Chapter 33
Teacher Preparatory Programs and Culturally Responsive Teaching

Nadira Raghunandan-Jack
Charter School Sector, USA

ABSTRACT

This text focuses on culturally responsive education programs within higher education institutions. The first section traces the historical roots of culturally responsive teaching and explores why it is a pivotal component necessary for pre-service students to comprehend. The next section emphasizes strategies that are currently used within the higher education sector to expose students to culturally competent practices in the classroom. Among the strategies that are discussed are community based immersion experiences, diversity and multi-cultural courses and student teaching experiences. The chapter then closes with a framework for recommendation and improvements for higher education institutions to implement to further refine and strengthen teacher preparatory programs.

BACKGROUND

Common Core Curriculum Standards

The Common Core Curriculum State Standards refers to a high-quality of academic standards in the area of English Language Arts Literacy. The standards collectively outline the learning goals of concepts, knowledge and foundational levels that students should be able to master at the end of each grade level. Through the collaborative efforts of educators, chief school administrators as well as other experts in the field of education, the Common Core provides a framework for educators and heavily emphasizes college and career readiness for students. The standards also focus on the application of content knowledge through the development of higher order thinking skills.

Culturally Relevant Resource

A contributing factor to the foundation and development of an individual's culture indicative of shared realities and lived experiences that is central to students lives. A culturally relevant resource reflects the diversity of the student population within a given classroom and is used as a critical tool by which to create equitable learning experiences, introduce concepts and ideas to students while demonstrating appreciation, respect and value of their culture as well as assist in the process of reframing perspectives.

Curriculum

In the context of this study, the term curriculum refers to an in-depth instructional guide incorporating all educational foundations, standards and benchmarks relevant to each grade level within a sequential order, inclusive of all resources and materials necessary for educators to successfully implement lessons. The curriculum is a detailed plan of instruction with categorical elements that define learning experiences and opportunities as well as multiple measures of assessment for students.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

Each day, students across the nation engage in a daily battle aimed at receiving a high quality education thoroughly designed to quench their thirst for knowledge while simultaneously meeting their distinct needs. They crave a foundation of knowledge that is applicable to their daily lives as they experience and observe a world around them with uncharted wisdom to explore; they yearn for learning modules that can heighten their awareness beyond all that is factual and transform from beings that simply exist towards manifesting their life's purpose. Similarly, educators struggle to provide meaningful learning experiences, as they are coerced to solely rely upon adopted state standards and benchmarks that neglect to integrate meaningful culturally relevant concepts. Overwhelmed by dramatic shifts and transitions in the field of education that link student performance and academic achievement directly to their professional level of efficacy, educators are faced with many limitations and stipulations that bind their instruction in the classroom. Increasing emphasis on accountability measures and standardized assessments related to the Common Core Standards have collectively impacted both educators and students in a negative manner, as both participants are inundated with unrealistic measures of success-none of which truly focus on the innate needs of learners. Thus, it becomes impossible to win the battle both are faced with on a daily basis, and even more difficult for learners to fully grasp content deemed detrimental to their success without relevancy to their personal lives. The end result provides much clarity and insight: We are losing our children to the ills of society and failing to provide them with the adequate tools necessary to develop an intrinsic love for learning and the ability to question the larger world in which they exist. Research suggests that students that reside in high poverty levels are more susceptible to engage in lives of crime, drugs and violence, as it is a part of the community they reside in (Waddell, 2013). Furthermore, unrealistic demands and measures ultimately compromise the quality of instruction that students receive in classrooms throughout the nation on a daily basis, often shattering the spirit of true educators that seek to truly transform the lives of their students.

Such changes present an overwhelming responsibility to the courageous few that choose to enter this rapidly changing field amidst barriers to effectuate the lives of learners in a positive way. While it gener-

Related Content

A Survey on the Impact of Digital Transformation on NPQEL Training in Institute of Aminuddin Baki: A Boon or Bane Training Structure of NPQEL 2021 - A New Landscape
Nor Hazimah Ismailand Noraisah Md Yusof (2023). *Comparative Research on Diversity in Virtual Learning: Eastern vs. Western Perspectives (pp. 263-278).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-survey-on-the-impact-of-digital-transformation-on-npqel-training-in-institute-of-aminuddin-baki/320549

A Look Inside My Groundbreaking Path in Higher Education
Dannelle Whiteside (2023). *The Future of Black Leadership in Higher Education: Firsthand Experiences and Global Impact (pp. 147-156).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-look-inside-my-groundbreaking-path-in-higher-education/318034

Coming Out, Going Home: Spatial Mobility Among the Gay College Students With Their Supportive Parents in Taiwan
Hong-Chi Shiau (2020). *International Journal of Bias, Identity and Diversities in Education (pp. 1-17).*
www.irma-international.org/article/coming-out-going-home/258994

Transformative Learning: Positive Identity Through Prison-Based Higher Education in England and Wales
Anne Pikeand Susan Hopkins (2019). *International Journal of Bias, Identity and Diversities in Education (pp. 48-65).*
www.irma-international.org/article/transformative-learning/216373

Additive Language Pedagogy: Aligning a Learner-Centered Approach with Student Diversity
Anne Holmen (2018). *International Journal of Bias, Identity and Diversities in Education (pp. 1-9).*
www.irma-international.org/article/additive-language-pedagogy/193673