The Effects of a Service-Learning Intructory Diversity Course on Pre-Service Teachers' Attitudes toward Teaching Diverse Student Populations

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THE EFFECTS OF A SERVICE-LEARNING INTRODUCTORY DIVERSITY COURSE ON PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS’ ATTITUDES TOWARD TEACHING DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATIONS

Dr. Dawn Lucas
Dean, Division of Education
Pfeiffer University
AGENDA

• Need for Research
• Overview of Study
• Lessons Learned from Data
• From Research to Practice
• Take away(s) from presentation
• Questions
NEED FOR RESEARCH

- To determine the effects of one service-based course in diversity in teacher education program on pre-service teachers’ attitudes toward diverse learners at one university in North Carolina.
OVERVIEW OF STUDY
• How does a one three-semester hour service-based introductory course in diversity affect pre-service teachers’ attitude toward the inclusion of diverse learners in a general education classroom?
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

• Social Constructivism- Lev Vygotsky
  • “Learners arrive in any learning situation with a range of knowledge and experience that will influence how they respond to new information” (Hyslop-Margison & Stobel, 2008, p. 78).
  • Knowledge is socially negotiated and constructed through culture, language and social interactions.
  • Knowledge is not generated by individuals
  • New Knowledge must be intelligible, plausible, and fruitful.
SERVANT LEADERSHIP

- Springboard for the evolution of leadership in teacher education
- “True leadership stems from the deep desire for one to help others” (Spears, 2004).
INSTRUMENTATION

Culturally Diverse Students

- Pluralism and Diversity Awareness Assessment (PADAA)
  - Stanley, 1996

Students with Disabilities

- Opinions Relative to Inclusion (ORI)
  - Anotnak & Larivee (1995)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Data</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>70% of respondents are ages 18-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation is EDUC 322</td>
<td>60% have completed course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensure Area</td>
<td>60% identified Elementary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>92% identified as Caucasian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>77% of respondents are female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses higher than 400</td>
<td>49% none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13% - 2 courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8% - 3 courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40% - 4 courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure –Cultural Diversity</td>
<td>90% reported yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83% more than once a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure-students with disabilities</td>
<td>88% reported yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70% more than once a week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appreciates Cultural Pluralism
- Hypothesis 2

Values Cultural Pluralism
- Hypothesis 3

Implements Cultural Pluralism
- Hypothesis 4

Uncomfortable with Cultural Pluralism
- Hypothesis 5
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Reject or Accept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate students who participate in a three-hour service-based course in diversity will have <strong>significantly different attitudes toward inclusion of culturally diverse learners</strong> than those who do not participate in the course.</td>
<td><strong>REJECTED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...significantly different attitudes of appreciation for cultural pluralism...</td>
<td><strong>REJECTED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...significant differences in attitudes of valuing cultural pluralism ...</td>
<td><strong>REJECTED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>differences with regard to implementing cultural pluralism pedagogy</td>
<td><strong>REJECTED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>significant differences toward feeling uncomfortable with culturally diverse learners</td>
<td><strong>REJECTED</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Benefits of Integration

- Hypothesis 7

Integrated Classroom Behavior Management

- Hypothesis 8

Perceived Ability to Teach Students with Disabilities

- Hypothesis 9

Special versus Integrated General Education

- Hypothesis 10
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Reject or Accept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate students who participate in a three-hour service-based course in diversity will have <strong>significantly different attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities</strong> than those who do not participate in the course.</td>
<td><strong>ACCEPTED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>...significantly better understanding of the benefits of integration of students with disabilities ...</strong></td>
<td><strong>ACCEPTED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>...significantly different attitudes about integrated classroom behavior management ...</strong></td>
<td><strong>REJECTED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REJECTED</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>significantly different attitudes about their perceived ability</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>to teach students with disabilities ...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>significant differences toward feeling uncomfortable with</td>
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<tr>
<td>culturally diverse learners...</td>
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<tr>
<td>significantly different attitudes about the qualifications of</td>
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<tr>
<td>general versus special educators teaching students with</td>
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<tr>
<td>disabilities ...</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Service-based course in Diversity

Impact on Pre-service teachers attitude toward the inclusion of students with disabilities into general classroom
- More favorable attitude toward inclusion

Impact on pre-service teachers attitude toward the inclusion of culturally diverse learners in the general classroom
- Better understanding of the benefits of integration of students with disabilities into the general classroom.
- NONE...BUT
LESSONS LEARNED
Pre-service Teachers' Attitudes

- Students who completed the class had a more favorable attitude with regard to the inclusion of students with disabilities.
- Gained a better understanding of inclusion.
CULTURAL PLURALISM

Appreciates

Values

Implements
What Does this Mean for Teacher Education Programs

• Attitudes of pre-service teacher already favor inclusion of diverse learners however research indicates a gap in achievement for students with disabilities.

Changing pre-service teachers’ attitudes is just the first step!
Recommendations for a Model

- A service-based introductory course in diversity followed by upper level programmatic courses that infuse and apply the concepts of diversity and inclusion in order to not only facilitate a change in attitude, but also to change teaching behavior.
FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Developing Servant Leaders for Professional Practice: Preparation and Planning, Establishing a Respectful Environment, Instructing Effectively, and Assuming Professional Responsibilities
At Pfeiffer University ALL education majors are required to take EDUC 322.

It now meets General Education requirement standards, therefore any student can enroll in this course to meet graduation requirements.

Designated as a Service Learning course (requires at least 20 hours of SL)

Includes SLP which is an evidence for licensure
This course is designed to equip prospective teachers with a broad base of knowledge and skills for teaching diverse learners. Teacher candidates study:

- Heritage and culture of high incidence ethnic groups and exceptionalities.
- Principles of culturally responsive teaching, accommodations for exceptional learners.
- Strategies for effective inclusion of English language learners in general education classrooms.
SERVANT LEADERSHIP PROJECT

• Collaborative
• Responsive
• Involves parents of P-12 students
• Serves the community
• Demonstrate LEADERSHIP

• Includes
  • Review of Literature
  • Discussion of SIP
  • Data included in SIP
  • REFLECTION on learning that occurred at all phases
  • Collaboration efforts
  • Professional relationships developed
  • Assessment
CURRENT SERVANT LEADERSHIP COMPONENT

Teacher Candidates

Stanly County Schools

Pfeiffer

YMCA (COMMUNITY)
REACH
DEVELOPING ATTITUDES
Upon completion of Diversity in Education, Teacher Candidates go on to take upper level courses that include:

- Pedagogy specific to diverse learning (i.e. UDL)
- Skill development opportunities
- Lesson Plan writing skills that include opportunities to address needs of diverse learners
- Field placement Level II MUST be in a diverse school
- All licensure areas have courses specific to teaching students with exceptionalities (i.e. Adapted Physical Education, Strategies for Exceptional Learners…)
- Participation in SEMC which targets opportunities with diverse populations
SEMC OPPORTUNITIES
BOOKS ALIVE!!!
TAKE AWAY FROM PRESENTATION
SUGGESTIONS

- Develop a service-based course to address teacher candidate/students attitudes regarding diversity
- Align those attitudes with that of a professional teacher who believes ALL students can learn
- Provide opportunities to PROVE this notion
- Provide opportunities for knowledge and skill development specifically related to diverse learners
- Ultimate goal is to improve self efficacy regarding teacher candidates ability to teach all students in order to CLOSE the GAP!!
THANK YOU!!

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