

MULTI-CULTURAL CLASSROOM : PROS AND CONS.

Mrs. Sarika M. Patel

SSR College of Education Sayli, Silvassa. U.T of DNH. Pin : 396230 India.

Abstract

Multi-cultural classroom describes the existence, acceptance, tolerance and promotion of multiple cultural traditions in a classroom. It is usually considered in terms of culture associated with an aboriginal ethnic group and foreigner ethnic groups. It is generally found when a jurisdiction is created or expanded by amalgamating areas with two or more different cultures. It may be beneficial for students to develop social and ethical values. It can be seen as giving more exposure to students. On the other hand it may create negative impact such as fear of influence, risk of social conflicts. Hence, the present study aimed to study pros and cons of multi-cultural classroom.

Introduction

In the year of 2009 UNICEF launched a study on multiculturalism and inter-ethnic relations in education in the country. The report shows that despite of generally solid curriculum foundation for the promotion of respect, tolerance and acceptance through the basic education system, ethnically based separation remains as an issue in the education system.

Multiculturalism is a concept based upon the national democratic values. It is about different cultural racial groups in a society have equal rights and opportunities, and none is ignored or regarded as unimportant. People from different culture have different views, belief, art, morals, languages, educational backgrounds, customs, values and religions etc... According to the Indian constitution all people have equal rights, privileges and duties to irrespective of gender, caste, community, language, society and religion. India is the best example of multicultural society where people speak 122 major languages and 1599 other languages. Unity in diversity is the beauty of India.

Multiculturalism is not a concept, it is an important term and approach for teachers to integrate into their daily classroom interaction. It is stated that "there is no worldwide structure of multiculturalism development that is faultless for attaining all objectives of all students". (Chamberlin, 2005. p. 26). Discovering a method to shape a multicultural basis for sequences across the disciplines may be a better goal for faculty of higher education organizations. Multiculturalism is an important phenomenon that cannot be overlooked in the present era of globalization, modernization and industrialization.

There are various factors of multiculturalism which play a vital role for psychological development of students in classroom. Multiculturalism that promotes distinctiveness of multiple culture is often contrasted to other settlement policies such as social integration, cultural assimilation and racial segregation. Multiculturalism may be proven as a major problem during classroom activities due unawareness or ignorance. The possibility of a social conflict occurs due to differences in religious beliefs and practices, ethnic rituals or certain ways of life that may cause a rift between two or more

groups. The success of education depends on effective classroom interactions. And diversity of culture in classroom is an important factor for classroom interactions. It has its own advantages and disadvantages as well. Hence the investigator attempted to study on 'Multi-Cultural Classroom: Pros and Cons'.

Need of the study

Effective teaching in any subject depends largely upon the classroom interactions. There is a growing need to emphasise on the concept of multiculturalism in the age of globalisation. There are various problems faced by migrated students such as language, communication, habits, and life styles. If the peers don't accept and respect various cultures in class it is difficult for cooperative and collaborative learning. Considering the psychological needs of the students various strategies of teaching are required for effective teaching. Teaching strategies should be planned by keeping the concept of multiculturalism in mind.

Statement of the problem

The present study was entitled as,
Multi-Cultural Classroom: Pros and Cons.

Objectives of the study

The investigator formulated following objectives for the present study.

1. To know the advantages of multi-cultural classroom.
2. To know the problems in multi-cultural classroom.
3. To find out suggestive measures for multi-cultural classroom.

Research design

Method

The investigator applied descriptive survey method to carry out the present study.

Population and sampling

The study was delimited to the higher education institutions of U.T. of Dadra and Nagar Haveli. Hence all the students of total nine colleges become the population for the present study. The investigator used the purposive sampling technique to select the sample. The sample of present study consisted of 60 students from four colleges of U.T. of Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

Tool

For the collection of data rating scale and questionnaire were used as tools of the study.

Rating scale: A five point rating scale for college students was developed by the investigator. It was containing 20 twenty statements.

Questionnaire: The investigator developed a questionnaire which comprises of five open ended questions for college students.

For the data analysis percentage and chi-square were calculated by the investigator. For the questionnaire qualitative analysis was done by the researcher.

Statistical analysis of the data

Table: 1

| Sr No | Statement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Chi-square value |
|-------|--|----------------|-------------|-------------|----------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1 | I like the environment of my class. | 16 26.6% | 38 63.3% | 4 6.6% | 1 1.6% | 11 18.3% | 83.17 |
| 2 | I mix with other community people easily. | 30 50% | 25 41.6% | 3 5% | 1 1.6% | 1 1.6% | 68.00 |
| 3 | I feel my religion a bar in my path to mix with others. | 5 8.3% | 8 13.3% | 6 10% | 16 26.6% | 25 41.6% | 23.83 |
| 4 | I have anti-social disturbance in my class. | 1 1.6% | 6 10% | 4 6.6% | 34 56.6% | 15 25% | 59.50 |
| 5 | Peers give respect to all religions. | 17 28.3% | 34 56.6% | 3 5% | 3 5% | 3 5% | 62.67 |
| 6 | There is no religious groups in my classroom. | 13 21.6% | 27 45% | 3 5% | 11 18.3% | 6 10% | 28.67 |
| 7 | I feel uncomfortable in multi-lingual classroom. | 1 1.6% | 6 10% | 6 10% | 38 63.3% | 9 15% | 73.17 |
| 8 | It is difficult to clear doubts due to language problem. | 2 3.3% | 11 18.3% | 8 13.3% | 24 40% | 15 25% | 22.50 |
| 9 | Medium of instruction plays vital role in educational practices. | 20 33.3% | 23 38.3% | 7 11.6% | 7 11.6% | 3 5% | 26.33 |
| 10 | I find it difficult to understand various concepts while teaching- learning process due to language problem. | 2 3.3% | 12 20% | 2 3.3% | 31 51.6% | 13 21.6% | 46.83 |
| 11 | Teachers' role is very important in multi-cultural classroom. | 26 43.3% | 28 46.6% | 4 6.6% | 1 1.6% | 1 1.6% | 63.17 |
| 12 | With effective teaching teacher can overcome the difficulties in multi-cultural classroom. | 30 50% | 20 33.3% | 3 5% | 5 8.3% | 2 3.3% | 51.50 |
| 13 | Use of ICT can reduce the difficulties to understand the concepts in multi-cultural classroom. | 17 28.3% | 27 45% | 10 16.6% | 5 8.3% | 1 1.6% | 35.33 |

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|----|--|--------------|-------------|-----------|----------|-------------|-------|
| 14 | Teaching aids contribute to lessen the problem of language in multi-cultural classroom. | 11 18.3% | 38 63.3% | 8 13.3% | 2 3.3% | 1 1.6% | 76.17 |
| 15 | Cooperative and collaborative learning practice is not suitable in multi-cultural classroom. | 3 5% | 6 10% | 8 13.3% | 29 48.3% | 14 23.3% | 35.50 |
| 16 | Multi-cultural classroom negatively effect on academic performance. | 1 1.6% | 4 6.6% | 5 8.3% | 30 50% | 20 33.3% | 51.83 |
| 17 | Multi-cultural classroom gives the feeling of unity in diversity. | 29 48.3% | 24 40% | 3 5% | 2 3.3% | 2 3.3% | 59.50 |
| 18 | Multi-cultural classroom helps for the all-round development of students. | 27 45% | 29 48.3% | 2 3.3% | 1 1.6% | 1 1.6% | 71.33 |
| 19 | Multi-cultural classroom inculcate the values of cooperation. | 25 41.6% | 27 45% | 3 5% | 4 6.6% | 1 1.6% | 55.00 |
| 20 | Multi-cultural classroom inculcate the values of fraternity. | 22 36.6 % | 32 53.3% | 3 5% | 2 3.3% | 1 1.6% | 66.83 |

Interpretation and Findings

As per the data analysis shown in the table: 1 and qualitative analysis of the information collected through the questionnaire following interpretations and findings were drawn by the investigator.

• Objective no. 1 was to know the advantages of multi-cultural classroom.

- 48.3 % students were strongly agree and 40 % students were agree that multi-cultural classroom gives the feeling of unity in diversity. Chi-square value of the statement is 59.50 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was concluded that students feel unity in diversity in multi-cultural classroom.

- 45 % students were strongly agree and 48.3 % students were agree for the statement that multi-cultural classroom helps for the all-round development of students. Chi-square value of the statement is 71.33 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was concluded that most of the students find multi-cultural classroom helps for the all-round development.

- 41.6% students were strongly agree and 45 % students were agree for the statement that multi-cultural classroom inculcate the values of cooperation. Chi-square value of the statement is 55 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, majority of the students believe that values of cooperation can be inculcated in multi-cultural classroom.

- 36.6% students were strongly agree and 53.3 % students were agree for the statement that multi-cultural classroom inculcate the values of fraternity.

- Ninety percent of students believe that in multi-cultural classroom they develop the values such as fraternity, unity, cooperation and adjustment. Majority of the students have positive attitude towards the multi-cultural classroom.

• Objective no. 2 was to know the problems in multi-cultural classroom.

- 26.6 % students were strongly agree and 18.3 % students were strongly disagree, whereas 63.3 % students were agree and 1.6 % students were disagree with the statement that they like the environment of their class. Chi-square value of the statement is 83.17 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was found that most of the students like the environment of their multi-cultural classroom.

- 50% students were strongly agree and 41.6 % students were agree for the statement that I mix with other community people easily. And very few were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 68 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was found that students easily mix with each other in multi-cultural classroom.

- 41.6 % students were strongly disagree and 26.6 % students were disagree for the statement that I feel my religion a bar in my path to mix with others. And a little number of students were agree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 23.83 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was concluded that students do not find their religion a bar to mix with others in multi-cultural classroom.

- 25 % students were strongly disagree and 56.6 % students were disagree for the statement that I have anti-social disturbance in my class. And 10 % of students were agree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 59.50 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was concluded that students do not have anti-social disturbance in multi-cultural classroom.

- 28.3 % students were strongly agree and 56.6 % students were agree that peers give respect to all religions. Chi-square value of the statement is 59.50 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was concluded that students give respect to all religions in multi-cultural classroom.

- 21.6% students were strongly agree and 45 % students were agree for the statement that there is no religious groups in my classroom. And 10 % were strongly disagree and 18.3 % students were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 28.67 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was found that students do not have religious groups in multi-cultural classroom.

- 1.6% students were strongly agree and 10 % students were agree for the statement that I feel uncomfortable in multi-lingual classroom. Whereas 15% were strongly disagree and 63.3% students were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 73.17 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was found that students feel comfortable in multi-lingual classroom.

- 3.3% students were strongly agree and 18.3 % students were agree for the statement that it is difficult to clear doubts due to language problem. Whereas 25 % were strongly disagree and 40 % students were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 22.50 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was found that some students feel difficult to clear doubts due to language problem in multi-lingual classroom.

- 1.6% students were strongly agree and 6.6 % students were agree for the statement that multi-cultural classroom negatively effect on academic performance. Whereas 33.3 % were strongly disagree and 50 % students were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 51.83 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was found that more than fifty percent students do not feel negative effect of multi-cultural classroom on academic performance.

- 33.3% students were strongly agree and 38.3 % students were agree for the statement that medium of instruction plays vital role in educational practices. Whereas 5 % were strongly disagree and 11.6 % students were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 26.33 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was found that more than fifty percent students feels that medium of instruction plays vital role in educational practices in multi-cultural classroom.

- 3.3% students were strongly agree and 20 % students were agree for the statement that I find it difficult to understand various concepts while teaching- learning process due to language problem. Whereas 21.6 % were strongly disagree and 51.6 % students were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 46.83 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, it was found that more than fifty percent students do not find it difficult understand various concepts while teaching-learning process due to language problem.

- Hence, most of the students are comfortable with their multi-cultural classroom. But still some students face language problem for communication and academic conversations. Moreover most of the students state the importance medium of instruction. So, it can be concluded that language is the major problem in multi-cultural classroom.

• Objective no. 3 was to find out suggestive measures for multi-cultural classroom.

- 43.3% students were strongly agree and 46.6 % students were agree for the statement that teachers' role is very important in multi-cultural classroom. Whereas 1.6 % were strongly disagree and 1.6 % students were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 63.17 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, almost all the students were agree for the importance of teachers' in multi-cultural classroom.

- 50% students were strongly agree and 33.3 % students were agree for the statement that with effective teaching teacher can overcome the difficulties in multi-cultural classroom. Whereas 3.3 % were strongly disagree and 8.3 % students were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 51.50 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, majority of students believe that with the help of effective teaching teacher can overcome the difficulties in multi-cultural classroom.

- 28.3% students were strongly agree and 45 % students were agree for the statement that use of ICT can reduce the difficulties to understand the concepts in multi-cultural classroom. Whereas 1.6 % were strongly disagree and 8.3 % students were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 35.33 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, most of the students were agree for the use of ICT to understand the concepts in multi-cultural classroom.

- 18.3% students were strongly agree and 63.3 % students were agree for the statement that teaching aids contribute to lessen the problem of language in multi-cultural classroom. Whereas 1.6 % were strongly disagree and 3.3 % students were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the

statement is 76.17 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, most of the students were agree that teaching aids contribute to lessen the problem of language in multi-cultural classroom.

- 5% students were strongly agree and 10 % students were agree for the statement that cooperative and collaborative learning practice is not suitable in multi-cultural classroom. Whereas 23.3 % were strongly disagree and 48.3 % students were disagree with the same. Chi-square value of the statement is 35.50 which was significant at 0.01 level. So, most of the students were agree that cooperative and collaborative learning practice is suitable for multi-cultural classroom.

- Hence, the investigator found that to overcome the class room difficulties due to multiculturalism effective teaching is very important. Various teaching approaches such as cooperative and collaborative learning can promote effective learning. With the use of appropriate teaching aids and ICT tools one can solve the problems of conversations in multi-cultural classroom.

Conclusion

Findings of the study denote that most of the students have positive attitude towards multi-cultural classroom. They believe that multi-cultural classrooms can inculcate various values in students such as unity, fraternity and cooperation. Students respect and accept other religions. The major problem faced by the students in multi-cultural classroom is the language. To remove the language barrier various teaching approaches and teaching aids can be used. Effective teaching is very important for successful classroom interactions in multi-cultural classrooms. Teaches plays vital role for various factors of multi-cultural classroom.

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