

understand them better and express them. We are convinced that this monograph will attract the interest of all who wish and have the courage to set out on a path of research, perception and studying the magical power of poetry.

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# Educational Values in Contemporary School

**Eva Nováková**

BEREŽNICKA, M. (2010). *Wartości kształcenia we współczesnej szkole*. Krakow: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UP.

The author of "Educational Values in Contemporary School", doctor Małgorzata Bereżnicka, works in the famous Pedagogical University of Krakow, Poland. She is an author of over thirty articles in the field of education and co-author of several textbooks on integrated teaching for primary schools as well as on mathematics for special schools. Her book "Educational Values in Contemporary School" was published in 2010. As E. Kameduła writes on its cover, for a long time both theorists and practitioners have been demanding some actions to remedy the situation in the educational system which does not meet the expectations of politicians, teachers as well as parents' and students' environment. Małgorzata Bereżnicka's work can serve as an inspiration for solving a number of problems and support the initiatives taken by the implementers of educational activities.

The book includes four chapters. In the first chapter the author introduces basic concepts of values in school education: in both educational theory and educational practice. She specifies European modern trends in education, analyzing the data from books, newspapers and documents and also resulting from her interviews with educators and teachers. She describes the situation of education in the Polish reformed school, focusing especially on the junior high school (*gimnazjum*), since that is a meaningful stage in life as far as building a system of human values is concerned. Then she comments on the universal nature of values in upbringing and education (in spite of the multiplicity of categories and divisions of the term), on the basis of pedagogical, psychological, sociological and philosophical literature connected with axiological issues in education: books, articles, conference materials and reports. Finally the author characterizes and defines educational values important in the modern school, presenting her own list of such values.

The list created by Małgorzata Bereźnicka, along with her characteristics of thirty two educational values, was related with Jacques Delors' report for UNESCO – *Learning: the Treasure Within* where the description of the four pillars of future education can be found. So, she distinguished three groups of values. The first group is connected with two pillars, "learning to know" and "learning to do", and it includes ten cognitive-intellectual values: truth, objectivity, cognitive utility, cognitive interest, cognitive independence, criticism, rationality, efficiency, effectiveness, communication skills. The second group is connected with the third pillar, "learning to live together, learning to live with others", and it relates to ten moral and social values: good, altruism, responsibility, social commitment, patriotism, tolerance, partnership, subjectivity, autonomy, human relationships. The third group is connected with the fourth pillar, "learning to be", and it includes twelve values divided into three subgroups: creative ones (self-fulfillment, self-study, self-shaping and creative thinking); aesthetic ones (beauty, association with art, aesthetic experience); health and ecological ones (physical health, mental health, fitness, safety, protection of physical and mental environment).

In the second chapter the author presents her research which aim was to find out what educational values appeared in social expectations considering education. To do so, the two most popular polish newspapers ("*Rzeczpospolita*" and "*Gazeta Wyborcza*"), with its over 400 articles, considering keywords *values* and *education*, had been analyzed. She found out that educational values had been mentioned relatively rarely, and they were treated mostly as secondary subjects. The chapter includes also the analysis of the education curriculum: fourteen secondary schools training programs, edited after the reform of 1999 and issued by one of the largest Polish pedagogical publishers, and ten core curriculums – two for elective classes and eight for interdisciplinary courses. The general conclusion of the analysis of both the articles and the curriculums were quite similar, the leading role of cognitive-intellectual values and moral-social ones could be observed.

In the third chapter the author presented results of her main research, a survey which had been carried out among 170 teachers and 713 students of junior high schools in Southern Poland. Both groups had to fill in analogue questionnaire survey containing questions relating to their work (teachers) or to their school reality (students). The issues were dealing with aspects such as: the meaning given to educational values in school practice; the ways to implement them; assessment of the effects of their realization; positive and negative factors influencing it and finally – the preferable changes for the more efficient and successful activities connected with implementing values. The final findings are presented in the last chapter. The author answers the main questions, mainly: which educational values are exposed in didactic theory, which ones appear in social expectations, in core curriculums and finally – which are implemented in students' training. Comparing the above data, she draws some conclusion useful for school practice.

The book by Małgorzata Bereźnicka contains a huge amount of information dealing with education in general as well as Polish education and it can be a precious source of knowledge of values, especially educational ones. Also the rich bibliography with over 300 positions is worth underlining. Furthermore, the research conducted by the author was very intricate, elaborate, multistageous and multi-threaded and the analysis seems to be not only interesting because of the similarities and differences, both between theory and practice and in the opinions of teachers and students, too. The issues presented in the book, especially the results of the authors's research can be useful for teachers at all levels (especially those working in secondary schools), school headmasters, educators, pedagogues, lecturers and students of pedagogical courses, as well as for all those who are indifferent to field of education.

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