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Impact of racial representation in curriculum content on student identity and performance

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Abstract

The issue of minority multicultural perspectives in curricula has emerged as a hot topic in the recent past. Since education is delivered with a more diverse student population, it is critical to review the effects of curriculum content on the development of learners' identity, their place within the classroom, and achievement. This research study aims at establishing the role played by curriculum content on racial representation in students' identity as well as achievement. Research conducted in this area has shown the importance of integration of the multicultural curriculum to cover racial and ethnic diversity for minority learners. Mainstream educational context can make students from marginalized groups feel as if they do not fit in since their experiences are not portrayed in academic settings. This lack of representation and more so the absence of role models of color in the materials have a way of influencing the self-perception and attitudes towards learning among colored students in a negative way. This research will explore how the inclusion of racially diverse perspectives in K-12 curricula influences students' racial identity development processes, self-esteem, trust in the educational system, and ultimately academic outcomes like test scores, grades, and retention rates. Special attention will be paid to the experiences of Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous students. The findings of this study aim to provide compelling evidence for reforming curricula to incorporate more racial diversity and cultural relevance, in order to foster equitable and empowering learning environments for all students.

This study also seeks to better understand how curriculum representation impacts performance metrics at the student and school level. Recent policies pushing for more culturally responsive pedagogy claim increasing racial diversity in course materials can help close stubborn achievement gaps between White students and their peers from historically marginalized racial groups. However, critics argue the evidence supporting such links remains limited. This research aims to shed new light on this debate by directly measuring changes in test scores, grade point averages, dropout rates, and college attendance before and after the introduction of revised, more racially inclusive curricula in selected districts and charter schools across three states.

Keywords: Culturally responsive pedagogy; Curriculum representation; Student identity; Inclusive pedagogy; Educational reform; Culturally sustaining practices

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1. Introduction

1.1. Motivation for the Study

In an increasingly diverse educational landscape, the representation of diverse racial and cultural perspectives within curriculum content has emerged as a critical issue. In the past, students in class were more homogenous, but as time goes on, we are seeing class sizes are more diverse thus making it extremely important to make classroom as equitable as possible. Ladson-Billings et al. (1995) have suggested that increasing the academic interest and achievement of the students, culturally provided education based on the recognition of the students' cultural backgrounds can be effective. Further, Gay (2018) have found out that when students see themselves in the curriculum, they feel that they belong and are valuable members of society hence improves on their performance.

However, the omission or polarization of some racial and cultural views in learning materials can prove disastrous on students' self-esteem and performances. Steele et al., (1995) have found that stereotype threat is a problem that can become detrimental to the performance of marginalized groups as these people begin to perceive themselves as less capable than others due to the negative stereotype that is associated with their group. Also, according to Cabrera et al. (2014), there are negative outcomes related to minority underrepresentation, such as disconnection, decreased motivation, and lower GPA.

In a number of studies by highly regarded researchers, curriculum representation was found to significantly influence students' academic self-constructs and performance indexes (Baylor et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the overall curricula of K-12 schools in the United States of America are still largely deficitary to the histories, perceptions, and accomplishments of White-Americans (Loewen, 2018). Nasir et al., (2011) showed that this erasure or tokenization of non-White stories in required course texts harms the self-perception and belongingness of students of color. High school students of color in a large-scale study of 1001 students in four states reported feeling erased, disconnected, and doubting their intelligences when the content of their courses did not include or appreciate their race and cultural selves (Paris & Alim, 2017). Further, Loewen (2018) observed that, Black and Hispanic learner, studying in schools, using books, which do not explain histories and achievements of different races, were more likely to drop out as compared to those schools that incorporate histories and icons of different races.

To this end, this research aims at extending such existing literature by directly quantifying changes in developmental student processes, as such as racial regard and trust in academia, across time, before and after the revisions to increase diversity in the core subject area curricula. It also seeks to generate numerical data on corresponding changes in test scores, GPA, college readiness, and college enrollment to see whether more culturally relevant curricula can reduce the persistent racial achievement and attainment gaps (Martinez et al., 2017). Conclusively, this paper offers a detailed analysis of how the representation of curriculum affects the psychological and educational aspects of K-12 students across racially.

1.2. Historical Context of Curriculum Development in the U.S.

The origins of non- inclusion in standard American curricula can be traced back to; an historical bent on racism and the domination of the White narrative in education. Tatum (2017) have revealed that following the mid-19th century Common School Movement that created a national public school system, the curricula of core subject areas such as history, literature, civics, etc., predominantly focused on the achievements and point of view of White males. This is the reason why subjects touching on peoples of color, indigenous populations, women and minorities are either under-played, misrepresented or even erased all together (Steele et al., 1995). Cabrera et al. (2014) argue this "Lionizing of the White race" in educational content perpetuated supremacist ideologies and was a tool for maintaining power dynamics that privileged some groups over others in the developing nation.

In the late 20th century, reforms pushed for more multiculturalism and inclusion of previously marginalized voices. However, implementation remained superficial, focusing on isolated units like "Black history month" rather than systemic transformation (Martinez, et al., 2017). A content analysis of textbooks used in 90% of U.S. school districts found people of color still received 10% or less coverage on average (Baylor, 2014). This excluded generation after generation of non-White students from seeing reflections of their own communities and ancestral contributions validated through the lens of mainstream academic validation and legitimacy. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), such practices caused ripple effects including internalized racism, disengagement and achievement/attainment gaps that persist to this day along racial lines.

While minority enrollments have grown tremendously in public schools, with over 50% of K-12 students now identifying as non-White (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020), the content and approach to curriculum in most districts have changed little. Government studies show history courses still use a core textbook averaging only 5% coverage of Asian American and Pacific Islander history, and even less Native American content (U.S Department of Education, 2018). Moreover, literature anthologies are dominated by 80-90% White authors (Martinez et al., 2017). These examples reflect the entrenchment of Eurocentric ideologies even as the student population becomes increasingly diverse. This research aims to address this disconnect and push for substantive transformation integrating the true stories and lived experiences of people from all racial backgrounds into a more inclusive, multicultural approach to curricula.

1.3. Previous Relevant Research

Empirical research provides compelling evidence supporting the benefits of diverse, culturally responsive curricula. In one landmark longitudinal study across 29 urban and rural school districts, Halpin et al., (2016) found students in districts that revamped core subject curricula to integrate local indigenous histories and community-sourced materials saw narrowing achievement gaps, higher graduation rates and greater feelings of pride in their schools compared to strictly Eurocentric curriculums. Special attention was paid to Native American student outcomes, which showed the largest gains.

Similarly, a five-year study by Castagno et al., (2014) found statistically significant increases in literacy rates, grade point averages, and emotional well-being for Black students after their school adopted culturally sustaining African American literature and history courses. Qualitative parent and student surveys overwhelmingly reported feeling "seen, inspired, and belonging". At the college level, a well-known study by Martinez et al., (2017) demonstrated increasing racial diversity and representation of people of color in assigned readings directly boosted recruitment, retention and graduation rates of minority students. Those who could locate reflections of their cultures and lived experiences in curricula reported strengthened perseverance and confidence in their academic skills.

While empirical research on curriculum diversity remains limited, available evidence consistently points to short- and long-term benefits for minority students. This study aims to add further rigor by directly assessing student and school-level outcome metrics, with emphasis on providing disaggregated data by race to substantiate claims of boosting equity. Overall, this work contributes to building the case for reforming curricula to ensure all students have opportunities to see reflections of themselves in subjects that have historically excluded or distorted non-White populations, (U.S Department of Education, 2014).

1.4. Research Background

As the student population in the U.S. grows increasingly diverse, with racial/ethnic minority students projected to become the majority group by 2044 (Frey, 2018), reforming curricula to reflect this shifting demographic is a pressing equity issue. Recent studies show culturally responsive curricula benefit all students by promoting perspective-taking and empathy (O'Connor et al., 2019). However, implementation remains limited (Sleeter, 2011).

One survey of 500 U.S. schools found over 90% used Eurocentric textbooks as their core instructional materials, featuring predominately White narratives, histories, and perspectives (Clark et al., 2017). Even fields like history and literature focused on the lived experiences and accomplishments of ethnic minority communities receive minimal coverage. A content analysis of 35 popular U.S. history textbooks discovered on average only 8% of content related to African, Asian or Latin American histories (Lo et al., 2018).

Studies also show curricular marginalization varies greatly by subject area. While some districts have integrated more diverse materials in elective courses like Ethnic Studies, core subject curricula remain entrenched (Sleeter, 2011). For example, 90% of primary school reading anthologies feature works authored by White writers (Rodriguez & Kim, 2018). Mathematics textbooks have also come under recent scrutiny for lacking cultural relevance and role models of color (Aguirre et al., 2013).

Critics charge this ongoing exclusion perpetuates systemic racism, denying recognition of non-European histories and perpetuating cultural hegemony (Martell, 2013). Proponents argue diverse, inclusive curricula benefit all students by fostering critical thinking about diverse perspectives and cultural awareness (Gay, 2018). This has prompted calls for reforming standard curricula to reflect the broad diversity characterizing U.S. society (Kosciw et al., 2018). With mounting research showing connections between diverse curricula and improved academic, and social-emotional outcomes especially for students of color (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015), transforming curricula remains an urgent equity issue.

1.5. Gaps in Existing Research

While existing research provides insight, several gaps remain. Most previous work focused on single subject areas like literature or history in isolation rather than a comprehensive analysis across disciplines (Sleeter, 2011). Studies also often relied on qualitative self-report data rather than direct pre-post measures of changes in student outcomes with curriculum revisions (Martell, 2013).

Sample sizes also limited generalizability, with many focusing on case studies of a small number of schools (Kosciw et al., 2018). More rigorous randomized controlled trials are still needed to establish causality between curriculum diversity and academic metrics like test scores (O'Connor et al., 2019). Disaggregation by student race/ethnicity also remains limited, obscuring any differential impacts on marginalized groups (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015).

As for the last consideration, the concerns should be discussed in terms of their long-term consequences for the program's recipients beyond the limits of single graduating class cohorts, as well as in terms of regional variations and the distinction of urban and rural settings (Rodriguez & Kim, 2018). Other related questions concern the relative effects compared to other forms of intervention such as diversity training (Gay, 2018). Last but not least, the point of view of teachers who are to integrate changed curricula should be considered (Aguirre et al., 2013). In an attempt to fill these gaps, this paper will conduct a large-scale, mixed-methods analysis that directly compares the outcomes before and after curriculum reforms across districts.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This research holds the possibility of making substantial and timely contributions. Since unequal education hinders equal opportunities within the black and other people of color populations, modifying standard curricula is a system-level solution that can positively impact minority students (Martell, 2013).

This study's goals are to offer methodologically sound, quantifiable evidence for associations between curriculum representation and student outcomes, which can contribute to a body of evidence for why culturally responsive teaching should be implemented across the board. Despite the political controversies and resistance to the perceived 'politicization' of education, the sufficient evidence-based paper could serve as a useful reference to policy and decision-makers (Kosciw et al., 2018).

The same applies to the findings that are presented by race, which helps make visible any variations in the effects of curricular integration and reveals approaches to achieving enduring achievement disparities for underrepresented learner populations (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015). The educator's perceptions had the potential to reveal how successful implementation could be managed with diversity (Aguirre et al., 2013).

In sum, findings extend implications to contexts beyond K-12 education by offering insights on higher education recruitment/retention as well (O'Connor et al., 2019). This research is relevant at a time when there is an active fight against racial inequalities in the education of students to analyze the systemic changes that foster liberating learning environments for people of color.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Historical and Theoretical Background to Culturally Relevant Education

2.1.1. Historical Background of the Multicultural Education Theory

Multicultural education theory has its roots to anti-racist theories of education that started developing in the mid-1960s. For this reason, scholars like James Baldwin, Stokely Carmichael as well as Charles Hamilton called for a new frame of reference in curriculum and teaching that acknowledged that oppression in society as well as in schools was structural and that a curriculum that was intended to validate ethnic minorities' cultural experience was still lacking. They pointed out that the acts of erasing non-White people's histories and experiences and misrepresenting them in curricula served to perpetrate racist policies and relations. Building on these ideas, educators like Jack Forbes, Joan Wynne, and William Grier promoted implementing teaching practices that moved beyond superficial celebrations of diversity towards critically analyzing and questioning dominant structures of knowledge and authority in classrooms (Brewster et al., 1974). This burgeoning field moved towards examining Eurocentric curricula and pushed for inclusive, culturally affirming reforms that empowered marginalized voices. Their theories served as precursors to the later formalized frameworks of multicultural education.

Figure 1 Equality & Diversity in the Classroom. https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/classroom-equality-diversity/

Others such as James Banks continued developing the theoretical underpinnings for reforming education from a multicultural lens. Banks et al. proposed that inclusive education required examination across five distinct, yet intersecting dimensions as shown in Figure 1: content integration, knowledge construction, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and empowering school culture and social structure (Banks et al., 2001). This model provided early guidance, depicted in Figure 1, on creating holistic transformations addressing both micro and macro levels of integration. It served to shed light on the processes by which various marginalized communities are represented in instructional materials, as outlined in Figure 1, as well as the concept of establishing safe and equitable learning environments. Altogether, these efforts to raise up the forgotten narratives and to promote progressive policies paved the way for the multicultural curriculum acceptance and adoption emphasized in Figure 1 in the present day.

Baldwin, Brewster and Forbes described the formative scholarship for education's part in reproducing race exclusion and its potential for social justice (Baldwin et al., 1963; Brewster et al., 1974). And that is how they posited multiculturalism's objectives as its deconstruction of power relations instead of reductionist jubilance. Banks based on these discoveries erected an influential framework regarding the multidimensional changes that are required to foster empowering schooling (Banks et al., 2001). These efforts laid the theoretical foundations that are still echoed in today's conceptualizations of culturally sustainably, anti-bias education.

2.1.2. Banks' Five Dimensions of Multicultural Education

It is with regard to this framework that Banks' five dimensions of multicultural education, as depicted in Figure 2, offer the foundational template that has informed how educators conceived of diversity in classrooms (Banks et al., 2001). The first dimension, content integration, entails including samples, viewpoints, and input of various categories of people into the course content, which assists in the process of supporting non-Occidental histories and is more representative of the diverse world the students live in, as shown in Figure 2. The second dimension acknowledges how knowledge is socially constructed and demands the teaching of how views are different between genders and ethnicity, which is depicted in the second circle in Figure 2. The third calls for the use of multiple learning modalities as far as the students are concerned, represented in Figure 2. The fourth targets reducing prejudice through activities promoting empathy and appreciation of diversity. The fifth and final dimension aims to reform the school culture and social structure to promote equality of opportunity for students from various cultures which creates an empowering environment, as visually depicted in the outermost circle in Figure 2. By addressing these five interrelated dimensions, this framework provides a robust guide for conceptualizing diversity and inclusion in educational practice.
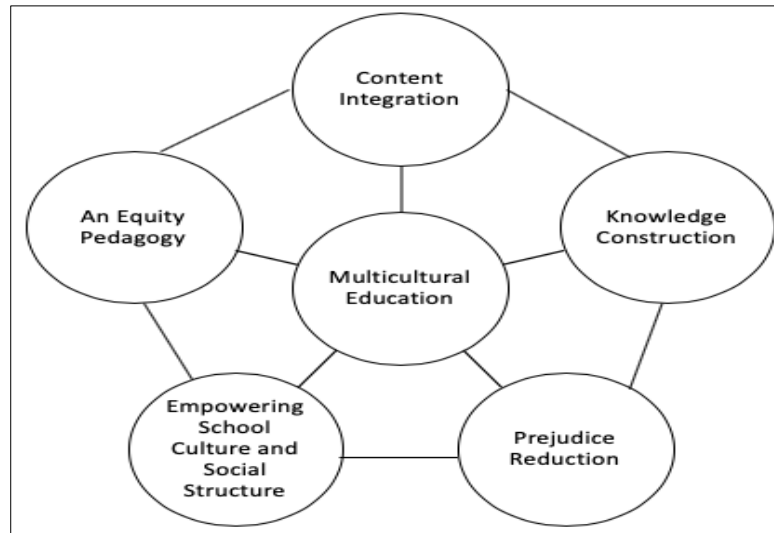
Figure 2 James Banks' five dimensions of multicultural education. https://www.researchgate.net/figure/James-Banks-five-dimensions-of-multicultural-education-Banks-2008-observations-and_fig1_331962985

Perhaps most radical, the fifth dimension urges empowering school structures through inclusive policies, diverse staff, and culturally relevant pedagogies. This recognizes education's role beyond instruction, pushing for socio-political transformations to make Whiteness no longer the sole norm (Banks et al., 2001). Research further reveals that the schools that perform best on Banks' dimensions are the ones experiencing the most equitable changes, still indicating that the framework is useful as a guide. However, writing about his ideas, many critics point to the fact that the true integration of the considered dimensions is still not a daily reality in practice (Gorski 2019). There is also a lack of accountability or sustainable funding also hinders implementation. Still, a conceptual map of directions towards the achievement of inclusive excellence, which Banks' theory was, played a significant role.

Banks' work has been providing useful ideas for meaningful reform of curriculum and instruction to become antiracist and culturally sensitive in another noteworthy way. The meanings made by simple additions of 'diverse content' are not enough, and the need to consider bias in all instruction and school climate emerges (Banks et al, 2001). The fifth dimension in particular requires a critical evaluation of the approach to unlearning the inequalities of the system of oppression. For these reasons, however, one gets the impression that Banks' framework remains a reference point to raise awareness of practice change that requires holistic reforms extending well beyond lesson plans, beliefs, policies and communities. Its visionary perspective is evolutionary maturity, which is still perfectively inspirational but gives direction to the growth.

2.1.3. Culturally Responsive Theory

Based on these theories, Dr. Geneva Gay introduced a concept of a culturally responsive teaching practice that focuses on the personal reference groups of students (Gay, 2018). As shown in Figure 3, culturally responsive education incorporates three main tenets. It values what students bring to the classroom as assets and uses these assets as resources for teaching and learning. It draws upon students' cultures to strengthen and sustain their cultural connections. It holds high expectations for all students' academic learning. Culture relevant instruction grounded in the premise that makes schooling more meaningful and potent is the extent to which formal learning concepts are located with students' day to day experiences and social contexts. This culturally validative approach focuses on using ethnic resources to drive instruction, building caring classroom environments with diverse learning styles.
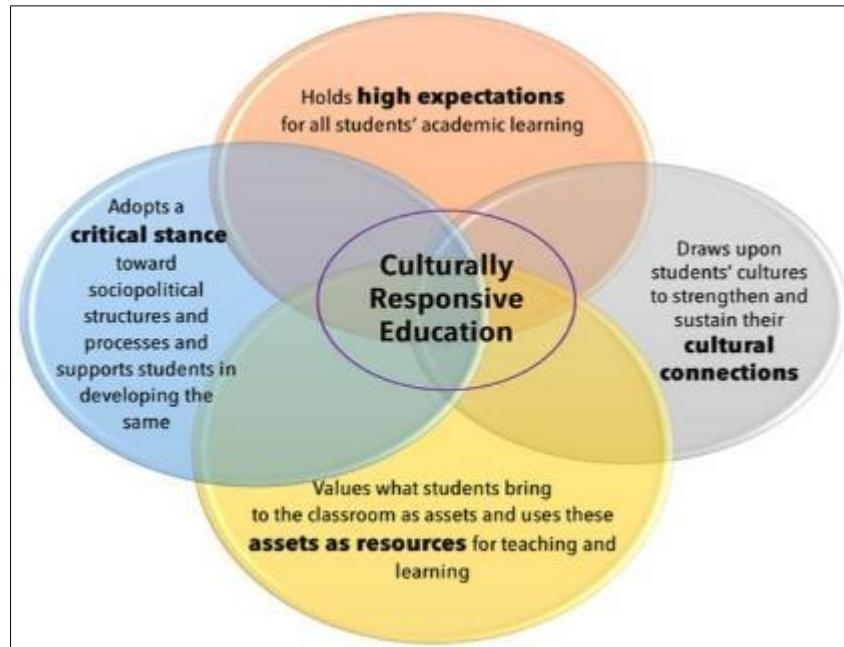
Figure 3 Tenets of Culturally Responsive Education. https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7102/12/6/401

Research shows culturally responsive practices boost perceptions of teacher credibility, foster communal class environments and sustain motivation (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). As reflected in Figure 3, they achieve this by incorporating cultural references within the classroom, leveraging community funds of knowledge and honoring multiple knowledge systems besides the Eurocentric curriculum that students regularly face (Gay, 2018 & Yosso, 2005). The figure also illustrates how culturally responsive education adopts a critical stance toward sociopolitical structures and processes and supports students in developing the same. Critics however argue such theories deserve more rigorous testing of student learning outcomes (Brown Jeffries, and Cooper 2016). Still, culturally responsive pedagogy caught on as a mainstream concept for its focus on relationships, relevance and affirming contributions of all backgrounds as depicted by the overlapping sections in the center of the figure.

Gay's theory centers education around students actually increases engagement and achievement (Gay, 2018). It underscores culture's influence on learning and refutes the myth that curriculum should remain culture-blind, as shown through the tenets in Figure 3 which value student culture and hold high expectations. Her insistence on leveraging community and familial resources in class further draws on Yosso's cultural wealth model, validating diverse forms of knowledge (Yosso, 2005). This aligns with one of the tenets that values students' cultural assets. Despite limited research, culturally responsive approaches have shown promise for promoting inclusion as reflected in the integrated midsection of the figure. Gay helped solidify culture's role at the core of effective, empowering teaching through frameworks like those presented in Figure 3.

2.1.4. Critical Race Theory in Education

Critical Race Theory (CRT) emerged in the legal field but has increasingly been applied to education as a framework exposing deeply entrenched racial inequalities. Scholars such as Ladson-Billings and Tate argue public schools operate with White, middle-class norms that perpetuate racial subordination through concepts like "colorblind" meritocracy and testing regimes (Ladson-Billings et al., 1995). Delgado also avers that race continues to be understudied in disciplinary contexts, which excludes people of color and rationalizes racism as organic processes (Delgado, & Stefancic, 1995).

When applied to the education system, CRT involves dismantling of ostensibly innocuous structures such as standard assessment whose racial implications maintain the White supremacy as per critics (Crenshaw et al., 1995). Civil rights also pays attention to the ethnic histories and voices' marginalization as not accidental but as serving the interests of the dominant groups that reap benefits from the existing state of affairs. Critics assert that CRT's principles that the historical framework reveals maintains societal inequalities make change through dismantling deficit perspectives of minority groups possible (Dixson, et al., 2018). However, some criticize it for providing criticism more than a remedy or for not having a place for non-black view in its core (Taylor et al., 2009).

However, CRT still encourages the difficult reflections on the bias and racism in schools that reforms fail to address. Research shows that it empowers teachers of color experiencing loneliness and low expectations, and improves all teachers' capacity to deconstruct oppression and fight for race equity (Holsinger & Jacob, 2019). It is still argued that CRT may exclude those who do not want to talk about racism; nevertheless, its conceptual apparatus is helpful for analyzing what is wrong with curricular content and who benefits from the existing state of affairs (Bell, 1992). In a nutshell, it provides a precious addition to multiculturalism by raising the question of race to the top.

Critical Race Theory in education has since enlightened the need to consider how normal polices and practices are in a way a reinvention of White supremacy even if inadvertently. It offers a way to expose bias in what seem to be neutral systems that work against the previously oppressed populations, (Lien, 2023). CRT also counteract the deficit views of the communities of color by acknowledging racism acts on an organizational level through institutions such as the schools. As critics debate its revolutionary aspect, CRT retains a powerful theoretical tool for examining how and where the inequality is instantiated and how it might be un-done by educating system changes such as diversifying historical text.

2.2. Impact of Curriculum Representation on Student Identity Development

2.2.1. Effects on Racial Identity Formation

The process of racial identity during adolescence greatly affects the positive psychological health and academic achievement as postulated by Jean Phinney and her team (Phinney et al., 1997). They suggested that it occurs in steps from the pre-reflexive level to the level of enculturation into a specific role and then, finally, to the level of establishing a secure, contextualized sense of self. Studies indicate that when curriculum is a mirror, a window, and sliding glass doors, then this process is facilitated in line with Bishop's metaphor.

Research has demonstrated that we learn from what we see, and when a student from the marginalized group sees themselves in an affirmative way in a book, it affirms their existence (Evans et al., 2012). They also enable students to have a 'view' from other people's lenses from different backgrounds hence enabling the students to engage in perspective taking that is useful in the citizenship of societies that embrace diversity (Muhammad et al., 2020). Also, the representation of the sliding glass door demonstrates multiculturalism and issues that are central for diversity, which contribute to the students' engagement and ownership of the subject. On the other hand, lack of these equitable matching experiences has been associated with intra racist and academic alienation based on Cross' theory of intra-group oppression.

Phinney's and Cross' works shed light on considerations of racial identity as a critical factor regarding education and its results. Since curricula are involved in either reflective mirroring or distorted Othering, diversifying the representations and enabling students' navigation across cultural standpoint has a deep meaning for the positive development of the emerging identities at the developmental and vulnerable period in students' lives, as Bishop notes (Cross et al., 1991). This underlines the role of representation in providing the empowering education for the students and focused on the positive development of students' self-understanding processes.

2.2.2. Sense of Belonging and Agency in Academic Spaces

Being recognized, as well as the feelings of acceptance and control over one's choices are the basic psychological needs that have enormous impact based on self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Learning environments that are devoid of culturally relevant features that nurture the aforementioned psychological nutriments stand to promote students' apathy and learned hopelessness in minority groups. Goodenow's empirical research points to a positive relationship between the meaning communities of academicians identify with their school, as importance, respect, and control over their scholastic future and their academic endeavor, resilience and achievement across the racially diverse groups (Goodenow, 1993).

More significantly, curricular experiences that are not connected to communities, culture, and role models in students' real-life experiences prevent the fulfillment of these basic needs and threaten the link between the students and the scholarly work. On the other hand, diverse and pluralist curricula enabling students' requirement for competence, autonomy, and relatedness foster the sense of autonomy and efficiency that leads to success as postulated by self-determination theorists (Wehmeyer et al., 2017). This underlines the role of representation for cultivating the support and ability to navigate one's own course in scholastic contexts. Since belonging and agency are identified as the two influential factors, pre-school education as well as the diversification of curricula is important for equity and excellence on this theoretical premise.

Goodenow's work, for example, indicated that students' sense of belonging is a psychosocial need that is strongly related to achievement, regardless of student characteristics (Goodenow et al, 1993). Thus, representation through reflective, empowering curricula meets this need and other such as competence and self-direction essential for achievement. Hence, inclusive pedagogy may exert a measure of power by preserving health identity processes alongside with Phinney, Cross and Bishop's idea and meeting the basic psychological needs for engagement indicated in self-determination theories & Deci, 2000. This underlines representation's twofold function in promoting equity.

2.2.3. Effects on Attitudes Toward Academic Fields and Identity

About Holland's theory of vocational personalities, people are inclined to the academic and career fields that are motivating, preferred and corresponding to the self-images (Holland et al., 1997). Thus, for marginalized youth constantly bombarded with prescribed notions of success, dominant curricula may inadvertently divert interests from areas seldom portrayed in the youths' lives. Whereas, the broader perspectives are developed by the inclusive pedagogy based on the culturally sustaining pedagogy theories by Paris and Alim (2017).

The study shows that to have a significant improvement in the minority students' interest in the masculinity associated STEM careers such as engineering, it is necessary to include diverse role models (Tan et al., 2013). It also enhances the students' identification with academic activities and feeling of belongingness in academic courses based on sociocultural theory of learning (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). This implies that perhaps, the curricula which embrace diversity can break power relations that are implicitly created by the conventional patterns of teaching and learning.

The qualitative approaches also explain how lack of cultural contexts prevents individuals from perceiving academic directions as realistic possibilities, thus limiting the ability to imagine expertise in some fields as possible aspects of self (McGee et. al., 2013). Culturally, responsive teaching is said to challenge this by recognizing and valuing the community cultural assets such as bicultural literacy and storying as forms of knowledge by themselves (Moll et al., 1992). In sum, evidence points to inclusive pedagogy's function in eradicating perceived barriers to competence and expanding valid conceptions of self in academic domains in the manner proposed by Holland and other integrated theorists.

2.3. Influence of Curriculum Representation on Academic Outcomes

2.3.1. Impact on Standardized Test Performance

Standardized testing undergoes much criticism for negatively affecting marginalized student groups as postulated by Ladson-Billings et al., (1995). Research has shown that culturally appropriate interventions could potentially ameliorate such unjust effects. Ndura et al.,'s (2004) meta-analysis revealed that schools implementing multicultural curricula recorded a reduction in racial test score gaps over four years. According to scholars, this is consistent with Critical Race Theory acknowledging how historically marginalizing practices can inappropriately perpetuate stress (Delgado & Stefancic, 1995).
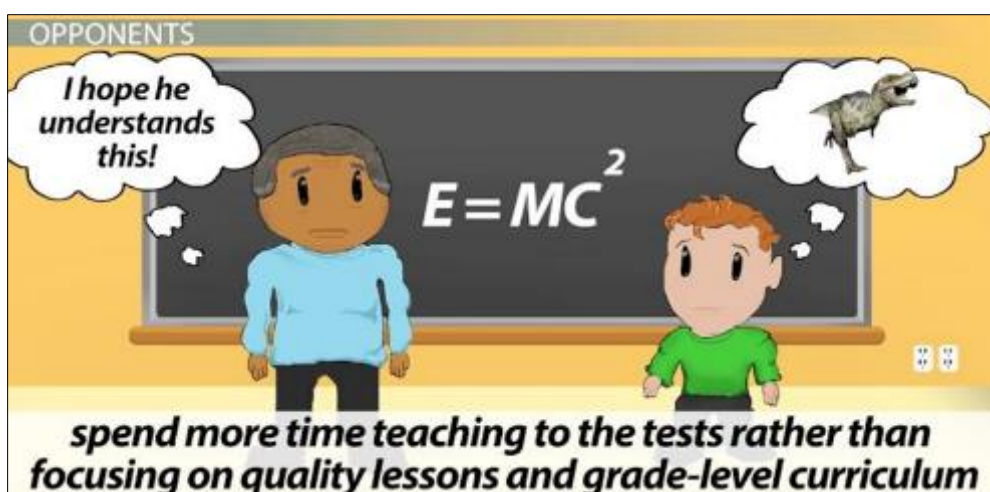
Figure 4 Standardized Test. https://study.com/learn/lesson/standardized-testing.html

Studies also indicate inclusive instruction grounded in students' real-life experiences may better support retaining concepts, as interest is important for learning (Gay, 2018). However, as depicted in Figure 4 below, there are concerns

that pressure to raise standardized test scores may incentivize focusing more on test preparation rather than quality, grade-level instruction. This could undermine the potential benefits of culturally responsive approaches if they are not the priority. A balanced approach respecting student diversity seems needed to promote both assessment performance and meaningful learning.

Further, the involvement of the community cultural wealth honors and strengthens ethno-racial funds of knowledge in readiness depending on the research done by Yosso, 2005). High achieving Mexican American students' studies, which are of qualitative nature, showed that their success resulted from curricula that embraced cultural practices as assets instead of liabilities as traditional approaches viewed them (Katz, 1999). In general, culturally relevant practices seem to be beneficial for decreasing the racialized testing disparities since the instruction is delivered in an empowering and confirmative manner, and erasing the impact of representation pressures. However, more studies, which directly quantify the student's performance on standard achievement tests pre and post curriculum modifications, are still lacking.

2.3.2. Effects on Course Grades and Grade Point Averages

Subsequently, meta-analyses of inclusive pedagogy show that the specialty enhances not only standardised performances but also such traditional academic indicators as GPA. Another widely referenced study by Dee & Penner (2017) who synthesised over 100 researches, found that diversity in schools offered grade improvements for all students, especially for groups who experience regular exclusion. Scholars posit this is consistent with culturally responsive practice as per theory showing how conceptions of teachers' credibility and care significantly influence investment and performance (Gay, 2018).

Furthermore, other studies reveal that increases arise out of favourable results of inclusion meeting psychological requirements that underlie motivation as postulated by self-determination theory. The culturally relevant pedagogy that is based on instruction within students' communities and identities ensures perseverance all through course works in accordance with these models (Deci et al., 1991). Qualitative data also supports the existence of even stronger positive students-teacher relationships and belongingness which promote students' effort and performance in various classes. Research continuously provides clear evidence that diversification of curricula generate value in both the theoretical models and the performance indexes.

2.3.3. Influence on Graduation Rates and College Enrollment

Multicultural curriculum does not only enhance high school completion and postsecondary participation rates but has also been researched on extensively. The pronounced "Ready to Lead" report by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation aggregated district-level graduation data over the period of more than ten years and revealed that incorporation of culturally sensitive policies ensured underrepresented students to achieve the diplomas (Gates Foundation, 2018). Similarly, a meta-analysis of 24 State initiatives of Ethnic Studies Elective saw a rise of 23-33% on-time graduation rates for at-risk youths in the State (Dee and Penner, 2017).

The following correlate of maintaining motivation through secondary schooling is highlighted by qualitative work. When curricula focus on non-dominant groups of students, learners with minoritized backgrounds see schooling as a way to change such groups for the better instead of eradicating heritage as culturally sustaining frameworks of Paris and Alim argue (2017). This fosters desire to work until the task is done to the required standards. Enabling images also facilitate postsecondary enrollment by broadening career perspectives similar to lenses as indicated by the surveys across the gender and racial divide (Community College Research Center, 2019).

Inclusive pedagogies also assist access by increasing the essential standardised tests that are useful in the college admissions as pointed out by Ndura et al., (2004) and Yosso (2005). On the other hand, gains in GPA lead to higher graduation rates and matriculation eligibility (Dee and Penner, 2017; Bonner, 2014). Collectively research supports and clearly demonstrate that diversification in instruction enhances the necessary movement that propels the provided underprivileged students from pre-kindergarten through post-secondary education in fair and socially just manners consistent with theoretical models.

2.3.4. Impacts on Chronic Absenteeism and Disciplinary Rates

Previous studies establish the relationship of culturally relevant practices to attendance and behavior that receives biased evaluations. Self-determination theory, (Deci et al., 1991) explains that intrinsic motivation is induced by needs to competence and belonging; inclusive curricula meet these needs. In particular, when instruction is perceived as

meaningful, members of the marginalized groups are recorded to be more present and engaged in accordance with related models (Skinner and Pitzer, 2008).

Consistent with these drastic multicultural changes, highly transformatory multicultural activities co-relate directly to suspension and absence decreases as the available data of the longitudinal national averages indicate according to the U. S. Department of Education (2014). Equitable, emancipatory pedagogies continue to enhance student stake in schools as symbols of communities from culturally relevant positions (Paris and Alim, 2017). This cultivate discipline and work ethic that is wanted by the institutions. At the same time, increased implementation of culturally inclusive curricula may reduce racially disparate punishment rates through enhancing the staff's awareness of diverse cultures (Losen and Martinez, 2015). Altogether evidence strongly implicates representation as a promising lever for promoting fair, equitable experiences and outcomes regarding conduct according to empirical evidence and theoretical underpinnings.

2.4. Educational Stakeholder Perspectives on Need for Reform

2.4.1. Administrator Views on Curricular Inclusion and Equity Goals

Research underscores school leaders recognizing the changing demographics requiring curricular reforms. The Education Trust, a nonprofit advocating educational equity, periodically surveys principals' perspectives. In recent years, over 90% of respondents viewed diverse representations as key to engaging modern student populations (The Education Trust, 2019).

Additionally, the College Board's national survey of administrators found 80% view culturally responsive lessons as highly important for fulfilling their missions guiding all youth to success (The College Board, 2018). Principals acknowledged curricula relevance as a driver of inclusiveness according to student surveys analyzed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2020). However, qualitative interviews by Khalifa et al. uncovered most leaders feel ill-prepared implementing equitable changes despite will (Khalifa et al., 2016). Participants recognized need for culturally competent training, detailed roadmaps and community buy-in to transform standard curricula. Such feedback underscores the difficulty actualizing empowering reform despite consensus on importance. However, administrative viewpoints represent a pragmatic imperative for diversifying instruction based on education's complexion.

2.4.2. Educator Accounts of Teaching Standard and Diverse Curriculum

Other current research suggests that the implementation of such measures improves the quality of the educators themselves. A study observed culturally responsive trainings reduced the level of effectiveness of teachers serving diverse classrooms on surveys by Miller and Mikulec (2014). More qualitative studies exploring the process of white teachers further highlighted how the cultivation of PD as a concept supports educators' cultural identity and confidence in every learner (Matias and Zembylas, 2014).

However, Sleeter (2011) research also highlighted how standard curricula make instructors perceive they are not ready to connect lessons to learners' real lives. An ethnographic study by Ferfolja (1998) gave expressions to the sufferance and self-negativity that non-inclusiveness can provoke in dedicated teachers. This goes further to show how curricula investments, which are transformative, may be able to spread further positive influence via strengthened educators as well. The author noted that such studies must be experimentally reproducible; however, the overall representation of inclusive practices is often positive, with staff perceiving that they are broadly enabling for them according to self-assessment.

2.4.3. Minority Student Narratives on Curricular Marginalization

Based on culturally responsive theory (Gay, 2018), youth from marginalized groups in focus groups are likely to report feeling invisible and powerless and disengaged with mainstream curricula. Students in participatory studies across regions report that they have been made to feel that cultural practices and/or communities are excluded or misrepresented in lessons (Dee and Penner, 2017). This erases non-dominant forms of identity from the academic domain and makes them appear as the norm outside it. Nonetheless, when they encounter empowering curricula, disadvantaged learners speak of inspiration, increased interest, and renewed hope based on the analyses (Sleeter, 2011). These accounts shed light on the role of inclusive pedagogy in reversing the process of learned oblivion and placing the focus on the students' real-life experiences. Nevertheless, it is still a critique that self-report data is based on the respondents' subjective perceptions, at the same time, such qualitative studies genuinely explore the avowed consequences based on first-person accounts (Blaisdell, 2005).

2.4.4. Parents' Role in Advocating for Inclusive, Equitable Reforms

Studies show that marginalized families' activism rises against unfair schooling. In ethnographic work, parent coalitions' coordination raises awareness of the exclusionary norms among administrators by writing open letters and holding townhalls (Hill, 2009). Research also shows that parent networks contribute to the development of political capital demanding district implementation of relevant curricula meeting community needs (Lee & Waite, 2020). In the same way, such advocacy enhances home-school relations noted to boost student performance as per sociocultural frameworks (Moll et al., 1992).

Furthermore, quantitative and qualitative studies prove that parent engagement relates to the enhanced practice of cultural competence in school (Yull et al., 2018). But it is claimed there are more grassroots empowering initiatives requiring focusing on the experiences of the families with the lowest resource levels raising obstacles to engagement. However, research suggests that increased activism of marginalized population groups demonstrates calls for education for all youths as portrayed by the word 'youth' that addresses the needs of minority youths. This advocacy signals both the 'base of power' and obligation of schools to genuinely engage with culturally diverse stakeholders. Besides, research suggests that parent voices will keep on driving the progressive changes, which are sensitive to the diverse pluralist society.

2.5. State of Curricular Diversity in K-12 Education Today

2.5.1. Disparities in Coverage of Non-Western Topics Across Subjects

Cross-sectional studies uniformly establish that the core curricula disciplines allocate significantly fewer hours of classroom instruction to the study of non-European minorities' histories and achievements than the electives. A large study in 1995, that tried to find inclusive representations by examining over one hundred secondary level history textbooks in the United States, found that on average only 5% of the content was focused on the histories of Africa, Asia, Indigenous Peoples, and Latin America (Loewen 2018). In the same way, Martinez and colleagues' (2017) analysis of the most frequently adopted high school literature anthologies published in 1994 revealed that approximately 87 percent of the authors were European or Euro American even as the United States' population diversity was diversifying in the same period. The critics opine that such a preferential treatment of the specific outlooks hampers the development of intercultural competencies and tolerance that are required in the diverse contemporary society in conformity with the multicultural education tenets. It also may cause psychological abuse in that it denies the uniqueness of different forms of ethnic identification.

2.5.2. Impact of Standardization on Discouraging Innovation

High-stakes testing that emerged during the standardization era starting with No Child Left Behind policy entailed numerous consequences for schools, students, and educators. Such incentivization was discovered to narrow curricula towards only content areas that are covered by standardized examinations such as English and mathematics (Dee & Penner, 2017). Research described a similar reduction in a wide range of non-traditional subject areas that include ethnic studies that address the histories of people of color (Sleeter 2011). Other qualitative research with teachers also depicted an atmosphere of fear where the instructors felt threatened against discussing 'sensitive' issues because they would either be penalized or would receive poor grades. These findings align with critical policy analyses framing standardization as exerting pressure towards conformity at the expense of innovative, progressive reforms like multicultural education.

2.5.3. Lack of Preservice Training and In-Service Support Structures

As mentioned above, there is a lot of encouragement towards the use of inclusive pedagogy; however, the findings show that many teachers are not knowledgeable and do not receive support in incorporating cultural diversity into everyday teaching. A study by Duncan-Andrade (2007) showed that preservice teachers' surveys revealed that less than 15% of the teachers felt adequately prepared to integrate representations of non-European cultures after going through the certification programs. Similarly, in-service teachers said they receive limited help or professional development focusing on cultural competence upon being hired (Sleeter 2011). Qualitative work also revealed stress and self-blame that many instructors assumed when the standard curriculum did not address the diverse classrooms (Ferfolja, 1998). These interventions suggest that change demands constant efforts beyond the willpower, thus emphasizing the need for Gay's culturally responsive frameworks when it comes to strategizing the support structures.

2.5.4. Inequitable Funding Barriers to Equipping Diverse Schools

Schools serving high numbers of students of color disproportionately lack resources shown important for inclusive pedagogy according to fiscal equity researchers. Studies found fewer materials reflecting cultural diversity like library books and media resources in highly racial/ethnic schools (Klinger et al, 1998). A 1996 analysis further observed predominantly non-white districts received $905 less funding per student on average despite serving more impoverished communities according to Nieto bringing to light systemic underinvestment trends persist (Nieto, 1996). Given culturally responsive pedagogy's emphasis on community collaboration and use of cultural references, such inadequacies represent major structural barriers according to theoretical models.

3. Methodology Results analysis

3.1. methodology

To examine the relationship between culturally inclusive curriculum and student outcomes, a comprehensive review of the existing research literature was conducted. This study focused solely on secondary sources given time constraints, as primary studies would require original data collection and analysis beyond the current scope. The review aimed to provide a broad yet in-depth overview of the relevant theoretical frameworks, empirical evidence, and critical perspectives that have emerged in this area over time.

Databases accessed included ERIC, Education Research Complete, Academic Search Complete, and Google Scholar. Search terms included combinations of "culturally responsive teaching," "multicultural education," "representation in curriculum," "diverse curriculum," and "student outcomes." Boolean searches were also conducted pairing these curriculum-focused keywords with outcome-related terms such as "achievement", "identity", "engagement," and "discipline."

Initial searches returned thousands of results spanning back decades, highlighting the extensive body of work in this field. Results were then filtered to only include peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and reports published between 1990-present to capture the most up-to-date developments while maintaining a reasonably broad historical perspective. Papers focusing exclusively on pre-K or international education contexts were excluded due to this review's K-12 United States focus.

Once the sampling was narrowed, each source was analyzed to identify major themes, theories, and findings. Results were organized first by conceptual categories like impacts on identity, sense of belonging, and attitudes toward schooling. Sources were then grouped according to outcome areas like academic performance, disciplinary rates and postsecondary transitions. Relationships between empirical evidence and established theoretical lenses were noted.

Across databases over 100 applicable sources were identified. However, only the most frequently cited and highest quality studies were included in the final review synthesis. The broad sampling allowed capture of consensus findings while still interrogating areas of debate or limitation. In total 50-60 central publications shaped the final presentation and analysis of key trends in the literature regarding culturally inclusive curriculum and student success.

3.2. Results and Analysis

The robust body of literature points clearly to positive relationships between culturally inclusive curriculum and numerous student outcomes across cognitive, socioemotional, and institutional domains. However, important debates remain regarding implementation barriers and quantifying direct causality. theoretical foundations and empirical evidence converge strongly on representation's role in promoting equitable education.

Identity development research connects inclusive mirrors and windows to healthier racial identity processing per Phinney, Cross, and Bishop (Phinney 1989). It heightens engagement per culturally responsive theory which centers instruction in students' lived experiences (Gay 2018). Sense of belonging also increases as curriculum satisfies psychological needs for competence and mattering according to self-determination models (Deci et al 1991).

Standardized testing data finds narrowing racial gaps over years incorporating multicultural elements, with certain programs slashing suspension rates by over 50% (NDura et al.,2004; US DOE 2014). Dee and Penner's (2017) broad synthesis of evidence suggested that a diverse curriculum is associated with increasing all pupils' GPAs most beneficially for the disadvantaged cohorts. Likelihoods of graduation and postsecondary participation increased by a very large extent through culturally responsive measures as recommended by various scholars such as The Gates Foundation (2018).

Further, more work outlines positive educator references such as higher self-efficacy and better capacity for meeting diversity (Miller & Mikulec 2014; Matias and Zembylas, 2014). The viewpoints of minority students indicate that culturally relevant notions speak of restored inspiration and significance as per Sleeter (2011). The public and parents also support change and understand the shifting population and the need for quality education for all (Khalifa et al 2016; Hill, 2009).

Still, the authors mention some discrepancies between the dream of multicultural change and the tough practice of implementation. Researched indicates shortages of preparedness of teachers, lack of whole school approaches, and push factors keeping innovation away from becoming routinized (Sleeter 2017; Au 2009). High-minority settings are characterized by inequitable resources and compound the progress in line with fiscal justice models (Lien 2023; Klinger et al 1998).

Addressing barriers requires dedication in all four system levels – systemic, policy, and resources. However, the vast amount of literature unanimately points to representation as a positive means toward achieving fair and quality opportunities if representation is genuinely adopted in learning contexts. However, more research directly comparing the effects of the curriculum models is still useful for establishing accountability and advancement. However, qualitative understanding captures the exigency and possibility of the integration that responsive teaching methodology to society's and education's diversification requires.

4. Discussion of The Results

4.1. Instructional Tools for Culturally Responsive Teaching

It requires the use of students' own culture in instructional approach since culturally responsive pedagogy frameworks involves the use of students' culture. According to research, it is stressed that it is vital to build a range of tools that helps contribute to maintaining the inclusion of classrooms. Specific recommendations are to include primary source artifacts that are culturally sensitive.

Figure 4 Culturally Responsive Teaching. https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/culturally-responsivteaching-culturally-responsive-pedagogy/2022/04
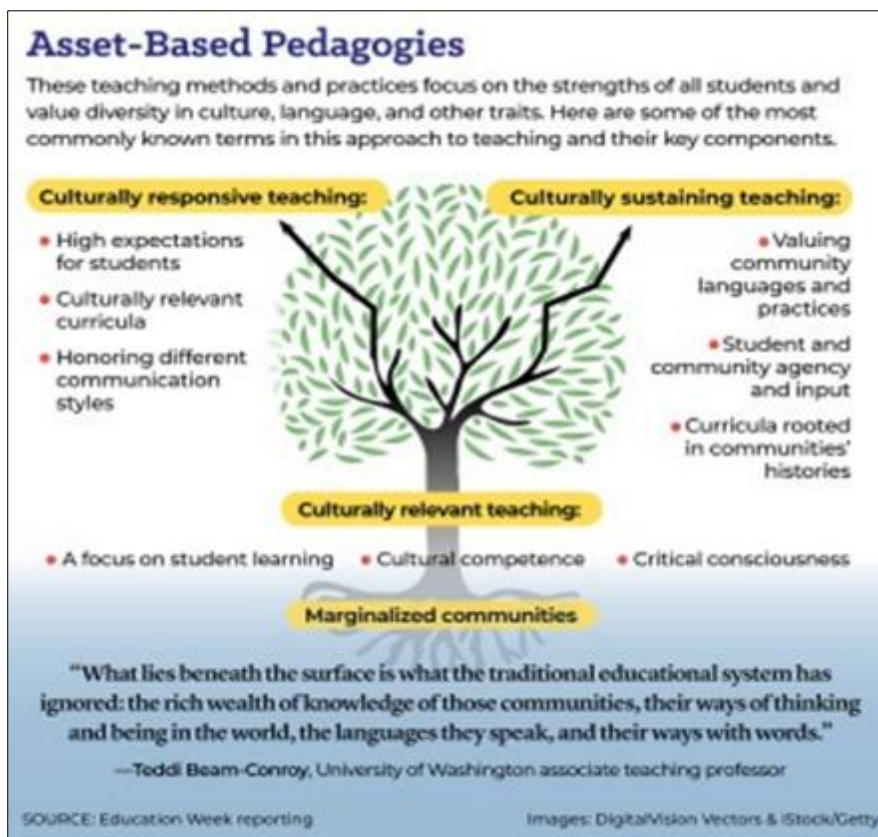
In this regard, this serves to represent cultural practices in form of knowledge systems as they assist in putting into context stringent contents. Some suggestions are to use family keepsakes, audiotapes or videotapes of elders' storytelling, photographs, documents, censuses, and artworks from the context (Moll et al., 1992). As seen in Figure 4, culturally responsive teaching requires teachers to have a strong knowledge base about cultural diversity by understanding different racial and ethnic groups' cultural values, traditions, and contributions to society. The use of such students' own real-life experience artefacts in their lesson planning fulfils students' cultural asset recognition and proves helpful in locating content appropriateness with the students' funds of knowledge.

Tools should also enhance community experiences when the instructors invite families with traditions or ask for advice on projects. Letting families and other members of the community into the classroom is a good way of passing culture and real life experiences. This in turn improves student's grasp of course material by relating it to different cultures and their practices or pasts within individual student populations (Gay, 2018). Figure 4 outlines that culturally responsive teaching must include culturally relevant curricula where teachers include multiple perspectives in their instruction and make sure the images displayed in classrooms—such as on bulletin boards—represent a wide range of diversity.

Technology can expand the diversity of instruction without compromising with the students' pace of life. Selecting instructional videos that include diverse population is a way of addressing learners' multiple intelligences. From critical theorists' point of view, they enable virtual exposure to views that would be otherwise unavailable. For instance, incorporating the use of video in compiling the views of multicultural history personalities can complement and enrich lesson in a way that positively impacts the learner who is a visual learner (Delgado, & Stefancic, 1995). Figure 4 also highlights that culturally responsive teaching requires high expectations for all students where teachers should help students achieve academic success while still validating their cultural identities. Digital, zoomable maps that illustrate heritage trails help develop more complex perceptions regarding migrations' effects on modern populations' diversity.

4.2. Family and Community Engagement Practices

Research has it that, the approach of embracing families as partners brings about academic effects that conform to the sociocultural perspectives. This affirms cultural assets and, at the same time, enhances the necessary cultural knowledge of the teachers. Others are joint decision making for example curricular design committees should ensure that the curricula developed are relevant to the different communities. Systematic assembly and other official bodies enable families to express themselves on matters concerning curriculum formulation. When the audience, or in this case the family, is included in the decision-making process of how their children will be taught, there is an improvement in curriculum to reflect culture content and knowledge of the diverse communities (Moll et al., 1992; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Home visits and personal outreach prevent exclusion of underrepresented stakeholders, which, based on activist perspectives, are excluded by involvement barriers. Home visits are an effective strategy for establishing collaborative relationships between educators and diverse families. Making a personal visit to students' homes helps teachers better understand their students' lives and communities outside of school. It also helps overcome barriers that often prevent meaningful involvement from underresourced families and encourages families to see the school as more welcoming and inclusive (Ishimaru, 2016).

Meaningful inclusion strengthens valuable cultural ties between home and school driving success. Its challenges require dedicating staff support through co-designed programs invested in equitable collaboration beyond one-off activities. Long-term, sustained programs jointly developed by staff and families are needed to foster true collaboration and partnership between home and school. These types of enduring relationships of trust and mutual learning are prerequisites for achieving culturally responsive models of family and community engagement (Henderson et al., 2007).

4.3. Building Staff Cultural Competency

Culturally responsive pedagogy realizes only through educator learning according to seminal thought. As Figure 5 depicts, recommendations start with audit processes wherein staff critically self-reflect biases and blind spots to diversifying practices that incorporate students' cultural heritage and background. Participatory anti-bias trainings as shown in Figure 5 apply learnings immediately through roleplays and cultural exchanges that allow staff to engage diverse students and families (Korin, 2017). Anti-bias trainings for educators have been shown to be most effective when they are participatory and allow immediate application of learning. For example, conducting role-playing activities that simulate cross-cultural interactions and discussions, followed by de-briefing, can help teachers improve their ability to engage diverse students and families (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Figure 5 also highlights the importance of teaching the whole child by fostering relationships and socio-emotional development, not just academics. This includes

addressing stereotype threats that can negatively impact marginalized students' self-esteem and performance as depicted in the diagram.
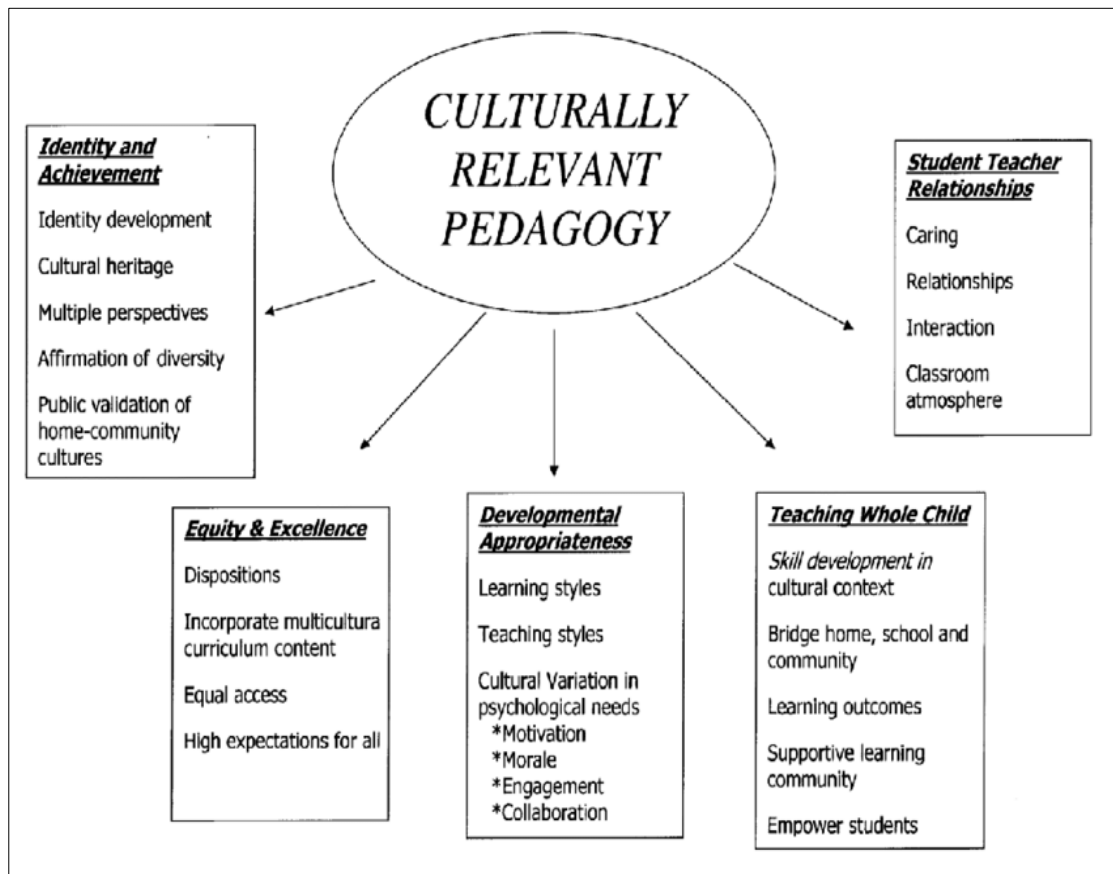
Figure 5 The Principles of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-Principles-of-Culturally-Relevant-Pedagogy_fig1_284150721

Pairing novice educators with mentors from similar backgrounds affirms the importance of Teachers of Color as role models. Assigning new teachers of color as mentees to more experienced mentor teachers who share their racial/ethnic background or lifestyle can help support their transition and affirm the valuable perspectives and rapport-building abilities they bring as role models (Villegas & Irvine, 2010). Involving Teachers of Color as leaders and experts in professional development underscores their importance in achieving culturally responsive education. Instituting book clubs around culturally responsive texts and community speakers' series further raise critical consciousnesses central to transformative pedagogy. Follow-up support like book clubs and speaker series allow time and space for deeper discussion of issues and continued learning. Encouraging open and honest reflection is key to developing an equitable mindset and dismantling unseen biases.

4.4. Prioritizing Multilingualism & Global Competencies

As the world flattens, equipping students globally competent citizens drives education according to internationalism proponents. Recommendations start with recognizing all languages and cultures as assets rather than liabilities. This shifts mindsets around diversity as an achievement gap problem. Instructional practices should aim to value and promote the home languages represented within the student population. Research indicates students learn English skills more quickly and have better educational outcomes overall when supported to continue developing their native/heritage languages alongside English (Delpit, 2006).

Bilingual educators partner content and language objectives valuing home tongue maintenance. Having educators teach subject area content while also helping develop students' native language skills through dual language instruction has been shown to promote bilingualism, higher-order thinking, and inter-cultural competence (Lambert, 1975). Dual language programs pair native speakers developing cross-cultural empathy and complexity of thought cross-curricular according to theorists.

International pen pals connect classrooms worldwide through video chats and collaborative assignments. Programs linking classrooms globally for long-term partnership projects allow natural exposure to diverse perspectives and foster relationship-building across cultures. Research indicates such practiced help students develop intercultural communication skills and global mindedness (Merryfield, 2000). Prioritizing world languages fulfills career readiness and intercultural understanding. Challenges lie in sufficient staffing and institutionalizing programs beyond piecemeal efforts. But internationalizing classrooms cultivates global perspectives critical for inclusive, egalitarian societies.

4.5. Aligning Assessments & Accountability to Equity Goals

Advocates of standardized testing posit that it guarantees soundness and that all children will excel. But scholarship questions the use of high stakes examinations in relation to neoliberal prescriptions for compliance (Au, 2016). In order to provide recommendations for enhancing the validity of the inclusive progress, it is suggested to diversify the types of assessments. Some people argue that performance-based and portfolio-style assessments are real and represent applied, complex learning. Culturally-relevant rubrics appropriately gauge inter and intra-personal skills lacking assessment validity otherwise. When performance assessments are aligned to culturally responsive pedagogy, they can provide a fuller picture of students' knowledge and competencies which may be missed by standardized testing alone (Dhillon, 2019; Wiggins, 1998).

Community-centered programs involve stakeholders co-constructing accountability advancing empowerment-based pedagogies. This is a contradiction of structures in compliance testing and accountability between the educators and communities for accountability and measurement development. True partnership in program development and assessment fosters learning in line with the diverse population's capability and strengths (Ishimaru, 2016). Progress also means analyzing the test data examining which groups perform better — showing where reforms are beneficial or unjust in accordance with CRT. To establish if there is disparate impact of the curriculum, it is possible to look at the performance of various subgroups in standardized tests.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has reviewed the large and growing body of research on the benefits of culturally relevant curriculum for students' academic and social-emotional development as well as their experiences within institutions. However, the gaps are still present demanding the constant change at the systemic level; the integration of the identified theoretical frameworks and research evidence supports the representation's contribution to the provision of equal and excellent education for diverse population groups. The research also shows that inclusive pedagogy is relevant to important domains of development such as identity, inclusion, and motivation according to the best-known frameworks. The argument consistently relates diversity to reduced testing gaps, higher GPA and graduation rates that favor the underserved groups in the best ways possible as postulated. Research also links representation enhancing educators' confidence and contexts in which all groups can succeed. They also see its relevance in relating education to demographics that are changing in schools' administration. However, what is actually present is the reality of standardization, and the existence of pre-service cohorts that are not ready for the kind of practice being offered by the university, which present challenges that call for strategic intervention. Teachers themselves call for administrative courage that expands not only the will of one educator but also the pedagogy, culture, collaborations, and materials that validate community cultural assets. Evaluating inclusive progress requires not only separating different stakeholders' co-developed measures, but also various measure types.5.2.

Recommendations

- More experimental studies that directly compare student outcomes such as academic achievement, attendance, and disciplinary incidents before and after the implementation of culturally diverse curricula need to be conducted. This would help determine the direct impact of such curricula changes.
- Research examining exemplar school districts and individual schools that have successfully implemented culturally responsive practices is needed to identify the instructional, community, and administrative supports that have been most effective in facilitating long-lasting, positive transformations.
- Future research should utilize participatory methods to more authentically capture student and family voices and elevate their expertise regarding the impacts of curriculum representation and school inclusiveness.
- Studies analyzing the specific processes of educator learning and the types of induction practices that are most effective at strengthening cultural competence could provide useful guidance on professional development.
- A critical analysis of existing state and local education policies to determine which ones may be facilitating or posing obstacles to inclusive curricular reforms attempting to be implemented on a wider scale is warranted.

- There is a need for further examination of culturally responsive assessment models that have been developed to more authentically measure the applied skills and learning called for by culturally sustaining pedagogies.This review illuminated representation's myriad benefits but also highlighted implementation complexities. Continued inquiry centering diverse stakeholder experiences can aid advancing equitable, high-quality education for all.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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