



# Multicultural Education in Commerce

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## 1. Introduction

The instructional philosophy of the New Educational Environment assumes that students should be prepared to function in today's complex society. The need to fit education within the emerging complex cultures of the 21st century has brought with it a more mature understanding of the challenge to integrate different cultures.

In forming new Information Age economy, knowledge and skills become the key factor of competition. Education should respond to global challenges of forming information society in providing necessary background for successful people living in this new knowledge based formation.

## 2. Need and Significance

To assimilate the different culture and inculcation of values of various cultures we developed value education, which result in sharp differences among various teachers and intellectuals. Indian society is evidently multicultural. Multiculturalism as a model of democratic policy response to cultural and ethnic diversity is of interest to UNESCO, in so far as it corresponds to the ideal of a culture of peace, based on respect of diversity as well as universally shared values and norms. In plural and multicultural societies like India, Canada, USA, etc., multicultural education can be enhanced. Preparing teachers for multicultural societies and for culturally responsive teaching in societies like India is a demand of the times as the societies are becoming more and more multicultural. Multicultural education in commerce education is assuming a prime importance as a tool to promote and perpetuate multiculturalism.

## 3. Multicultural Education

Multicultural education is designed to restructure commerce educational institutions so that all students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to function effectively in a culturally and ethnically diverse nation and world. It is designed to empower all students to become knowledgeable, caring and active citizens in a deeply troubled, polarized nation and world. Multi-culture education views citizen action to improve society as an integral part of education in a democracy, it links knowledge, values, empowerment and action. Multi-culture education is also post modern in its assumption about knowledge construction, it challenges positivist assumption about the relationship between human values, knowledge and action.

Multi-culture theorists maintain that knowledge is positional that it relates to the knower's values and experiences, and that knowledge implies action. In order to have valid knowledge information about the social conditions and experiences of the knower is essential.

Multicultural education context has made significant inroads into both school and college curricula in America within the last two decades. A significant percentage of teachers took a required commerce education course in multicultural education when they were in college. The multicultural education standard adopted by National Council for Accreditation of Commerce Education in 1977, which became effective in 1979, was a major factor that stimulated the

growth of multicultural education in commerce education programmes.

Text books always reflect the myths, hopes, and dreams of people. Text books dealing with multicultural education are prepared. Text books in other required courses also incorporated concepts in multicultural education. California university, Minnesota University, Stanford university etc. revised their core curriculum to include ethnic content.

The dimensions of multicultural education are;

1. content integration
2. the knowledge construction process
3. prejudice reduction
4. an equity pedagogy
5. an empowering institutional culture and social structure

Content integration deals with the extent to which teachers use examples, data and information from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate the key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area and discipline. The knowledge construction process encompasses the procedures by which social, behavioral and natural scientists create knowledge in their disciplines. The prejudice reduction dimension of multicultural education focuses on the characteristics of student's racial attitudes and on strategies that can be used to help students develop more positive racial and ethnic attitudes. An equity pedagogy exists when commerce teachers use techniques and teaching methods that facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial and ethnic groups and from all social classes. An empowering school and social structure will require the restructuring of the culture and organization of the school so that students from diverse racial, ethnic and social class groups will experience educational equality and a sense of empowerment.

People in a multicultural institution should acquire different types of knowledge.

1. Personal / cultural
2. Popular
3. Mainstream academic
4. Transformative, and
5. Institutional

Personal or cultural knowledge consists of the concepts, explanations, and interpretation that students derive from personal experiences in their homes, families, and community cultures. The popular knowledge that is institutionalized by the mass media and other forces that shape the popular culture has a strong influence on the values, perceptions and behavior of children and young people. The concepts, theories and explanations that constitute traditional knowledge in history and social and behavioral sciences constitute main stream knowledge. Transformative academic knowledge challenges the facts, concepts, paradigms, themes and explanations routinely accepted in mainstream academic knowledge. Equity pedagogy exists when teachers use techniques and teaching methods that facilitate the academic achievement of students from different groups and classes. According to Banks (1974) multicultural education sustains and promotes social cohesion while allowing the freedom of cultural expression .He discusses three major groups of approaches.

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

According to Banks Curriculum approaches conceptualizes multicultural education as a process that involves addition or changes in curriculum .It incorporates the knowledge of understanding about cultural differences. Achievement approaches is the movement towards achieving equality of educational opportunity. Inter- group education approach helps to develop competence in multiple ways to perceiving, evaluating and believing multicultural education.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The achievements of multicultural education are noteworthy. Most multiculturalists agree that the major goal of multicultural education is to restructure educational institutions so that all students will acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to function in an ethnically and racially diverse nation and world. Evidence indicates that global issues and problems are growing in magnitude and will neither go away nor resolve themselves. They require action. Multicultural education, if applied and accepted in commerce teacher education will help for global education, which is a lifelong process the metaphor of a spider's web applies remarkably well to today's global educational problems and challenges. Touch that web anywhere, even lightly, and it vibrates everywhere. As Chicago University Psychologist Mihaly stated, it is imperative to begin thinking about a truly integrative, global education that takes seriously the actual interconnections of causes and effects.

#### **References**

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