

Multicultural Education: Teachers' Perceptions and Preparation

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Abstract

This paper focuses on theory and practice in multicultural education as it pertains to the preparation of preservice teachers. The literature reviews the history and definition of multiculturalism and investigates multiple theoretical frameworks around the ongoing debate and issues of multicultural education. Teachers' perceptions of multicultural education and various approaches to multicultural pedagogy and curriculum are explored. The finding indicates that thorough and balanced courses preparing preservice teachers to teach culturally diverse students are essential to supporting teachers' awareness, knowledge, and skill in providing equal education for all students.

Keywords: conservative, liberal, and critical multiculturalism, teachers' perceptions and preparation.

1. Introduction

The common belief that America is a "land of opportunity" is why immigrants often choose the U.S. to study and seek jobs. This phenomenon has influenced the demographics of the United States, which has seen a rapid growth in the foreign-born population, especially those from Asia and Latin America. Thus, the ethnic and racial makeup of schools, workplaces and neighborhoods has increased. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 and 2013 American Community Surveys, the estimated number of foreigners in the US increased from 9.6 million to 19.8 million between 1970 and 1990. The number of U.S. immigrants grew in 2013 to 41.3 million, a quadrupling since 1970.

The children of these newcomers have changed not only the makeup of the public school population, but classroom dynamics as well. For Saint Paul Public Schools (2014), the district reported an enrollment of 19,383 elementary level pupils for the 2014-2015 school year. These diverse students' backgrounds consisted of: 2.1% American Indian, 27.8% Asian, 14.5% Hispanic, 31.8% Black, and 23.8% White. Seventy-two percent of these students came from low-income families. Moreover, 41% were English language learners. Multicultural education was created to provide educators with a platform for working with such diverse school populations and achieving justice within societies marked by inequalities based on language, gender, socioeconomic status, or religion (Banks, 2004).

The emergence of multiple and overlapping identities involving ethnicity, gender, religion, and transnationalism has further complicated the concept of diversity and multicultural education, and effected how teachers address the needs of children from a widening cultural spectrum (Banks, 2004; Kymlicka, 1995). Because of the cultural and racial diversity of the US student population, educators must realize the differences among their students and integrate diversity education into the entire curriculum to implement multicultural education successfully.

One of the other challenges in multicultural education is that of providing a fair education for students with the purpose of achieving social justice (Gordon, 1999). A fair education takes into account the perspectives of many groups. By establishing a fair and inclusive curriculum, "the mainstream-centric perspectives" that are only "viewed as significant by the mainstream society" can be avoided (Banks, 1988, p. 18). However, ideological and/or political resistance, and high-stakes testing and teacher accountability make any curriculum changes towards multiculturalism difficult since educators must know the cultural characteristics of their students in diverse cultures before teaching minority students. Teachers must also have adequate skills to enable them to integrate the students' different cultures into classroom experiences.

In this regard, Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis, (1992) argue that multicultural competence requires the development of three levels of understanding: awareness, knowledge, and skills. However, these competencies are hard to acquire (Garcia & Pugh, 1992). Therefore, preservice training is a very important factor in helping educators recognize the effects of cultural and racial diversity on students. It also prepares them to use this diversity as a classroom resource influencing their teaching practices. By effectively preparing preservice teachers to implement multiculturalism, these new teachers become multiculturalism's advocates, more prepared to achieve equity and social justice in their classrooms.

The main purpose of this research is to investigate preservice teachers' perceptions of multicultural education and the effectiveness of professional training programs in multicultural education. This research is significant because it illustrates teachers' perceptions of multicultural education and the role of professional preparation in teaching culturally diverse students. Through adequate preparation, teachers' perspectives towards multiculturalism can change, and through the acceptance of their students' diversity, they may also feel confident and encouraged to incorporate more multicultural experiences into their classrooms. Researchers emphasize that

the professional preparation process can increase teachers' awareness of the impact of cultural differences, and to bring children's different cultures into the classroom, influencing their teaching strategies (Garmon, 2004; Gay, 2005).

Multicultural perspectives should prepare teachers to critically reflect on the power and privileges of dominant culture, their own place within these systems, and to deconstruct them to create social equality through teaching practice. Jenks et al. (2001) identified three theoretical frameworks of multicultural education in teacher education: conservative, liberal, and critical multiculturalism.

In the conservative multiculturalism framework, marginalized groups are expected to assimilate into the mainstream culture (Gorski, 2006); their voices and perspectives are neither accepted nor appreciated (Kanpol, 1994). Conservative multiculturalists see themselves as committed to equality, but that equality comes from assimilation to the "mainstream culture and its attending values, mores, and norms" (p. 90). This theory of multiculturalism assumes that equality is possible for all and can be evenly apportioned (McLaren, 1999). Similarly, Ladson-Billings (1995) argue that "the current multicultural education practice seems more appropriately rooted in the intergroup education movement of the 1950s, which was designed to help African Americans and other 'unmeltable' ethnics become a part of America's melting pot" (p. 741). Platt (2002) argues that conservative theories of multiculturalism see race as ahistorical and universal without considering the economic or class aspects of diversity.

Critical multiculturalists directly challenge conservative multiculturalism. For instance, they claim teachers and students must not assume that because there are laws to promote justice and democracy that justice and democracy exist. Teachers and students should explore social inequalities and critically examine what is meant by democracy and how to achieve it. To do this, teachers must stop working towards "building a common culture" and begin teaching the value of multiple identities and multiple perspectives (McLaren, 1999).

Liberal multiculturalism is based on a human relations approach that recognizes cultural diversity and pluralism, and accepts and celebrates difference (Grant & Sleeter, 2006). Liberal multiculturalists argue that our primary goal ought to be the creation of conditions for equal opportunity by recognizing and valuing diversity. However, while liberal multiculturalists support diversity programs that encourage an appreciation of difference, McLaren (1994) says they do so in a manner that ignores the ways that difference plays into inequality. He also characterizes liberal multiculturalists as believing that natural equality exists among groups of people, but because equal opportunity doesn't exist in US society, that natural equality is not allowed to flourish.

Critical multiculturalists challenges liberal multiculturalism by emphasizing that underlying diversity are inequalities in power, control, and access. Liberal multiculturalism celebrates democracy but is not transformative because it does not address barriers to equality.

Critical multiculturalism questions the fabric of our educational system, from both critical and social justice viewpoints, including anti-racist practices in the classroom (McLaren, 1994). Referring to this critical multicultural framework, Ukpokodu (2003) defines teaching as:

A paradigm in which teachers and students consciously engage in the construction of knowledge, critique the various forms of inequities and injustices embedded in the educational system, and strive to gain the empowerment needed to engage in culturally responsive and responsible practice. (p. 19)

This means that in order for preservice teachers to effectively be prepared to meet the challenges of today's diverse and multicultural classrooms, they must systematically be immersed in comprehensive and quality programs of multicultural education. Future teachers must be afforded opportunities to become aware of and question their personal perspectives regarding social, philosophical, and cultural "norms" in order to develop the skills and mindset to work with and teach students from diverse socioeconomic, racial, gender, language, and cultural backgrounds.

2. Literature Review

Through a review of the literature of previous studies, this research focuses on theory and practice in the preparation of preservice teachers for multicultural education. The literature reviews the history and definition of multiculturalism and the approaches of multicultural curriculum. Various studies of the perceptions and implementations of multicultural education will be described also.

2.1 History and Definition of Multiculturalism

The historical roots of multicultural education grew out a struggle for political power, freedom, and economic integration during the civil rights movement of the 1960's. During that time, various oppressed groups demanded that public schools include cultural and ethnic content (Banks, 1989). In the late 1960s and early 1970s, women's rights groups advocated for this educational reform and called for learning institutions to provide educational opportunities and employ people of color, thereby providing minority children with role models. Additionally, women activists and feminist scholars pushed for curricula that reflected and included more minority narratives, experiences, and histories. In a similar manner, other marginalized groups—the elderly, people with disabilities,

and gay and lesbians—organized themselves and continued to push powerfully and visibly for human rights and sociopolitical status. Schools, universities, and other educational institutions rushed to treat the concerns of these historically marginalized groups and make some change to traditional curricula. These actions, during the late 1960s and 1970s, helped to determine multicultural education's earliest idealization (Gay, 1994).

In the 1980s, multicultural education scholar James Banks, one of the pioneers of multicultural education, worked to examine schools as social systems from a multicultural context. Banks (1989) defined multiculturalism as:

A philosophical position and movement that deems that the gender, ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity of a pluralistic society should be reflected in all of the institutionalized structures of educational institutions, including the staff, the norms, the values, the curriculum, and the student body. (p. 11)

This philosophical concept was the foundation of his idea of multicultural education, with the goal that all children should have an equal opportunity for education, regardless of the social class, race, gender, and language. Therefore, as an ideal and a movement, multicultural education was the means and the end by which this philosophical concept could be realized (Banks, 1989).

By the late 1980s, emerging scholars such as Carl Grant, Geneva Gay, Christine Sleeter and Sonia Nieto provided a great foundation for early multicultural education. By providing deep frameworks rooted with the goal of social change and equal educational opportunity, they developed models of education built on a bedrock of equal opportunity, social justice, and critical thinking (Banks, 2001).

Today, multicultural education advocates confirm the goals of multicultural education are to build relationships, enhance understanding, support self-concepts, develop multicultural climates of schools, and perfect curricula that encourage multicultural awareness (Banks, 2001; Banks, 2004). These goals can be achieved when cultural diversity is viewed as a resource in the schooling enterprise which can, in turn, help teachers to understand and accept differences, creating a safe and unified environment within the school (Wham et al., 1996).

2.2 Approaches of Multicultural Curriculum and Pedagogy

Banks (1994) discusses four approaches to integrating ethnic and racial content into a school curriculum: contributions, additive, transformative, and social action. These approaches provide a better understanding of how the three theoretical frameworks discussed above can be translated into multicultural curriculum and pedagogy programs for schools.

The contributions approach to multicultural education emphasizes minority groups' contributions to the greater society. Therefore, it has elements of both the conservative and liberal frameworks. In this approach, stories of ethnic heroes and special days celebrating minority communities are added to the mainstream curriculum; however, the central part of the curriculum remains unchanged. This approach is the easiest to integrate into the curriculum, but because different groups are treated as additions, it does not allow students to develop a global view of ethnic and cultural groups. Moreover, the contributions approach does not address issues such as oppression, victimization, racism or poverty. By failing to address issues of inequality and discrimination, the contributions approach unfortunately reinforces stereotypes and misconceptions of minority groups (Banks, 1988).

The additive approach is used when different ethnic heritage themes and perspectives are addressed in the school curriculum without making any significant changes. This approach shares the disadvantages of the contributions approach in that it fails to help learners understand society from diverse ethnic perspectives (Banks, 1988). The additive and contribution approaches emphasize the addition of information about different minority groups to the curriculum. However, these approaches do not allow students to evolve their voice or gain critical thinking skills in order to challenge discrimination and inequalities in society (De La Torre, 1996). These approaches have both conservative and liberal multiculturalist elements. They are conservative when multicultural education is viewed primarily as a perfunctory gesture toward fairness. They are liberal when multicultural education is viewed as a substantive addition to a study of the diversity in American life, and when sufficient curricular time is given to doing so (Banks, 1988).

While the additive and contribution approaches focus on recognizing and teaching about diverse groups of people, the transformative approach demands change to the internal structure of the curriculum in order to integrate the perspectives and experiences of ethnic, racial, and other minority groups. The transformative approach is primarily critical because it teaches students to examine underlying cultural assumptions and to study diversity in relation to the dominant culture. It promotes democracy by educating for equity and justice. This way enables students to recognize the concepts from various points of view. It also impacts perspectives and content from various groups, which helps increase students' understanding of society and several cultures (Banks, 1988; Rothenberg, 2000).

The social action approach is another form of critical multiculturalism. Its aims are to teach students thinking and decision making skills, which will empower them to think critically about white privilege, society,

and racism, and prepare them to initiate and support social change. The goal of this approach is not only to teach students to respect differences between groups, but allows them to recognize inequality and discrimination in the school and society, thus empowering them to become actively involved in groups that work for change (Banks, 1988).

2.3 Teachers' Perceptions of Multicultural Education

Teachers' perceptions and their trends regarding culturally diverse students in the classroom are an important element in educating, motivating, and making a difference in education among students irrespective of their age, gender, ethnicity, language, and religion. These perceptions and attitudes influence teachers' expectations and treatment of these learners (Le Roux, 2001).

A study by Barry and Lechner (1995) surveys 73 preservice teachers' attitudes and their awareness of multicultural teaching and learning. All participants completed an orientation to education course, such as an elementary social studies methods (17.8%) or media for children course (68.5%). Additionally, they experienced laboratory teaching in schools with a high proportion of African-American students. The study finds that most respondents to the questionnaire understood and were aware of different issues in multicultural education, and they expected to have culturally diverse students in their classrooms. Although aware of the need for skills to work with diverse student populations, new teachers were undecided as to how well their education program had prepared them to instruct students with different religious backgrounds and cultural from their own, or communicate with the families of these students.

Pohan (1996) studies the personal and professional beliefs of 492 prospective teachers to identify variables related to the development of multicultural awareness and sensitivity. The study finds a significant relationship between prospective teachers' personal beliefs and their professional beliefs. Students who bring strong biases and negative stereotypes about diverse groups are less likely to develop the types of professional beliefs and behaviors most consistent with multicultural sensitivity and responsiveness. Another relevant finding from Pohan's study is that personal and professional beliefs are significantly related to students' cross-cultural experiences. Although causation cannot be inferred, the clear implication is that prospective teachers who have more cross-cultural experiences are more likely to develop favorable personal and professional beliefs about diverse learners.

Fueyo and Bechtol (1999) investigate how teachers' perceptions impact classroom practices and the relationship among their students. According to this study, teachers who do not value bilingualism not only have lower expectations of linguistically diverse students in terms of achievement, but often discourage these students from using their primary language for academic purposes. The research further states that teachers, who negatively perceive ethnic minorities, have also shown differential and biased treatment of students based on stereotypes of gender differences and students' last names. The study emphasizes that teachers must be aware of cultural sensitivity through engaging in the critical and continual process of examining their personal biases, prejudices and perceptions that affect students' learning experiences.

Martines' (2005) study concerns teachers' ability to discuss their culturally diverse students in the context of the consultation process, as well as their perception of cultural issues and level of multicultural understanding. The study finds 19 major themes that have already been addressed in many articles regarding multicultural education. In addition, nine salient and minor themes are recognized and, although not arising with as much consistency, are noted as evidence of teachers' multicultural awareness. However, pertaining to teachers' multicultural teaching efficacy, awareness and knowledge are not enough to develop Multicultural Consultation Coding System (MCCS) level 3 competency skills.

Aydin and Tonbuluğlu (2014) examine curriculum and instruction doctoral students in order to find out their perception of and attitude towards multicultural education. A qualitative case study is used to collect the data through informal observations, interviews, field-notes, and document analysis. The study finds that the most emphasized values are democracy and justice—as well as tolerance, peace and respect—and that these are reinforced through multicultural education. Moreover, all participants define cultural richness as the necessary ability to consider and value individual differences. The study recommends making multicultural education a necessity so that equal rights and opportunities will be shared among all groups and people in society's structure.

2.4 Teachers' Preparation for Multicultural Education

School systems have traditionally had large numbers of teachers who are white, middle-class women. As of 1994, Hinchey indicates fewer than 12% of school administrators and fewer than 5% of teachers are from ethnic minority groups, while African-American teachers constitute only 10.3% in U.S. schools. Wallace (2001) points out 90% of preservice teachers are middle-class Caucasians. King (1991) finds that a significant number of preservice teachers display dysconscious racism. Dysconscious racism is "the uncritical habit of mind, such as attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs, which justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given" (King, 1991, p. 135). Thus, these teachers are not prepared in teaching culturally diverse

students effectively.

A large body of educational research argues that preservice teachers should learn more about multicultural education and different aspects of diversity in order to acquire the appropriate awareness, knowledge and skills that support their understanding and teaching strategies in the classrooms (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sleeter, 2005; Gorski, 2009; Krummel, 2013). Teachers' preparation programs help preservice teachers to implement the approaches of multiculturalism into a school curriculum as well as find a way to move their students toward a critical philosophical framework for a just and democratic society (Gorski, 2009). Sharma (2005) suggests teacher preparation programs incorporating a balance of multicultural theory and practices are more comprehensive.

Ladson-Billings (1994) states, "My own experiences with white teachers, both preservice and veteran, indicate that many are uncomfortable acknowledging any student differences, and particularly racial differences" (p. 31). Therefore, he argues that teacher education curriculum must develop both a theoretical and practical connection between the academic success of culturally diverse students and the relevance of culture itself. To achieve this, he recommends diversity education be integrated into every aspect of teacher training curriculum, and opportunities to apply and experience planned as part of preservice teacher training. Also, this study suggests that colleges and universities with teacher education programs should appropriately train education faculty in cultural diversity for the purpose of teaching students about cultural sensitivity.

Sleeter (2005) reviews 80 studies about the effects of preservice teaching strategies in multicultural educational practices. The results of this study indicate there are limited amounts of multicultural-related teacher preparation given in a "crisis" for schools with students of poverty and racial diversity because colleges with predominantly white students rarely offer a balanced menu of course offerings in multicultural education. This study finds that non-white preservice teachers were often "more committed to multicultural teaching, social justice, and providing children of color with academically challenging curriculum" (Sleeter, 2005, p. 95). However, well-designed teacher prep curriculum is needed for all races of preservice education students. Sleeter recommends preservice teachers become involved in their students' communities; some are even required to live in a neighborhood different than their own. These methods can allow teachers to better understand and connect with their students. Finally, this study recommends that multicultural teacher training should be a motivating factor in using classroom strategies, not offered as deficiency models. As such, it is crucial that the multicultural methods taught in these courses be implemented and practiced in new teachers' classrooms. The study also suggests partnerships between universities and schools might offer support for teachers in strengthening their knowledge regarding multicultural curricula.

Sharma (2005) investigates the perceptions and recommendations of new teachers concerning their studies to teach culturally diverse students and the training they received in their teacher education preparation programs. This study describes a selected group of elementary, middle, and high school teachers from The School District of Escambia County, Florida. Findings indicate that universities and districts are not preparing teachers with a comprehensive, multicultural perspective.

Gorski (2009) uses qualitative content analysis to examine 45 syllabi from multicultural education classes. This study analyzes five approaches to multicultural teacher education: 1) Teaching the "Other" 2) Teaching with Tolerance and Cultural Sensitivity, 3) Teaching with Multicultural Competence, 4) Teaching in Sociopolitical Context, and 5) Teaching as Resistance and Counter-Hegemonic Practice. Courses organized using the Teaching the "Other" approach focus on the culture, contributions, worldview, and values of a particular identity group and how the group can be assimilated into the educational system. Classes using a Teaching with Tolerance and Cultural Sensitivity approach seek to teach education students awareness of their own biases and prejudices through tolerance and sensitivity to diversity. Through the Teaching with Multicultural Competence approach, teachers are prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners through a planned framework of practical skills, pedagogical methods, and competencies. Courses implementing a Teaching in Sociopolitical Context approach engage students in critical discussion and analysis of the education system and federal educational policy through the lens of systemic oppression. Class instruction organized around Teaching as Resistance and Counter-Hegemonic Practice look similar in content and method to the previous approach with the added emphasis of social activism. The results indicated a concerning 15% of the syllabi were aligned along the Teaching the "Other" principles, and less than 1% of them were clearly on the other end of the continuum in the vein of preparing teachers to see themselves as the agents of educational reform. The remaining syllabi (57.8%) fell somewhere between the two extremes. This study recommends more research in the area of multicultural teacher education and that purposeful examination of methods, practices and faculty from the university level to accrediting agencies be the next, best steps forward.

Krummel (2013) investigates the models of multicultural education for preservice teacher training. The study examines preservice teachers' beliefs, strategies and attitudes toward teaching culturally different students during professional knowledge acquisition. This research indicates that preservice teachers are fearful of engaging in discussions about race. Therefore, Krummel recommends ongoing training, support, and feedback

for teachers of culturally different students and the services teachers provide for their students.

3. Discussion

The focus of this review is the investigation of preservice teachers' perceptions of multicultural education once they have completed professional training programs. Studying preservice teachers' perceptions about teaching culturally diverse students can help educational researchers recognize the effectiveness of such training programs. Ideally, such programs should prepare teachers to work more effectively with culturally diverse students and to better understand global society.

The research reviewed here suggests that preservice teachers do not have enough knowledge, experience, and awareness to teach different minority groups (Pohan, 1996; Fueyo & Bechtol, 1999; Martines, 2005). These findings encourage preservice teachers to participate in multicultural training programs that prepare them to create a more equal, more democratic and a more just educational system as well as develop their level of understanding and awareness in teaching culturally diverse students (Aydin & Tonbuloglu, 2014). Although some preservice teachers know more about teaching racial minority students and have an awareness of multiculturalism (for example the teachers in Barry and Lechner's (1995) study) they are undecided as to just how well prepared they are to teach students from cultural and religious backgrounds different from their own. However, this review indicates that teachers' education programs are not providing enough training for preservice teachers to teach effectively in multicultural classrooms. Therefore, the researchers recommend providing more credit courses in multicultural education, and the inclusion of multicultural topics within other courses in the curriculum. Such courses must educate preservice teachers about the need for multiculturalism, the theory and practice of multiculturalism, and pedagogical methods in the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sharma, 2005). University courses in multiculturalism have been designed to prepare teachers with personal awareness and pragmatic skills, but they have not provided them with the key principles of multicultural education, such as critical consciousness and a commitment to educational equity (Gorski, 2009). Some scholars suggest teachers live in their students' communities to become involved and to understand students' backgrounds and cultures (Sleeter, 2005). Krummel (2013) suggests rather than relying on one or two multicultural college classes, teachers should be provided with ongoing professional development to support their teaching practices in culturally diverse classrooms.

Three major implications have emerged from this review that help support teachers' perception in multicultural educating. The first implication is related to professional preparation for multicultural training teacher education programs. Universities and educational institutions need to provide teachers with practice in critical multicultural education in order to help them effectively incorporate cultural diversity into the curriculum and school environment.

The second implication relates to the content of courses in teacher education programs. Syllabi for teacher education courses on multicultural education and related topics must be restructured to allow teachers to practice authentic multicultural education. The curriculum for preservice teachers should include an understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the philosophical frameworks and specific multicultural models discussed above. Doing so can contribute to learning that is transformative, provoking a reconceptualization of multicultural education. In this way, educators can overcome the narrow understanding of race represented in liberal and conservative multiculturalism, and help teachers to see themselves as change agents within and outside school.

The third implication concerns the experience of instructors who conduct teacher education programs. These professors must be knowledgeable about the topic of multiculturalism and create a safe environment to help preservice teachers discuss their beliefs, enhance their awareness of multicultural education, and explore appropriate pedagogy for all students. Tutorial relations with individual minority students would allow new teachers to develop a clearer and more sensitive understanding of how culture shapes students' learning styles, and to use that knowledge to provide students more choices about how they will learn.

4. Conclusion

Multicultural education is a very important and necessary concept. The literature reviewed here identifies three forms of multicultural pedagogy: conservative, liberal, and critical. Conservatives see multicultural education as a means of integrating students into a broader society. Liberals seek to celebrate diversity, but do not challenge the underlying social order. Critical multiculturalists see education as a way of addressing social inequalities shaped by differences in race, ethnicity, and social class.

Teachers need to understand multiculturalism in order to provide equal education for all students. The literature reviewed here suggests that many teachers feel they need more training in multicultural education because of the diversity of their classrooms. However, they seem to be uncertain about the specific values of multicultural education and are not sure how to implement the principles of multicultural education effectively. Reviewing teachers' perceptions of their professional preparation to teach culturally diverse students would help

teacher education programs prepare student teachers to work more effectively with culturally diverse students. Those who create teacher-training programs should reflect upon ways to integrate diversity across program settings, provide coursework and training opportunities to help teachers to apply innovative strategies, and link multicultural theory to practice in their own teaching.

The results of this study raise some questions that need to be addressed in future research. Researchers should interview teachers about their teaching strategies, techniques, and learning environment before and after completing training programs. This data would help to establish the effects of such training. Educational researchers should also investigate schools and districts that have implemented strong multicultural curricula as well as quality multicultural professional teacher development. Such investigations would provide examples of how multicultural education is implemented in practice, both at the level of schools and individual teachers. It is important as well to understand how students and parents view the curriculum at schools.

Well-developed multicultural training is essential for preservice teachers' awareness, preparedness, and attitudes regarding multicultural education and the students they will effectively teach. Therefore, it is necessary to intentionally plan and support this process so that teachers are prepared both personally and professionally to work with students from cultural and racial backgrounds different from their own. Such training will provide teachers models to think about and discuss regarding cultural diversity. By having skills and knowledge in multicultural pedagogy, new teachers will be empowered to work towards creating structures and social arrangements in school environments that promote equality in school and out (Futrell et al., 2003; Gorski, 2009).

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