyperactivity, Asperger Syndrome, autism, chronic diseases and other disorders. A special role in the inclusive class is the presence of two teachers - objective and supportive, whose task is to jointly plan, design and implement educational activities ([http://bimen.gov.pl/men_bip/akty_pr_1997-2006/rozp_134.php?wrapper = test](http://bimen.gov.pl/men_bip/akty_pr_1997-2006/rozp_134.php?wrapper=test)). The individual support that is given to pupils takes various forms and is most often associated with the organization of classes: correctional-compensatory (enabling students with specific learning difficulties to attain achievements recorded in the core curriculum), speech therapy (organized especially for foster children with various disorders of speech), therapeutic and sociotherapeutic (carried out with students with disabilities hindering social functioning) (Gajdzica 2011, 88).

The entire school team is responsible for the implementation of the inclusive assumptions at school: all teachers and students, as well as parents of pupils. The real consequences of the inclusive activities undertaken here turn out to be key.

Attending an inclusive class may be beneficial not only for children and young people with decisions about the need for special education, but also their “able-bodied” peers. They gain a chance to increase their sense of responsibility and the ability to subject people who differ in their level of fitness. Departure from looking at pupils in diagnostic and medical categories, and adopting a socio-educational direction may enable the real inclusion of these pupils in the school community. Therefore, in the literature on the subject attention is paid to the potential inherent in inclusive facilities. The verifier of this inclusiveness should be the high quality and frequency of contacts made between people with disabilities and able-bodied students (Janiszewska - Nieścioruk, 1999, 24). They will be based on the positive attitude of their peers to the representatives of

these minority groups, and it can be considered one of the key factors enabling the implementation of the inclusive process.

By emphasizing the wider dimension of inclusion, they are also seen as a chance to shape positive attitudes towards each other - such records often appear in the formal records of the mission and vision of inclusive schools (Garbat 2003, 160). In these assumptions, everyday contact with people with different degrees of disability would become a factor facilitating the non-acceptance and understanding of representatives of other minority groups. Is this really the case? Or maybe other conditions have a greater impact on the appearance of positive attitudes towards members of groups at risk of social exclusion.

3. Method

The object of the research was to diagnose the attitude of students from inclusive and non-inclusive classes to “Others”. The term “Others” refers to a different person, potentially remaining in the sphere of “experience and knowledge”: he/she belongs to the category of “We” (“Other” “close”, directly known and understood) or “They” (“Other” “distant” different, unknown directly, but still recognized). His/her “otherness” remains in the sphere of the subject’s “experience and knowledge”; it is visible or appears in certain social situations (“otherness” known). The approach present at work takes into account the aspect of seeing “otherness” as associated with the threat of social exclusion. Such a focused analysis enabled the identification of many “risk categories”. Of these, for the needs of the work, I chose 6 categories:

- “Others”: people with disabilities: people with Down Syndrome, people in a wheelchair.
- “Others”: ethnically and racially different people: black people, people belonging to the Roma minority
- “Others”: poor people (where otherness is associated with their low economic status)
- “Others”: members of the religious association Jehovah’s Witnesses (Smoter, 2017)

The “otherness” of the members of the categories included here can be considered socially “known” and “visible”. Consideration of such a diverse group was aimed at showing the pluralism and complexity of the social reality surrounding the pupils of older school age, and also refers to the possibility of “meeting” with other people in social environments close to students - including at school, but it does not exhaust a much broader “list” of these categories.

In addition to the diagnosis, reference has also been made to the sociodemographic and environmental conditions of the relationship expressed to the representatives of these groups. Many concepts take into account the belief that we only have a predisposition for socialization (Berger, Luckmann 1983, 202), while various experiences affect the

shaping of attitudes towards culturally important norms and values. Consideration of such conditions of attitudes allows us to assume that the individual develops depending on these factors and creates his/her own personality during social interactions (Hurrelmann, 1994, 49). The following characteristics are taken into account:

1. sociodemographic - social and demographic features: gender, parental education, number of siblings, religiousness, place of residence or self-assessment of economic status
2. related to the characteristics of socialization and educational environments of the tested students:
 - features related to the family environment - subjective opinions of pupils about the attitude expressed by their parents to “Others”, representatives of the Other category, with whom students have had contact in the family environment and the declared frequency of these contacts (due to the importance of personal contact for shaping the relationship with “Others”)
 - characteristics related to the peer environment - the ratio assessed by the best friend towards the “Others”, assessed by the respondents, representatives of the Other categories indicated by the students with whom they had contact in the peer environment and the declared frequency of these contacts.
 - characteristics related to the school environment - attending inclusive or non-inclusive classes, representatives of the “Others” categories with which students have had contact in the school environment and the declared frequency of these contacts.
 - characteristics related to the media environment - the nature of media content regarding “Others” with whom they declared the most frequent contact (defined by students as positive, negative or neutral in their pronunciation) and the frequency of these contacts (Smoter 2017).

4. Sample

The research was carried out in 2014-2015 in inclusive and non-inclusive classes in Cracow using the auditorium survey technique (a simple group random sample was used here). A total number of 556 students of Cracow school (group 1: 203 students from inclusive schools and group 2 - 353 students attending non-inclusive schools) participated in these studies. Numerical differences between groups are associated with the very much smaller number of integrated secondary school students than non-integrated students.

I used a random simple team selection. The lottery list of units - schools in Krakow (for pupils of older school age), constituting the total population, became the sampling frame.

5. Instruments

The analysis used a questionnaire in which the first part deals with issues concerning the environmental and sociodemographic characteristics of pupils; in the second part: the relation to “Others” revealed in their declarations. This was indicated by: attributes attributed to “Others” by students (semantic scale modelled on the tool of C. Osgood), social distance of students to “Others” (including the school context and a modified E. Bogardus scale¹), and the attitude of the respondents to “Others” in their own assessment. Due to the technique used, there is no possibility to capture the behavioural component of the attitude (ex post facto procedure). A special distinction of the emotional component was related to the subject of research, regarding the acceptance or non-acceptance of certain groups (the affective component of the attitude is constitutive of its construction).

Completion of questionnaires by respondents was preceded by an oral introduction to its subject. In order to reduce the risk of the examiner’s influence on the quality of the answers obtained, adequate conditions for conducting the tests were provided (the students signed pseudonym questionnaires and were informed about the anonymity of the answers).

The research was carried out for the purposes of the doctoral dissertation “Conditioning of older school age students’ relationship”, Jagiellonian University, Krakow 2016, written under the supervision of dr hab. Z. J. Danilewska.

6. Analyses

The following statistical tests were used in the tests:

- a. U-Mann Whitney test (Mann-Whitney U test)
- b. Wilcoxon rank sign test (“marked ranks” test, “pairs order” test)
- c. Chi-square independence test
- d. Regression analysis.

The data analysis was based on the IBM SPSS Statistics program.

7. Results

The results of analyses of the ratio of students to “Others” were presented in the summary of the average results (Figure 1, Figure 2)

¹ I took here five dimensions of distance, which was connected with the expression of agreement or disagreement by the older school age students: attendance with the “Other” at the same school, class, admission of the “other” to the friendships, approval of the “Other” as a friend, and his/her acceptance as boyfriend / girlfriend

Students from inclusive classes

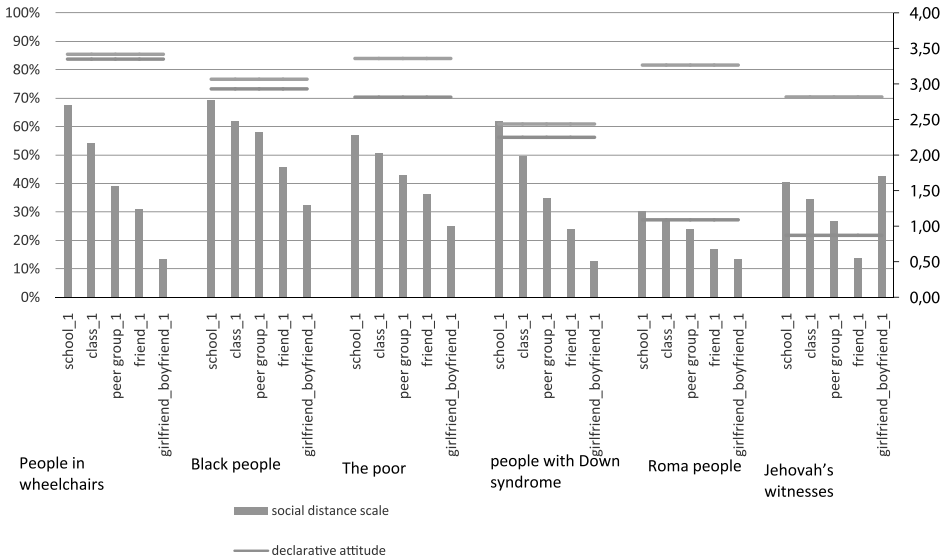


Figure 1. Summary of average results for groups illustrating the ratio of students from inclusive classes to “Others” (Smoter, 2017)

Students from non-inclusive classes.

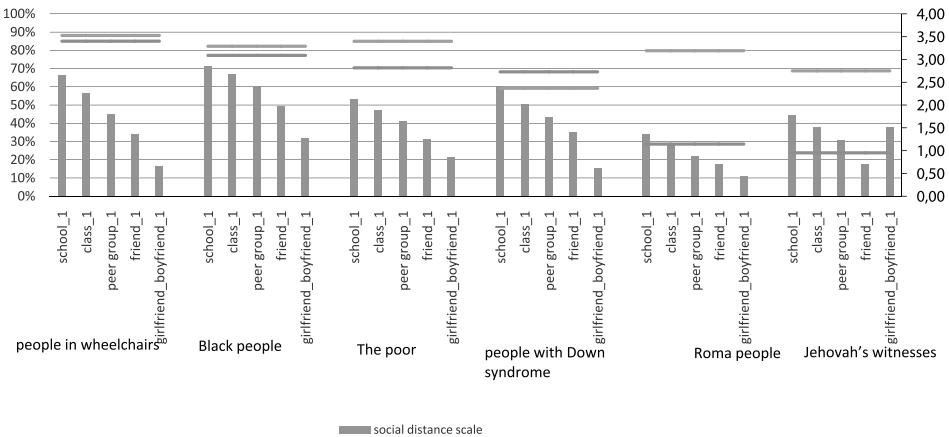


Figure 2. Summary list of average results for groups illustrating the ratio of students from non inclusive classes to “Others” (Smoter, 2017)

The presented results differ in the two groups to a rather small extent. Students most often indicated a neutral or positive attitude towards “Others”, although these data differed depending on the category. The respondents most often declared positive attitudes towards people using wheelchairs (e.g. in relation to the subjective evaluation of this feature, a positive attitude was indicated by over 80% of respondents) as well as

black and poor people (approximately 70% of respondents from both groups declared this). Respondents least often indicated the acceptance of people with Down Syndrome, and even more rarely the approval of members of the Roma minority and representatives of Jehovah's Witnesses. Regarding the members of the first of these minorities, the majority of respondents from groups 1 and 2 (over 1/3) pointed to the negative nature of the relationship. However, it should be emphasized that there were more positive assessments included in the study of these "Other" traits (semantic differential). Jehovah's Witnesses turned out to be the worst-valued "Others" (especially regarding the results of the semantic differential). The relationship to "Others" differed among the subjects from both groups depending on the disability referred to. People with Down Syndrome were valued lower in all dimensions than people in wheelchairs. Quite often, there were inconsistencies between the different ratios of the ratio - it was most relevant to the assessment of members of the Roma minority; in the smallest "consistently" of poor evaluation of Jehovah's Witnesses (Smoter, 2017).

The largest differences between groups 1 and 2 occurred in relation to the ratio declared to persons with Down Syndrome (the majority of positive responses of respondents from group 2). In the context of the assessment of traits attributed to "Others" on the social differential scale, the greatest differences appeared in the valuation of black people (with the dominance of positive indications of students from group 2).

The key here turned out to be answering the question: "Do the students attending the inclusive class have a positive influence on the attitude towards "Others"? In the analysis of the results included in the research questionnaires, it can be observed that students from non-inclusive classes generally slightly more often positively assessed "Others" than students from inclusive classes. In relation to detailed analyses, however, these differences turned out to be statistically insignificant - attending the inclusive class does not condition the higher degree of acceptance distinguished in the study of "Others" (Table 1).

Table 1. Characteristics of "attending a non-inclusive class" in comparison to "attending the inclusive class" and the attitude towards "Others"

School conditions	regression coefficient	standard error	t	statistical significance (P>t)	Beta - regression - adjusted rate
Attending a non-inclusive classes compared to attending an inclusive class by the respondents	2.0032	2.0141	0.99	0.320	0.0438

In light of the results obtained, attending an inclusive class cannot be considered as a factor eliminating pejorative attitudes towards members of the described groups.

This state certainly requires more in-depth research, but one can cautiously conclude that the process of inclusive in the schools studied is not fully successful. It is worth referring here to the issue of inclusiveness levels. This dimension refers to the strength of the parties' involvement in the emerging consensus and joint action, hierarchically divided into institutional, interpersonal, inclusive and, its highest level, psychological inclusiveness (Krause 2003, 59-64). The first of those mentioned was combined with the institutional selection of individuals departing from the current standards, the administrative determination of the place, and role of a given person in public life and social structures (an important element of institutional inclusiveness is the education system of people with disabilities) (Ibidem, 71). The second level, interpersonal inclusiveness, is connected with the degree of readiness to communicate with persons with "disabilities" and individuals with disabilities. The last one distinguished here, mental inclusiveness, meant acceptance of people with disabilities, an internal conviction about the integrity process, and readiness to take actions conducive to its formation (Ibidem, 73). With regard to the information included here, it can be assumed that the inclusive process in the schools studied could be more suited to institutional inclusive than to its highest, psychological level. In comparison with the members of the comparative group, they did not help to develop more accepting and open attitudes towards the "Others" in the tested students. Thus, functioning in such a class, despite the existence of formal "frameworks" reinforced by additional educational actions, may remind us more of "being by the side" of students than their common and even communal "being with each other".

Apart from the results presented here, in the course of the research procedure dependencies emerged between the sociodemographic and environmental characteristics of the students and their declared relationship to "Others". A multiple regression analysis was applied here, and the research results of the social distance scale were taken into account, considering the fact that the distance declared by respondents co-creates the key context of social processes, which should be taken into account in educational practice.

The key aspect of the analysis has been the identification of the impact of individual independent variables distinguished in this work on the level of acceptance of the groups distinguished here. At the next stage of work, a scale of generalized acceptance towards the Other was created. It was constructed by aggregating previously created acceptance scales for each of the categories at risk of exclusion: the percentage of respondents who agreed that another would attend the same school, class, peer group, be in a friendly relationship or a love relationship with the test. In the course of analysis, the responses of the surveyed students from the inclusive and non-inclusive classes were weighted depending on the degree of contact acceptable to them. Next, it was checked whether in the context of the presented data one can distinguish the so-called generalized acceptance of the "Others". In the context of obtaining a positive verification of this question, it was possible to include the considered Other categories in a cumulative manner, the factors influencing the so-called generalized acceptance

of the Other. It made it possible to identify the variables most strongly affecting the ratio of students from both groups to the representatives of the categories at risk of social exclusion. In the course of empirical analyses, two regression models have been constructed - showing variables most strongly affecting the positive attitude towards “Others”. These data are included in the tables. (Table 2 and Table 3).

Table 2 Influence of independent variables on the ratio of students to “Others” - a regression model for students from inclusive classes

Socio-demographic and social conditions	regression coefficient	standard error	t	statistical significance (P>t)	Beta – the regression – adjusted rate
gender - men in comparison to women	-7.3578	2.9673	-2.48	0.014*	-0.1743
faith and religious practices - „believers and non-practicing”	-9.7968	3.9769	-2.46	0.015*	-0.1800
Conditions related to the future environment					
Positive attitude of a friend towards „Others”	2.2423	0.8784	2.55	0.012*	0.2203
Conditions binding with the local environment and the activities of its institutions					
Contact with the „Other” in the neighborhood	1.4845	0.6698	2.22	0.028*	0.1570

Table 3 Influence of independent variables on the ratio of students to “Others” - a regression model for students from non inclusive classes

Socio-demographic and social conditions	regression coefficient	standard error	t	statistical significance (P>t)	Beta – the regression – adjusted rate
gender - men in comparison to women	-6,0544	2,4215	-2,5	0,013*	-0,1339
faith and religious practices - “believers and non-practicing”	-8,9343	3,4926	-2,56	0,011*	-0,1439
Conditions related to peer group					
Contact with the „Other” in a peer group	3,3314	1,2060	2,76	0,006*	0,1618

Conditions binding with the local environment and the activities of its institutions					
Contact with positive contents about „Others”, presented during participation in events realising aims of anti-discrimination and intercultural education	2,0065	0,6359	3,16	0,002*	0,1894

According to the information appearing in the table, in a model referring to data obtained from students of inclusive classes, there were statistically significant relationships between: the positive relationship between a colleague and other people, contacts with representatives of these categories established in the neighbourhood, and positive attitudes to these groups. One can also point to the presence of a statistically significant relationship between the male gender and self-determination as: “believing but not practicing” and the occurrence of more negative attitudes towards “Others”. In turn, in the model referring to data obtained from non-inclusive school students, statistically significant correlations were observed between: contacts with “Others” undertaken in a peer – group and contacts with positive content about “Others” during cultural events and positive attitudes of students to members of these minorities. One can also indicate the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the male gender of the respondents and the definition of themselves as “believing but not practicing” and the occurrence of more negative attitudes towards “Others” (Smoter 2016, Smoter 2017).

8. Discussion

In the context of the results here, it is worth referring in particular to the determinants related to the environment of upbringing and socialization of the pupils studied. They are listed in the following diagram (Figure 3).

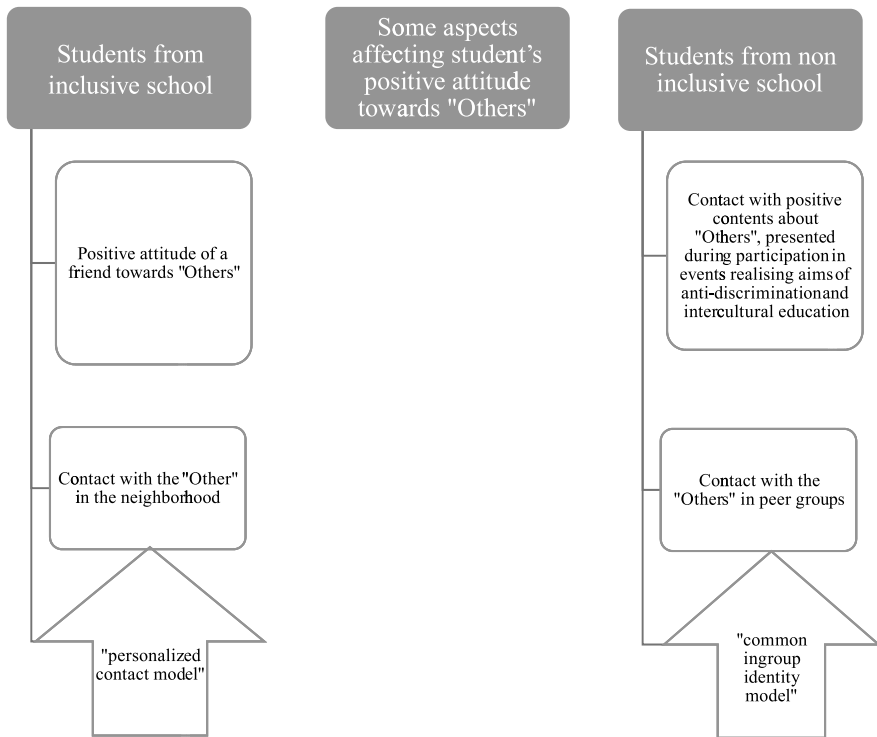


Figure 3. Conditions of relations pupils of older school age for “Others” – summary

I will devote special attention to the two distinguished variables, e.g.: “Contact with the “Other” in the neighbourhood” and “Contact with the “Other” in peer groups, which can be referred to as the “contact hypothesis” known in social psychology (Allport, 1954, Sherif, Harley, White, Hood, Sherif, 1961, Bilewicz 2006). It is assumed that the tensions weakening intergroup biases should be characterized by: intergroup cooperation, equal status of interaction participants, presence of personalized contact, or institutional support for these contacts (Stephan, Stephan 1999, 71-72, Bilewicz 2006). These assumptions are guided by formal and informal youth organizations, whose popularity and socialization importance acquires meaning, especially in the period of adolescence (Fudali, 2009, 8). The role played by the diverse composition of members of this group was pointed out by R. Zelig and G. Hendrickson, who proved that children with colleagues from different racial groups showed a higher level of social tolerance (for: Dovidio, Gaertner, Kawakami, 2003 and Bilewicz 2006, 63). The nature of this type of contact occurring in the peer group can be associated with the concept of weakening prejudices, possibly thanks to the so-called personalized contact (Miller, Brewer, Edwards 1985).

In the peer groups, it becomes possible to perceive oneself and the partners of interaction by passing their individual features; it becomes possible to focus on your

personal attributes and perceived similarity (Miller, Brewer, Edwards 1985, and Bilewicz 2006). A significant element of personalized contact is to perform common tasks. An important condition for the abolition of group prejudices is the interdependence existing here - a situation in which members of the group need each other to achieve their goal (Sherif, Sherif 1956, Aronson 2009, 336). In social psychology, attention is paid to the key condition for the success of these contacts - an equal position of interacting participants, enabling better understanding and understanding (Aronson 2009, 330). It is considered the main feature of informal peer groups. Developing this type of mutual relations in other types of arrangements may be much more difficult to implement, and in the absence of other properties of these contacts recognized as favourable, even impossible. Similar relationships are visible in the concept of weakening prejudices by contact in "one team" (Gaertner, Dovidio, 2000, Bilewicz 2006), in which participants in intergroup contact can perceive members of both groups as a kind of "one team" (when processes cognitive and motivational underpinning favouring one's own group are transferred to favouring a new own group). In order for this kind of contact to be effective, it is necessary to create the following conditions: (1) cooperation based on the interdependence of the actors, (2) similar status between contact participants, and (3) the sharing of egalitarian values by both parties. It has been proven that such contact leads to the growth of altruistic behaviours and opening up to a foreign group (Dovidio et al., 2003, Bilewicz 2006). According to the results of empirical analyses, the local environment, and especially the neighbourhood in its closest dimension, may be a convenient place for contacts that may weaken intergroup biases. It also enables the organization of various cultural events and meetings, and the implementation of direct interactions of a natural, unconstrained and voluntary character. In these informal conditions it becomes possible to create high-quality contacts, which gives the opportunity to deepen ties with "Others" (Allport 1954, Stephan, Stephan 1999).

9. Conclusion

The obtained results revealing not a entirely satisfactory level of acceptance of "Others" in students from inclusive classes point to the need to undertake systematic interactions aimed at developing their pro-inclusive attitudes. The implementation of diversified activities enabling an increase in the openness of pupils of older school age towards representatives of groups threatened with exclusion (in relation to the results of the research - members of the Jehovah's Witnesses, representatives of the Roma minority, people with Down Syndrome, but also representatives of other minorities) is becoming significant. The place of obligatory activities in the field of intercultural and anti-discrimination education should be the school and institutions of extracurricular education. Educators should make an effort to identify peer groups' values and norms adopted on the ground, which will enable them to capture their potential in the context of the implementation of education tasks against discrimination. It is also important

to shape the conditions for personalized contact of their students with “Others” and to create a field for changing existing prejudices by contacting one team (Bilewicz 2006). A big potential appears to be in youth organizations or interest groups: groups that combine formal and informal aspects of activity. Some of them present an attractive offer of initiatives enabling the formation of equal and differentiated (cultural, ethnic, religious and other) peer interactions. An interesting proposition is presented in this regard, among others, by youth clubs operating in Poland.

Undoubtedly, the implementation of the humanistic idea of inclusive education encounters numerous limitations and obstacles. Enriching educational practice with activities based on the results of social psychology research, exchange of experiences between practitioners and experts, respecting the principles of peaceful coexistence at school and consistent response to discrimination are just some of the significant actions that should be taken to fully implement the idea of inclusion. The response to the increased pluralisation of the surrounding unit should become the taking up by the schools of the subject matter of “otherness” and “Others”: The urgent need to incorporate insufficiently present content in the field of intercultural education and anti-discrimination education into school programmes should be pointed out (Smoter 2017). The implementation of the activities described here should not be limited to one-off “actions”, but should form part of a well-thought-out and regularly implemented strategy permeating the whole school life. Systematic and consistent shaping of readiness to integrate with “Others”, being together “despite differences”, should be associated with attention to the process of educational inclusion, especially at the level of friendly groups. Interactions undertaken in a diverse peer group provide knowledge relating to other people. In their positive dimension they also shape attentiveness to the needs of other individuals, on the one hand, similar, and on the other, “equipped with a difference”. The process of social learning of communing with “otherness”, a kind of growing up in this process, is a long-term learning from experience, contexts of contact with “Others”, deconstructing the senses assigned to “otherness”, and reflecting on opportunities that redefine meanings (Rzedzicka 2005, 105). Care for the shaping and course of these relations applies to all categories at risk of social exclusion, especially those accepted at the level of “distant contacts”, and at the same time excluded from the area of closer relations and treated as “worse Others”.

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