Good example of research proposal on the effects of multicultural classrooms on e...

[Life](#), [Childhood](#)

\n[toc title="Table of Contents"]\n

\n \t

\n[/toc]\n \n

CHAPTER ONE

I. INTRODUCTION

Diversity in the classroom is extremely important to the development of children, and continues to become more important in light of the changing demographics of the classroom today. Diversity and multicultural education provides children with the context that they need to function within an increasingly multicultural society today. It is also a way to deal with the changing demographics of the classroom; in America, classrooms now contain children from a variety of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and providing other children with the context needed to understand their differences and maneuver around any conflicts that are created as a result of these issues.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Along with the positive aspects of multiculturalism in the classroom, early childhood educators are often faced with the problem of how best to address cultural differences in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner. This discussion will center around age-appropriate multicultural education, and the effects of multicultural education on the early childhood classroom.

Primarily, the discussion will focus on the United States of America, but other educational systems may be discussed tangentially to address certain issues, problems, and solutions that are not found in the United States of America.

Within this paper, the question of what the effects of multicultural education are on early childhood educational learning environments will be directly addressed. The alternate hypothesis in this case will be that there is a correlation between increased cultural sensitivity, aptitude for cultural understanding, and long-term critical thinking skills with the involvement of multicultural education in the classroom. The null hypothesis for this particular discussion assumes no correlation between early childhood multicultural education and increased cultural sensitivity and tolerance.

III. JUSTIFICATION

Within this discussion, there will be a focus on pluralist multiculturalism, with a tangential focus on liberal multiculturalism and left-essentialist multiculturalism. In early childhood education, the lack of nuance that children are capable of lends itself closely to the use of pluralist multiculturalism, but within the construction of a multicultural early childhood classroom, there must be a mixture of different types of multiculturalism (Saracho and Spodek, 1983).

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Pluralist multiculturalism is the simplest type of multiculturalism for children to understand in the context of their age; it teaches that there are different types of people, and that they have different features (Saracho and Spodek, 1983). It focuses on a decontextualization of the white, middle-class norm,

attempting to introduce new and different norms into the classroom with equal focus (Saracho and Spodek, 1983). Liberal multiculturalism makes an attempt to make all members of all different classes of people equal, and pluralist multiculturalism lends itself heavily to this approach, particularly in the context of early childhood education (Saracho and Spodek, 1983). Left-essentialist multiculturalism, conversely, teaches that there are very specific differences that define different groups. These groups are portrayed as equal, albeit different (Saracho and Spodek, 1983). When considering multicultural education that requires individuals to be " politically correct" and sensitive to cultural differences, left-essentialist multiculturalism is the type that encourages this type of behavior in adherents (Saracho and Spodek, 1983).

CHAPTER TWO

I. INTRODUCTION

Diversity in education comes with a variety of benefits for the student. For early childhood education, diversity in the classroom and multiculturalism in education is particularly important, as children are not born with biases, but develop them over time. Diversity in the classroom will help create children that are more tolerant to differences and cultural diversity later in life. This is extremely important in the

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Historically, classrooms in the United States have been dominated by white children, and other children have been marginalized by the subject matter and the manner in which teachers address the class (Bowman, 1993). The

race and gender gap in early childhood education has a tendency to grow throughout the early childhood years if it is not addressed by early childhood educators; Daniel and Friedman (2005) note that this gap can be shrunk by educators if they engage in programs that focus on the marginalized groups within their classrooms.

Bowman (1993) suggests that the gender and race gap is partially the result of discriminatory practices that begin in the early childhood educational sphere. Children who are from minority and marginalized groups have long been subjected to discriminatory practices in the classroom; Bowman (1993) points to the sociological studies done on African-American children prior to the Brown v. Board of Education decision, in which children were asked to provide adjectives describing an African-American doll and a white doll (Bowman, 1993). These children almost unanimously used negative words to describe the African-American doll, reflecting their poor view of their race and their poor self-esteem as a result of their marginalization (Bowman, 1993). Historically, marginalized groups have tended to do more poorly in the classroom; multiculturalism seeks to undo the wrongs that were done in the past and promote a more accepting early childhood educational experience for traditionally marginalized groups.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the literature, there are a number of benefits that come with the introduction of diversity into the early childhood classroom. Bowman (1993) suggested that one of the primary motivators for increasing diversity in the classroom should be to reduce the age and race gap in early childhood education. Without this reduction, children who are poor performers in their

early childhood have a tendency to grow up into further poor performance as they age (Bowman, 1993). A classroom that is accepting of diversity and provides a safe space for all individuals, Bowman (1993) wrote, can provide children with a way of escaping the downward trend of educational underachievement that can become endemic within marginalized populations, like non-native English speakers (Bowman, 1993). Correa et al. (2004) wrote, " The demographics of the students in early childhood education are changing. However, most of the early childhood education programs are not prepared for this change. The problem may be in creating dialogue between the two communities and seeking state laws to regulate multicultural education as a requirement for all early childhood education programs." (Correa et al., 2004). In short, one of the primary problems regarding early childhood multicultural education programs, Correa et al. (2004) suggested, was that they were not comprehensive or widespread enough.

Ultimately, according to the literature, the success of multicultural education in the classroom was a function of the educational level of the teacher or educator (Daniels and Friedman, 2005). Daniels and Friedman (2005) wrote about the importance of teacher training in the introduction of diversity in the classroom, stating:

Overall there has been much progress over the last quarter century in preparing teachers to meet the education needs of linguistically and culturally diverse children. Most early childhood teacher education programs now require students to take some general coursework related to the topic of diversity Of course, the adult students in these programs are themselves

from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds; they present teacher educators with challenges in meeting their diverse needs but also opportunities to learn. (Daniel and Friedman, 2005).

Daniel and Friedman (2005) noted that one of the many problems with multicultural and diverse education in the classroom is that teachers felt under-prepared to properly engage in programs that promoted diversity and multiculturalism. Daniel and Friedman (2005) wrote that an integrated approach to teacher training and further educational opportunities for instructors could easily help assuage the fears of educators who were interested in developing a diverse classroom environment, but lack the know-how. In addition, ESL (English as a Second Language) classes for instructors should be integrated into teacher training programs (Daniel and Friedman, 2005).

IV. CONCLUSION

Encouraging diversity in the early childhood educational classroom in the United States is fundamental to the success of children who are part of marginalized groups. The theoretical framework needed to create these multicultural education programs must be fine-tuned because of their immense importance in the classroom. In the United States of America, the race and gender gap is still very real, and the result of the marginalization of certain groups of people. With the recent influx of immigrants to the United States, more students than ever will be of minority or marginalized groups, and multicultural education programs will be more important than ever before.

References

Bowman, B. (1993). Early childhood education. Review of research in education, 19 pp. 101--134.

Bredekamp, S. & Copple, C. (1997). Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs. Washington, D. C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Bush, T. (2013). Leadership in early childhood education. Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 41 (1), pp. 3--4.

Correa, V. I., Hudson, R. F. & Hayes, M. T. (2004). Preparing early childhood special educators to serve culturally and linguistically diverse children and families: can a multicultural education course make a difference?. Teacher Education And Special Education: The Journal Of The Teacher Education Division Of The Council For Exceptional Children, 27 (4), pp. 323--341.

Daniel, J. & Friedman, S. (2005). Preparing teachers to work with culturally and linguistically diverse children. Beyond The Journal: Young Children On The Web, pp. 1--7.

Edwards, C. P., Gandini, L. & Forman, G. E. (1995). The hundred languages of children. Norwood, N. J.: Ablex Pub. Corp.

Hensel, N. H. (1991). Social leadership skills in young children. Roeper Review, 14 (1), pp. 4--6.

Molnar, A. (2002). School reform proposals. Greenwich, Conn.: Information Age.

Muijs, D., Aubrey, C., Harris, A. & Briggs, M. (2004). How do they manage? a review of the research on leadership in early childhood. Journal Of Early Childhood Research, 2 (2), pp. 157--169.

National Education Association. (2014). Early childhood education. [online] Retrieved from: http://www. nea. org/home/18163. htm [Accessed: 21 Jan 2014].

Parten, Mildred B. " Leadership among preschool children." The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology 27, no. 4 (1933): 430.

Rodd, Jillian. " Towards a Typology of Leadership for the Early Childhood Professional of the 21 st Century∗." Early Child Development and Care 120, no. 1 (1996): 119--126.

Rodd, Jillian. " Learning to be leaders: Perceptions of early childhood professionals about leadership roles and responsibilities." Early Years 18, no. 1 (1997): 40--44.

Saracho, O. N. & Spodek, B. (1983). Understanding the multicultural experience in early childhood education. National Association For The Education Of Young Children Washington, DC.

Shin, M. S., Recchia, S. L., Lee, S. Y., Lee, Y. J. & Mullarkey, L. S. (2004). Understanding early childhood leadership emerging competencies in the context of relationships. Journal Of Early Childhood Research, 2 (3), pp. 301--316.

Spodek, B. & Saracho, O. N. (2005). International perspectives on research in early childhood education. Greenwich, Conn.: Information Age Pub.

Unknown (2003). Guidelines on multicultural education, training, research, practice, and organizational change for psychologists. The American Psychologist, 58 (5), p. 377.

Woodrow, C. & Busch, G. (2008). Repositioning early childhood leadership as

action and activism. European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 16 (1), pp. 83--93.