Summer
of Diversity

Project Report **Diversity**

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Diversity

Margaret Mead is said to have coined the phrase, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” For the *TUM: Junge Akademie*, the modified version should read: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed *students* can change the world…”

The participants we mentored were indeed thoughtful and committed – they were bursting with ideas for how to translate the topic of diversity, whose relevance for our societies cannot be doubted, into a project.

Finally, what actually materialized was a summer program aimed at raising children’s awareness for the topic of diversity, along with a social scientific evaluation of the effect of the program. However, not even the soundest plan is immune to unpleasant surprises, such as a seminar facilitator cancelling his participation at short notice. It was only possible to carry out the summer program because all the team members pulled together and supported one another.

“Diversity” was not only the topic for this task force, though: It is a fundamental principle of the *TUM: Junge Akademie* itself, as its participants are all from different fields. The willingness to enter into a dialogue between individuals who are pursuing completely different interests in their academic studies, and are thereby preparing themselves for completely different careers and lives, cannot be taken for granted. Sociologist Armin Nassehi is one of the many critical observers of what the tendency of our societies to differentiate into social spheres that are becoming increasingly separated from each other. Recently, he suggested establishing a “parliament of functions and logics, a parliament of intelligences which can bring together various problem-solving competencies and tools.”[1]

One question still remains, however, and it is one that remains unanswered for the *TUM: Junge Akademie* as a project as well. This question lies at the core of growing concerns for democracy arising from the emergence of populist forces in many countries: In what ways can diversity be defined so that it includes socio-economic dimensions in addition to the typical parameters of gender and race? How about those who feel, or actually are, left behind according to common definitions? It is a well-known phenomenon that in democracies the voter turnout correlates positively with socio-economic status.[2] However, if the concerns of disadvantaged groups are not heard by the political system, populist rabble-rous-

1 Armin Nassehi, Die letzte Stunde der Wahrheit. Warum rechts und links keine Alternativen mehr sind und Gesellschaft ganz anders beschrieben werden muss. Hamburg: Murmann Publishers, Pos. 4258-4269 (e-book), own translation.

2 See e.g. Robert Vehrkamp and Christina Tillmann: „Landtagswahl in NRW: Soziale Spaltung der Wahlbeteiligung hat sich verschärft.“ Bertelsmann Stiftung, viewed 19 May 2017, https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/de/themen/aktuelle-meldungen/2017/mai/landtagswahl-in-nrw-soziale-spaltung-der-wahlbeteiligung-hat-sich-verschaerft/.

ers can easily present themselves as “the true voice of the people” and incite feelings against “the elites.”

University members, no matter whether students or professors, find themselves in a dilemma. On the one hand, many of them share the concern about the cohesion of society and the future of democracy. On the other hand, they are “human capitalists” themselves, and generally equipped with a high amount of “social” and “cultural” capital. For these reasons, those who feel left behind and unheard view them with suspicion.

Certainly, this problem cannot be solved by giving up the values of knowledge and education in order to appeal to people who possess less of them and therefore feel disadvantaged. But maybe we need a new perspective on knowledge and education, one which is based on similar concerns as the ones about the value of diversity that motivated the team of the *TUM: Junge Akademie*. Unfortunately, knowledge and education are often interpreted in terms of individual progress, as means for climbing up the career ladder for the sake of a higher salary. Several decades of a neo-liberal conception of human beings as homines oeconomici have had their effects on education as well. But there are also alternative approaches. We can also understand knowledge and education as means that enable individuals to make a valuable contribution to social welfare. After all, even an AfD-sympathizer who feels left behind and lashes out at “the elites” benefits from medical progress or innovations in energy production.

Conversely, it is also true that those who work in the “higher” professions must appreciate that this is only possible for them because other forms of labor are taken on by other people. If individuals use their knowledge in order to actively support society, the diversity of professions, accompanied by a diversity of social spheres, does not have to result in conflict, but can instead be seen as mutually complementary cooperation. With their project dealing with social diversity, the members of our team have shown that they are willing to accept the social responsibility that comes along with the privilege of an academic education and a program like that of the *TUM: Junge Akademie*.

Lisa Herzog and Franz Hofmann

Summer of Diversity – Chopsticks on Steinway & Sons

"Could I make a phone call?" Max asks straight away on the first day, "I would like to call home and tell them how cool it is here." Max was one of the seventeen participants of "Summer of Diversity," a three-day holiday program for children and teenagers between the age of 11 and 14 years. On the first day of the program, August 8th, the first participants arrived just after 8 a.m. at the Musikhochschule München, the event's venue. The official beginning of the event was scheduled for 9 a.m. – early in the morning, especially when you're on holiday. However, not so early for many of the kids who had come to the venue a good while before the event was supposed to start. They enjoyed playing cards together or even having a play at one of the two grand pianos from Steinway & Sons, which were positioned in the room. At one point, even both pianos were played on simultaneously by the kids who were keen on trying the Chopsticks. One could clearly feel that the kids were on holiday and there was only one thing that they wanted – fun! That's enough reason to arrive early.

As the kids reported, it was mainly their parents who had suggested participating in the free holiday program. They had spotted either our colorful posters or an announcement about "Summer of Diversity" in the newspaper. That showed us: Our advertising in the run-up had worked!

The central question that we, the event organizers, had asked ourselves before coming up with the event was: How would it be possible to familiarize kids with diversity, a sensitive topic that overstrains even adults? Would it be relevant and interesting for them after all? And can such topics be imparted in a way that does not make them feel like at school? One thing we knew from the beginning was that we did not want to give lectures. Our aim was to find a way to present the concept in an age-appropriate and entertaining manner. The solution we arrived at was … experiential education! Therefore, we developed a holiday program that would combine all of that: Game blocks with knowledge transfer about the concept of diversity, as well as workshops about the topic of interculturality.

The first day started with ice-breaker activities and group games which were considered important as most of the kids didn't know each other. Furthermore, the games enabled a group-identity to take shape among the seventeen individuals. We were convinced that the participants were only able to learn something and have fun if they felt comfortable and part of the group. Due to the number of participants, the group had to be separated into two smaller groups. On the first day, the workshop Improvisation Theater and the first block of the Diversity Training took place.

In the Improvisation Theater module, the kids learned to put themselves in different situations and roles. Our participants were very impressed when they found out that actors, in their training, would have to do improvisation theater every day for two hours. One of the groups had a lot of fun when they were instructed to break a taboo and use swearwords. Max was in the other group, which had the task of trying to open up the actors by arousing various emotions. Max didn't find this easy. But, also in this group, there was a lot of laughter, as the kids used all kinds of means possible to bring the others out of their shells. It was incredibly entertaining to see with what self-confidence and creativity the kids performed the tasks.

The Diversity Training was intended to make the participants familiar with the concept of diversity in general. It was important for us that the kids acquired their knowledge autonomously and were able to express their own thoughts. We did not intend to supply a definition and tell the kids what to think about the topic. During the first Diversity Training, the participants had to think about how they would describe themselves, which attributes distinguished them

from others, what hobbies they had and what they were particularly good at. The comparison of these characteristics among the individuals led them to the insight that everyone is different, and that this is normal and good. In the following days, further diversity blocks took place, which enabled the kids to find out more about the concept in a playful way. Furthermore, percussion workshops, Capoeira and communal cooking were part of the program.

At the percussion workshop, the participants got acquainted with drums and different drumming techniques. The workshop instructor showed the kids a Cajon and asked which German word had a similar sound to its name and what its appearance reminded them of. One of the kids suggested a carton and was right on target. It was explained to the kids that Cajones were originally made from transport boxes and used by African slaves after their traditional drums had been taken away. The children also played on African Djembes and Latin-American Congas and Bongos.

The cooking workshop took place in the cooking school "Koch dich glücklich." But in what way is cooking related to diversity? In no way! However, it is related to interculturality. The participants were asked to try out something new and to work together as a team while preparing a meal. The result for the starter was Vietnamese Spring Rolls, which they had made from rice leaves and rice noodles. Before consumption, the rolls were dipped in a hot sauce. The main course was self-made Ravioli with a self-made stuffing. As a dessert, they served American Chocolate Raspberry Crumble with vanilla ice cream.

In addition, the kids tried out the Brazilian Capoeira. The two Brazilian course instructors showed them how dance and martial arts can be combined. Promptly, one of the participants observed: "So you don't really hit each other?" Indeed, with Capoeira the intention is not to hurt your teammate. Neither should there be any body contact at all. The opponent's attacks are not blocked, they are rather reacted to with a counter-attack. The result is a sort of conversation that requires a huge amount of agility, alertness and interaction. It was obvious that the kids were having fun trying out the several basic steps and finally playing themselves. Each round, two at a time played in the Roda, the circle formed by all players, while the others were singing and clapping, accompanied by the Berimbau.

While examining the participant list, we caught ourselves thinking: This group is not diverse enough for investigating a question that deals with diversity." But that is exactly the wrong way of thinking about it, as we had reduced the term "diversity" to the participants' origins only. It may be true that all our participants had at least one parent that was German. However, this characteristic on its own does not necessarily indicate a homogeneous group. We were able to observe a variety of different characters and attributes in this group consisting of seventeen children and teenagers. During the workshops, we also realized that the kids all had different strengths. One of the participants who had had difficulties at the Improvisation Theater was unstoppable at the Capoeira. It was impossible to claim that there was a workshop that all kids found equally easy or difficult. Some of the children stood out by enormous creativity, others were extraordinarily athletic, musical, or self-confident. The differences became particularly obvious when the kids were talking about their career wishes. For example, one of the participants would like to study physics and join NASA, while another one would like to be an actor in California.

At the end of the three days, Max said: "I am very sad that not more kids have participated, because they would have loved it, too." We also enjoyed the three days ourselves – and above all, the kids showed us just how diverse a group can be, even though it might not be obvious at first sight.

Leaving the Pigeonhole
How to communicate diversity skills

In a Nutshell:

- A summer program for teenagers with focus on diversity was organized
- The program was successfully conducted at the HMTM in Munich
- Questionnaires and interviews showed an increase in awareness for diversity in the participants
- In conclusion, existing summer programs could benefit from workshops focused on diversity

Abstract

The term “diversity” has been generally used within biological research and means in this field a great variety of species. The term is also used to refer to variousness in society. Our project aims to gather detailed information on the topic of promoting diversity competency in teenagers. Qualitative research during a three-day summer program was designed to provide such information.

1. Background

The development of societies shows a general tendency towards more complex and heterogeneous social milieus. These heterogeneous units have a multitude of particular characteristics across a large number of individual members. The term “diversity” denotes this great social variety and describes similarities and divergences within and between them. Very often the term “diversity” refers only to cultural differences but it has a wide range of meanings. The term encompasses various dimensions of society: sex, age, sexual orientation, ethnic-religious-cultural affinity, religious affiliation and also socio-economic environment, leisure behavior and habits.

Dissimilarities between different groups in society aren’t always looked on favorably – the challenge of recent assimilation concepts in politics to those of social inclusion are a clear indication. But according to a research report of the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft[1], the term diversity is increasingly used in a positive way. The reasons cited were as follows: “*allgemeine Individualisierungstendenzen, die Zunahme migrationsbedingter Vielfalt und die gestiegene Bedeutung von Antidiskriminierungsdiskursen.*” [2], which can be translated as “general tendencies towards individualization, the increase of migration-related diversity and the increased importance of anti-discrimination discourses”.

1 Cp. Nieswand, Boris: Diversität und Gesellschaft. Forschungsbericht 2010 – Max-Planck-Institut zur Erforschung multireligiöser und multiethnischer Gesellschaften. https://www.mpg.de/359276/forschungsSchwerpunkt. (18.08.2018).
2 Nieswand, Boris.

Society has a duty to prepare its members for diversity[3] and to begin an early "training" for dealing appropriately with people from different communities. The aim is to prevent intolerance and discrimination and therefore to counteract social inequalities. For a long time the ability to encounter other people prejudice-free and in a spirit of mutual respect was called intercultural competence.

Wolfgang Welsch, philosopher and researcher in the field of aesthetics and the discussion of postmodernism, criticizes the term "interculturality" because it implies a negative connotation of other cultures.[4] In his view, the term "transculturality" symbolizes in a better way positive and respectful interactions between the members of society. Furthermore, according to Welsch, modern society is characterized as a place where identity formation proceeds in a heterogeneous environment of many cultures. Welsch describes this process as a patchwork which results in people becoming "cultural hybrids."[5]

Our summer program aimed to investigate if it is possible for pupils to acquire "diversity skills" in workshops dealing with the topic of diversity. These diversity skills do not have measurable characteristics, but rather can be seen as general social skills such as taking all people seriously as individuals, with their own individual concerns and needs, instead of regarding them just as members of a certain social group.

This ability should be accompanied by a sensitization to stereotypical categorizations and discrimination. The overall objective of acquiring diversity skills is to develop and establish a differentiated perception and awareness combined with a self-critical attitude. The term "Diversitätskompetenz" is in addition understood to mean abilities such as empathy and the ability to tolerate insecurities and diversities in society.[6] In summary, it can be said that the aim of our program is to foster an appreciative approach towards diversity where differences are evaluated in a non-normative way.

Pupils most commonly experience a teacher-centred education or classroom teaching style. This way cannot be seen as very effective to convey the knowledge and skills requiring independent action of individuals. To teach diversity skills we designed a summer program according to the proven pedagogical principles of experiential education. And therefore the project focuses on experiential learning. The term "experience" in this context was coined by American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer John Dewey. In his view experiences should be seen as experiments with the world due to its recognition.[7] Hence experiences are vital for learning.

2. Goals and Methods

The study aims to explore whether an experimental pedagogical summer program for children aged 11-13 can develop and strengthen their awareness and acceptance of diversity.

3 Cp. Aigner, Petra: Integration, Interkultur oder Diversität? Anmerkungen zu Fragen von Theorie und Praxis ethnisch – kultureller Vielfalt in Österreich.: "Hier muss auch darauf verwiesen werden, dass Migration und der Umgang mit/bzw. die Bewältigung von daraus resultierender Diversität eine historische Konstante der Menschheitsgeschichte, ja fast der „Normalzustand" sind (vgl. Kleinschmidt 2011), und dass alle heute weltgesellschaftlich bedeutsamen Regionen und Gesellschaften (Europa, Nord- & Lateinamerika, Afrika, indischer Subkontinent, China, Südostasien etc.) zutiefst von ganz archaischen bis ganz modernen Migrationsphänomenen geprägt sind, diebei aktuellen Fragen nicht außer Acht gelassen werden können." http://www.isw-linz.at/themen/dbdocs/LF_Aigner_2_13.pdf. (15.08.2018).

4 Cp. Welsch, Wolfgang: Welsch, Wolfgang: Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World, ed. by Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash, London: Sage 1999, 194-213: "Are then, perhaps, the concepts of interculturality and multiculturality more able to provide an appropriate concept of today's cultures? They apparently try to overcome some flaws of the traditional concept by advocating a mutual understanding of different cultures. Yet they are, as I will argue, almost as inappropriate as the traditional concept itself, because they still conceptually presuppose it."

5 Welsch (1999).

6 To understand our conception of the term "Kompetenz" see Franz Weinert's definition of the term: "die bei Individuen verfügbaren oder durch sie erlernbaren kognitiven Fähigkeiten und Fertigkeiten, um bestimmte Probleme zu lösen, sowie die damit verbundenen motivationalen, volitionalen [die willentliche Steuerung von Handlungen und Handlungsabsichten] und sozialen Bereitschaften und Fähigkeiten, um die Problemlösungen in variablen Situationen erfolgreich und verantwortungsvoll nutzen zu können." In: Weinert, Franz E. (Hrsg): Leistungsmessungen in Schulen, Weinheim und Basel, 2001, S. 27f.

7 Cp. Dewey, John: Demokratie und Erziehung. Eine Einleitung in die philosophische Pädagogik. Hrsg. von Jürgen Oelkers. Weinheim und Basel: Beltz 2000, S.187.

For the recruitment of participants, posters were hung in several public schools and various locations across the TUM campus. Flyers were handed out at public libraries in Munich, especially in the sections with children's books. In addition, there was an article in the Süddeutsche Zeitung about the summer camp. Social media channels were used to announce the event on the Facebook pages of the TUM: Junge Akademie and TU München. The program was also announced to professors of TUM via email. A website was established to simplify the process of application. In the end 17 participants registered. Most of them were recruited via the newspaper article in the Süddeutsche Zeitung. We had decided to accept a maximum of 35 participants. In retrospect, we think that would have been too many participants for this program. The group size of 17 participants, divided into two groups of 8 and 9 children, was appropriate. The only inclusion criteria for participants was an age between 11 and 13 years. One exception was made for a 14 year old participant.

The conducted intervention was a three-day program named "Summer of Diversity" that took place at the University of Music and Performing Arts Munich. The participants took part in several workshops that were led by professional course leaders. The organization team participated as supervisors. The activities included workshops in improvisation theatre, Capoeira, percussion and cooking. These represent the experimental pedagogical component of the summer program. Furthermore, there was a workshop about diversity and also different group games. A detailed timetable of the program is shown in figure 1.

A one-group pre-test/post-test design was used. The 17 participants completed a three-page questionnaire at the beginning of the first day of the program. At the end of the last day of the program, a second eight-page questionnaire was completed by all 16 participants that were present on that day. In order to have a better overview and an appropriate statistical analysis of the results, the questionnaire was created on EvaSys. Furthermore, the 13 participants who gave their consent were interviewed on the last day. Moreover, the organization team made observations during all the activities of the three-day program.

The first questionnaire contained questions about basic information such as age, sex, school form, native language and the place of birth of the participants and their parents. In addition, other questions aimed to capture the children's knowledge and perception of diversity, discrimination and minorities. Besides that, there were questions about the participants' expectations of the program and the reason for their participation.

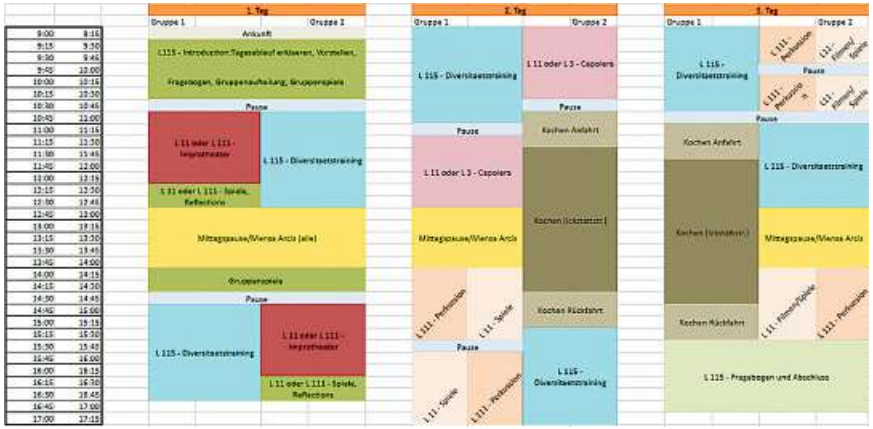


Figure 1: Timetable of the program

The second questionnaire included the questions about basic information that had already been used the first time. A further 22 questions focused on knowledge about diversity and its various aspects and associations. In addition, there were questions to evaluate their competencies and their willingness to work in teams. Another important aspect of the questionnaire was the appraisal of the program. This contained questions about the workshops, the course leaders and the organization team in their role of supervisors. The participants were invited to give recommendations for possible improvements. One page of the second questionnaire can be seen in figure 2.

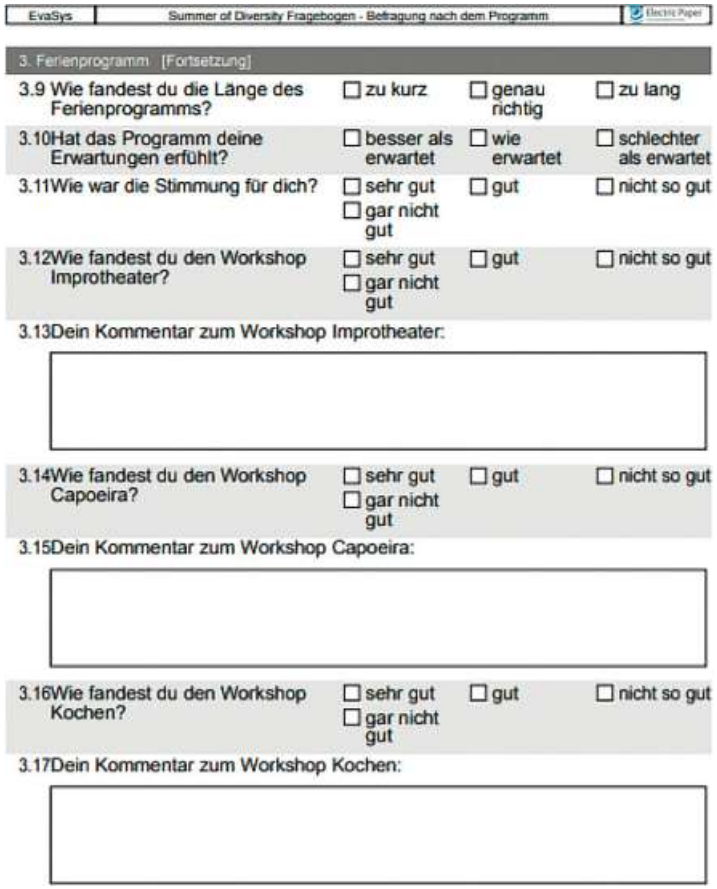
In the interviews there were questions about how the children liked the program and the other participants. They were also asked if they had had any funny or special experiences during the program. Finally, they were asked if they had known the meaning of diversity before participating in the program and then what they now know about diversity after taking part in the program.

3. Outcome and Discussion

In the following, the results of the questionnaire evaluation and the observations made by the organization team are provided.

On the first and second day all 17 participants who had signed up took part in the program. On the last day there was one case of illness. This level of attendance indicates that the children favored the program. Furthermore the children gave positive feedback about the workshops. They said they had had fun participating and trying new things. This corresponds with our own observations.

Evaluation of the first questionnaire, which was conducted before the program, allows us to derive some facts about the participants and make various assumptions.


EvaSys | Summer of Diversity Fragebogen - Befragung nach dem Programm | Electric Paper

3. Ferienprogramm [Fortsetzung]

3.9 Wie fandest du die Länge des Ferienprogramms?	☐ zu kurz	☐ genau richtig	☐ zu lang
3.10 Hat das Programm deine Erwartungen erfüllt?	☐ besser als erwartet	☐ wie erwartet	☐ schlechter als erwartet
3.11 Wie war die Stimmung für dich?	☐ sehr gut ☐ gar nicht gut	☐ gut	☐ nicht so gut
3.12 Wie fandest du den Workshop Improtheater?	☐ sehr gut ☐ gar nicht gut	☐ gut	☐ nicht so gut

3.13 Dein Kommentar zum Workshop Improtheater:

3.14 Wie fandest du den Workshop Capoeira?	☐ sehr gut ☐ gar nicht gut	☐ gut	☐ nicht so gut

3.15 Dein Kommentar zum Workshop Capoeira:

3.16 Wie fandest du den Workshop Kochen?	☐ sehr gut ☐ gar nicht gut	☐ gut	☐ nicht so gut

3.17 Dein Kommentar zum Workshop Kochen:

Figure 2: Page 7 of the second questionnaire

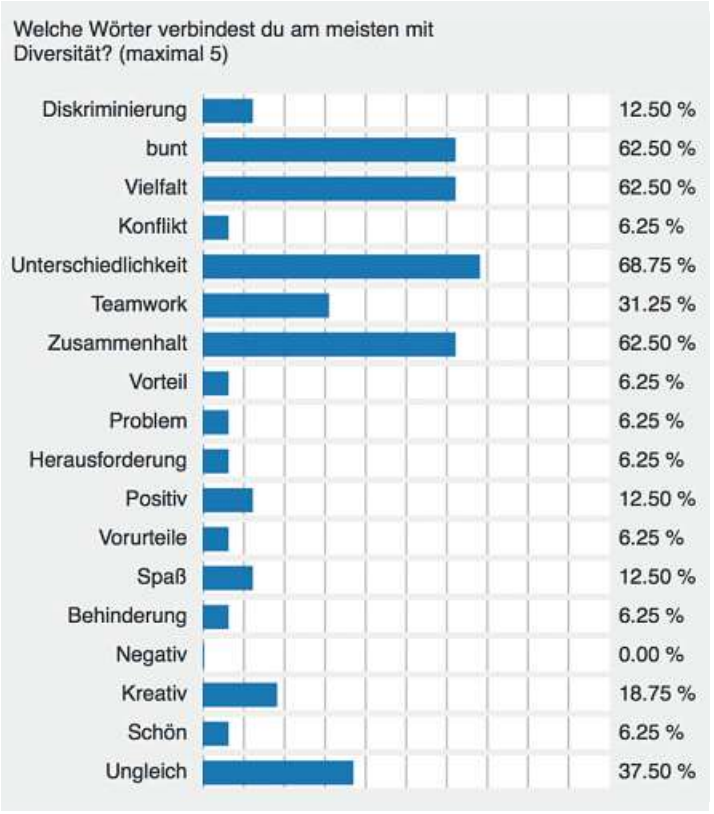


Figure 3: “Which words do you associate with diversity?”

There were 65% female and 35% male participants. All participants were between 11-13 years old, with the exception of 2 children (10 and 14 years old). Gymnasium students formed the majority in our program. According to the questionnaire, only 15% of the participants were familiar with the term “diversity” before our program. The main interests of participants included sport, music, time spent with friends and family. It was found that most of the participants share their interests with their family and friends.
Although most of the participants regard themselves as German (near 90%), around 50% of them also feel that they belong to another nation. The underlying reason could be the ethnic origin of their parents, for example American, Brazilian, Italian ... In spite of the fact that 60% of the participants face questions on their ethnic background in their daily lives, almost the same percentage of children ask this question to others. This signals that they do not feel discriminated against or excluded by their peers when asked about their ethnic background. However, most of them have already faced some sort of discrimination, which can also be based on other reasons than nationality.

After the evaluation of the second questionnaire, which was carried out at the end of the program, we found that the awareness of participants with regard to diversity and how diversity manifests itself in daily life had surged. The detailed results can be seen in figure 3. In summary, children link diversity with teamwork, variety, creativity, and inequality.

In order to get more unbiased and sensitive information related to the children’s understanding of diversity in the questionnaire, we presented children with different scenarios that touch the subject of diversity and discrimination based on race, color and disability. The results are provided in figure 4. It was found that although diversity is perceived as advantageous and society can gain a lot from it, the participants also acknowledged the fact that it also causes some misunderstanding and conflicts in group communication. Openness to other nationalities is less evident in relation to non-European countries, when compared to European ones. One outstanding discovery is that none of the participants see skin color as an interference parameter.

Moreover, we noted that the children quickly started interacting with the others and took part in the group games. In the interviews most children reported that they thought the other participants were nice and that they had made new friends. All of them replied that they could get along well with the others. Our questionnaire also supports this opinion. The participants stated that they had friends from all over the world, including countries such as Ecuador, China, Rumania, Luxemburg, Brasil, Turkey, Peru, and Poland. In one of the workshops, in which the meaning of diversity was

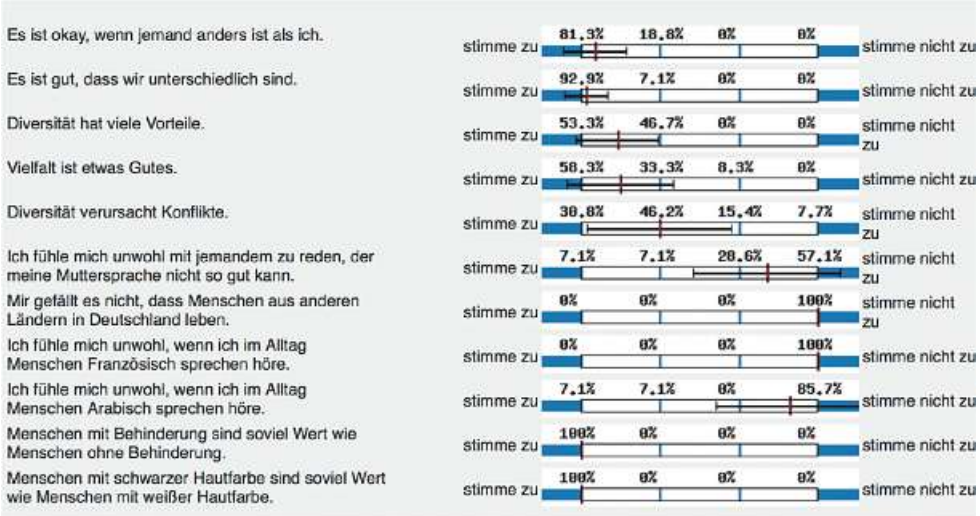


Figure 4: Responses to the second questionnaire

introduced to the children, they had the chance to discuss whether they think diversity has advantages or not. We realized the oldest participant (14 years old) of the group had a more critical opinion on working in a diverse team. He mainly associated diversity in a group with the potential for conflicts and difficulties, while the two youngest (11 years old) said they generally preferred working in a group and did not like working alone. After being asked in the individual interviews conducted during the workshop breaks if they knew the word "Diversität," almost all children said they did not know the word or its meaning before taking part in the program. All of them were able to explain the meaning of diversity in the interviews.

4. Summary and Future Goals

The summer program "Summer of Diversity" provided plenty of valuable insights for a better understanding of how to increase the awareness of diversity in our society. We believe that the questionnaires and interviews we conducted provide useful information for examining our hypothesis. From our personal observations, as well as from the collected data, we conclude that the teenagers had had a lot of fun and felt good about the experience. This is important to us as we believe that a positive atmosphere is an important basis for any learning process. Additionally, looking at our hypothesis, we are convinced that the summer program "Summer of Diversity" increased the awareness of diversity of the participating teenagers.

We are aware that 17 participants are not sufficient to draw robust quantitative conclusions from questionnaires and that for meaningful results the programs needs to be scaled up. Meanwhile we learned that for a small team of scientists it is not easy to handle 17 teenagers full-time. Therefore, in order to scale up our summer program, solutions must be found as to how to conduct it with larger numbers of participants.

Also, more extensive collaboration with a social scientist could have improved the scientific examination of our program. With additional guidance we might have been able to create questionnaires and interview guidelines which enabled us to draw more precise conclusions regarding our hypothesis.

Looking at these shortcomings, but also the success of the program, we believe that it would certainly be worthwhile to conduct similar summer programs in the future, where some of the problems encountered in the first run could be remedied.

As the organization of a summer program takes some effort, it might also be worth considering the option of teaming up with existing summer programs. On the one hand, examining the impact of other summer programs on the awareness of diversity could provide further insight into how the concept of diversity can be communicated more effectively. On the other hand, additional diversity workshops could be offered at existing summer programs. We would be happy to share our results as well as our personal impressions with others. We are convinced that it would be valuable for other summer programs to integrate concepts similar to "Summer of Diversity."

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Summer
of Diversity

Self-reflection Diversity

“Integration als Windfallprodukt durch gezielte Nutzung von Diversität” – “Windfallproduct Integration as a result of targeted use of diversity.”

Both in German and English the working title of our project seemed to be rather clumsy for an interesting thought leading, hopefully, to an exciting project. The basic elements – diversity and integration – are complex issues with a multidimensional nature and they have given rise to a multitude of explanations, definitions and action plans.

As a basis for creating innovative ideas and planning our communications, there were regular meetings within the team. Our first meetings were taken up with approaches to understanding the basic ideas and different concepts of the terms “integration” and “diversity.” At first we called ourselves “team integration” but soon switched to the name “team diversity.” This title not only described our project but also the composition of the team, since the student members are drawn from three different universities – the TUM: Junge Akademie has small-scale cooperative arrangements with other universities – and from various areas and courses of studies such as film production, health science, electrical engineering and information technology, business studies and musical education. Additionally, the members have different cultural backgrounds. All these factors could be cause enough to complicate teamwork but we realized at an early stage that our common goal was to organize a participative project instead of a pure research project. Nonetheless, by distributing roles and tasks at various decision-making levels, and by establishing rules of communication, we avoided conflicts in the team. Members’ overloaded schedules sometimes resulted in exhausting team meetings, and so-called power projects that seemed often less than profitable contributed to this workload. Time management and estimating availability now and then caused minor problems.

As stated previously, we needed some time to familiarize ourselves step by step with the topic and to acquire the relevant specialist knowledge and methodology as well as an understanding of interdisciplinary interrelations.

As it later transpired, one of the main problems was getting started on the actual project work. Right from the first meeting, we generated ideas, but it needed quite some time till these ideas were firmed up sufficiently to allow us to envisage constructive solutions and to make actual plans for our project. One of the reasons why decision-making was quite difficult was our determination to include every team member in the process – which, as already mentioned,was complicated by problems of availability.

We were helped greatly, however, by managing our project through the setting of concrete milestones and interim steps.

Summer
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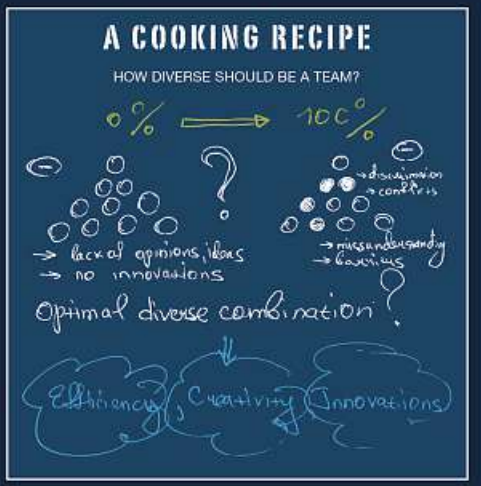
Summer
of Diversity

Diversity

ABSTRACT According to recent studies diversity makes teams more successful. But do teams always benefit from diversity? We understand diversity as a science – We should definitely know more about it. If diversity would be an ingredient, how much would be to much?

GOALS

- How to find the best combination of diverse personalities for a successful team
- Is there a cooking recipe to form a successful team?
- Are there different cooking recipes for successful teams in different challenges?
- To prove hypotheses in practice by looking at startups, companies, other organizations
- Help a group or team in business or society to achieve more by employing a better degree of diversity



HYPOTHESIS

There is an optimal mixture of diverse individuals for a successful team.

OUTCOME

Our research showed us various aspects of diversity. The particular aspects of diversity that we are concerned with relate to the following areas:

- ethnicity
- age
- gender
- socioeconomic status
- disability
- lifestyle and habits

TEAM STRUCTURE & PROCESS

- interdisciplinary group of international students: 2 group speakers and a moderator
- regular meetings with agenda planning

SUMMARY AND FUTURE GOALS

There is still a lack in research about diversity. We want to fill the gaps and discover a differentiated perspective on diversity. As future goal we want to find a suitable target groupfor our project.

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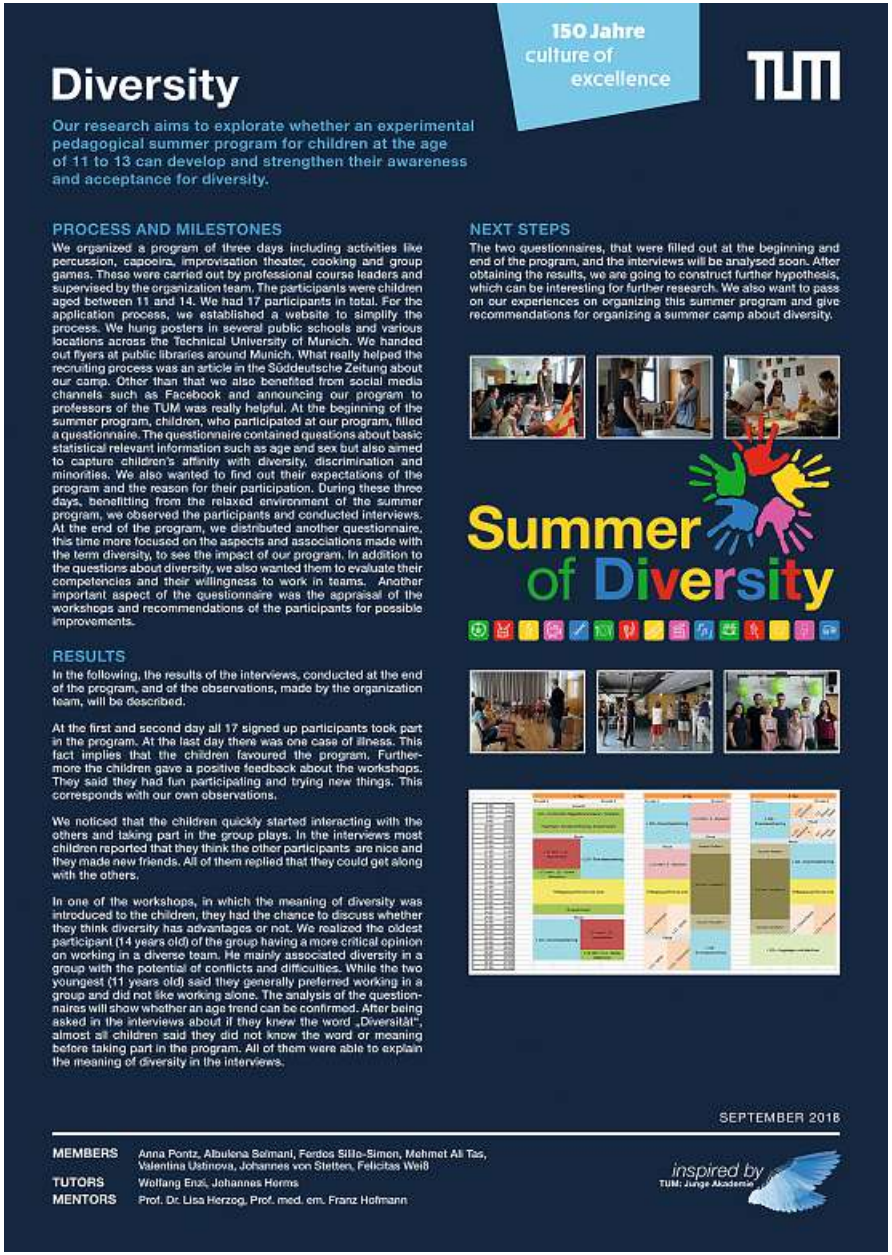
OCTOBER 2017

MEMBERS Anna Pontz, Albulena Selmani, Ferdos Sillo-Simon, Mehmet Ali Tas, Valentina Ustinova, Johannes von Stetten, Felicitas Weiss
TUTORS Wolfang Enzi, Johannes Herms
MENTORS Prof. Dr. Lisa Herzog, Prof. Dr. em. Franz Hofmann

inspired by TUM: Junge Akademie

POSTER 1: In the first months we focused on the determination of the main aspects of diversity and tried to establish a common understanding of the term. However, because of the wide-ranging nature of diversity and its role in our society, we decided to narrow down the social groups affected by it and selected “teenagers” as the group to focus on.

POSTER 2: Our initial research made it clear that there were no projects at high schools in Munich concerning diversity in general. So we decided to develop and carry out an experiential pedagogical summer program on diversity. We aimed to verify the hypothesis that teenagers' competence for diversity can be improved through such a program.



POSTER 3: At the time of the preparation of the third poster, we had successfully elaborated the abstract idea of a summer camp for diversity and were able to increase awareness of our program thanks to newspaper articles promoting our camp and the numerous posters and leaflets we distributed throughout Munich. Although we were unable to meet every milestone on time, we successfully organized and executed the three-day holiday program and it received an enthusiastic response from the participants.

POSTER 4: In our final poster, we gave an in-depth description of our methodology. In addition, we presented and discussed the results of our summer program. From these results we drew conclusions on the sustainability of our project. ■