



Multicultural Education Integrating the Community and Academia

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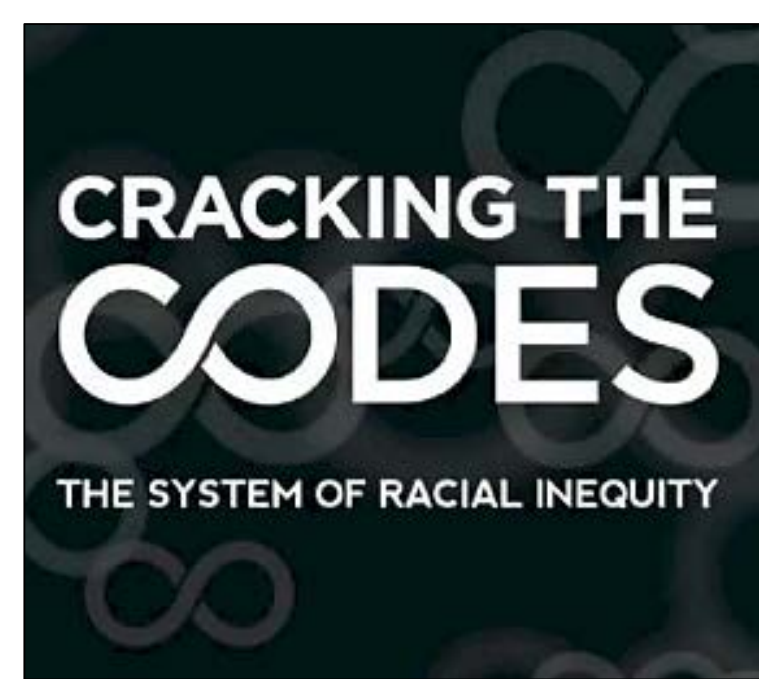


Diverse Students and Multiculturalism

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the total undergraduate enrollment for all racial-ethnic groups has increased. As a consequence, the student body is diversifying progressively while the faculty composition remains homogenous. Thus, it is difficult for faculty to fairly represent the variegated nature of American culture.⁵ The cultural difference paradigm between the number of students with diverse backgrounds and the number of diverse faculty available to meet the needs of these students, presents concern that without appropriate pedagogical strategies to address the diversity students bring to classrooms produces discord about who to teach, what to teach, and how to

teach. College administrators need to proclaim an allegiance to teaching multiculturalism. Courses in diversity and multi-culturalism should be mandatory, rather than an elective.² Multicultural education promotes reduction of ideological racism and ethnic discrimination.⁵ Multicultural ideas implanted at the college level would lead to a new generation that could create societal changes restructuring society by embracing diversity rather than scrutinizing it.⁵ Multicultural education engrains ideas of tolerance, greater acceptance of cultural pluralism, and equal treatment of individuals.³ Multicultural education movements have embraced social and political inclusion and acceptance of diverse racial and ethnic groups.

Cooperative Learning



Cooperative learning is an active pedagogical strategy that involves students working interactively in small teams, each with different levels of ability, to accomplish a common learning task under conditions that satisfy five criteria: (1) positive interdependence, (2) individual accountability, (3) face-to-face promotive interaction, (4) appropriate use of interpersonal skills, and (5) regular self-assessment of team functioning and processing.⁶

CRACKING THE CODES: THE SYSTEM OF RACIAL INEQUITY

The workshop included a viewing of Shakti Butler's, "Cracking the Codes: The System of Racial Inequity." The documentary included three video segments followed by group workshops and a panel discussion. The 75-minute documentary was developed in Oakland, California, featuring 23 leaders in the equity movement for a deeper understanding of systemic inequity expressed in policies, services, and other forms of action. The three segments of the documentary include (1) Social Determinants: History, Identity & Culture,

(2) Internal: Bias, Privilege & Internalized Racism, and (3) External Relationships: Interpersonal, Institutional & Structural. The film addresses structural drivers of social and economic inequities. It also creates a context to engage in community dialogue that is meant to help deepen the national conversation on race. The film addresses racial and socio-economic barriers, and is designed to aid in understanding the system of racialization.

Communicating about Diverse Groups

Communication is quintessential in bridging or dividing people. Respecting individuals, avoiding stereotypes and prejudices, and working with interpreters are key communication skills for diverse group communication.⁷ Group guidance based on conflict resolution and communication has a positive impact on learners' confrontation, emotional expression, private and public behavior, approach and avoidance, and self-disclosure behaviors.¹ People actively strive to ensure that their experiences in groups confirm their self-views.¹⁰

However, certain types of diversity messages may cause under-represented group members to experience vulnerabilities or to expect fewer opportunities, which can curtail their abilities to thrive in academic or workplace contexts.¹² Also, outgroup members may evoke more disliking, distrust, and competition than in group members.¹⁰ Another barrier is resistance within institutional hierarchies to develop diversity training.⁷ Groups can be challenged to move beyond stereotypical expectations, become more aware, and to use the information given.⁴

Pre-test Survey

- Framed pre-existing ideas about knowledge and attitudes towards multiculturalism, social issues, and diverse groups
- Elicited demographic info such as gender, race, country of origin, age, and status of participants
- Included 17 open-ended questions
- Administered first to identify prior knowledge about existing social differences and examine changes in attitudes towards diverse groups following workshop participation

Post-test Survey

- Evaluated knowledge about existing social differences, changes in attitudes towards diverse groups, and responses to the film
- Included 17 open-ended questions
- Administered at the end
- Pre-test questions were altered to explore effectiveness
- Explored design, implementation, effectiveness, usefulness, and perceptions
- Suggestions for improvements and ideas for future workshops were solicited

Survey Analysis

COMPONENT CORRELATION MATRIX									FACTORS USING PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS	
COMPONENT FACTORS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
1	1.000	-.054	.110	-.054	-.050	.289	-.294	-.069	1	Enjoyed learning new info and improved knowledge/understanding
2	-.054	1.000	.102	-.231	-.219	.112	-.038	.164	2	Performed well in diverse setting
3	.110	.102	1.000	-.135	-.081	.085	-.208	.257	3	Group learning is helpful and beneficial
4	-.054	-.231	-.135	1.000	.192	.017	.114	.014	4	Learning with students/small groups/teams is not a good use of time
5	-.050	-.219	-.081	.192	1.000	-.057	.066	-.188	5	Not able to resolve conflict or communicate well with individuals or groups
6	.289	.112	.085	.017	-.057	1.000	-.070	.005	6	Documentary was a valuable learning experience and a good use of time
7	-.294	-.038	-.208	.114	.066	-.070	1.000	-.154	7	Did not perform well in the workshop during panels
8	-.069	.164	.257	.014	-.188	.005	-.154	1.000	8	Familiar with learning and communicating about diverse groups

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization

Findings

Principal component analysis was used to compress the size of the data, simplify the description, and to observe the variables. Of **34** variables explored using pre and post survey questions, **8 factors or inter-correlated variables** described reported participant experiences during the workshop. The factors were both positive and negative.

Positive: The factor with the highest significance was participants' ability to enjoy, learn new information, and improve their knowledge and understanding. Most also believed they performed well during the workshop.

Discussion

Of the 125 attendees, 96 (28 men and 68 women) completed the pre and post surveys. Status included 21 faculty, 3 staff, 50 students, and 22 community members. Ethnic background was diverse: 57 were White, 30 African-American or Black, 1 Asian, 5 identified as "other", and 3 participants did not respond. Age categories varied: 47 were between 18 and 24 years of age, 14 were between 25 and 40, 15 were 40 to 50 years old, and 17 were 50+.

45 of the participants had attended a multicultural or diversity workshop in the past. Still, 93.7% of the population reported in the pre-survey believes that the workshop could increase their ability to understand society. 85% "strongly agreed" that the workshop was a valuable experience. Many also agreed

Participants also reported that group learning was helpful and beneficial.

Negative: Breaking into small groups during the workshop was not as favorable. Some claimed that learning with students or by status was not a valuable use of time. In addition, a smaller population reported an inability to resolve conflict. Some also questioned their familiarity and ability to communicate well in the group setting. There were also reported concerns among panelists about their performance during the panel discussion.

that learning using the documentary was a good use of their time. Only one participant reported no benefit.

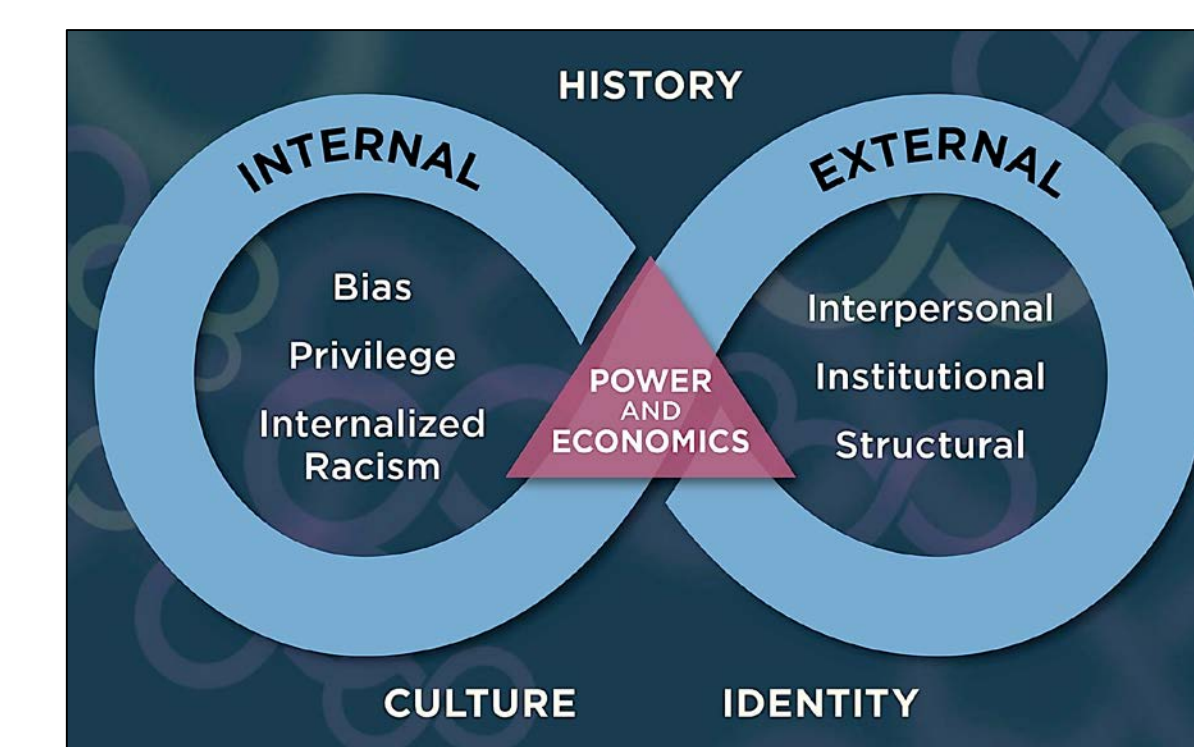
The workshop impacted perspectives of 39% of participants. For example, most attitudes about familiarity with communicating in diverse groups were consistent. However, 25% reported increases in their familiarity working with diverse groups. Conversely, 11.4% felt less familiar with multicultural issues. Thus, the workshop incorporated information about multicultural issues that altered participants' original perceptions of familiarity.

The workshop proved to be valuable among the pilot group. The activities enhanced participants' awareness and willingness to learn about diverse group.

Project Overview

Multicultural education is the process by which the structure of educational institutions is adjusted to provide equitable accommodations for male and female students, exceptional students, and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic, language, and cultural groups.⁸ Multicultural education incorporates the histories, texts, values, beliefs, and perspectives of cultural diverse individuals with aims of re-teaching culture, community, and racial

relations. Multicultural education is a philosophical concept built upon ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equity, and human dignity. Initiatives include programs and practices related to educational equity, women, ethnic groups, language minorities, low-income groups, and people with disabilities. Supporters trigger an awareness of one's own assumptions, prejudices and stereotypes to inspire learning, explore cultural languages, and develop behavioral skills.



1. Exploring systemic inequity
2. Developing skills in communication and healing
3. Teaching the fundamentals of democratic movement building

Discussion 1 Panelists

Community member, Lead Pastor
Community member, Coordinator of Career Services
Community member, President of Nonprofit
Faculty, Associate Professor of Biology
Faculty, Vice President for Student Affairs

Discussion 2 Panelists

Community member, Domestic Violence Coordinator
Faculty, Graduate Assistant
Community member, Director of Marketing
Community member, Pastor

Discussion 3 Panelists

Community member, Social Action Chair
Undergraduate Student
Community member, Journalist
Community member, University Alumni
Community member, State Employee

Team Learning

- Construct a negotiation process that is shared by all participants⁴
- Understanding difference allows a team to be managed synergistically⁴
- Group cohesiveness garners mutual regard and commitment to its activities.
- Problem solving promotes cooperation, and fosters competence⁹
- Teams reflect on their performance, examining consequences, and identifying strengths/weaknesses¹¹
- Teams implement changes and prepare for future challenges

THREE SOCIOLOGICAL WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

The multicultural workshop activities were designed to assess knowledge about issues of diversity and multiculturalism among students, faculty, staff, and members of a local community. The workshop invited personal stories as a political retreat and call for social change. The goal of the workshop was to inspire community members and university affiliates to engage in social change. The video was presented to deepen their understanding of systems of inequality and motives for action. The workshop activities included three activities. The activities included a triangle of sociological theories to explore various types of racial inequity. The first activity applies the symbolic interactionist perspective to better understand how inequitable treatment stems

identity, and culture. The second activity examined myths by discussing tall tales or false truths that impact how individuals perceive one another. Myths about minority groups were examined to explore social conflict. The third activity evaluated external relationships and hierarchies of power. The group explored three power dynamics impacting multicultural relationships: (1) interpersonal relationships impact the power of individuals, acceptance, and rejection; (2) institutional relationships involve the power of rules that can affect social mobility among individuals and entire groups; and (3) structural relationships involve perceived power of certain groups and societal conditions of the past.

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