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Teaching Strategies for Second Generation Immigrant College Students

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ABSTRACT

It is challenging to factor in cultural diversity when delivering educational skills, particularly to immigrants raised and nurtured in different backgrounds across the globe. As such, pedagogical skills among tutors and educators have always to be updated and mobilized to accommodate the bulging number of foreign speaking students. In the United States, foreigners are increasing, and so does more challenges, particularly as it relates to non-English speaking. Currently, language problems among second-generation Immigrant College students are among the few thorny issues that peer educators have to deal with, given their diverse cultural backgrounds. Hence, teachers and instructors have to lay efficient strategies to put all students in a level playing ground irrespective of their native backgrounds. Therefore, this paper, particularly deals with teaching strategies for second Generation Immigrant college students and other higher learning institutions. For the issues being more pronounced in the United States most research in the paper tends to utilize studies dealing with challenges in the country.

Keywords: Multicultural education, Immigrants, Teaching Strategies

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INTRODUCTION

Culture and diversity are two key aspects that greatly influence education perception among many international students that seeking to further their studies in foreign nations like the United States. As such, it is pivotal to create a better understanding of cultural diversity among teachers and students through strategies that promote effective learning. Szilagyi, Giambo and Szecsi (2013) give examples of these strategies, which include strengthening cultural awareness, encouraging a global outlook, and promoting a safer learning environment among others.

It is apparent that within the last century, the U.S. has played a decisive and motivator role as a dream destination of many students across the globe wishing to pursue higher studies. One of the key reasons is the high quality of education in the country and the availability of resources and technical knowhow especially in areas of Technology and scientific fields like medicine. As a result, many students across the globe, including Australia, Africa, South America, Asia, and Europe, hope get a visa or a scholarship to study in the United States. These students are even willing to abandon their families and initial jobs to obtain certification from an institution in the United States. In addition, a large number of these individuals become employed and later apply for citizenship (Chang et al, 2014).

After getting their education, a large number of these individuals are employed and later apply for citizenship, perhaps due to the hefty returns in the country than if they went back to their native countries. In effect, they get families and children who form the group of immigrants termed as Second Generation. Schwartz, Kozminsky and Leikin (2009) state that it is important to understand that the difference between First and Second Generation Immigrants is miniscule, and they all face similar challenges in the society and in the learning institutions among them racism or segregation, language barriers, and many other social setbacks. As a result, they require special attention from tutors or peer educators.

The aftermath of this entire exodus is detrimental and strenuous to the country's education system. In fact, Native American students are also finding it very hard to adjust to education life with immigrants who carry with them their different cultures and social norms. Similarly, the tutors have been forced to

adjust their teaching strategies and programs to accommodate the extremely concoction students from the different cultural, economic and social backgrounds. For instance, it can be challenging to put a non-English speaking student like a Chinese or French to the same class with an English-speaking student. Confusion would arise since communication is very central in passing knowledge from one individual to another, and language is a vital determinant (Wiley, 2005).

These challenges are amplified and more complicated in institutions that lack teachers trained in foreign languages or skills in dealing with students from varied social, racial, or economic backgrounds. In addition, it is sometimes very distressing for other minority group students to realize that they are despised and looked down upon by their peers because of their communication skills or social backgrounds. If the situation is not well and professionally managed, there is likelihood of school dropouts or failure in attaining quality grades among students. As a result, individuals may end up engaging in unhealthy behaviors such as drug abuse and trafficking, robbery and even prostitution. As such, it is a pedagogical requisite for tutors to design and institute better strategies to be able to contain and manage institutions admitting a blend of students. It ensures that the benefits of education will reflect long all social and cultural backgrounds without prejudice or injustice, as Garrett and Holcomb (2005) support.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

There exists a myriad of information on this topic, and by using keywords Multicultural education, Immigrants, Teaching Strategies; it was possible to obtain the best-fit research for the review. Since the research on this topic, as above stated is a lot and extensive, Ebscohost, ERIC, and JSTOR research databases provided equipped locations for the sources, guaranteed by their reputation. After searching the above-mentioned keywords, more than one thousand articles appeared in the option area. However, only fifteen peer-reviewed articles were selected based on their validity, quality and reliability. To ensure that the articles content were timely valid, they had to have been published before 2005. The fact that they were peer reviewed preempted mathematical evaluation of validity and reliability and avoided biasness.

In addition, the match of the obtained materials and the topic was assessed based on their relevance and exactness to the topic; specifically, the resources had to be dealing with causes, effects, and solutions to the topic being analyzed. The main type of information collected is secondary information is sourced from the articles. Since the research on this topic, as above stated is a lot and extensive and the appropriateness helped sort articles, which search results indicated were in hundreds of thousands. It was possible to obtain 15 articles, which were considered enough for the analysis.

RESULT

After extracting the raw findings from each study, thematically grouping similar findings and merging similar themes, three major themes related to teaching strategies for second generation immigrant college students emerged: (1) Cooperative Learning Strategy (2) Group Learning Strategy and (3) Creating Awareness Strategy.

Cooperative Learning Strategy

According to Wiley (2005), cooperative learning is very resourceful in fostering the learning process among linguistically and culturally diverse college students. He notes that it promotes individual accountability, simultaneous interaction, positive interdependence, and equal participation. Participants reveal an improvement in their communication skills after the cooperative learning exercise. In addition, cooperative learning supports and augments literacy skills, as well as promotes better inter-ethnic interactions among culturally diverse students. This strategy has been utilized in many avenues and has promoted interaction among both young and youthful college students, enhancing both learning and social skills (Wiley, 2005).

Group Learning Strategy

Researchers argue that multiple grouping strategies are essential in facilitating the participation of college students as well as children with language and special learning requirements in inclusive settings. In addition, he states that integration of class wide teaching and cooperative learning enables students with poor communication actively participate in class with increased autonomy just as their peers. It also helps in boosting their confidence, even when answering questions in class during discussions, a notion Suárez-Orozco and Qin (2006) support. Grouping is a technique that places students into smaller groups with a common goal. Selective grouping of students so that each category contains individuals from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds increases effectiveness (Hart, 2009).

According to analysis, language barriers may not be the root cause of the teaching and learning problems. Immigrant students are perhaps faced with loneliness, segregation, racial abuse, and lack of understanding or naivety of how to behave in a new socio-cultural environment, a fact lecturers acknowledge and are unable to fix. Therefore fostering learning in schools for second-generation immigrants by creating awareness about diversity, embracing new cultures, and demystifying culture superiority provides a balanced learning platform (Valdés, 2005).

Suárez-Orozco and Qin (2006) also concur that addressing language challenges is one of the central strategies instructors can use to foster learning among second generation Immigration University or college students. In addition, they state that parental-classroom involvement during and before higher education institution is very rewarding, since it improves communication by promoting oral comprehension.

Creating Awareness Strategy

According to Painter (2013), creating intercultural awareness has been a critical teaching strategy for immigrant students in regardless of their stage in education. He backs his proposition by arguing that culture always operates outside of human understanding and awareness. As such, human beings learn every aspect of their lives from birth, including how to conduct themselves as men and women, be responsible, relate and interact with others among other vital living aspects. Lee (2005) also agrees that culture influences how people converse, their nutritional approaches, methods of worship and clothing, mode of conduct at workplaces, and behaviors in learning institutions. In addition, culture greatly influences how people bring up their children from aspects as insignificant nutrition, conduct, and their perception and regard to education as well as entertainment. Even Rosenbaum and Jessie (2008) approve that intercultural education is crucial in alleviating prejudice among students and in the event promotes understanding, thereby resulting in a level teaching and learning platform.

Ngo (2006) echoes these sentiments by stating that creating and embracing awareness of diversity is central in enhancing effective education among second-generation immigrant students in colleges and universities as indicated in his southeast analysis context. He states that people constantly judgmental about others, specifically in presence of an uncommon fact. However, he found that encouraging students to mingle with those from other cultures changed their perceptions with regard to their perceived inferior social, economic, or racial background, which lead to a better interactive environment for all students. In addition, language barriers to communication could be reduced by promoting avenues for intercultural interactions, a notion Debra (2007) supports.

CONCLUSION

In summary, it can be deduced that second generation Immigrant College students face a myriad of challenges in their quest for higher education and key among them being language barriers. Several mechanisms or strategies have been used to address or alleviate this hindrance. However, tutors or instructors can create awareness among students on the need to embrace cultural diversity. They can be educated on issues of equality irrespective of their socio-cultural backgrounds. In addition, teachers can use selective grouping and cooperative learning to promote inter-student relationships. In addition, educators can instill significant oral communication skills to enhance content comprehension among students as well as use cooperative learning and grouping.

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