

Conception and Definition of the Democratization of Education

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Abstract

Republic of Macedonia at the moment with all the trends for reforms in the educational system, there are still shortcomings in this regard. The intention of Republic of Macedonia since independence, until today is the modernization and adjustment of the system of education to the European developed countries and their upbringing -educational systems. Democratization of education have got one fundamental request, and that is the respect for diversity.

The subject of this survey are the aspects of democratization in the upbringing - education system in the Republic of Macedonia.

The population of the survey is consisted of the students of primary and secondary schools. The sample survey includes pupils of primary and secondary schools in the cities of Tetovo, Gostivar, Skopje and Kumanovo.

In the research survey are applied questionnaires intended for pupils in primary and secondary schools.

The data from the survey are processed by a professional package for data processing SPSS (Statistical package for the social science). The database in this format allows application of statistical methods and techniques of descriptive statistics as well as methods and techniques of inferential statistics.

Keywords: *democratization of education, teaching democracy, democratization in the educational system, position of the pupil in contemporary school, role of the pupil in contemporary school.*

Introduction

Firstly, I would like to point out that in the procedure to explane the concept of democratization of education I used several sources, which enabled me to enter deeper in studying this notion which simultaneously represents a right, a process and a goal.

Thus, in the Pedagogical encyclopedia (1989), the democratization of education is defined as:

- A process in the world, in certain countries and areas in which the inherited class and other restriction in access to the realization of the right to education is avoided, ways of its mass use are opened at all levels. Itenhances the wide social influence in politics, financing, planning and the practice of education of the population. This is done by expansion of the network and improvement of financing, reduction of the impact of the state bodies, decentralization or in other words by distribution of decision-making at different levels, inclusion of the teacher and other employees, parents, students and representatives of the various social structures, direct management i.e. self-management in schools and other educational organizations and at other levels and modernization of the educational process with greater participation of the student.

UNESCO and the other international organizations recommend and encourage the action of democratization of education in the world, particularly against - discrimination, the fight against illiteracy, unification and spread of compulsory primary and secondary education, encourage education and compensatory measures in the field of special education, education of the migrants, exercising the rights to education of minorities, adult education and the realization of the permanent education.

The realization of democracy and equality requires special measures in order to mitigate and overcome the social differences through educational policy, such as:

- the elimination of illiteracy, with better developed pre-school education and complete realization of primary education;

- exclusion of the dualism in the secondary education, openness of the overall system, development of education through work and for work, development of teaching in mother tongue of all nations, equal material conditions for education, raising the standard of the pupils and students by material, social, organizational and pedagogic measures on the principle of solidarity. Towards this particularly should contribute: school canteens, prolonged stay, pupils' homes, free transportation and free books, increased scholarships and lending to the pupils and students, establishment of pre-school pedagogical institutions, pre-school and preparatory grades in primary schools and especially additional work with the students who lag behind due to difficult living conditions or lack of previous education.

In the Pedagogic dictionary (1967), the democratization of education and schools is explained as:

- availability of education to as many as possible number of children and the right to upbringing, education and schooling to all citizens of a nation, without discrimination in terms of gender, language, religion, class and race.

In the Pedagogic dictionary of the author Shefik Osmani (1983), democratization of education is defined as: "one of the main principles of socialist democracy in the field of education, that is concretized in the rights and opportunities that are provided to the people in order to be educated, their active participation in the solving the educational problems (through massive discussions, conferences, consultations, etc.), in close connection of the schools with life and its contents for the purpose of economic development of the society and protection of the country, in actual - real relations teacher - student, teacher (professor) - student, etc.

Democratization of education is one of the basic issues and indicators of the social development. However, democratization of education is not only an issue of the social arrangement or only of the political arrangement, but it is a complex social phenomenon and a socio - historically conditioned category. It is necessary certain level of development of the production i.e. the production forces and socio - economic relations for a totally successful realization of the democratization of education. The process of democratization of education except by the social arrangement is also influenced by the economic development of the society, the position of the citizen, culture, tradition and other factors which affect the system of education and upbringing. It is generally known that the man through the work in accordance with the conditions does not change only itself but also the environment in which he/she lives and works, and consequently the process of education and upbringing.

Democratization as a phenomenon does not apply only to the ability of learning and improvement of the students, but the attitude of the society, the possibilities offered by the society which allow the students to be educated within their intellectual characteristics. (Trnavac, 1987).

The process of democratization should not only connects with the possibility and access to school forms of education.

Also democratization should not only be reduced to the problem of financing, but more to the problem of distribution and access to funds intended for education. (Potkonjak, 1981, p. 464.)

I believe that from the analysis of the pointed sources and other materials for democratization of education, it can be concluded that for realization of the same, there are several conditions, such as:

- Extension of compulsory education;
- Elimination of the selectivity and discrimination in education i.e. teaching;
- Adjusting the ways and methods of education to the environment and characteristics of the students;
- Affirmation of lifelong education and learning.

Democratization of education requires reform of the upbringing - education system, raising the material foundation of education and decentralization of education. The freedom of the individual should be the start, because only the free teacher can teach the pupils for democracy in the free democratic system. (Barakoska, 2007).

Teaching about life in peace and freedom, about the respect of human rights and teaching about democracy must become part of the upbringing - educational process. Upbringing and education must be directed towards complete development of the human individual, strenghtening human rights and the foundations of freedom, the struggle for peace and democracy. The school is a place where young people should themselves influence democratic changes in the society and together with the teachers to work on democratic proposals and also in that way to influence the society.

Metodology of survey

Subject of the survey

Within the scope of the overall socio-political transformation of the social arrangement in a direction of parliamentary democracy and democratization of social relations, democratization of education and education for democratization at all levels and for all participants plays a key role.

The subject of this survey are the aspects of democratization in the upbringing - education system in the Republic of Macedonia. We believe that main characteristic of the changes in the upbringing - education system

are the changes that they occurred in schools. Actually the intention of the innovation is to come to a better quality changes in the upbringing - education system.

The paradigm shifts from a society that teaches to a society of knowledge. In that context, education gets a key role.

It can be said that surveys relating to the democratization of education, of school in our place are very rare. The need for survey of this kind is implied by the fact that developed countries put the emphasis on the role of democracy in the function of the development of schools. This survey should give insights into the position and the role of the child in contemporary schools.

Objective of the survey

The objective of this survey is to obtain relevant knowledge about the method and the rate of democratization of the education system in the Republic of Macedonia.

To the purpose of this survey we can come through studying the these aspects:

1. Knowledge of the students about democracy as a form of social functioning
2. The orientation of the students to democratic relations and decisions and the way in which the students have to give ideas, suggestions, to behold problems and to solve them independently.
3. The interest of the students for practicing democratic relationships in schools.

Tasks of the survey

Tasks of this survey are:

1. To make a survey of the opinions and attitudes of the students, how big is the degree of democratization in the upbringing - education system in the Republic of Macedonia.
2. To determine how much schools as educational institutions enable democracy to exist and how much it is being practiced.
3. To determine whether students can be elected and to elect leadership in schools; students' boards, students' parliaments, representative for parental meetings; planning of excursions, etc.

Hypothesis

1. The General hypothesis is:

It is assumed that in the upbringing - education system in the Republic of Macedonia the aspects of democratization are realized in sufficient measure.

2. The specific hypotheses are:

- 2.1. There is no statistically significant difference in the perception regarding the presence of democratization in the educational system between the respondents from different cities;
- 2.2. There is a statistically significant difference in the perception regarding the presence of democratization in different ethnic groups (in our case between respondents Macedonians and Albanians);

Variables

Independent variables:

- City
- Nationality
- Type of the educational institution
- Student

Dependent variables:

- The level of representation of democratization in the educational institutions among students
- The level of experience of democratization in the educational institutions

Sample survey

The population of the survey is consisted of the students of primary and secondary schools. In the survey will be covered 240 pupils of whom 120 pupils of VII grade of primary school and 120 pupils from secondary school.

The sample survey includes pupils of primary and secondary schools in the cities of Tetovo, Gostivar, Skopje and Kumanovo. From these cities in the sample survey enter one primary and one secondary school. From the secondary schools 1 class (15 pupils) Albanian pupils and 1 class (15 pupils) Macedonian students from the third year; the same number also applies to the pupils of the primary school, VII grade. This means that the total number of involved pupils in primary and secondary schools would be 240 pupils.

Research instruments applied in the survey

In the research survey are applied questionnaires intended for:

- Pupils in primary and secondary schools

The questionnaires are composed of questions of closed type and evaluation scales in order to obtain more objective responses and to come to a more relevant knowledge about the issue that we research.

Statistical methods and techniques for processing and analysis of data from the research

The data from the survey are processed by a professional package for data processing SPSS (Statistical package for the social science). The database in this format allows application of statistical methods and techniques of descriptive statistics as well as methods and techniques of inferential statistics.

The distributions of data (analysis of the frequencies) were analyzed within this framework, at a general level and at the level of specific categories which depend on the sample design and by special sets of variables that arises from the definitions of the topics and objectives of the research. In a survey-based questionnaires, except the part for socio-demographic features of the interviewees were used interval scales designed to measure the individual's attitudes and opinions of the respondents regarding the included questions that were grouped into a specific theme. The fact that were used interval scales enabled application of measures of central tendency (M calculating of the average scores with certain relevant categories of respondents, covered by the empiric research as well as measures of dispersion of the individual results of average and median value).

Analysis of the results obtained by the research

A brief description of the sample

The conducted quantitative research includes several primary and secondary schools, students in mixed ethnic environments (Macedonians, Albanians and other nationalities), namely, in Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo and Gostivar.

The survey is conducted in: Skopje (as a capital city), Kumanovo, Tetovo and Gostivar. The number of the survey is presented in Table 1:

City	Frequency	%
Gostivar	98	25
Kumanovo	100	26
Skopje	95	24
Tetovo	99	25
Total	392	100

Table 1. Cities in which the survey is conducted

From the enclosed table we can see that the structure of the sample according to the number of realized survey on the level of the first stratum - city where the research is conducted, is balanced and it includes in each city by 25% of the total number of questionnaires (with statistically insignificant variation of the general average).

At the level of the second stratum, the sample is designed so it provides symmetry in the number of the survey in relation to the type of upbringing educational institution - primary schools or secondary school, in each of the cities where the research is conducted (see Table 2).

Such structure of the sample where the stratum at the level of city and within the city conducted a symmetrical number of questionnaires in primary and secondary schools (stratum - type of schools) is in order to enable objective and methodologically correct analysis of the phenomenon that are subject to the empirical research. This kind of design of the sample is for the purpose of meeting the requirements for a particular statistical analysis for which is desirable symmetry in certain segments (see Table 2).

City	Gostivar	Primary school	49
		Secondary school	49
		Total	98
	Kumanovo	Primary school	50
		Secondary school	50
		Total	100
	Skopje	Primary school	49
		Secondary school	46
		Total	95
	Tetovo	Primary school	49
		Secondary school	50
		Total	99

Table 2. Number of questionnaire in relation to the type of upbringing and educational institution in each city

In order to measure the perception of the implementation of democratization in the upbringing and educational institutions i.e. to measure the perception of the level of representation of democratization in the upbringing and educational institutions is used 5-point scale where 1 = low representation and 5 = highest representation of democratization in upbringing - education system in the Republic of Macedonia.

The results of the survey show that the average (medium) level of representation of democratization in the upbringing - educational institutions in all respondents equals $M = 3.3$ which is higher than the mid of the scale (value 3).

Democratization is a complex process which is influenced by several factors, independently or in interaction among each other and / or with other factors. For this purpose it is necessary to examine and compare the perception of the presence of democratization at several levels and relations.

A) Analysis of the influence of the independent factors upon the perception of presence of democratization in upbringing and educational institutions

a1) analysis of independent factors – city

Firstly we will compare the perception i.e. the average value of the level of representation of democratization in the education system among the respondents from various cities covered by the survey (The total number of respondents for which are obtained average values amounts to 371 and is less than the total number of respondents because in a certain number of cases, some questions are either not answered or are answered "I do not know" and for that reason they cannot objectively be taken into account in the base of which average values are calculated). The average (medium) values for each of the cities are given in Table 5. All the results obtained are in a positive direction, i.e. above the central value of 3 on the scale. The general average score derived from the processing of the answer of all respondents is 3.3. The lowest average score is obtained in Gostivar and equals 3.2 and the highest 3.5 in Skopje. Central question at this level of analysis is whether variations in the differences of the average scores obtained on the level of cities statistically significantly differ or there is no statistically significant difference among them. Or in other words whether the received differences are the result of an accidental variability or the variability is due to the impact of certain factor.

	N	Average value	Std. deviation
Gostivar	95	3.2	.84
Kumanovo	85	3.4	1.01
Skopje	93	3.5	1.22
Tetovo	98	3.3	1.02
Total	371	3.3	1.03

Table 5

Q1 The implementation of democratization in the upbringing and educational institutions represented on the scale from 1 to 5

In order to interpret the results in this sense is carried out an analysis of variance (hereinafter will be used the familiar abbreviation ANOVA and the results are presented in Table 6.

	Sum of squares	df	Average square	F	Sig.
Between the groups	2.804	3	.935	.878	.453
Within the groups	390.721	367	1.065		
Total	393.526	370			

Table 6

ANOVA

Q1 The implementation of democratization in the upbringing and educational institutions represented on the scale from 1 to 5

Testing of the differences in the average values between the cities shows that there is no statistical significance of F i.e. $F = 0.878$ $df = 3$ $p = 0.453$ This leads to the general conclusion that the overall perception of the representation of democratization in the education system among the respondents from various cities is at a close level and the differences among them are statistically insignificant.

a2) analysis of independent factors - nationality

From aspect of ethnicity (Macedonians - Albanians), the perception of the presence of democratization in the educational system shows a statistically significant difference. Namely, the average value of the surveyed Macedonians amounts $M_{mak} = 3.57$ and at the surveyed Albanians $M_{alb} = 3.18$.

The carried out t-test equals $t = -3.59$ $df = 340$ $p < 0.01$ which means that the perception of the level of representation of democratization in education among Macedonians is diverse compared to the Albanians (see Table 7)

	Levene's test for equality of variances		t-test		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances	.338	.561	-3.592	340	.000

Table 7

a3) analysis of independent factors -type of the educational institution

The analysis of the first hierarchical level of the impact of the type of educational institution (primary - secondary school) on the perception of the presence of democratization of the educational system shows that there is a statistically significant difference among the surveyed in primary schools, compared to the surveyed in secondary schools. The average value of the interviewees in primary schools amounts to 3.60 and in secondary schools 3.07. The carried out t-test equals $t = 5.169$ $df = 359$ $p < 0.01$ This means that the perception of the level of representation of democratization in education among the interviewees in primary schools is statistically significantly different from the average in the secondary schools (see Table 8).

	Levene's test for equality of variances		t-test		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances	3.723	.054	5.169	369	.000

Table 8

b3) interaction effects of the independent factors at students

Analysis on the relation - type of upbringing and educational institution (students in primary or secondary

school) and ethnicity.

2h2 factorial model is created (in this model are included two variables: school (a student in primary or secondary school) and ethnicity (Macedonian, Albanian).

From the conducted ANOVA is obtained the average level of representation of democratization in pedagogical and educational institutions presented in the following table.

Type of educational institution	Nationality	Average value	Standard deviation	N
A student in primary school	Albanian	3.7	1.1	66
	Macedonian	3.7	1.0	37
	Total	3.7	1.0	103
A student in secondary school	Albanian	2.6	1.1	49
	Macedonian	3.3	0.8	49
	Total	3.0	1.0	98
Total	Albanian	3.3	1.2	115
	Macedonian	3.5	0.9	86
	Total	3.3	1.1	201

Table 11

The following table is the main table of the F-tests for the main effects of the two independent variables as well as their interaction effect on the dependent variable (the level of representation of democratization in educational institutions).

Source	The sum of the squares	df	Average squares	F	Sig.
Adjusted model	37.879a	3	12.626	11.991	.000
Constant	2139.862	1	2139.862	2032.223	.000
Factor school	25.299	1	25.299	24.026	.000
Factor nationality	4.889	1	4.889	4.644	.032
Interaction school * nationality	6.072	1	6.072	5.767	.017
Residual	207.434	197	1.053		
Total	2492.000	201			
Adjusted total	245.313	200			

aRsquare = .154 (Adjusted Rsquare = .142)

Table 12

Q1 The implementation of democratization in the upbringing and educational institutions represented on the scale from 1 to 5

Evaluation of the students for the application of democratization in upbringing - educational institutions

Students were able to assess the implementation of democratization in the upbringing and educational institutions on a scale presented with the lowest representation of 1 and 5-highest representation. In most cases, the students estimated the implementation of democratization with score 3, while the lowest score was estimated by around 5% of the students. With the highest score the implementation of democratization was estimated by around 19% of the students.

	Frequency	%
1 the lowest representation	11	5
2 2	34	14
3 3	85	36
4 4	50	21
5 the highest representation	44	19
9 Without answer	13	6
Total	237	100

Table 16
 q1 The implementation of democratization in upbringing educational institutions represented on the scale from 1 to 5

The perception of the meaning of democratization of education among students

The students who were part of this research were able to express their opinions about what democratization in education is for them. There was attached a set of nine guidelines that refer to confidence, respect, human values, tolerance and so on.

Around 88% of the students expree themselves that democratization in education means developing trust, respect for different opinions and providing good communication and agreemenet. This percentage is a sum of the answers "totally agrees" 32% and "agrees"56%. This high percentage of positive responses assumed that the students act in that spirit, to develop trust and respect of different opinions.

	I agree %
Decentralization of education	70
Respect for Diversity	75
Developing critical thinking	76
It sets learning and achievements of the students in the center of the activities	78
Equal access to education regardless of gender, ethnicity, social situation	81
Education for peace and development of tolerance	83
Requires responsibility and working discipline	84
Acceptanceand learning on human values	85
Develops trust, respect of different opinions and provides good communication	88

Table 17
 Democratization of education for you means:

Students also expressed high compliance with the opinion that democratization means accepting and learning human values (85%), and only 12 % do not agree with this opinion.

About 84% of the students expressed approval that democratization demands responsibility and working discipline and 13% do not agree.

Taking into account all nine tested opinions on democratization in education, students express the highest approval in the direction that it presents developing trust, respect for different opinions and provides good communication.

Participation of students in decision-making processes at school

In relation to the next set of questions, students were able to express their views about the participation in nine different spheres of activities at school.

I considered their answers through the prism of a school, whether the examinee is of primary or secondary

school, and according to their ethnicity.

Do you as a student decides about themes and activities at school: %		Primary School - student - Albanian	Primary School - student - Macedonian	Secondary school- student - Albanian	Secondary school - student - Macedonian	Total
Equipment of the school	Yes, always	58	17	36	14	34
	No, never	29	44	44	48	40
	Sometimes	14	39	20	38	26
Who will they sit next to	Yes, always	37	27	42	56	41
	No, never	51	12	42	14	32
	Sometimes	12	61	16	30	27
The way of work during the class	Yes, always	60	18	24	14	32
	No, never	33	40	50	49	43
	Sometimes	6	43	26	37	26
To choose the contents of the teaching material in accordance with the interest of the student	Yes, always	29	18	27	18	24
	No, never	54	54	46	57	52
	Sometimes	17	28	27	25	24
Equipment of the classroom	Yes, always	29	37	46	28	35
	No, never	57	15	15	38	33
	Sometimes	14	49	39	34	32
For organizing the cultural and entertaining life at school	Yes, always	36	15	27	34	29
	No, never	53	34	33	40	41
	Sometimes	11	51	40	26	30
For selection of places where they will have excursions	Yes, always	35	24	27	30	30
	No, never	59	54	33	36	46
	Sometimes	6	22	40	34	25
For the dress code of the students	Yes, always	30	15	16	28	23
	No, never	56	65	56	58	58
	Sometimes	14	20	27	14	19
The choice of the student who will be awarded	Yes, always	30	24	24	24	26
	No, never	42	46	53	46	47
	Sometimes	28	29	24	30	28

Table 27

Goal of the education policy of each country is to provide opportunities for acquiring the appropriate level of education for everyone and to ensure that people possess knowledge, skills and attitudes which are in accordance with the requirements of the society. Therefore, education must be accessible to all, regardless of gender, religious orientation, ethnicity, health status, social and financial status. Education has to possess a dynamic and flexible structure that will satisfy the changing needs of the individuals and the society as a whole.

The educational system has to overcome the problems and to eliminate the factors that cause abstinence among certain students. Simply the involvement of each pupil in the activities during the class or at school should be an obligation and not a question of desire or opportunity.

From the enclosed table can be noticed that in most cases the answers of interviewed students about who will they sit next to, are distinguished (41%). The answers "Yes, always" are selected which shows their persistent activity on specified topics and activities.

The smallest number of positive answers (that they always decide on their own) are noticed at the selection of contents of the teaching material and the dress code of students.

Do you as a student decide about the theme and activities at school	Yes, always	
	Frequency	%
Who will they sit next to	97	41
Equipment of the classroom	83	35
Equipment of the school	80	34
places where they will have excursions	71	30
The way of work during the class	70	30
For organizing the cultural and entertaining life at school	70	30
The choice of the student who will be awarded	60	25
To choose the contents of the teaching material in accordance with the interest of the student	57	24
For the dress code of the students	53	22

Table 28

- Findings and interpretations (among students):

1. The main effect of the type of educational institution is statistically significant. ($F_{u_{os},sr} = 24.02$ $df=1$ $p<0.001$) This means that there is a difference in the perception among students in primary schools ($M_{osn,u} = 3.7$) which is higher compared to the students of secondary schools ($M_{sred,u} = 3.0$).

2. The main effect of the variable nationality is statistically significant and regarding only the students Albanians in relation to the students Macedonians there is a statistically significant difference at the level of perception $M_{u_{-}alb} = 3.3$ i $M_{u_{-}mak} = 3.5$. $F_{nat} = 4.64$ $df=1$ $p<0.032$ (a reminder that is was statistically significant taking into account all respondents, regardless of their nationality)

3. The interaction effect of these two factors is statistically significant. $F_{u_{os},sr*nat} = 5.76$ $df=1$ $p<0.017$. This means that the perception at one level of the first factor depends on the levels of the second factor. As explained with simple words:

- The students Macedonians and Albanians in primary schools have very similar level of the perception (no statistically significant difference) on the contrary of the students Albanians in secondary schools and the students Macedonians in secondary schools. Note: On this equality in the perception among the Macedonian and Albanian students in primary schools probably affects the level of development of children at that age and their knowledge and understanding of the notions (terms) "democratization", "representation of democratization"and so on.

- In secondary schools, the perception of the representation of democratization of the Albanian students is with an average value of $M_{u_{-}alb} = 2.6$ (lower than the mid value of the scale) compared to the Macedonian students whose perception is with the average value of $M_{u_{-}mak} = 3.3$. (There is statistically significant difference).

Conclusions

On the bases of the received empirical and theoretical data and formulations processed in the work following conclusions arise:

- 1) Education is a social category, fundamental human right and the right of children regardless of their ethnic origin, religious, racial and cultural orientation. Democratization in the society as a whole in transition societies or states includes two key processes which are: pluralism and depolitization of education.

Education is an investment for the future of the children, youth and the society as a whole.

- 2) The intention of our state since independence, until today is the modernization and adjustment of the system of education to the European developed countries and their upbringing -educational systems. Thus the changes that were done in primary education and in particular the extension of the duration of primary education from eight years in nine years were with the aim of more developed primary education and adaptation of our primary education to the compulsory primary education in the

developed countries. According to the Law on Primary Education in the Republic of Macedonia, primary education is compulsory for all children regardless of their ethnic, religious and social orientation; is free for all children without exception; and lasts nine years. One of the reasons for the extension of primary education is the tendency for covering a larger number of children and also with the pre-school education regardless of the fact if they are from rural or urban areas.

Also the compulsory secondary education is a new segment with which we want to connected to the European developed countries.

- 3) Education in democratic society should be independent. Independence is considered in terms of respect for education as one important and independent segment that vitally influences the development of the society as a whole by developing the individual as an important resource in the development of the country.
- 4) The democratization of the society and thus democratization of education have got one fundamental request, and that is the respect for diversity. When I say respect of diversity, I believe that it is not only respect for the different ethnic groups, respect for different cultural groups, different religious groups, but also respect for the individuality of the person in one ethnicity, because each individual is a structure in itself which has got its needs, requirements, different capacities, different opportunities and its own need for affirmation and respect.

Lastly, I would like to point out the statement of the former president of the United States, Lyndon Johnson, who says:

“At the desk where I sit in, I have learned one great truth: The answer for all of our national problems, the answer for all the problems of the world, comes down, when you really analyze it, to one single word - EDUCATION”.

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