

Culturally Responsive Teaching

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The Problem

(Abstract)

- Barely three-quarters of high school students are graduating from high school in California (USA)
- THE NEED: Culturally Responsive Teaching! Foster a development of heightened cultural awareness!
- Intent: Infuse cultural awareness in into the state curriculum as well as leaders in education recognize a culture that often remains silent: the culture of the learning disabled student!

Alarming Statistics

- 62% of students in the U.S. are unemployed one year out of school.
- 60% of adolescents in treatment for substance abuse and 50% with diagnosed depression have learning disorders
- 31% of adolescents with learning disorders will be arrested 3-5 years out of high school.
- ½ of all “juvenile delinquents” tested were found to have learning disabilities (Karpman, 2002, p. 2)

National University (USA)

- National University (California, Hawaii, and Nevada) graduated more minority students and over 50% of all teachers in California (Gibson, 2007)
- National University upholds Culturally Responsive teaching via Level 1 and Level 2 tiers for educators entering special education that infuse heightened cultural awareness into each syllabus
- California (state) initiated a grant with National University to oversee ALL special education interns teaching in inner city schools to maintain state standards

National University

Administrative Office is located at 11255 North Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla, California (USA).

International Headquarters is at 5245 Pacific Concourse Drive, Los Angeles, California (USA) headed by Richard Higginbottom: phone is 310-662-2151.



Action Plan for Culturally Responsive Teaching

- Teacher Education Intern Program
- Rigorous entrance requirements
- ALL University Level classes MUST include a cultural component!
- Teacher Candidates:
- Evaluation of teacher candidates must reflect compliance with State Teaching Standards which includes designing instruction for diverse learners!

Supporting Culturally Responsive Teachers

- Leadership Skills:
 - Trust
 - Team Building
 - Similarities/Differences
 - Recognize Strengths of the Individual
 - Fairness

What makes a Leader? What makes a Manager?

(Bennis, 1997, p.4)

- Leader
 - Effectiveness
 - What/Why
 - Trust: Human Element
 - Innovating: Initiation
 - Big Picture
- Manager
 - Efficiency
 - How
 - Systems, controls,
 - Procedures, policy
 - Copying status quo
 - Bottom Line

Gardeners (1995) Leadership Elements

- “Leaders are people who understand the prevailing culture, even though much of the culture is latent, existing only in people’s minds and dreams, or in their unconscious...”
- The leaders of the future will be those who take the next step – to change the culture” (p.190).
- We must be “change agents to affect culturally responsive teaching!

Synchronicity in Leadership

(Jaworski, 1998, pgs ix-x)

- “A meaningful coincidence of two or more events, where something other than probability of chance is evolved..the most subtle territory of leadership...occur[s] collectively within a group or team of people”.
- Synchronicity provides us the opportunity, as leaders, to shape the future, to become change agents and accept culturally responsive teaching as an offering to our diverse students!

Theoretical Framework

- Trifold method of communication
 - Benefit: allows an “expert”, i.e. multicultural leader to act as a “go-between” the target (student at risk) and the educator/leader who often brainstorms with the consultant to find the best possible manner to incorporate culturally responsive teaching (Thomas, et.al, 2000).
 - Also known as the Triadic Model of Communication (ibid).

Constructivist Teaching

- A “hands-on” approach to teaching.
- Incorporates KWL – what does the student KNOW, what does the student WANT to know and at the end of the lesson, what has the student LEARNED!
- “To understand constructivism educators must focus attention on the learner” (Brooks, 1999)
- Engage the learner: teach to the modalities!

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development

- Scaffolding information so that students at risk, i.e. learning disabled students can grasp new information that has been segmented.
- Students grasp new information by building on prior knowledge.
- Often younger children are assisted by older children and adults (Cole, 1996)

SDAIE STRATEGIES

- Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English
 - Widely used by educational leaders to make learning more concrete for students whose primary language is other than English
 - Makes use of ALL learning modalities: kinesthetic, auditor and visual
 - Minimize use of English but emphasize learning based on student's past knowledge

Strengthening Leadership in Culturally Responsive Teaching

LEADERSHIP IS BUILT ON:

- Trust
- Team Building
- Awareness of similarities and differences
- Recognizing each other's strengths

GROUP PARTICIPATION;

- Increased self-awareness toward heightened cultural diversity
- Consolidation of previous knowledge about cultural diversity
- Role of culture in human interactions

CONCLUSION

- Statistics point to increased need for culturally responsive teaching!
- Acknowledgement of students at risk and those qualifying for special education under specific learning disability is given for their successes rather than failures!
- Leaders in education can foster culturally responsive teaching by following aforementioned theories and strategies to enhance education for ALL students, nationally and internationally!

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