Need of Multicultural Education in Diverse Society.

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Abstract

Education and culture are intimately and integrally connected. The cultural pattern of a society conditions its educational pattern. For example, if a society has a spiritual pattern of culture, then its educational procedures will emphasize the achievement of moral and eternal values of life. On the other hand, if the cultural pattern of a society is materialistic, then naturally its educational pattern will be shaped for the attainment of material values which promote pleasures of senses and material comforts. A society devoid of any culture will have no define educational organization. Hence the culture of a country has a very powerful impact on its educational pattern. The intimate relationship between culture and education is evident from the fact that one of the major aims of education is to impact to the child his cultural heritage, the social heritage. Learners should be made aware of their own cultures and of the need to get to know their own culture and that of others in the school. Learners should be proud of their cultural backgrounds, because if one is aware of where one is coming from, it becomes easy to know where one is going to. Education is a deliberate attempt to construct human beings who will participate in society as productive citizens. The question whether our education system should be designed or not is quite irrelevant when education, schooling, training, indoctrination, and the spectrum of ways by which the child is "schooled" are all based on intentional design. Schooling is the most contested terrain in any society; it is a battlefield or a conveyor belt for the creation of human beings. In a multicultural society, who should be entrusted to design schooling? Are those designing our schooling equipped with the varieties of philosophical perspectives in education???

Introduction:

The tremendous diversity of cultural, ethnic, religious and socio-economic groups in student teacher colleges today calls for multicultural education that reflects understanding and respect for adolescences differences. The multicultural education has particular relevance for the 1990s and beyond because of the migration of the people into all over the world and because of the enlightened and more human perspective that diversity enriches, rather than weakens, a nation. Multicultural education is when approached to teaching and learning that is based on democratic values and beliefs and affirms cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies. To become an excellent classroom teacher in 21st century is extra ordinarily hard work, especially given the intense national climate of educational standards, high stake testing, increased diversity within college age population, and the ever increasing expectations for education colleges to address special needs and community concerns. Excellent teachers are those who can inspire the intellectual, social, and personal developments of all their students to their highest potential. These students are increasingly diverse in terms of race, culture, and socio- economic background, as well as personal knowledge and experience. Teacher wants to provide each student with an equal opportunity to learn. Teachers knowledge and understanding can help all students reach their potential. Students bring to college, not only differing racial and ethnic heritages but also wide range of histories perspectives, experience, expectations, and approaches to learning. All of these factors will influence students educational experience. "The increasingly diverse student population requires that teachers have a broader range of skills and knowledge to meet these diverse needs of the students body" is rightly said, by Bynoe. According to Hixson,"it is unacceptable for teachers to have little respect for their students, or to blame poor college performance on the facts that student did not come prepared to adapt to the college environment". Teachers must recognize the impact that cultural differences can have on student or students education. Gay has rightly denoted that,"teachers who are aware of the impacts of cultural differences are more likely to bring students different cultures into the classroom." Multicultural education is both a concept and deliberate process designed to teach learners to recognize aspect and appreciate differences in culture, ethnicity, social class, religion, special needs and gender. Banks and Banks view multicultural education as a means to help learners develop more positive attitudes towards different cultural, racial, ethnic and religious groups. Multicultural education should help to empower students from

disadvantages groups and help them develop confidence in the abilities to succeed academically and to influence the social, political and economical world. Multicultural education should assist students to develop skills to be able to consider the view point of different groups. Learners are rarely given the opportunity to view life from the perspective of, for e.g, women disabled persons, lower class people, and, ethnic minority groups Multicultural education is a philosophical concept build on the ideas of freedom, justice, equality, equity and human dignity as acknowledged in various documents, such as U.S Declaration of Independence, Constitutions of South Africa and the United States, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adapted by the United Nations. It affirms our need to prepare students for their responsibilities in an independent world. It recognizes the role schools can play in developing the attitudes and values necessary for a democratic society. It values cultural differences and affirms the pluralism that students, their communities and teachers reflect. It challenges all forms of discriminations in schools and society through the promotion of the democratic principles of social justice.

❖ **Multicultural Education in India:**

In India, the term multicultural educationgained currency in the 1990s and is linked to demographic realities and long-standing traditions. The term multicultural education is rarely if ever used, but since the establishment of the post independence Constitution in 1951 and the two major reports on education in 1953 and 1966, respectively there has been substantial attention to cultural pluralism and social equality in education. What makes Indian multiculturalism and multicultural education unique is the fact that diversity is considered a defining feature of both indian identity and Indian democracy. Consequently, the Indian approach to multiculturism rests on the principles of both unity in diversity and diversity in unity. What this means in practice is that diversity is supported, not as a necessary evil, but as an important ongoing feature of society. Most particularly, this approach rests on the twin ideals of autonomy and nondiscrimination as exemplified in Article 29 of the Constitution of India.

❖ **Need of Multicultural Education :**

Multicultural Education helps students develop a positive self-concept by providing knowledge about the histories, cultures, and contributions of diverse groups. It prepares all

students to work actively towards structural equality in organizations and institutions by providing the knowledge, dispositions and skills for the redistribution of power and income among diverse groups. The primary goal of multicultural education is not merely to promote human relations, to help students feel good about themselves, or to preserve students native languages and cultures. While these outcomes may be by-products, the primary goal of Multicultural Education is to promote the education and achievement of all students, particularly those who are traditionally dismissed and under reserved in our education system.Reffered to the definitions we can summarise that multicultural education incorporates the idea that all students regardless of their gender are social class and their ethnic racial or cultural characteristics should have an equal opportunity to learn in college of education.Multicultural education is necessary for all children in all colleges, state and private, denominational and non-denominational, co-educational and single sex, primary and secondary, comprehensive and differentiated, compulsory and non-compulsory. Multicultural education is a necessity in India because of the cultural diversity that exists in the country. Multicultural education could enable learners to learn to tolerate and accommodate one another.

Before discussing the need for multicultural education, Pratte and Grant states that multicultural education can be considered from different perspectives, which are:

- Restricted multicultural education, which seeks to remedy deficiencies in culturally different students and attempts to teach majority students to tolerate minorities.
- Modified restricted multicultural education, which seeks to promote full school services for all groups and promote equality among groups within the school.
- Unrestricted multicultural education, which seeks to remedy ethnocentrism in all students by teaching them to identify with a plurality of cultural groups.
- Modified unrestricted multicultural education, which seeks to prepare all students for active citizenship in a racially diverse society.

Weather restricted, unrestricted or modified, the point that is emphasized here is that multicultural education seeks to integrate people from all cultural and ethnic groups, and to

expose these people to many cultures. Multicultural education as stated in four approaches encourages cultural tolerance amongst learners in Multicultural environment. Multicultural education in India is necessary for the interaction between and integration of different cultures. In the past, the dominant group through social structures and the Mass media dedicated which values and cultures should be dominant in the country even the values in the school system where enforced by the state policy and where of Christian nature. Micro cultures in India have been isolated from One another. Western cultures and western values dominated for years without taking into account the origin of great number of people. Today there is a great need for balance in the core culture of society. Multicultural education is greatly needed in India with its diverse cultures.

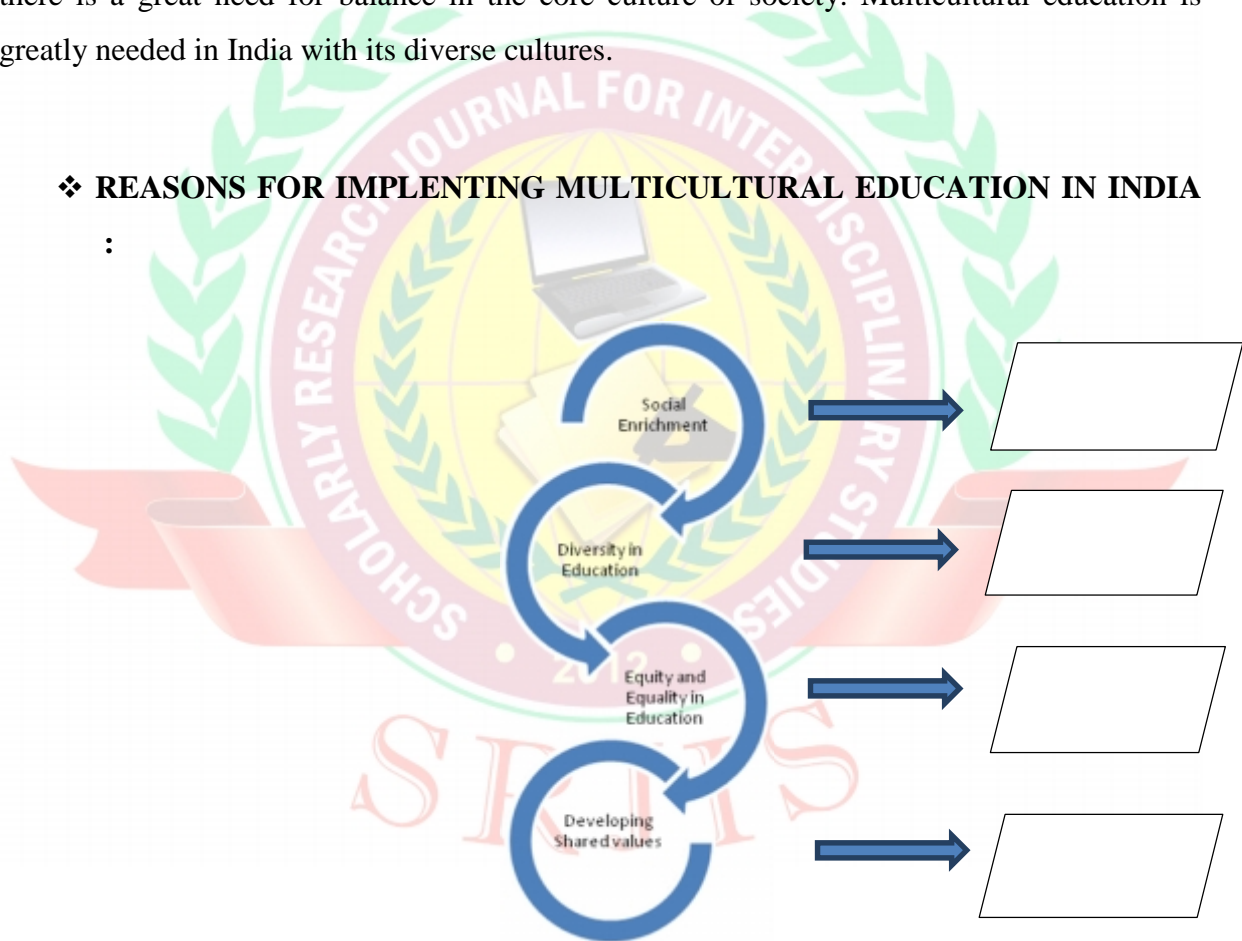❖ **REASONS FOR IMPLENTING MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN INDIA :**

Fig- Diagram showing the Need of Multicultural Education as per the Social Diversity.

1.Social Enrichment : Multicultural education emerged as a reaction to the ideology of assimilation. The existence of diverse cultural groups must be recognized and must be seen as a source of social enrichment rather than a social problem. India as a diverse society consists of many nations cultures and value systems. Indians differ in race, religion, values, heritage,

ideology. In order to function properly in a diversified system, we need not only to acknowledge differences, but also to somehow recognize similarities. We need to stress differences within unity. Because of the variety of cultural groups, cultural interaction becomes very important in order for a democratic society to function effectively.

2. Diversity in education : In India we have to ensure that diversity is not an end in itself. It cannot be seen apart from the objective of equity, equality and freedom. The discourse on diversity cannot and should not supersede or conduct the agenda of transformation, equity and equality. One group's culture and value system should not supersede that of another's- every cultural and value system should get the same attention. India needs to recognize the value of diversity by implementing a multicultural approach in education. Socio-cultural factors cannot be neglected if meaningful educational reform is to be implemented. Learners are unique individuals and cultural beings who bring into the classroom a distinct set of beliefs, values and experiences that influence attitudes, perceptions and behavior. Educators need to be aware of these different ethnic backgrounds. Awareness and knowledge of learners backgrounds will enable educators to design a curriculum that will effectively suit its learners. Learners should be motivated to develop their unique capabilities.

3. Equity and equality in education: In multicultural education all learners should enjoy an equal chance to maximize their potential. Learners from different ethnic groups should be given the opportunity to enter and succeed in the education system. Equity and equality in education requires the elimination of laws and barriers that prevent specific groups of individuals from entering the system. It also entails the complete removal of explicit and implicit discriminatory structures that might hinder access to and progress through the system.

4. Developing shared/ common values : In order to achieve unity in diversity, the education system in the form of multicultural education should aim at recognizing shared values. Specific values should be acknowledged in education in order to acknowledge diversity. Parents, teachers, learners and stakeholders should come together and recognize the core /shared /common values in the education system. Examples of shared / common values to be developed in India are the value of respect of other cultures in the education system, and that education should enable all learners to have access to an equal education.

❖ **Role of Teacher in Multicultural Society :**

The newness of the concept of multicultural education in many schools and the lack of published materials available to teachers, it becomes the responsibility of the teacher to design a program aimed at meeting the needs of their classes. Certain objectives may be achieved through reading books or stories about young people from different cultures and asking students to identify values, relate similarities to their own lives, roleplay unfamiliar situations, and evaluate the objectivity of the author. It is also the teacher's responsibility to develop lessons that are aimed at analyzing specific stereotypes. An important part of the teacher's role is to bring issues on racial differences and tensions to the classroom and discuss them professionally with the students. Another aspect of the teacher's role is that of becoming a resource person for the students; to collect, compile, and use community resources to enrich students' experiences and lives. It is important for the teacher to be a positive role model for the students by using appropriate language and behavior.

❖ **Conclusion :**

Transformation in Multicultural Education should start with educator and proceed from educators to learners. Many teachers do not know or understand what multicultural education is, and they do not know how to use effective practices. Educators should avoid attitudes that show biases and conflict. The teacher in a multicultural institution should not forget that he / she has a very important role to play. The total development of the students becomes the major concern of the teacher, instead of solely focusing on how they perform academically. In fact, one of the reasons for a student having poor grades could be psychological and emotional trauma. To be able to handle successfully such concerns, the teacher must be equipped with ample knowledge about multiculturalism which can be achieved through education. The teachers must bridge possible gaps between cultures. Educators must consider not only the basic skills that students need to master but also the struggles, hopes and dreams of students from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural groups. The mastery of basic skills will be essential but not sufficient as the diversity within our society deepens and our nation faces new challenges and responsibilities. Students must be taught the knowledge, attitudes and abilities needed to work with people from diverse groups in order to creative civic, moral and just communities that promote the common goals.

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