



# Multicultural and multireligious educational system: impact of teachers' understanding of cultural diversity on students' performance

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- With the Pathway project we would like to influence on the educational system in order for teachers to **recognize** and **respect** the presence of different cultural groups in class and **acknowledge** and **value** their socio-cultural differences.
- Teachers need to discover why students do what they do. The reason may be cultural instead of behavioral.

"It is those who haven't experienced diverse perspectives and outlooks in life who tend to provide very linear and unimaginative solutions to problems."

Steve Jobs

## *Benefits for students*

- Experimental studies on influence indicate that the presence of a few group members who hold opinions that are different from those of the majority leads to increased reasoning and creativity;
- Meaningfulness of human life is found in relationships;
- What better way of broadening a child's understanding of human life than by immersing them in a learning environment where students from different countries share stories with their classmates.
- How valuable would it be to hear first-hand views about life under different political regimes, different socio-cultural and economic conditions?

- Multi-cultural and multi-religious classes must be managed well for there be real benefit for all students.
- Learning is not only an intellectual activity, it is also a very emotional experience. It brings up strong feelings that can range from frustration to satisfaction and from anxiety to delight.

## Benefits for students

**Emotional safety for students;**

**Self-confidence;**

**Belonging;**

**Recognition;**

Within a multi-cultural and multi-religious environment students are urged to explore and understand better the differences .

As Audre Lorde tells us, “we have no patterns for relating across our human differences as equals.”

Well managed multicultural class can help a lot in overcoming that.

# *Pedagogical approaches to teach religion in school*

- **Teaching sacred books as literature:** Sacred books offer universal stories, themes, metaphors, and characterizations. There is plethora of literary forms and genres that can be found there: poetry, narratives, epistles, proverbs, parables, satire, and visionary writing. When teachers and students interact with the sacred books using literary tools of analysis, they will be able to discover in the text what was missed while focusing on the storylines of miracles and life of saints. A literary approach seeks the unity of the text, trying to make connections with the literary nature of the canon, the book, and the immediate context.

# *Pedagogical approaches to teach religion in school*

- **Teaching religion through the personal experiences of prophets and saints:** *This methodological approach of teaching religion is to be used to show students that common people can follow the morals and the values sacred books teach. Love, understanding, kindness are universal.*
- *Prophets are not necessarily popular and not necessarily “perfect”.*

# *Pedagogical approaches to teach religion in school*

- ***Teaching secular values, which coincide with religious values***
- Normally, when one puts on the brakes and swerves while driving in order to avoid hitting a child that has run out into the street, one does so in order to save the child's life because one thinks life, particularly the life of an innocent child, is important. One does not apply the brakes in order to please God, though God may be pleased. A Jew might do this; a Muslim might do this; a Christian might do this; an atheist might do this. Such an act has to do with valuing the life of a child, regardless of what philosophical basis, if any, one might have for doing so.

# Pedagogical approaches to teach religion in school

## **Peer learning in teaching history of religions**

- All together dancing;
- Circle of showing skills;

## **Teaching religions through visual arts (paintings, sculpture, architecture)**

- *Spiritual concepts have always been expressed through painting, sculpture, architecture and other arts.*
- *Images of sacred buildings, representations of gods, goddesses, saints and artefacts used for worship put religions into a cultural context.*
- *By studying the images students can become familiar with the historic background within which the religion has evolved.*





Thank you for  
your attention!

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