

## MULTICULTURALISM: AN EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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### **Abstract:**

*Multicultural education is an educational philosophy that focuses on celebrating cultural differences while also recognising the importance of challenging all forms of discrimination based on race, gender, age, religion ability or sexual orientation. Instructionally it may entail the use of texts, material, references and historical example that are understandable to students from different cultural backgrounds or that reflect their particular cultural experience-such as teaching students about historical figure who were female, disabled. It tries to create equal educational opportunities for all students by changing the total school environment so that it will reflect the diverse cultures and groups within a society and within the nation's classrooms. Social values cannot be promoted without a systematic process of education in this regard, promotion of social values is the primary cultural aim of education. Multicultural benefits include innovation and creativity, business development and economic growth, community flair etc. Multicultural education needs to enable students to succeed economically in a multicultural world by teaching them to be comfortable in a diverse workforce and skilful at integrating into a global economy. This research paper focuses on the educational development with the help of multiculturalism and how it help to acquire the knowledge and commitments needed to make reflective decision and to take personal, social and civic action to promote democracy and democratic living.*

**Keywords:** Culture, Education, Equality, Identity and Social Justice

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### **Introduction:**

Multicultural education is a set of educational strategies developed to provide students with knowledge about the histories, cultures, and contributions of diverse groups. It draws on insights from multiple fields, including ethnic studies and women studies, and reinterprets content from related academic disciplines. Multicultural education is an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process. As an idea, multicultural education seeks to create equal educational opportunities for all students, including those from different racial, ethnic, and social-class groups. Multicultural education tries to create equal educational opportunities for all students by changing the total school environment so that it will reflect the diverse cultures and groups within a society and within the nation's classrooms. Multicultural education is a process because its goals are ideals that teachers and administrators should constantly strive to achieve. The objective of multicultural education is to preserve of minority culture by fostering student's development of autonomy and introducing them to multiple cultures. This exposure assists students in thinking more critically as well as encourage them to have a more open mind-set. Political theorists want to use multicultural education to motivate social action. In this approach students are equipped with knowledge, values and skills necessary to advocate



and participate in social change. Teacher then serve as change agents, promoting relevant democratic values and empowering students to act. Other objective goals of multiculturalism are promote civic good, correct historical records, increase student self-esteem, diversify student's exposure, preserve minority group culture, foster student autonomy, promote social justice and enable students to succeed economically.

Need of multiculturalism in the field of education is very important because it identify the culture, create cultural integration, develop responsible citizen, create broad positive social approach, cultivate global spirit, create unity through diversity, develop cultural exchange and integrate the culture. So when the education provide in the school curriculum one should develop these aspect in their mind and serve for the nation by taking the education and develop himself on the horizon of sky. Multiculturalism is the process of giving equal justice to all religions, people of different cultures without any distinctions on the basis of race or culture. The knowledge construction process describes how teachers help students to understand, investigate, and determine how the biases, frames of reference, and perspectives within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it. Students also learn how to build knowledge themselves in this dimension. Curriculum flexibility is very vital for multicultural education. It should reflect the cultural needs and problems, develop sensitivity, community oriented and students centred. Cooperative learning activities also help all students, including middle-class White students, to develop more positive racial attitudes. However, to attain these positive outcomes, cooperative learning activities must have several important characteristics (Allport, 1954). The students from different racial and ethnic groups must feel that they have equal status in intergroup interactions, teachers and administrators must value and support cross-racial interactions, and students from different racial groups must work together in teams to pursue common goals. An empowering school culture and social structure is created when the culture and organization of the school are transformed in ways that enable students from diverse racial, ethnic, and gender groups to experience equality and equal status. The implementation of this dimension requires that the total environment of the school be reformed, including the attitudes, beliefs, and action of teachers and administrators, the curriculum and course of study, assessment and testing procedures, and the styles and strategies used by teachers.

Teachers use several different approaches to integrate content about racial, ethnic, and cultural groups into the curriculum. One of the most popular is the Contributions Approach. When this approach is used, teachers insert isolated facts about ethnic and cultural group heroes and heroines into the curriculum without changing the structure of their lesson plans and units. Teachers should help students to understand that while they live in a diverse nation, all citizens of a nation-state share many cultural traditions, values, and political ideals that cement the nation. Multicultural education seeks to actualize the idea of *e pluribus unum*, i.e. to create a society that recognizes and respects the cultures of its diverse peoples united within a framework of democratic values that are shared by all. An important goal of multicultural education is to help students acquire the knowledge and commitments needed to make reflective decisions and to take personal, social, and civic action to promote democracy and democratic living. Opportunities for action help students to develop a sense of personal and civic efficacy, faith in their ability to make changes in the institutions in which they live, and situations to apply the knowledge they have learned (Banks, with Clegg, 1990).



Action activities and projects should be tuned to the cognitive and moral developmental levels of students. Practicality and feasibility should also be important considerations. Students in the primary grades can take action by making a commitment to stop laughing at ethnic jokes that sting; students in the early and middle grades can act by reading books about other racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. Upper-elementary grade students can make friends with students who are members of other racial and ethnic groups and participate in cross-racial activities and projects with students who attend a different school in the city. Upper-grade students can also participate in projects that provide help and comfort to people in the community with special needs. They can also participate in local political activities such as school bond elections and elections on local initiatives. Lewis has written a helpful guide about ways to plan and initiate social action activities and projects for students (1991).

Multicultural affairs offices and centres were established to reconcile the inconsistencies in students' experiences by creating a space on campus where students who were marginalized because of their culture could feel affirmed and connected to the institution. It consider an equal opportunity for learning beyond the simple trappings of race and gender. It includes students from varying social classes, ethnic group, sexual identities and additional cultural characteristics. Multicultural education is introduced at a young age to allow students to build a global perspective. Critical literacy practices enable students to build an honest relationship with the world recognizing multiple perspectives and ideologies. Teachers can use critical literacy practice to pose questions that will make students analyse, question and reflect upon what they are reading. Critical literacy can be useful by enabling teachers to move beyond mere awareness of, respect for and general recognition of the fact that different groups have different values or express similar values in different ways.

When working and learning with people from variety of background and culture present in the classroom, student gain a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. It also teaches students how to use their own strengths and points of view to contribute in a diverse working environment. Multicultural education is an educational philosophy that focuses on celebrating cultural differences while also recognising the importance of challenging all forms of discrimination based on race, gender, age, religion ability or sexual orientation. Instructionally it may entail the use of texts, material, references and historical example that are understandable to students from different cultural backgrounds or that reflect their particular cultural experience-such as teaching students about historical figure who were female, disabled. Multicultural benefits include innovation and creativity, business development and economic growth, community flair etc. Nowadays as an outcome of economics internationalization, many people from various countries and ethnic backgrounds live in the same city, either permanently or temporarily with residents. It helps in reducing the ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural prejudice and bias stereotyping. India is enriched by cultural diversity in terms of language, ethnicity and religion among members of society. The diversity of Indian : society is both an opportunity as well as challenge. Although societies have long been multicultural, the use of multiculturalism as a term in social and political discourse is relatively recent. Three kind of multiculturalism can be identified as coexisting in the same society: ethnic, linguistic and national multiculturalism. Education plays a significant role in the promotion of civilization heritage. Social values cannot be promoted without a systematic process of education in this regard, promotion of social values is the primary cultural aim of



education.

Multiculturalism typically develops according to one of two theories: the “melting pot” theory of the “salad bowl” theory. The multicultural education paradigm includes the cultural preservation paradigm, social justice paradigm, equality paradigm, unity in diversity paradigm and social interaction paradigm. All students have different learning styles so incorporating multicultural education technique into the classroom may allow all students to be more successful. Multicultural education needs to enable students to succeed economically in a multicultural world by teaching them to be comfortable in a diverse workforce and skilful at integrating into a global economy. Teachers should align the curriculum with the groups being taught, rather about them. Every child can learn so it is the teacher’s responsibility to not track them but rather to personalize the curriculum to reach every student. Teacher need to assume that students are capable of learning complex material and performing at a high level of skill. Each students has a personal, unique learning style that teachers discover and build on when teaching.

There are so many challenges to apply multiculturalism in the society. Nowadays in the present situation we can see there are threat to the democracy and society but to overcome on it we should always think positively and honestly toward the democracy and try to maintain the social equality among the people. Multiculturalism provide the solution to maintain equality and justice in the society which is the core part of it. Education is one way to understand multiculturalism and its core ideas. Education broaden the mind of human being and sharpen the decision of him which help him to spread the harmony in the society.

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