



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: Teachers' Perceptions and its Incorporation as a Toolkit for Best Practice in the Future of Education

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Abstract

Professional development for educators' in the UK has recently shifted to an awareness of Equality and Diversity and its incorporation into pedagogical practice across all levels of education for the purpose of ensuring that all learners are offered maximum opportunities. In the light this provision, education professionals are expected to be aware of the strands of Equality & Diversity and implementation strategies. However, education professionals' perceptions still vary in their understanding and practice. It is the aim of this presentation to share this all important and timely concept with education practitioners from different parts of the world, clarify and provide explanation of the pedagogical implications of EDI.

Introduction

Teachers and lecturers in the UK have been fully exposed to the concepts of EDI but hold a variety of perceptions as observed by the results in a survey. Out of 176 educators, 43% fully understand the notion of equality, while 62% have a strong awareness of diversity. The practice of inclusion by 89% seems quite strong through the practice of differentiation and statement of learning objectives drawn from Bloom's taxonomy.

Edi Concepts and its Incorporation as a Toolkit into Pedagogical Practice

Equality is a process of ensuring that everyone (student) has the same opportunity to access services and to reach their full potential in life; the process of ensuring that everyone has an equal chance to participate and succeed in life.

Equality and Human Rights Commission, UK stated 'Every individual should have an equal chance to make the most of their talents, capabilities and endeavour; and no one should have poorer life chances because of where, what or to whom they were born'. The Equality Act 2010 came into force from 1st October 2010 in the UK with 9 strands: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. Equality is about treating every student as an individual and recognising the impact that prejudice and discrimination have on people. Actively taking steps to eliminate negative attitudes, stereotypes or prejudice about certain communities or individuals is required and constitutes innovative pedagogy in the achievement of maximum equality of outcome. Differences or variety in people serves as an opportunity for educators to recognise and celebrate such by harnessing and driving the differences forward to achieve excellence and creativity. Inclusivity is the multiple, continuous and deliberate practice where all efforts are geared towards making every student feel valued in a learning environment. Such includes removing all anticipated barriers before they take on any negative effect. These three concepts are interdependent of one another in a practical sense.

Practices of EDI comprise the following: robust student recruitment, curriculum development which embeds VAK, collation of learner profiles, provision of additional support, student/parent induction, overcoming barriers to learning such as family profile or expectations, creating progression opportunities, career guidance, taking advantage of missed spontaneous opportunities, staff development, best practice forum (evidence of teacher performance/pupil achievement) and celebration of achievement and awards.

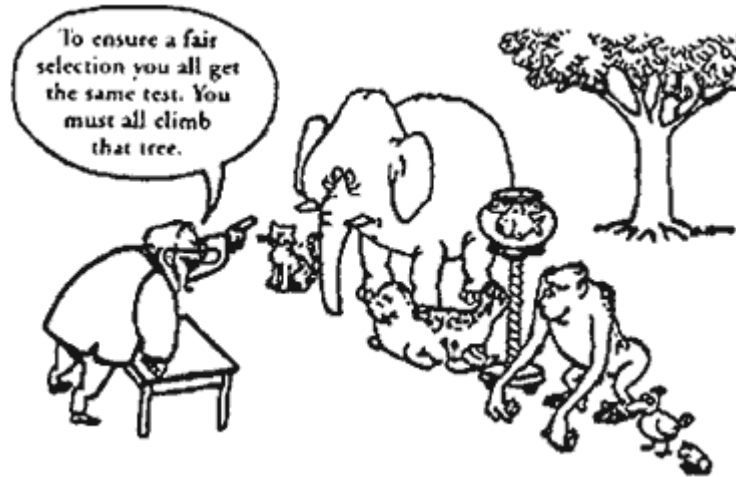


Figure 1

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