

Respect for Diversity in Greek Schools and The Role of Democratic Educational Leadership: A Survey of Secondary School Teachers

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Abstract:

Background: The theoretical and research interest in issues of diversity in modern multicultural societies is particularly high. Education is aimed at shaping a society in which the new generations will acquire the knowledge and skills that will enable them to share and adopt democratic attitudes and values, the core of which is respect for diversity. Hence, the promotion of respect for diversity is one of the basic and ultimate goals of democratic education in Western societies, particularly in recent years due to the problems of the immigrants' integration. In this base, respect for diversity can be cultivated at school through the implementation of a well-articulated and collaborative-democratic model of leadership.

Materials and Methods: For the implementation of the research the survey method was used in a sample of 400 secondary school teachers.

Results: The results of the research presented in this work examined the attitudes of teachers regarding the promotion of diversity in Greek schools. Through the examination of the four stages of teachers' democracy scale regarding respect for diversity.

Conclusion: The results led to the conclusion that most of the participants felt that today's school does not provide sufficient knowledge and appropriate learning methods to promote diversity in the school community.

Key Word: Diversity; Democracy; Educational Leadership.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Shaping democratic ethos, mainly through the learning and dissemination of democratic values and principles, such as respect for diversity, is a key objective that education in modern democratic societies must promote, *inter alia*. However, public education in the developed countries of the western world nurtures the new generation mainly with skills that primarily support the competitiveness and productivity in the area of economy. In this way, it reduces the skills that young people need to develop in order to be able to address the various issues or problems and to assume their responsibilities as active citizens of a democratic society [6]. Therefore, there is a need for an education that will contribute to the democratic socialization of the student and the democratization of the school.

One of the basic prerequisites for school democratization is the existence of a school administration capable of administering in a democratic way, fostering democratic competences and attitudes in teachers and students. In other words, school administration must have the characteristics of a democratic educational leadership. This is because democratic educational leadership can turn the school into a democratic learning community, where the main priorities will be the knowledge of democracy and democratic principles and values. Central to these values is respect for diversity that is one of the greatest problems facing multicultural democratic societies.

II. PROBLEM OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTION(S)

Promoting democracy in today's education presupposes the implementation of a democratic model of educational leadership in the school environment. An educational model that can create educational conditions that will help to promote respect for diversity in the school environment, and subsequently in the wider community. The question therefore arises: in social environments where the problems of conflict or differentiation in terms of diversity are a warning of the great difficulties that may arise in the future, how can education promote active citizenship and democracy, and in particular, respect for diversity? In terms of

teachers, what should be their role and what is the corresponding form of educational leadership that will be able to promote respect for diversity deemed necessary for the social cohesion of modern western democracies?

Then an attempt is made to formulate the research questions that emerged from the literature review and theoretical analysis that preceded it. More specifically, the research questions were:

1. Which are the attitudes of teachers in developing educational leadership at school?
2. Which are the attitudes of teachers about the relationship of educational leadership and the promotion of respect for diversity at school?
3. Which are the attitudes of teachers in relation to the practices and management methods applied by the principals to promote respect for diversity at school?

III. AIM(S) AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this research is to examine whether respect for diversity is promoted in the secondary education field. Also, one of the aims of the research is to explore the role that informal school leadership plays in fostering respect for diversity and its integration into school life. It should be noted at this point that the term “democratic educational leadership” refers to teachers of schools promoting democratic public morality, mainly through the learning and dissemination of democratic values such as respect for students' diversity. [49]. Through this learning process it is possible to transform pedagogical relationships between teachers and students. Therefore, an appropriate climate is created in the school to effectively promote the rights of both teachers and students [48].

In this perspective, the present study examined the attitudes and practices of school teachers on issues related to respect for diversity and how it is promoted through planned activities in the school environment. That is, this research aimed to examine whether respect for diversity is promoted in knowledge and practice in secondary schools. It also explored whether teachers, through the exercise of democratic educational leadership, contribute to its empowerment in a way that is respected by and for all students regardless of their cultural, religious or other identity. Therefore, the focus was essentially on examining the attitudes of teachers towards promoting respect for diversity in schools.

The present research will help to draw conclusions about whether respect for diversity in Greek schools is promoted and cultivated through teacher action. In other terms, the research will explore the issue of respect for diversity in schools and how it is perceived and treated by school teachers. Specifically, examining teachers' attitudes towards promoting respect for diversity in schools will simultaneously draw conclusions about the stages of their democracy escalation. In more detail, those stages of escalating teacher democracy that can lead the school to a democratic way of functioning are examined. An attempt will be made to answer the key question of whether respect for diversity is promoted at school by collecting data from a representative sample of 400 teachers serving schools in the Regional Unit of Aitolokarnania. Finally, as shown by research objectives set by the research questions, the study of the attitudes of teachers in relation to the promotion of respect for diversity through the development of educational leadership at school makes it necessary to clarify the concept of educational leadership.

IV. EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS

For many decades, educational leadership in schools has focused on the person of the “heroic” principal, as a leader who is fully responsible for the operation of the school. Essentially, he is committed to setting new goals, creating new organizational structures in the school and adopting appropriate strategies. His main goal was to achieve a change in school culture and greater teacher and student satisfaction in relation to educational outcomes [43]. However, today's social conditions require models of educational leadership in schools capable of “shaping an environment built on a collaborative culture [...] and open to improvements, trials and challenges” [49], highlighting, according to Storey [45], the ineffectiveness of the traditional management of the “heroic” principal in responding to the above challenges.

The theories of educational leadership developed in previous decades have recognized to some extent the interaction between the leader, teachers, students, and situations at school. Such theories tended to propose a set of relationships without explaining and exploring the basic dimensions of these relationships and avoid the wider micro and macro levels that interact to, in order to give educational leadership an essential status [14]. Recent developments at global level such as the speed of change, the development of new technologies, poverty, social exclusion, and social divisions have drawn the attention of scholars to the redefinition of educational leadership in issues related to democracy, rights, freedoms, and social justice. Similarly, the emergence of demands for respect for minority rights and the protection of the natural environment reinforce the above logic [24]. There is a need to recognize the complex and dynamic nature of educational leadership in schools, in order to understand that democracy is a function inside and outside the school environment. In this way, it will be understood that democracy is a function, which must be linked to school administration, recognizing the

dynamic contribution of teachers and students and the need for free expression of views and their participation [50].

Therefore, the theory of educational leadership needs to rethink issues related to the values and purposes of education. Educational leadership must primarily promote constructive dialogue on issues related to the school's organizational culture. This is because without dialogue no school will be able to function satisfactorily and the educational process will not be aware of the required development [29]. Hence, educational leadership must adapt to new circumstances and social needs in order to respond more effectively to contemporary democratic demands [21].

On this basis, the development of collective models of educational leadership in schools becomes necessary for the achievement of the above goals. In addition, educational leadership should be able to influence the behaviors, attitudes, motivations, knowledge, or practices of each member of the educational community in order to adopt new values and collective goals [44]. However, this definition of educational leadership is quite general and does not include important aspects of the processes and ways in which the various actions and interventions of the members of the school community need to be implemented to achieve these goals.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW ON EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in international literature in the scientific field of school educational leadership. However, the interest in the role of educational leadership in promoting democratic values such as respect for diversity and school democratization is negligible. The issue of promoting democratic values in schools is a field that has not been adequately investigated, although a significant number of reports are observed and to a lesser extent, related surveys, which identify and study some democratic practices that take place in school. However, these studies show that the democratic elements they identify in schools do not fit into an overall logic or program of *ad hoc* actions designed to promote democracy and school democratization by teachers. However, this does not exclude the possibility of the *de facto* promotion of democratic values and strengthening of democracy in the school community.

It should be noted that a significant number of international research in educational leadership is mainly related to the way the school administration associated with the human and especially social capital. This finding, according to the research conducted by Robert Putnam [37] in Italy, is directly related to the development of a level of mutual trust between citizens and a more horizontal governance system, regarding cooperation between citizens or social groups. Particularly, in terms of human capital, Portin's et al. [36] research, conducted in English schools, examined the role of the principal's personality and his relationships with teachers regarding the extent of distribution of responsibilities to them. Similarly, some other researches have focused on teacher satisfaction and the creation of human capital at school [28].

Regarding social capital, it has been identified in several studies which mainly examine the relationship between school administration and teachers. A relevant example is the research of Camburn et al. [9], which conducted in schools of the United States of America and showed the degree of cooperation and division of responsibilities between principals and deputy principals of schools in Canada and Australia. In addition, Harber and Mncube [20], in their research, found that the implementation of effective educational leadership models in schools had a positive impact on both educational outcomes and behavior and relationships among educational leaders, in a cooperative direction, but not necessarily in the logic of democracy. The results of another research by Moos et al. [34], conducted in schools in Ontario, Canada, showed that principals encouraged teachers to higher levels of collaboration while demonstrating a clear preference for students' academic achievement as well as sensitivity to discipline issues. Also, in a survey conducted in schools in the United States of America, the results showed that in some cases, educational leadership was shared by teachers, thereby enabling them to participate in school administration [35], and the freedom to express their own views and values [16].

We would conclude that the results of the aforementioned researches indicate the existence of different forms of educational leadership in schools. These forms of educational leadership are oriented towards values or ways of administration. More specifically, it concerns the co-operation and sharing of responsibilities between principals and teachers, the development of trust and a willingness to cooperate between teachers and students, and the development of school trust relationships with parents and the wider school community. In addition, the findings of the same researches identify forms of educational leadership that combine personality traits, personal values and the principal's personal role, or even personal satisfaction and professional development of teachers.

However, in none of the above cases there is not a direct link between educational leadership exercised by school administration and teachers with the goals of democratic education. More specifically, there is no link with a form of democratic educational leadership. There are no relevant data concerning the democratization of school and the development of democratic values and ideals in the wider school community.

VI. DIVERSITY AND DEMOCRACY

The concept of diversity is based on the principle of multiplicity of identities and values [4]. Primarily, it is the opportunity for all people to have the capacity to express themselves as human beings, either as individuals or as members of a national, religious or other community [5]. It is also a virtue of the citizen that enables the coexistence of different cultures and ensures social peace. Respect for diversity is first and foremost an active attitude inspired by the recognition of one's human rights and fundamental freedoms [30]. In international literature it is found as national, racial, religious, linguistic or cultural diversity [4]. On the other hand, the concept of democracy implies a political community where there is political equality between citizens. But democracy is at the same time a form of government based on fundamental values such as equality, freedom, active participation, respect, tolerance, security, justice, sensitivity to others' problems and acceptance of diversity [46].

It is a fact that the issue of respect for diversity has been at the center of public life in modern democratic societies for at least a decade, which are by definition liberal, therefore pluralistic and multicultural. Consequently, it is sometimes extremely difficult for these societies to understand that diversity can be an effective tool for cultural understanding. In that way, diversity can lead to the creation of a democratic framework for the coexistence of culturally diverse social groups [27]. The demand for respect for diversity has been intensified in recent years because of the increasing migration flows and the multicultural nature of democratic societies. In modern western democracies, respect for diversity and human rights in general is being undermined today by xenophobia, racism and the denial of otherness. The coexistence of people with different perceptions of lifestyle and values becomes problematic, and there is a certain difficulty in identifying a framework of shared values, with implications for the future of democracy [15].

VII. DIVERSITY AND EDUCATION

The role of education in promoting respect for diversity is a central issue at the level of educational policy-making and at the same time a high priority issue for all stakeholders, such as scientific associations. The issue of the role of education in promoting respect for diversity mainly raises the question of the most appropriate model of education. It is better than examining the most appropriate model of education to capture the characteristics of educational leadership that could best respond to the promotion of democratic values, and particularly diversity [49].

Over the last two decades, there has been a widespread development of specialized education models such as global education, peace education, value education and education for democratic citizenship [32]. It is worth noting that these new models of education are emerging at a critical juncture when there is a strong tendency among teachers to adopt conservative perceptions and practices usually promoting the "teaching" of the dominant traditional values and the existing rules of student behavior [27]. This finding further highlights the need for a "democratic reaction" in the field of education, represented by the dynamic development of the above educational models.

Indeed, the theoretical and research interest in controversial issues and their relevance to the role of education is seen as particularly important in promoting respect for diversity in society. Because the common element of these models of education is the creation of a society where its citizens perceive themselves as an integral part of a collective and participatory activity based on shared democratic values and attitudes. The key issue is to find that the debate about promoting diversity in today's education confirms the primary role of the school. Also, a modern school administration to take responsibility for the moral education of students with primary aiming to shape them as tomorrow's democratic citizens is needed [18]. This kind of school administration acquires features that are increasingly attributed to what is termed "democratic educational leadership" in international literature [49].

Concerning the development of democratic educational leadership in the school Brownlee et al. [8] argue that it is an important transformative factor for integrating diversity into the school community. Furthermore, democratic values in education, such as respect for diversity, should place greater emphasis on social criticism and advocate a deeper and substantial critique of democracy, equality, human rights and social justice [52]. From this point of view, it is important to implement collaborative and participatory models of educational leadership in school. In this way, respect for diversity is embedded in everyday school life without coercion but is instead freely adopted as the basis for creating a morally good society, which is the essential purpose of democratic education [22].

Hence, democratic educational leadership being the most appropriate model of education that understands both the moral and democratic aims of education and the importance of the democratic nature of the educational process. In this sense, one of the main tasks of school administration is to promote teaching that recognizes respect for autonomy [52]. Achieving the above goals, school administration builds the resilience of the students and redefines the culture of school, transforming it into a democratic culture [7].

Therefore, the prerequisite for the democratic functioning of the school and the promotion of respect for diversity is the democratization of school administration. Through the development of strong democratic educational leadership, school administration will be ready to cultivate beliefs among teachers necessary for the implementation of democratic practices and learning methods. Main purpose of these actions constitutes spreading respect for diversity in the educational process and, by extension, in society [26].

As emphasized above, the promotion of respect for diversity in school and the establishment of democratic culture in school community presuppose the existence of a school administration free of rigorous hierarchical structures. Also, this kind of administration should be conscious of the operation of bottom-up systems of governance. In this sense, school administration needs to have capable, but above all confident leaders who teach democracy and its values by guiding teachers and students through planned activities in a society with active democratic citizens [11].

VIII. DEMOCRATIC EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

First, democratic practice is identified with the active involvement of principals, teachers, students and, parents in school activities in a creative and effective way that promotes democratic values and principles, such as diversity, religious freedom, equality, justice and accountability [49]. Adopting Woods's view that the existence of democratic models of school administration reinforces its democratic way of organizing, we can assume that educational leadership is indispensable for promoting the democratic goals of education in the school community. Consequently, the distribution of educational leadership by a democratic school administration favors both the development of democratic thinking and disposition to teachers and students. On the other hand, such a democratic administration cultivates the democratic principles and values in school community preparing students as tomorrow's democratic citizens [13].

Democratic educational leadership is deeply intertwined with the notion of human existence, mutual respect and the promotion of common interest through the free and consensual action of the subjects [33]. Also, it is primarily aimed at creating a school environment free from predefined formal decision-making rules, curriculums, and standardized written tests [51]. In such an environment, students and teachers are encouraged and supported by the school administration for the implementation of democratic pedagogy and, through it, for the development of a democratic culture in the school [49].

One of the main priorities of democratic educational leadership is the increased involvement of teachers and students in the decision-making process and the strengthening of the sense of responsibility by teachers on issues that mainly concern educational conditions and the way of teaching [29]. Therefore, this model attaches importance to the active involvement of school members in a creative community action, where the principal, teachers, students and parents participate and collaborate. In this sense, democratic educational leadership acquires the characteristics of a key factor in nurturing the humanitarian value potential, democratic perceptions, and competences of school community members through a collective and conscious involvement in the educational process [50].

IX. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The development of democratic educational leadership is based on the concept of democratic practice. In such an environment, everyone can distinguish and represent the interactive and complementary rationalities of actors in the micro-society of the school. Democratic practice has four rationalities. Any rationality can express the democratic nature of the school, and their combination reflects a strong form of human potentiality that is grounded in democratic educational leadership [49].

First, the ethical rationality is about supporting and promoting "authentic truth" from school administration, thereby legitimizing the principle of free access for students and teachers both in terms of approaching it as well as improving its access conditions. One of the functions of democratic educational leadership, according to Reitzug and O'Hair [38] is to "involve individuals in such processes that put them in front of issues and dilemmas, giving them at the same time new knowledge of their solution". In addition, in such democratic organizational conditions, a group of individuals develops their intelligence more and acquires the ability to solve problems far better than the one acting as a unit [47].

The decisional rationality concerns the ability of people to freely decide, create and develop ideas and relationships, without any social or other constraints. It is about enhancing one's power and freedom in relation to the arbitrary and compulsive will of others and enforcing their values. It also concerns, the exercise of individual freedom and respect for social identities and diversity [22]. In such a context, democratic educational leadership must distribute responsibilities to all members of the school in order to facilitate the effective involvement of teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders in the recruitment process of decisions [49].

Accordingly, the decisional rationality is summarized as a genuine sharing of power. Using this power, all members of the school community can raise issues, make or adopt decisions, and generally control the school

administration. The notion of sharing power in this case incorporates the essence of genuine participation, having a definitive influence on the culture of the school. Indeed, Trafford [48] characteristically states that “what students like most is the idea of sharing power. It is a "living" condition that immediately attracts them”.

Subsequently, the discursive rationality is about the distribution of voice. It is about maximizing the possibilities for an open dialogue of alternative interpretations and perspectives. It concerns the recognition of their ethical basis and, moreover, the consensus on justified and effective action [42]. It is essential for a democratic school administration to seek out contact with teachers, students and parents and recognize that their positions cannot be unimportant. After all, the concept of dialogue, “does not only mean acceptance of differences but also divergence from these differences, seeing them as beneficial to the organization [...], while dialogue means *dia-logos*, that is, a reason that flows between us and is stronger than the speech of each individual” [25].

Finally, the therapeutic rationality is about enhancing social cohesion and a positive sense of involvement through active participation and distributed leadership in school, “through the distribution of esteem” [10]. The therapeutic rationality, while focused on one's mental well-being, recognizes the association between one's external social relationships and one's inner world. More specifically, it recognizes the nature of social relationships, the symbols and messages transmitted by formal and informal social arrangements. Then, they encourage or discourage participation and the way in which they are shown their different forms of power and authority. For instance, in a study conducted in the North of England found that many students, and especially dissatisfied ones, consider education they receive as boring, dangerous, and frustrating. In this study, according to Riley [39], students wanted, “schools more open and democratic so that they feel cooperative in their "own" education”. Consequently, the most radical and integrated democratic way of thinking and functioning of the school arises when the above four rationalities come together, as shown in Figure no 1.

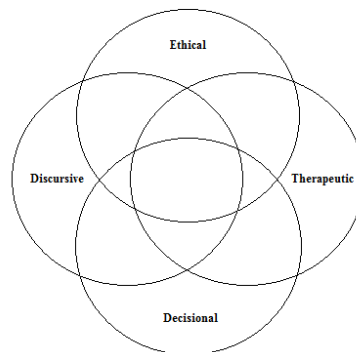


Figure no 1: Rationalities of Democratic Practice according to Woods (49: p.12)

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the operation of the four rationalities is identified with the development of a dynamic and social process of democratic leader's “discovery”. In such an organizational environment, school administration, teachers and students will be able, through a continuous social activity in the school, to be creative. At the same time, the school administration will be able to strengthen self-confidence of other members of the school [49].

X. RESEARCH METHOD

At first, we used the written questionnaire that is completed by the teachers, without the presence of the researcher [40]. For the preparation of the questionnaires, in addition to the problem that developed and the theoretical conclusions resulted in the preceding sections, the theoretical tools were derived from the work of Bäckman and Trafford [2] concerning the exploration of school administration attitudes towards the promotion of democratic values in the school. Additionally, the Council of Europe's model for promoting democracy citizenship and human rights in education was used [17].

Specifically, according to the Council of Europe, Education for Democratic Citizenship is based on three basic democratic values. These are “Rights and responsibilities”, “Active participation”, and “Valuing diversity”. In examining teachers' attitudes towards these democratic values, according the Council of Europe, there are specific areas in each school where the above values can be developed.

- Governance, leadership and management.
- Value-centred education.
- Co-operation, communication and involvement.
- Student discipline.

The figure no 2 shows the relationship of the three democratic values with the four key areas in which they are located, based on which we can assess the democracy in schools.

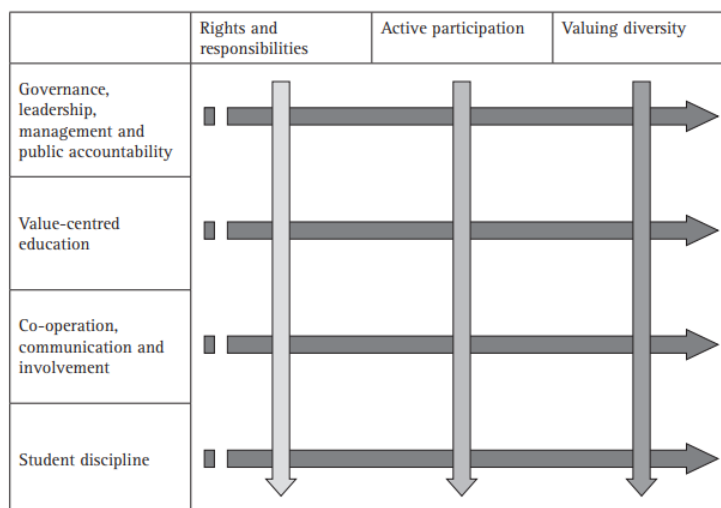


Figure no 2: Relation between democratic values and research areas (17: p.120)

According to the figure 2, Bäckman and Trafford [2] analyzed each area in relation to the three democratic values, namely “Rights and responsibilities”, “Active participation” and “Valuing diversity”. The survey of this study focused on identifying the democratic value of “Valuing diversity” in two of the four areas, namely, governance, leadership and management and value-centred education. The questions are divided, on the one hand, into the two areas of our research, and, on the other, the democratic value under consideration of “Valuing diversity”, as shown in the preceding table. In addition, the questions explore this particular value in four stages corresponding to the escalation of teacher democracy, from their authoritarian attitudes to the most democratic. Furthermore, questionnaires on the 5-point Likert scale were used to capture the answers given by the teachers in a more reliable way [12]. Finally, the Likert scale is as follows: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = partially agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Sampling

In terms of sample selection, the stratified sampling method was used [41]. More specifically, each school participated in the sample with a percentage proportional to its relationship to the total surveyed population. For example, if a school contributed 2% of the total population, it was received 2% of total sample of 400 questionnaires, that was, 8 questionnaires. Then, it was calculated the percentage of the eighty (80) schools we examined in relation to their area, urban, semi-urban and rural, according to 2011 census data of the Hellenic Statistical Authority. Depending on this percentage, the number of teachers in the sample was divided, which it was calculated above. Also, the teachers from each school who participated in the survey were selected by random sampling. It should also be noted that the total surveyed population of teachers in the Regional Unit of Aitoloakarnania was 1295 according to the figures of the Secondary Education Department of Aitoloakarnania at the beginning of the school year 2017-2018. The total surveyed population of teachers in the Regional Unity of Aitoloakarnania was 1295 persons. According to gender, was divided into 765 female, 59.10% and 530 male, 40.90%. Correspondingly, the distribution of the sample under study was 58.70% for female and 41.30% for male. The gender divergence observed in our sample from the total surveyed population did not appear to affect the representativeness of our sample.

This is because the relative frequency of a particular trait of the sample, such as gender, age, height, etc., should approach the probability of the sample, given its relative frequency, that is, the relative frequency presented to the entire population. For example, if the frequency of female was 65% in the surveyed population, the probability of being “female” was 65 at 100, i.e., $p = 0.65$. Therefore, the relative frequency of female in the survey sample should be around 0.65 or 65%. In addition, a total of 400 questionnaires were a satisfactory sample size for the survey [40]. Also, it should be emphasized that the majority of the sample of teachers were female (58.7%), while male represented 41.3%. Finally, the schools from which teachers were selected mostly came from urban areas (64.3%) and the rest from semi-urban (19.8%) and rural (15.9%) areas.

Data analysis and interpretation

Subsequently, the teachers’ attitudes are analyzed in relation to the practices and methods used by the principal to promote respect for diversity in the school, based on the responses of the teachers surveyed. The

results are presented in four parts, which are the four stages of escalating teacher democracy in relation to the democratic value we examined in our research, namely “Valuing diversity”. In addition, in the first and second stage, the answers to the questions range from one (1), which is equivalent to democratic attitudes of teachers toward principals, to five (5), which is equivalent to authoritarian attitudes of teachers. That is, the higher the average of the responses, the more authoritarian teachers’ attitudes are presented to the school administration. Conversely, the smaller, the closer it is to democratic attitudes of teachers.

Furthermore, in the third and fourth stage the answers to the questions range from one (1), which is equivalent to the authoritarian attitudes of teachers towards school administration, to five (5), which is equivalent to teachers’ democratic attitudes toward school administration. That is, the higher the average of the responses, the more democratic attitudes teachers have toward the administration of the school, and *vice versa*. It should be emphasized that the move from the first to the fourth stage, the less authoritarian and more democratic the attitudes of teachers towards school administration become. Next, the results of the data analysis will be presented, which relate to the four stages of escalating democracy of teachers’ attitudes towards school administration concerning the democratic value of “Valuing diversity”.

XI. RESULTS

As mentioned above, in the first stage, the higher the average of the responses, the more authoritarian attitudes teachers have toward school administration. In this sense, teachers’ more authoritarian attitudes (avg. = 3.43) relate to their position that textbooks should promote the values and ethics established and valid in society, followed by their position (avg. = 1.77) on the adoption of dominant social perceptions. Also, in the second stage, the higher the average of the responses, the more authoritarian attitudes teachers have towards school administration. In this case, the authoritarian attitudes of teachers to all questions are well below average and relate to their position concerning the initiatives to promote the principle of equality of children in school without restrictions (avg. = 2.31) and the behavior of students who are hostile or violent towards their peers who belong to different cultural, national or religious groups (avg. = 1.74).

On the contrary, in the third stage, the higher the average of the responses, the more democratic attitudes teachers have towards school administration. More specifically, teachers more democratic attitudes (avg. = 4.34) relate to protecting students’ religious freedom, while less democratic are their attitudes on whether school administration should allow teachers to implement a “free” curriculum aimed at equal treatment of students’ cultural and social identities (avg. = 3.59). Additionally, teachers seem to take a rather democratic attitude on the position whether the curriculum should be implemented in a way that safeguards the special needs and equal treatment of students (avg. = 4.23).

Finally, in the fourth stage, the attitudes of teachers related to the promotion of democratic values and the prevention of any potential infringement are highly democratic (avg. = 4.19). Similarly, the teacher’s attitudes related to encouraging students who belong to sensitive social groups to take initiatives present high score (avg. = 4.19). Furthermore, teachers present democratic attitudes about their proposal to the Teachers’ Association to include in the curriculum actions that promote tolerance and respect for diversity in the school (avg. = 4.1).

The above results of the data analysis of teachers’ attitudes showed that:

- In Stage 1, it appears that the majority of teachers largely adopt the prevailing social perceptions, while believing that textbooks should promote the corresponding dominant values and morals of Greek society. These attitudes suggest, in our opinion, a lack of willingness to change. Furthermore, they express conservatism and a commitment to the traditionalist conceptions of Greek society that are strong, if not dominant, in terms of discrimination against others and intolerance of diversity. It is worth noting that these conceptions are from the highest among EU countries, according to a Eurobarometer survey.
- In Stage 2, the majority of teachers seem to significantly promote respect for diversity in the school. But, in our opinion, these are disputed democratic attitudes, whereas the average of the question (avg. = 1.74) related to “Valuing diversity”, it exceeds the average level of democracy in second stage. This can be explained by the teachers’ desire, as expressed in the question: “to instruct students who have hostile or violent behavior towards their peers belonging to different cultural, ethnic or religious groups”. However, this does not mean that there is a real involvement and, thus, an effective response to the problem.
- In stage 3, most of teachers show respect for students’ religious freedom but do not have a positive disposition to adapt the curriculum or create a “hidden” one to facilitate students who have different cultural and social identity.
- In stage 4, the majority of teachers adopt strong democratic attitudes resulting from the inclusion of actions in the curriculum that promote tolerance and respect for diversity in schools. Similar is the case with encouraging students from vulnerable groups to participate actively in the life of the school.

XII. DISCUSSION

If it is assumed that democratic educational leadership presupposes the participatory-collective dimension of its practices, then its concept should include the attitudes of both teachers and other school members, that is, the administration and students. Based on the above reasoning, the following conclusions are reached.

A. Regarding the first research question:

- In the first and second stage, of the escalation of democracy, the majority of teachers seem to consciously embrace an authoritarian form of school administration, while reconciling an individualistic and passive attitude, in general. They do not have a developed sense of collectivity, nor do they spend enough time and energy on promoting their pedagogical work. They always follow the suggestions and initiatives of the school administration without publicly expressing their objections. Their attendance at school is exclusively accompanied by the maintenance of their teaching hours. This means that most teachers behave as followers, without the possibility of developing leadership roles on their part. Moreover, the majority of teachers are not prepared to act democratically and transform the culture of the school, as this requires huge personal investment, which has not been observed in these two stages.
- In the third and fourth stage, most teachers promote an authoritarian form of education, presumed by a strong tendency among teachers not to adopt democratic attitudes and practices. As a result, they prefer socializing to the dominant traditional values and rules of student's behavior established by the formal rules of procedure. Hence, most teachers find it difficult to teach students respect for the diversity that is essential to the development of a democratic ethic in the classroom. Furthermore, they have clearer democratic attitudes than school administration, but at the same time they refuse to accept educational processes that foster the development of a democratic climate throughout the school community. Finally, they do not show a positive attitude towards applying pedagogical methods to issues concerning students with different cultural and social identities. In such an environment, most teachers despite their democratic disposition on critical educational issues, such as respect for diversity, manifest a conservative attitude, making it difficult to transform the school into a democratic learning community.

B. Regarding the second and third research question:

- In the first and second stage, the majority of teachers accept the choices and practices of a conservative school administration without seeking to actively participate in school life. There is a clear denial by them to take initiatives on various educational issues at extradition level. In addition, their desire to develop partnerships and collective actions at school seems weak. Under these circumstances, promoting respect for diversity at school becomes almost impossible.
- In the third and fourth stage of the escalation of teacher's democracy, there are prominent democratic attitudes towards promoting respect for diversity in school. More specific, the majority of teachers often applaud the democratic practices of school administration, encouraging students, and sometimes their colleagues, to become more involved in educational activities. There is a certain tendency among teachers to cultivate a climate of cooperation and trust in school, while often they support the efforts of students from vulnerable groups to achieve better educational outcomes.

Therefore, in these stages the majority of teachers tend to act as co-leaders towards the school administration, empowering it at this level. In turn, the latter will be able to transform its administrative action into democratic educational leadership and the school into a democratic learning community. Finally, with the development of democratic educational leadership by teachers and the promotion of democratic educational methods by the school administration, it is easier to transform the school into a democratic community, where respect and tolerance are essential elements for its operation.

XIII. CONCLUSION

Through the study of the results of the research and based on the answers to research questions, this paper highlights the important problem of the democratic functioning of the Greek secondary education and the Greek school, more generally. The inability of school members, and especially of teachers, to promote respect for diversity and, in general, democratic ideals in schools has been shown to have limited potential for preparing students as tomorrow's democratic citizens. In such an environment, the democratic functioning of school is limited and activating its members in this direction seems difficult.

Therefore, there is a need to redefine educational leadership in schools. School administration must pursue in order to harmonize with the needs of modern society and to respond to the skills needed by modern citizens, such as the acceptance of diversity, in order to revive democracy in society. The question then arises whether today's teachers in relation to the school administration can develop the model of democratic

educational leadership and drive Greek schools their democratization. This could be achieved, at least to some extent, if educational policy makers implemented educational programs in schools in line with the principle that education must be adapted to the need for public participation, but mainly in the context of multicultural society, in which the main demand is respect for diversity. Thus, democratic demands for equal treatment can be answered based on the democratic values of equality and freedoms of all citizens irrespective of their identity [3]. In this regard, White argues that education for democratic citizenship in a pluralistic society presupposes equal treatment of children in preparing themselves as tomorrow's democratic citizens through the learning of democratic values, which for him constitutes "the stronghold against social coercion and manipulation" [19]. In addition, integrating training programs for principals and teachers in issues such as respect and acceptance of diversity, which are a challenge for modern democracy, is one of the possible ways to create the right conditions for the development of democratic educational leadership [1].

Furthermore, educational policymakers and institutions need to incorporate respect for diversity, as a core democratic value, into the official curricula [46]. In this way, it will be aligned with the democratic culture of the school with greater programmatic accuracy and defined targeting, transforming the often-authoritarian school administrations into democratic ones [31]. Also, the design and implementation of formal curricula that promote democratic values such as respect for diversity and the practices of learning and applying democratic values should be a dynamic field of educational leadership [23].

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