

Chapter 11

Managing Diversity in Schools: The Pedagogical Imperatives of Recognition and Respect for the Cultural Individuality of Learners

Ntasiobi Chikezie Nwankwo Igu

Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Nigeria

Francisca Ngozi Ogba

Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Nigeria

Emeka Nwinyinya

Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The multi-ethnic content of the 21st century population is made most manifest in the classroom settings of educational institutions as the composition of an average classroom is changing due to globalization and human mobility that have brought people of diverse culture together. The diversity content of the classrooms somewhat places enormous responsibilities on the school leaders and classroom teachers to evolve teaching practices and learning experiences that are culturally responsive to the needs of each individual student. This chapter contributes by analyzing the pedagogical principles of recognition and respect as imperative in managing the cultural individuality of learners in the classrooms.

INTRODUCTION

All over the world, much attention is being drawn to the diverse content of classrooms at all levels of education due to the incidence of globalization, migrations and population dynamics. This has greatly impacted human relationships hence the need for more effective educational practices in the classrooms. Guzman, (2014) posits that the increasing number of people moving from one place to another has created new places of living and works around the world. Prodding further, Billot, Goddard, and Craston, (2007)

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-3331-4.ch011

noted that these large-scale human migrations are a global phenomenon of this 21st century which could be optional (people seeking economic advantage) or forced (e.g. people escaping conflict or environmental hazards). Ogba and Igu, (2017) contribute that as a result of these migrations; contemporary societies are becoming more diverse and multi-ethnic most especially in urban settings. Eyeaga and Mauth, (2018) remark that globalization has almost removed national boundaries making labour movements easy and further forced organizations to deal with people of diverse cultural backgrounds. Nonetheless, as people's lives intersect, the boundary between them becomes more and more blurred (Pfeifle, 2009). A cursory peep into societies today, shows a global trend of hatred and injustice which are resulting into wars and terrors. Interestingly, these changing demographics are especially noticeable at the school level and are having a foremost impact on the works of educators (Billot et al., 2007; Muthukrishna and Schluter, 2011). Along the same line, Muthukrishna and Schluter, (2011) observed that throughout the world, more and more students from diverse backgrounds are entering twenty-first-century classrooms. The reality remains that the diversity content of classrooms somewhat places enormous responsibilities on the school leaders and classroom teachers to evolve teaching practices and learning experiences that are culturally responsive to the needs of students. This could be why Dimmock and Walker, (2005) suggested that leadership studies are needed that identify the particularity and diversity of cultural contexts in the classrooms and to respond to these diverse challenges through culturally responsive classroom practices.

This chapter contributes to knowledge in this regard by underpinning two important pedagogical principles- Recognition and Respect that have emerged as central contexts in classroom management practices. They are somewhat the most dominant and complicated concepts that define human relationships and are in fact, very crucial to achieving social justice for citizens (Fraser and Honneth, 2003; Thompson, 2006). Before this chapter goes further, it is important to give the conceptual definition of the terms- recognition and respect because they lie at the heart of this contemporary discourse. Recognition denotes a subject matter of normative status that deals with the capability of an individual to undertake responsibilities and exercise authority (Brandom, 2007). In the same connection, respect connotes dignity. Forst, (2013), states that respect deals with toleration of another's dissenting opinion even when there is disagreement.

To navigate freely in this discourse, this chapter contribution is specifically focused on Nigeria. The choice of Nigeria stemmed from the fact that she is a multi-cultural society with a landmass area of 923,768 square kilometers, comprises 36 states plus Abuja the federal capital territory, has over 500 ethnic groups that are housed in three major ethnic components of Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba; 350 living spoken languages and a growing population of about 2,000,000 people (Ogba and Igu, 2017). Nigeria is popularly known as a deeply divided country in which most issues are violently contested along the lines of ethnic and religious divisions even in classroom settings. For example, Omede, (2016) reported that students from ethnic minorities face discrimination in the classroom and this is a great challenge to students' development. Similarly, Ebenezer and Ebekue, (2012) bemoaned the overemphasis of unity in diversity which has remained a mirage as religious intolerance in Nigerian schools has resulted in the death of many students and the closedown of many schools in the North for many months. The areas in which diversity is mostly pronounced in Nigeria include but are not limited to culture, ethnicity, belief system, sexual preference and educational backgrounds. Issues in these areas of diversity have persistently constituted clogs in relationships and associations of people (Nnachi, Ude and Igu, 2009) hence, the urgency for multicultural education. The proponents of multi cultural education (e.g. Banks, 2008; Sleeter and Grant, 2003) maintain that at the societal level, it strives to reduce prejudice and discrimination against oppressed groups by working towards equal opportunity and social justice for all groups.

14 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/managing-diversity-in-schools/255537

Related Content

Online Technological Media in the Higher Education Classroom: An Exploratory Investigation of Varied Levels of Twitter Use

Eric Fife, C. Leigh Nelson and Theresa B. Clarke (2014). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design* (pp. 35-45).

www.irma-international.org/article/online-technological-media-in-the-higher-education-classroom/114995

Online Education: Influencing Teachers' Perception of Professionalism

Roofia Galeshi and Hamid Reza Taimoory (2019). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design* (pp. 1-17).

www.irma-international.org/article/online-education/236165

Repositories

Cathleen S. Alfano and Susan L. Henderson (2007). *Learning Objects for Instruction: Design and Evaluation* (pp. 16-28).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/repositories/25529

Student Teachers' Lived Experiences of an ODeL Flipped Instructional Design

Micheal M. van Wyk (2020). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design* (pp. 14-31).

www.irma-international.org/article/student-teachers-lived-experiences-of-an-odel-flipped-instructional-design/262185

Meeting the Needs of All Students: Online Undergraduate Student Use of Support Services

Jessica C. Decker and Valerie Beltran (2022). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design* (pp. 1-11).

www.irma-international.org/article/meeting-needs-all-students/295954