

The Influence of Economic and Education Level into Cultural Integration of Macedonian Minority in Korça District

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Abstract

The case study of this article presents the influence of economic and education level into cultural integration of population of Macedonian minority in Korça district, Albania. First of all let's have a short presentation of the Macedonian minority. This minority lives in a region at South-Eastern part of Albania (in Korça district), around Prespa Lake. Even though the population of this ethnic community has presented the main forms of monogamy group, they show that they are well integrated into Albanian culture. Their life is very dynamic, with specific traditions, cultural aspects and physic-social mentality. This is one of the minorities in Albania, which have developed specific approaches in cultural integration. Furthermore, in the center of coexistence of minority population into Albanian culture and society are a range of strategies. The historic background is a major point, because we can see that both ethnicities have a very similar history, the negotiation and adaption is another important element of integration. But, the question the author has raised in this study is: Is all the Macedonian minority population well integrated into Albanian culture and society? Of course, that the social stratification is involved in the interpretation of adaption forms. And, the types of surveys in these social groups have different attitudes of integration, because their economic status and education levels are determinative in the process of integration. Other important issues addressed by the author in this study are the cultural diffusion between Macedonian and Albanian society, the basic elements which influence cultural integration, similarities and differences between Macedonian and Albanian communities and the great specifics in their social life. The type of methodology used during this study is ontology-empiric, and the target groups are Macedonian minority population and Albanian population in Korça district. Data collection will be provided through 200 questionnaire based on random sample method. The data analysis will be calculated by SPSS 21 program.

Keywords: cultural integration; diffusion; minority; negotiation; economic status.

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1. Introduction

When we refer minorities in Albania, the issue appears a redundant topic, and even abstract, to many. The history of minorities in the country has been historically shaped in particular political and social climates, thus very apparently leaving out the element of the naturalness of their formation, especially local population. In the beginnings of the Albanian state, minorities were not devoted any special importance as long as Albania itself was in its very first steps of state building. Nowadays in Albania live seven minorities in all country (Greek minority, Macedonian minority, Serbian and Montenegrin minority, Bosnian minority, Romanian minority, Roma minority) [1].

The Macedonian minority population lives in southern part of Albania, surrounding of Prespa Lake. They are indigenous (ethnic) minority, which were being part of Republic of Albania in 1924 [2]. The respondents' interviews tell that residents of this minority had decided to be part of Albanian territory under their free decision. In that period Korca city was more known for trade and economic development and the residents of Macedonian minority were nearly with Korca markets in geographic distance, and sociocultural function. Under pressure of 2nd World War, and indicated from economic development in the region, they decision to be part of Albanian country.

The Macedonian Minority is one of the largest minorities in Albania and they have been cooperative community for Albanian society development. They have a social and economic space, and they are well integrated in market associations with their commercial achievements. Historically the farmers from Macedonian minority villages have traded the products in Albanian families (except in Korca city) and in this way they started to create good relationship with them. After the time they enriched the relationship with Albanian people through the godfather's ceremony, where in their Baptist tradition the godfather should be Albanian.

The sociocultural similarities helped this minority to be successfully socialized between two cultures. Surely, they are indigenous minority so they have inherits their cultural mores and traditions (like language, behavior, religion rituals, values etc.). But, the relationship with the Albanian people has influenced in a family organization, life style, cultural similarities.

Nowadays, the integration of Macedonian minority cannot evaluate only from trade relationship because they live, work and earn their socialization model within Albanian society. The global development in the other hand is a deep factor of the right qualities achievements. The education level and the social status are two major requests to increase relationship between Albanian and Macedonian minority today. In this way, the aim case of this article is to evaluate the influence of education level in social and economic integration.

The residents of Macedonian minority are good educated, because the Albanian education system has stimulated there to be part of the school system. The involvement in public institutions, the leadership system, in the political issues etc. helped them to enrich the social and cultural abilities through education system.

Today they are important factor in all events (political, economic, cultural and social) within Albanian society development.

2. Methodology

- The type of methodology used during this study is ontology-empiric, where are combined the quantitative and qualitative method because to evaluate the economic integration of the minority group need to have the general opinion of the community and the real experiences from their life. In this way, we can evaluate clearly the situation by based in statistic data and narratives experiences.
- The target groups of the survey are Macedonian minority population, and Albanian population in Korça district.
- Data collection had provided through 200 structured questionnaires based on random sample method and 20 deep interviews.
- The sample is calculated by the statistic formula: $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$; [3].
- The data analysis will be calculated by SPSS 21 program.

2.1. The variables

- The influence of unemployment in sociocultural integration during last decade. (dependent)
- The strategies of political making for socioeconomic integration of indigenous Macedonian minority group in Albanian society. (independent)
- The civil responsibilities of Macedonian minority respondents and Albanian social groups. (Independent)
- The possibilities of self-employed in Korca district. (dependent)

3. The discussion

If we refer thoughts of Michael Bourdieu, we can understand clearly the mutual relationship between material and spiritual culture in a major society. When societies cultivate both of them, have created cultural capital [4]. Based in this overview the residents of ethnic minorities socialize between two cultures, so they inherit their origin culture but they adapt in the dominant culture. To evaluate the level integration of ethnic minorities needs to know economic and level education. Both of them are two crucial mechanisms of adaption for minorities.

In this case the evaluation of Macedonian minority cultural integration is directly influenced from the economic, education and demographic situation.

In Albanian society in last decade the culture is under the transforming process. The modernity values are indicated the relation of major society and minority groups.

Based in "Report of AHRG on the situation of minorities in Albania", Tirane 2003, we can say that all minorities in Albanian country have their rights to educate in their language and Albanian too, to be part of political decision, to be part of institutions, to vote, to have their political parties and to be involved in works space (worker trade).

They also, have their mores and traditions especially religious tradition.

The people who are employed in public or private sectors are more motivated to collaboration with Albanian people than they are not employee. They have started to live near places of work and to be interested about social cohesion and harmony.

Table 1: Professional status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Labor (instruction, industry)	8	4.0	4.0
Farmer	24	12.0	12.0
Labor in services sector	16	8.0	8.0
Teacher	23	11.5	11.5
Labor in health care sector	20	10.0	10.0
Labor in economic sector	23	11.5	11.5
Valid Self-employer	35	17.5	17.5
Unemployed	27	13.5	13.5
Pensioner	20	10.0	10.0
Other	4	2.0	2.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0
MissingSystem			
Total			

As we can see from the results most of the respondents are self-employer into the big market in Korca city and they have developed clothing commercial sector.

In the entire Korca district is known the Macedonian commercial place. Also, they are good commercial of kind of fishes from the Prespa Lake. Another characteristic of Macedonian minority in this region is farming cultivation and medicine herbs which find in this area. Most of these productions they trade in Korca city market.

The other category which influence in the integration level and adaption of the Macedonian minority are the labels in the public sectors who are in relation with Albanian workers, and administrative rules of Albanian legitimate.

Table 2: In your neighborhood the neighbors are Another indicator of integration is neighborhood reality. During the last decade the minority residents have had easier situation to migrate from their region (in Prespa villages) to Korca city, or other cities in Korca district.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Albanian	68	34.0	34.0	47.3
More Albanian but have and Macedonian	46	23.0	23.0	75.3
Valid Macedonian	45	22.5	22.5	92.2
More Macedonian but have and Albanian	28	14.0	14.0	96.3
For different ethnic groups	13	6.5	6.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
MissingSystem				
Total				

Table 3: Evaluate of education (Macedonian minority)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Do not know	11	5.5	5.5
Nothing	14	7.0	7.0
Valid Little	22	11.0	11.0
Somehow	41	20.5	20.5
More	112	56.0	56.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0

Education level indicates as a link of chain in adaption of minority residents. The Macedonian minority is a good educated community.

Nowadays education infrastructure is better than last decade because they did not have high school in the Prespa region, but only in cities of Korca District (Korca city, Bilisht city, Pogradec city). The elementary school learns in native language after by 5 classes they start to learn Albanian language. They expressed; ... to study in Albanian language is difficult for us, but anyway we have managed and now we have teachers from our community, we have nursing and doctors, potters, pharmacists, who work in Albanian institutions with good quality.

Most of them prefer to study in Albanian education system, but some of them select to study in Macedonia for the better infrastructure. The role of trade space, education flexibilities and employ status are the triangle of integration level.

In this micro study cannot skipping the other cultural forms of integration like participation in folkloric festival with their traditional costumes and mores?

Table 4: Place of education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Albania	98	49.0	49.0
Macedonia	74	37.0	37.0
European state	16	8.0	8.0
Eastern state	6	3.0	3.0
Other place	6	3.0	3.0
Total			100.0
MissingSystem			
Total		100.0	

In some of the interviews respondents tell about the relation with Albanian people in their everyday life. They prefer to live in Albanian cities, to integrate through employ and education system, and they feel Macedonian and Albanian in the same time. An old man told during the interview; When I am in Albanian place all label me as a Macedonian, but when I go to Macedonian state they label me as Albanian, so I feel between both of them.

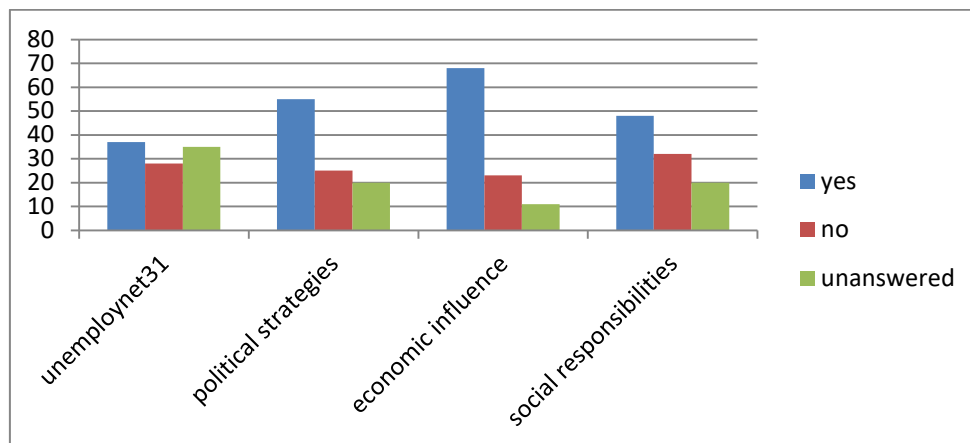


Figure 1: The influence of employment situation in sociocultural integration

4. The conclusion

The minority will be integrated in high level into Albanian society if they will have better economic status.

The employment situation must be rich eventually under the basic strategy only for minorities. The political strategies will can create better climate for minority education and employ situation.

The civil responsibility has started to increase the social status of minority residents and the voice of the problems of socio-cultural reality.

The economic welfare will influence in self-development of Macedonian residents, and they can create correct cultural relationship with Albanian residents through multicultural values as:

1. Tolerance,
2. Respect,
3. Correctly,
4. Faithfulness,
5. Volunteerism.

Under the cultivation of the multicultural values the both societies will deep the collaboration and social harmony between them.

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