Chapter 2
Managing Bias in Teacher Preparation in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Studies on teacher preparation for managing bias has established and created a domain within the global educational research enterprise. What is implicit is how researches on managing bias may be used to improve teacher development. Research on managing bias in teacher preparation has recognized a place for itself within the international educational research initiative. What is not so clear is how studies of teacher thinking may be used in improving the quality of teacher development programmes. 'The notion of managing bias implies employing strategies that foster inclusivity and multicultural education. This chapter focuses on five areas of the importance on managing bias in teacher preparation. I endeavour to explore the following: the concept bias, bias in teacher preparation, creating an anti-bias learning environment, preparing teachers for multicultural classes, and citizenship education and anti-bias in teacher preparation.

INTRODUCTION

Studies on teacher preparation for managing bias has established and created a domain within the global educational research enterprise. What is implicit is how researches on managing bias may be used to improve teacher development. Research on managing bias in teacher preparation has recognized a place for itself within the international educational research initiative. What is not so clear is how studies of teacher thinking may be used in improving the quality of teacher development programmes. 'The notion of managing bias implies employing strategies that foster inclusivity and multicultural education. This chapter focuses on five areas of the importance on managing bias in teacher preparation. I endeavour to explore the following:

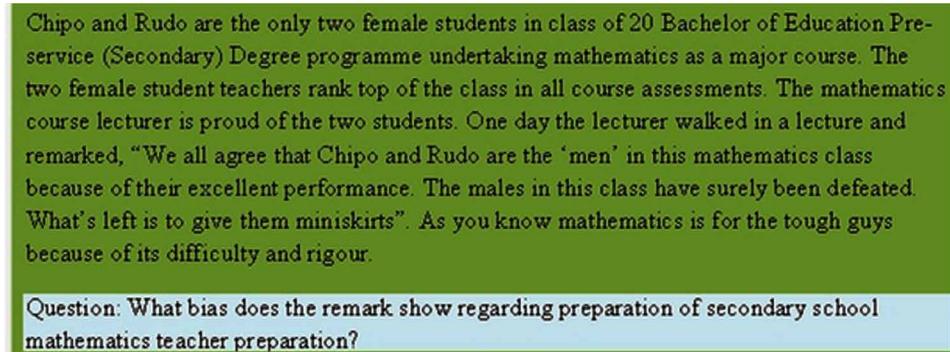- The concept bias
- Bias in teacher preparation

- Creating an anti-bias learning environment
- Preparing teachers for multicultural classes
- Citizenship education and anti-bias in teacher preparation

Learning Outcomes

- Define the general term bias
- Discuss anti-bias teacher preparation
- Examine creation of anti-bias learning environment
- Analyse issues of teacher preparation for multicultural classes
- Analyse citizen education and anti-bias in teacher preparation
- Teaching for social justice

Figure 1. Case study

Chipo and Rudo are the only two female students in class of 20 Bachelor of Education Pre-service (Secondary) Degree programme undertaking mathematics as a major course. The two female student teachers rank top of the class in all course assessments. The mathematics course lecturer is proud of the two students. One day the lecturer walked in a lecture and remarked, "We all agree that Chipo and Rudo are the 'men' in this mathematics class because of their excellent performance. The males in this class have surely been defeated. What's left is to give them miniskirts". As you know mathematics is for the tough guys because of its difficulty and rigour.

Question: What bias does the remark show regarding preparation of secondary school mathematics teacher preparation?

The Concept Bias in Teacher Preparation

In layman's language 'bias' refers to logical error: deviation from a true score, the latter referring to the valid measurement of some phenomenon or to accurate estimation of a population parameter (Levinson, 2009). In this chapter, which deals with teacher preparation, bias means perpetrating oppression cycles and marginalization which may be based on race, gender, culture or ethnicity (see figure 1) (Derman-Sparks, 2009). It depends on other concepts, such as 'truth' and 'objectivity', whose justification and role have been questioned. The aim of teacher education is to capacitate student teachers at all stages in this 21st century to be effective in the global village. Anti-bias in teacher development or preparation involves setting forth values-based principles and methodology which respect and embrace differences as well as act against unfairness (Derman-Sparks, 2009). It is important that anti-bias teacher preparation should be undertaken for teachers to operate efficiently in classrooms where there is increased diversity in race, culture, ethnicity and special needs among learners (Lin, lake and Rice, 2008). The diverse needs in contemporary classrooms require teachers who are responsive to the different needs of all learners. Teacher development should equip a student teacher with skills that enable one to implement curriculum at any level that is culturally responsive and inclusive to assist all learners meeting their needs (Lin et Al, 2008).

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