

Democracy, diversity, and social justice



James Banks, *Democracy, Diversity and Social Justice*, the meat of the entire lecture is focused on three important goals on how can teachers use cultural diversity in the classroom to improve race relations and to help other students upon the knowledge attitude and skills needed to participate in cross cultural interaction and personal and civic actions that will help our country and the world more civilized: To know, to care and to act, the three goals of global citizenship education.

This type of teaching will educate " students' heads, but also their hearts," and create " transformative" citizens who are prepared to take an active role in their society and work for social justice. (Banks, 2009) . Banks addressed the implications of a multicultural view of citizenship for curricular reform.

The principal goal of multicultural citizenship education is to help students balance their various cultural, regional, national and global identities, he said -- but a truly transformative approach to citizenship education would also give students the knowledge, skills and values to challenge inequality throughout the world and to create just and democratic multicultural societies.

To acquire understanding of different racial groups rather than simply requiring students to memorize facts about their form of government or encouraging non-reflective loyalty to their countries, transformative citizenship education would demand that both teachers and students learn to recognize and fight racism, Banks said. It also would require teaching materials that preserve diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives and ensure

that students from different cultural, ethnic and social groups enjoy equal status in the classroom.

He also emphasized that teachers and students to care about democratic racial attitude through cooperative learning. His contentions about observing true democracy in the classroom is teaching the true spirit of democracy to students and that democratic way is implementing equality of rights among the students and between students and teachers regardless of what race they belong.

There should be no racial prejudice and segregation and that students are working harmoniously , helping each other and knowing each other's culture is a true key and that book contents should not contain something which may be biased to other races and must only contain the factual history not a racial nor gender biased. One good concrete example he pointed out was the picture of happy slave in a textbook from 1960's.

He also cited the gender bias in the 1990's which the books cited only male African American civil rights heroes and not women when in fact there were African American women who played a very important role on the civil rights movement. This is showing that students are lacking knowledge of the real history of America and the world. To limit their knowledge is like telling them a lie about other races and an implication of discrimination. If students know all the important facts, they will care about all this injustice from history and will not allow these sad part of history happen again.

If students know how and what happened in history, they will try to put into action what they learned and therefore develop the value of equality and

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fully understand how racial discrimination is still apparently observed in our society today and be brave enough to change their values and learn to observe real essence of democracy by considering other races , black, brown or yellow to be equally capable of learning as much as they are and this will forever be inculcated in their hearts no matter who they are, what race they belong and wherever they go.

If I have to evaluate myself as a teacher, I feel like Banks has touched a very important learning for us teachers, the equity pedagogy which we as teachers need to modify our teaching that will facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse cultural, racial, gender and social group. We need to develop within our students global citizenship through balancing unity and diversity. It is imperative that the most important learning that our students need is not only identification of race but immersion into the different cultures itself to really understand and appreciate the value of social democracy and justice.

If all of us will just put into action what Dr. Banks has laid in his lecture, what a harmonious world this would be. No prejudice against the different races, no threats of labeling a student on how much he can be capable of doing according to false research on racial IQ's and to look through the individual under the skin.