
UNDERSTANDING
AND
APPLYING
HUMAN RELATIONS
AND
MULTICULTURAL
EDUCATION:
Teaching~Learning
in a
Global Society
6th Edition, Revised

Douglas F. Warring, Ph.D.

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The new edition of this book is the culmination of over thirty years of formal and informal teaching-learning exchanges from the standpoint of a teacher and many more from the standpoint of a lifelong learner. The settings have varied from formal classrooms to dusty fields, terrain of all types, gymnasiums, ball fields, hallways, cafeterias, coffee shops, conferences, and countless other interactions with seeming strangers in a variety of venues. I can honestly say that I hope others have learned from me as much as I have from them on this journey.

I have learned from my experiences as a student in elementary, junior high, high school, college, graduate school, as a father, as a participant in numerous activities, and a member of the U.S. Army. Many of life's lessons are too involved to delve into and there are countless others long since forgotten. Each and every one of these has left a mark. Although perceptions shape our realities it is not until they are critically consciously culturally explored among a diverse group that learning occurs. I am fortunate to have such a group with whom to interact.

I have also been fortunate to have lived, taught, or visited and learned from people all over the world in a variety of settings both formal and informal. Thank you to one and all as we embark on global interdependence and citizenship.

PREFACE

The study of human relations and multicultural education is an integral part of learning for living. People, by the very tenets of human nature, strive for interactions in a variety of settings. This creates a specific need for understanding at all levels within a pluralistic multicultural society.

The following pages represent an attempt to compile articles, exercises and supplemental materials on human relations/multicultural issues that may at first appear to be somewhat different but are in fact integrally related. It is through the application of the concepts and principles of these materials that understanding can occur.

The objectives are to achieve and demonstrate the following:

1. understand the contributions and life styles of various racial, cultural and economic groups in our society.
2. recognize and deal with dehumanizing biases, prejudices and discrimination.
3. create environments, which contribute to the positive self-image of persons and to positive interpersonal relations.
4. respect human diversity and personal rights.
5. develop multicultural overall inclusive approaches.
6. move to an education that is multicultural and works for anti-bias.

Multicultural education consists of many components and cannot be reduced to one or two items.

In the study of multicultural education, we need to be mindful of the diversity that exists within all social/ethnic groups. This includes groups that are often categorized as African Americans, Asian Americans, European Americans, Hispanic/Latino(a) Americans, Native Americans/American Indians. These terms are in reality geopolitical labels often used for convenience. While there are commonalities between and within groups, differences also exist.

There is some degree of sense in linking all white people and all people of color to examine ethnocultural identity, which is often perceptual, and race based. Resistance to this is often linked to denial, escapism, silence, and a collective unconscious designed to maintain the status quo. But to consistently categorize in this way contributes to the illogical fallacy of racial identification and collective homogeneity.

In dealing with multicultural issues we need to remember that illiteracy, poverty, prejudice, violence, hunger, and other problems occur among all groups of people. No matter where we live or what groups we *belong to*, problems exist. However, some groups face greater challenges to existence.

The challenges we each face in our struggles to embrace multicultural education require that we are able to think analytically about historical events and current developments to examine options for the implementation of possibilities. We must continue to examine relationships between culture, ethnicity, bias, and learning, as well as other factors. Learning from this study and discussion will enable us to build new systems that are more inclusive.

The readings, charts, exercises, and activities contained in this publication are designed as a starting point for understanding and dealing with the complexities of everyday interactions. It is the hope of the author & editor that through increased understanding of individuals, groups, and societies we can create positive change in an ever-changing multicultural world.

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SECTION I

CULTURAL PLURALISM AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIBLE PEDAGOGY

Rationale: We live in an increasingly complex and diverse world. Yet in the United States of America our socialization into a particular culture and lifestyle induces us to accept certain values, attitudes, and beliefs as universally correct and valid. This form of ethnocentrism serves to limit the effectiveness of interpersonal relationships across diverse groups. In our global society it is important to develop understanding, appreciation, and respect for others. It is important to understand culture, social identities, and social justice as they apply to us, and the world in which we live and work.

Objectives

1. To develop an understanding of the differences between cultural pluralism and assimilation.
2. To be able to distinguish between the individual, social group, society, and global levels of analysis and to identify the effects of each on interpersonal relationships.
3. To explain how ethnocentrism and unconscious ideology operate.
4. To broaden perspectives to include global options.
5. To understand culture, ethnicity, and culturally responsible pedagogy.
6. To understand dispositions and their importance.
7. To understand and begin to make applications of cultural and social identities.
8. To understand and begin to make applications of social justice.
9. To understand and utilize constructive and effective communication (feedback, gestures, touching, empathy, listening, group process, and hidden agendas).
10. To examine the role of perception.
11. To understand the self and culture with regard to communications.
12. To examine a model of cultural responsibility and culturally responsible pedagogy.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The world is growing smaller on a daily basis as migration and other factors contribute to the increasing diversity in the United States of America (USA). Other significant shifts are also occurring. In the early 1900s, the average American was 21 years old with a life expectancy rate of 47 and the infant mortality rate in New York City was 50% according to Hodgkinson (2002). Compare that with today where the average American is now 38 with a life expectancy of 78+. Demographic realities are changing at a rapid pace in the U.S. Over three-fourths of the immigrants now come from countries other than Europe and we are experiencing a rapid aging of the population. Distribution is an issue facing all countries. Nothing is distributed evenly across the nations, not jobs, not race, not age, not wealth, and not even crime.

During the past century, important movements calling for recognition of the rights and needs of people of color, women, and other oppressed groups have surfaced in this country. Different movements seeking justice and equity have brought together groups focusing on social change. The focus has been on the inclusion of groups that have been previously omitted from full and equal participation and the mainstream of American education. It is important to examine the connection between the concern for the rights of others and the concern about educational issues. This places the focus for discussion squarely within the educational environment. Most educational endeavors have been void of course work on these issues, or have peripherally dealt with them, so it is quite readily apparent that most of the persons who are preparing to teach have not had adequate training to assist in the preparation of future global citizens. This includes the understanding of self as a cultural being as well as understanding and support for a multicultural environment.

Education has traditionally been one of these closed systems. Many reports and other indicators have called for, and continue to call for, educational reform. We must learn how to analyze these reports by reading their findings and reading between the lines. The reports don't often state their desired final outcomes, only partial examples based on biased analysis. The researchers and writers of these reports approach them from their own perspectives, as we all do. Understanding these varied and multiple perspectives is critical if the meaning of the educational reports is to be understood.

In an effort to assist teachers and other school personnel in understanding the changes in society, Minnesota enacted legislation mandating competencies for all educators and prospective educators. These are most often met by successfully completing a course or series of competencies in Human Relations, Multicultural Education, and/or Diversity. The course competencies consist of work in the following areas

1. understand the contributions and lifestyles of various racial, cultural, and economic groups in our society;
2. recognize and deal with dehumanizing biases, prejudices, and discrimination;
3. create environments which contribute to positive self-esteem of persons and to positive interpersonal relations;
4. respect human diversity and personal rights (this has more recently expanded to include more specific aspects of multicultural education);
5. understand the language, culture, and history of American Indians and other oppressed groups;
6. develop multicultural approaches; and
7. incorporate education that is multicultural as a regular ongoing process throughout the educational realm.

What began as a series of regulations has evolved slightly over the years and most other states have since added comparable requirements. Most of the requirements now speak directly to areas of diversity through multicultural education.

As teachers and professionals in all fields we have an intellectual and ethical responsibility to provide our students and others with the most current and accurate information possible. A more inclusive education will have a number

of important effects on students. It will expand their worldview by exposing them to the life experiences of people both similar to, and different from themselves. It will make them more cognizant of interesting variables including culture, ethnicity, and gender, which are important variables for everyday life. It will also make students aware of the significant contributions of members of groups who have been omitted from the American mainstream, as well as provide them the skills to recognize and deal with dehumanizing bias, prejudice, and discrimination. This will help students to benefit from an increased appreciation of diversity in any of their future roles as parents, teachers, community leaders, coworkers, employers, and citizens. This should facilitate the changes in climate necessary to ensure change.

Diversity, while inevitable, is positive and should be seen as strength, as it continues to increase. Mobility and migration patterns throughout the world continue to bring people into contact with others they never thought would be possible. One of the consequences of this is the opportunity to become more multicultural and manage diversity in constructive instead of destructive ways. This new diversity poses challenges and opportunities for all.

In order to understand others better and interact with them in more positive ways it is essential to understand your own culture and cultural identity. Examine the generalized identity you have constructed over time and start to analyze each part. Of special interest are factors that contribute to intersecting variables such as race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, religion/spirituality, exceptionality, language, affectional orientation, and other cultural identities. Examining these about yourself will assist you in understanding your worldview. As you progress on your journey remember that your identity development and understanding of your social identities and culture are works in progress.

Models for Education

As a model for education we could utilize some of the current programs that are either in existence or being created at the local levels. Minnesota is in the process of moving in that exact direction for all of its P-12 programs. To that end, the Minnesota State Board of Education adopted a plan for all school districts in Minnesota regarding Multicultural and Gender-Fair Disability Sensitive (MCGFDS) Curriculum, and is working on integrating global issues, as well.

Several years ago the State of Minnesota passed a law requiring all teachers in the state to successfully complete a Human Relations course. Continuing from that point, the school board in each district is now required to adopt a written plan to assure that curriculum is evaluated and developed for use in each district school establishes and maintains an inclusive educational program. Specific objectives are designed to achieve the following outcomes in addition to the Standards of Effective Practice. An inclusive educational program is one that employs each individual's culture as the curriculum developed and delivered so students and staff. Obviously these need to be regularly updated. Where is your school in this process? How effective is this committee/plan in facing new challenges? Continue to examine the field of multicultural education as well as related areas for more information.

Multicultural Education has been defined as an idea, an educational reform movement, and as a process (Banks & Banks, 2001). According to Banks (2001) the goal of multicultural education is to change the structure of educational institutions to improve the chances for equal educational opportunity and academic and social achievement for all students. Education must be anti-biased and seek change. Change is already occurring so don't change just for the sake of change; be purposeful and make it count. Work for social justice.

MCGFDS education is education which values cultural pluralism and reflects the view that schools should not seek to melt away cultural differences through forced assimilation, but should be a process of sharing culture through learning. Multicultural education programs for teachers, staff, students, families, and community members must permeate all areas of the educational experience.

Multicultural education is developmental and emergent. It is a process for impacting upon the totality of the educational enterprise. Multicultural education assumes that cultural elements are significant components of education and when incorporated into the curriculum, make the learning more meaningful for all students. The salient feature of these programs is the use of a systematic approach to the design, development, and implementation

of a pluralistic, multicultural, anti-biased, inclusive framework. In this process it is important to keep expectations high for all students and continue to provide a significant level of cognitive sophistication for all involved.

What is needed is to integrate concepts and to examine the impact of specific elements (intersecting variables) such as race, class, gender, lifestyles, and exceptionality. This is where variables intersect to impact each other. These are inextricably interwoven characteristics. Some of these status variables can be more successfully dealt with in modified learning environments.

Instructional strategies include the use of cooperative learning with a basic understanding of values and differences seen as positive and brought out in the classroom. Specific pedagogical techniques are essential to integrating factual information about people of color and women into the classroom. A cooperative instructional system utilizes cooperative task structures in which students spend much of their time in heterogeneous groups earning recognition, praise, and rewards based on the academic performance of their respective groups (Cohen 1986; Johnson & Johnson 2002; Slavin 1983).

Since the State of Minnesota (Minnesota Department of Education, 1974) requires all prospective teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers, community educators, and school personnel to take course work in Human Relations/Multicultural Education. The Multicultural Gender-Fair Curriculum component for all school districts is a natural and necessary step in this learning process. The MCGFDS training needs to be evaluated regarding the significance of impact and if shown to be successful, be implemented in all institutions of higher learning which are the agencies offering the course work. This will undoubtedly lead to significant changes in the attitudes and behaviors of those persons who are employed in higher education, thus creating a change in the climate and curriculum in formal education. Increased learning and attitude change in formal education will in turn assist in the achievement of societal goals for social justice such as

1. reduce prejudice,
2. reduce discrimination,
3. provide equal opportunity,
4. create an anti-biased education, and
5. provide social justice for all.

Achievement of social justice is a process in the move to foster education that is multicultural and anti-biased.

Education that is Multicultural and Anti-biased

Education must move to a practice that is inherently multicultural and intentionally anti-biased. It needs to provide the skills necessary to function in a global environment. Part of this education must include citizenship and values whereby people become actively involved in the educational process. Without doing so it remains biased. There are many reasons educational inequality exists. Some of the most significant reasons are listed here.

1. There is a lack of diverse educational resources.
2. Most teachers know very little about cultural traits, behaviors, values, and attitudes of diverse populations.
3. Most curriculum designs and instructional materials are Eurocentric and show other signs of bias.
4. The environments in which students live and in which they learn often differ significantly.
5. Most educators do not teach students how to survive and succeed in schools.
6. Most of education in the past was based on a biased model.

Guidelines for Teaching

In order to be more effective in meeting the needs of all learners cultural scripts need to be written and analyzed, which consciously cause an analysis and reanalysis of teaching and the entire educational process. Some of the guidelines that will assist all school personnel in becoming more effective are listed here. Look at these and be reflect about what you are presently doing and what you would like to accomplish.

1. Recognize knowledge, attitudes, and skills of the teacher and student as important variables.
2. Develop knowledge about cultural, racial, gender, ethnic, and groups that have traditionally been absent from the curriculum.
3. Be sensitive to one's own culture, attitudes, values, and behavior.