

STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION ON THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS NATIONAL INTEGRATION OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

By

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ABSTRACT

The present endeavour enables the students to gain information and knowledge about different sub-cultures as well as to develop positive attitude towards national integration. A country lives and thrives in its cultural heritage. Culture is a treasure to be preserved, perpetuated and promoted. Today's students will be the future nation builders. They should possess thorough knowledge about one's own culture and also knowledge about other sub-culture. Therefore, it is important to develop among students positive attitude towards national integration. The present research is aimed to ascertain the effectiveness of multicultural education on attitude towards national integration in students of high school. The selected methodology is experimental one in the present research using Random Stratified Sampling Technique. The sample selected for the study consists of 200 students, both boys and girls from high school. The study found that, there is no significant effect of the treatment on their attitude towards national integration.

Keywords: Multicultural Education, Attitude Toward National Integration, High School students.

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a vital role in strengthening National integration. Through deliberate planned programme, education can develop all aspects of the student's personality. Through education, it is easier to broaden the student's outlook, promote feeling of unity, and nationalism so that his narrow group interests give way to larger interest of the country. There are various components of education like text books, methods of teaching and curricular and co-curricular activities, through which desirable attitude towards national integration can be developed.

National integration implies a feeling of oneness which may transcend all group or cultural differences and synthesise different religions, castes, linguistic communities into a compact whole. It inculcates a feeling among citizens of India that India is 'one' and we belong to it culturally. It is our interest. Country comes first; it is given higher place over sectional, linguistic, racial and other loyalties.

Education is an instrument of social change and can

preserve and protect the country's unity by providing mutual understanding, tolerance among people who come from diverse background.

Role of Education in Developing National Integration

According to Dr. Radha Krishna, "National Integration cannot be built by brick and mortar; it cannot be built by chisel and hammer. It has to grow silently in the minds and hearts of men. The only process is the process of Education".

Education can play a vital role in strengthening national integration. It is felt that education should not only aim at imparting knowledge, but also should develop all aspects of student's personality. It should broaden the outlook; foster a feeling of oneness and nationalism and spirit of sacrifice and tolerance so that narrow group interest is submerged in the larger interest of the country.

Concept of Multicultural Education

Multicultural Education means to bring about changes in all educational components including instructional material, curriculum, values, rules, structure, organization and governance which reflect culture and help in

developing a tolerant society which comprises of groups that belong to different religions and preaches diverse beliefs. Multicultural education develops a philosophy of equality among the students in an institution, which may become the foundation of mutual respect, acceptance, understanding and moral commitment to social justice.

Multicultural Education Means

According to Banks(1997-2002) and Sleeter(1995), multicultural education rejects the idea of the melting pot and supports a society that values diversity.

- An Educational approach aimed at enabling students to value social diversity arising out of religious, caste, linguistic, social class and gender related differences in India.
- To inculcate students in the recognition and appreciation of social diversity because of different religion, culture, caste, language, etc.

Approaches to Multi cultural Education

According to Hernandez, H. (1989) there are three major groups of approaches as given by,

1. Curriculum Approach
2. Achievement Approach
3. Inter-group Education Approach

Concept of Attitude Towards National Integration

The progress of a country depends on the citizens of that country. One of the important assets of any democratic society is national integration. Prosperity and security of the nation depends upon national unity and emotional integration of its people. In India, there are lots of differences in the living standards, dress, food habits, music, dance forms, customs, religions, cast and languages among people existing in different parts. India is facing problems like regionalism, communalism, terrorism, linguism and casteism which can be eradicated if emotional and national integration is inculcated and developed among the people. In regionalism, people promote their own regional interest at the expense of the interest of other regions. One's own region, language and religion are considered superior to other regions, languages and religions. Regionalism is

disruptive and a disorganizing influence, which has divided Indian society into various groups. One cannot think of any solution to those problems unless and until emotional integration is developed which will help to develop national integration among the people. Feeling of belonging to 'one nation' is essential for the progress of the country which is specially needed for the success of the democracy.

Attitude towards National Integration

Allport has defined an attitude as "a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects with which it is related".

It is the development of an intellectual mind that would be helpful in bringing about unity and oneness among the people, irrespective of heterogeneity of the society.

Meaning of attitude towards Cultural Diversity

According to Crow and Crow (1991), "Attitudes are the effective by product of an individual's experience to have their bases in his inner urges, acquired habits and the environmental influence by which he is surrounded".

- To make the students respond in a favourable way towards heterogeneity culture in the Indian society.
- Diversity is an inclusive collection of individuals and groups who bring varied human characteristics, backgrounds, interest and points of view to enrich the universal community.

Meaning of Cultural Literacy

Bringing about the awareness among students of different sub-cultures in India is 'Cultural Literacy'.

Locus Control

It is the tendency to which an individual attributes the causes of his behaviour to environment factors to his own decision or efforts.

Origin of the research problem

There are several reasons that justify the present research. First, India is multicultural country. Though constitutionally it has declared itself to be a secular country, in reality, there have been several clashes between various religious and ethnic groups of the society on various issues. This implies

that, there is an urgent need of developing a positive attitude towards national integration.

Review studies

Today many countries have multi ethnic, multi religious people mainly because of large scale migration especially from the poor countries to developed countries; therefore problems occur like identity crises, equal rights, in-justice, etc. in those countries.

India, because of its multi religious and multi culture population, has always faced those problems and many researchers have tried to find out the best possible solution through education. The curriculum of school also has scope for multi-cultural education.

Cohen L. Smith (2005), states that, for all students to achieve in school, the work must be relevant to their lives. Further Cohen says that, to meet differentiated educational and cultural needs of students, school systems need to examine their curricula and the manner in which it is delivered.

In order to improve academic performance in all areas, schools should assess their current programs and their teaching staff to see if they meet the need of their populations.

Jordan-Irvine (2003) states that, there is a growing recognition among the educational research and policy communities that, one of the key variables related to the school is achievement of culturally diverse students is the teacher" (p.72). That means, teacher's preparation and ability to address the needs of the student bodies teach a direct impact on student achievement.

Nixon (2006) outlined three current issues what public schools face in the United States: Thus, at the present time in American public education, three simultaneous statistical realities exist such as, (1) Teacher force is mostly White, (2) Student population is highly diverse and growing in children of colour, and (3) children of colour are precisely the students most at risk of being caught on the negative end of the achievement gap.

Rai (2000) conducted a study on role of education and cultural practices in creating environmental awareness. The findings reveal that, higher level of education in the

formal system possessed greater awareness towards the environment.

Lubna Mansuri (2010) focussed her research on Effectiveness of School Education on the Attitude toward National Integration of Students of VIII standard in greater Mumbai. The finding reveals that, National Integration among the secondary school students needs to be strengthened with emphasis on the students, with external locus of control and introversion personality, as those are the two traits for whom the Multicultural Education programme has not been effective.

Need of the study

In India, there are a lot of differences in the living standards, dress, food habits, music, dance forms, customs, religions, castes and languages among people living in different parts of the country. Today's students are the future nation builders. They possess knowledge about their own culture but they are ignorant about the culture of other communities, though those communities stay as neighbours. Previously, ignorance regarding other communities was confined to metro cities more because of the busy lifestyle. But, even in rural and backward areas, polarisation in the communities can be seen. Marathwada region is the most backward region of Maharashtra which has a history of misunderstanding among various communities due to cultural differences, apart from socio-economic and political factors.

Even after six decades of freedom, the communities have not come to terms and still behave suspiciously with each other. Even secular schools have become scarce and most of the schools are based on religion, caste, tribes and other communities, such is the extent of polarisation in this Marathwada region. Moreover, the syllabus in Maharashtra State does not explicitly prescribe Multicultural Education. Therefore, researcher felt the need to study the attitude of school students toward national integration in such a scenario.

Objectives

- To study the cultural literacy among the students.
- To study the attitude of students towards cultural diversity.

- To study the attitude of students towards national integration.
- To ascertain the effect of multicultural programmes on student's attitude towards National Integration.

Hypothesis

- There is no significant difference among the students towards cultural literacy.
- There is no significant difference in the attitude of the students towards cultural diversity.
- There is no significant difference in the attitude of students towards national integration.

Methodology of the study

The researcher adopted 'Experimental Method' to conduct the research. The researcher formed two groups such as 'Controlled Group' and 'Experimental Group' among the students. Researcher conducted a pre-test on controlled group to check their attitude towards National integration. The researcher then conducted a session on experimental group based on multicultural education programme designed and prepared by the researcher. Researcher analysed the result of the test conducted on both the groups using statistical techniques.

For the purpose of the present study, the researcher selected two schools out of which one was taken as control group and the other was taken as experimental group. The students who formed the experimental group were taught the content of multicultural education programme designed and prepared by the researcher using different interactive methods of teaching. The content developed was expected to develop positive attitude towards national integration.

Programme on multicultural education was included to identify the components. Multicultural education material was prepared by thorough in-depth discussion between the researchers, the literature available on the theme and with the help of colleges belonging to different cultures. Lessons were prepared using different interactive methodologies like co-operative learning, role play, debates, slogan, lecture cum discussion, poster, competition for which the program comprised of 32 hours.

Sample of the study

The small group is the sample, and selecting the sample group is called sampling. Sampling is the most significant thing in research and the researcher has to be well versed in varied techniques of sampling.

In this research, the researcher used Simple Random Sampling Technique for the collection of data. Total sample selected was 200 from High School of Marathwada region.

Variables

Variable refers to attributes, properties or characteristics which can change from one individual to the next.

According to Ferguson, G.A. variable is one, which is expected to have an impact on the dependent variables through its interaction with the independent.

In this research, the researcher used the following variables given as follows,

a. *Dependant variables*

The dependent variables consists of the following sub variables such as,

- (i). Cultural literacy
- (ii). Attitude towards cultural diversity
- (iii). Attitude towards national integration of students

b. *Independent variable*

Treatment Programme is aimed to imparting multiculture education to the High School students who belong to different media schools of Marathwada region.

c. *Controlled variable*

The following variable were controlled either through the design of the research i.e., the application of factorial design or inclusion or exclusion of the variable in the study or through the use of statistical technique.

- i. Gender of the student
- ii. Board of affiliation (School affiliated to SSC board)
- iii. Pre test scores of the dependant variable.

Tool

The instruments that are employed as a means are called tools. Each research tool is appropriate in a given situation to accomplish a particular purpose; therefore, the

researcher used "Attitude toward National Integration Scale tool" that was prepared by the researcher herself for the collection of data.

Statistical Technique

The researcher used t-test for the calculation of data, the statistical procedure were taken from the book written by Garret (1971).

Data analysis

The mean value, standard deviation and t test were used to compare the pre test and post test scores on the basis of Cultural literacy, Attitude toward cultural diversity, Attitude toward national integrations, of the experimental and controlled group and scores are tabulated in Table 1. which is shows that, all the variables are differed significantly.

Table 1 is showing the mean, SD, t value of the scores of dependant variables of the High school of Marathwada region.

Major findings of the study

There is no significant difference in the scores of students towards cultural literacy. This hypothesis was tested with the objective of comparing the control group and experimental group. The obtained t - value is greater than 2.58 for cultural literacy and hence, is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

There is no significant difference in the scores of students towards attitude towards cultural diversity. This hypothesis was tested with the objective of comparing the control group and experimental group, the obtained t - value is less than 1.96 for attitude towards cultural diversity and hence is insignificant at 0.01 level. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

There is no significant difference in the scores of students

Variables	Groups	Mean	SD	t-value	Table value	Interpretation
Cultural literacy	Control	5.28	2.01	5.12	0.01	Significant
	Experimental	7.09	2.75			
Attitude toward cultural diversity	Control	66.65	5.35	0.95	0.01	Insignificant
	Experimental	63.94	7.80			
Attitude toward National integration	Control	67.38	5.45	0.46	0.01	Insignificant
	Experimental	68.91	9.01			

Table 1. Scores of Dependent Variables.

towards attitude towards national integration. This hypothesis was tested with the objective of comparing the control group and experimental group. The obtained t - value is less than 1.96 for attitude towards national integration and hence is insignificant at 0.01 level. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusion of the study

There is an effect of the treatment on cultural literacy and attitude towards cultural diversity of the students. But there is no effect of the treatment on their attitude towards national integration of the students.

The effect of the treatment on the cultural literacy of students was found to be significant.

There is no significant effect of the treatment on attitude toward national integration of the students. The reason may be more awareness with the students about the cultural diversity and facilitating a positive attitude with them towards cultural diversity which may not help in creating a peaceful and cohesive society. Higher the awareness in students about cultural diversity, greater is likely to be distrusted in each other on account of the more diverse society which is likely to be the tendency in people to behave like turtles that hunker down with their heads in their shell.

Educational Implication and Recommendation

Multicultural educational programme is found to be more effective in developing a positive attitude towards National integration among students with an internal locus of control as compared to those with an external locus of control. This could be because, students with an internal locus of control have control in their hands and change their future. This belief may have them to benefit more from the experimental treatment.

The teachers in schools should treat all their students equally. The teacher herself may belong to any group but it is expected that, she should follow an objective approach in dealing with students. Teachers should realize that, all students have the need for identifying themselves with each other. The teacher should play an effective role in providing a conducive environment inside the classroom for all groups to live peacefully and

to achieve the desired goal.

The school authorities should take an initiative in modifying the curriculum to integrate multicultural education in it. The teaching learning process and class room interaction should be compatible to promote unity in diversity. There is a need for institutions to develop course content and other related activities which will help in developing an impartial, secular and more inclusive education. There should be a scope for students to exchange their views with each other openly and freely and to develop their tolerance.

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