Key Terms and Concepts for Intercultural Development

BCCIE
BC COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Intercultural

- Involves two or more people of different cultures whose interactions promote negotiated meaning and understanding.

- The difference between intercultural and multicultural is in the interaction and negotiation of meaning. Multicultural refers to diversity of people, not the interactions between them.

Culture

According to LeBaron and Pillay (2006), who wrote Conflict Across Culture, culture is defined as the "shared, often unspoken, understanding in a group... It is a series of lenses that shape what we see and don't see, how we perceive and interpret, and where we draw boundaries. Often invisible even to us, culture shapes our ideas of what is important, influences our attitudes and values, and animates our behaviours. Each of us belongs to multiple cultures and so we are experienced in transitioning cultural boundaries within and between us from an early age" (p.14).

Socialization

Socialization refers to the process of learning the meanings and practices that enable us to navigate and behave appropriately within the norms of a culture. We are socialized on both group and individual levels by several different agents such as educational systems, the media, our families, our peers, workplaces, and our generation, to name a few.

Power

The capacity to do something, act in a particular way, or influence others.

Individuals have power, but there are other types of power. The following are a few examples of institutional power:

- History has power

- Laws have power

- Money has power

Reference: sleighthompson.com

Privilege

Unearned benefits and access to resources given to one social group as a result of marginalizing other social groups. Privilege is often connected to the social groups that have power in society. Privilege happens due to aspects of identity such as race, gender, class, ability, sexual orientation, language fluency and so on.

The wheel includes: Education, Political Belief, Family, Organizational Role, Language and Communication Skills, Income, Religion, Appearance, Work Experience, Age, Race / Ethnicity, Gender Identity or Expression, Mental / Physical Ability, Sexual Orientation, Gender, National Origin.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality sometimes compound and create obstacles that are not understood through a singular lens of identity or analysis. Intersectional approaches account for the complex ways that one can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression based on different aspects of their social identities.

Equity

Equity addresses difference and is not about equality, which means everyone is treated the same. Equity recognizes that some groups have been historically disadvantaged, for example, in the access to educational opportunities. Inequities and discrimination occur at the level of the individual, teams, collectives, systems and through intersectionality across the levels.

Inclusion

Inclusion is the concept that all people have access to participate, for example in education, and are treated with dignity, in that the diverse aspects of their identities are respected and valued. Inclusion is the continuous process of increasing the presence, participation, and achievement of all learners, which requires an equitable approach to education.

WE WELCOME

ALL RACES AND ETHNICITIES
ALL RELIGIONS
ALL COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN
ALL GENDER IDENTITIES
ALL SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS
ALL ABILITIES AND DISABILITIES
ALL SPOKEN LANGUAGES
ALL AGES
EVERYONE.

WE STAND HERE WITH YOU
YOU ARE SAFE HERE

* Content adapted from the original "We Welcome" sign created by IPRC members Lisa Mangum and Jason Levian

Intercultural Development

Intercultural development is more than a tool of exchange, it also promotes critical dialogues that question inequity and discrimination.

As we engage in our development, we may note that "intercultural practice is undertaking shifts in consciousness that acknowledge sociopolitical context, raise questions regarding control and power, and inform, rather than deferring to, shifts in practice" (Gorski, 2008).

This approach is critical to intercultural education as it offers a critical, *social justice* approach to grapple with the dynamic, interconnected, and complex nature of intercultural development.

References

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