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The application of student development theory in multicultural programming

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to examine the application of student development theory in multicultural programming. Part I takes a look at the theoretical models of Hoopes (1979) and Katz (1984). Bridges (1980, 1988) offered insight into ideas from the corporate world which may apply directly to related issues in higher education. Part II looks at the application of theory from first an administrative and then a student affairs approach. Combined, both approaches prove valuable for the institution as a whole to utilize effective models and implement multicultural programming. Part Ill offers implications and advances the discussion of issues, theories and models.

The Application of

Student Development Theory in

Multicultural Programming

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The purpose of this paper is to examine the application of student development theory in multicultural programming. Part I takes a look at the theoretical models of Hoopes (1979) and Katz (1984). Bridges (1980, 1988) offered insight into ideas from the corporate world which may apply directly to related issues in higher education. Part II looks at the application of theory from first an administrative and then a student affairs approach. Combined, both approaches prove valuable for the institution as a whole to utilize effective models and implement multicultural programming. Part III offers implications and advances the discussion of issues, theories and models.

The models presented are timely in an era when university administrators and educators are actively addressing the issues of cultural diversity, equal opportunity, access and participation of all types of students in higher education. As colleges respond to the challenges posed by changing demographics, and by culturally motivated tensions, student affairs educators will be called on to play an important role.

As educators, our study of American history and government has shown that effective diversification of traditionally all-white, homogeneous student bodies has been painful. With the rise of tensions among a number of cultural groups on college campuses nationwide (Carnegie, 1990), and with the ever-changing economics of higher education, it becomes necessary to seek strategies for dealing with

today's concerns and building for excellence tomorrow.

It is a time when the commitment and influence of top university administrators is crucial to the programming efforts of student affairs staff members. In many cases, the changes witnessed on campuses bring about other new changes. This constant activity, in turn, leads to a need for stabilizing forces which create conducive educational environments. Some of the stabilizing forces are well-designed multicultural programs. Programs based on student development theory may assist us with the related transitions.

DEFINITIONS

To begin with, five operational definitions will be provided to temper the ensuing discussion. Brown (1963) offered a sound definition of the concept of culture: ". . . all the accepted and patterned ways of behavior of a given people. It is a body of common understandings. It is sum total and organization or arrangement of all the group's ways of thinking, feeling, and acting" (p. 32). This definition gives us a singular view of the bigger picture surrounding multiculturalism. Since we are talking of more than one culture when using the term multiculturalism, it is best that we understand which cultures may be involved in the daily operation of an institution of higher education. The Executive Committee of the Association of College Unions - International (1989) developed the

following comprehensive definition:

Multiculturalism . . . mean[s more than simply] other races and nationalities but virtually every conceivable human grouping that separates from the norm, develops a separate identity as well as its normative identity. Indeed each person is of many cultures simultaneously. One has a sexual identity; a racial identity; a religious identity; a class/work identity; a school identity; an identity from the friends one keeps; a family identity; several geographic identities: neighborhood, city, state, country, hemisphere, etc. Human tendency to be relatively unconscious of other cultures is dysfunctional in our society as well as in any association, and it is clear that much hostility is created by ignorance of other cultures and the failure to recognize their existence. (p. v)

The National Committee on Teacher Education's (1977) definition of multicultural education broadens the discussion to include a plan from which to operate. This definition declared that:

Multicultural education is preparation for the social, political, and economic realities that individuals experience in culturally diverse and complex human encounters . . . Multicultural education could include but not be limited to experiences which: 1) Promote analytical and evaluative abilities to confront issues such as

participatory democracy, racism and sexism, and the parity of

power; 2) Develop skills for values clarification including the study

of the manifest and latent transmission of values; 3) Examine

linguistic variations and diverse learning styles as a basis for the

development of appropriate teaching styles. (p. 4)

Miller and Prince (1975) stated that Student Development:

. . . at the most basic level . . . simply means the development of the

whole college-going human being . . . it is defined more specifically

as the application of human development concepts in postsecondary

settings so that everyone involved can master increasingly complex

developmental tasks, achieve self-direction, and become inter-

dependent. It is, then, both a philosophical goal and the means for

achieving it. (p. 3)

Brown (1989) declared that the Student Development Educator:

. . . is knowledgeable about theories and practices in learning,

development, and assessment that relate to the intellectual,

emotional, cultural, moral, physical, interpersonal, and spiritual

dimensions of student life. He or she works with the individual

students, group of students, and people who interact with students

to establish institutional goals, policies, and programs for student

development; to assess students' developmental status and diagnose their developmental needs; to help students determine appropriate goals and experiences; to design and implement programs to foster development; to evaluate students' developmental progress; and to record student attainments. Student development educators serve numerous educational roles in fulfilling their educational mission. These include roles as advisor, mentor, instructor, curriculum builder, evaluator-assessor, and scholar-researcher. (p. 284)

These definitions have been included to illustrate how the student affairs educator can enhance the campus environment and work through the transitions associated with implementation of multicultural programs. If the educator has a sound concept of culture, multicultur-alism, multicultural education as well as understanding his or her specific roles and expectations, the transitions can happen more smoothly.

Part I - THEORY

Transition: Perceptions of Change

The expertise of Bridges (1988) will be called upon to discuss how observing the change in a large corporation can be helpful to a person desiring to serve as a change agent on a university campus. The role of change agent appears to be fitting to the educator who desires to

introduce and implement multicultural programming in an environment which was previously void of such. Bridges offers a developmental model for gently bringing about new perceptions and routing attitudes that welcome multiculturalism over ethnocentrism. In his 1980 book, Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes, we are given a view of the personal side of instituting new programs. This is a conceptual overview which helps us examine the transitions of our own lives. We can draw suitable analogies to the changes in our attitudes and behaviors in numerous settings. Bridges helps us to "try to clarify the actual experience of being in the midst of transition. That difficult process of letting go of an old situation, suffering the confusing nowhere of inbetweenness, and launching forth again in a new situation" (p. 5). He draws from current research of adult development and provides strategies for individuals who desire a constructive approach in dealing with transitional points in their lives.

Likewise, educators strive to equip students with coping mechanisms and understanding of the developmental stages of growth they move through. Bridges (1980) stated that there are three distinct developmental stages. The first stage is that of "endings" where we clarify, identify, talk out loud, celebrate and process closure of some ending. Whether it be through a party or mock funeral, we can "tie the knot" at the passing away of some period of our life. This stage could

very easily be likened to the period of ending the rhetoric of where the problems lie in culturally motivated disputes. We could tie the knot on the problems and celebrate that we recognize where we have come from and stop blaming the "different" student for lack of progress or being the creator of problems.

The next stage, or "wilderness", is marked by unresolved problems, loss of productivity, withdrawal or retreat into a well-defined neutral zone. This stage could be compared to a possible retreat of administrators, faculty, staff or students when introduced to something new that contradicts accepted tradition or threatens group norms. It is a questioning time, a time of skepticism, a retreat to protect old beliefs and practices. A good deal of energy, patience, and openness are required to advance to the third stage.

The third stage, or "new beginnings", is a time for filling the emptiness, inspiring productivity, setting agendas. It is an orchestration of the mission with incentives for forward movement. This stage could be paralleled to a period of new growth within students and throughout campus. Individuals may try new programs within the support of the full network. It is a time when student affairs educators can enhance the climate of the campus; more importantly, students can maximize their own learning.

Bridge's Model suggests that development or change begins at the

point of closure. It starts when the old ends. Just as in the stages of

death that Kubler-Ross (1969) offered in her book, <u>On Death and Dying</u>, we

all go through a period of loss before we gain new perspectives to begin

again. Bridges (1988) advances this concept in his book, <u>Surviving</u>

<u>Corporate Transition: Rational Management in a World of Mergers, Layoffs,</u>

<u>Start-Ups, Takeovers, Divestitures, Deregulation, and New Technologies</u>.

He introduces seven "ages" which are useful tools when drawn in

comparison to the stages of multicultural development. For example:

<u>Bridges Organizational Life</u>
1. The Dream
2. The Venture Begins
3. Getting Organized
4. Making It
5. Becoming an Institution
6. Closing In
7. Termination

<u>Multicultural Development</u>
1. Establishing a Plan/Goals
2. Needs and Interests Assessed
3. Defining Purpose
4. Implementation
5. Repeated Efforts
6. Backlash of Efforts
7. Old Behaviors End

The comparison of these two models illustrates that change is a

major element in a life cycle. If change is what is needed for individuals

to end racial, sexual, ethnic, or other related verbal outbursts and attacks,

then we can turn to developmental models for help in the process.

<u>Two Multicultural Education Models for Higher Education</u>

Two multicultural education models will be included here. The

models of Hoopes (1979) and Katz (1984) have been selected because at

this time, they are the most usable and carry the endorsements of many professionals of the Association of College Unions - International (ACU-I). Until other models come along which offer such direct application and effective implementation these models stand.

Hoopes (1979), a national leader in the field of intercultural education, offers a model which proposes that individuals progress through seven stages in their multicultural development. The stages are identified as:

Stage I   - Ethnocentrism

Stage II   - Awareness

Stage III - Understanding

Stage IV   - Acceptance/Respect (tolerance)

Stage V   - Appreciating/Valuing

Stage VI   - Selective Adoption

Stage VII - Multiculturalism

In the "Ethnocentric Stage", a student may exhibit intolerance and outright hostility or aggression as a result of perceived challenges posed by the many diverse cultural groups on campus. Student attitudes may indicate that they desire those who are "different" from themselves to become "more like" themselves. This stage is static, much like Bridge's "Endings" Stage. Students in this stage may choose to stay isolated

within their own culture while attempting to impose their cultural values on others.

Just like Bridges' "Wilderness" Stage, Hoopes' "Acceptance/ Respect" Stage illustrates that a change has occurred in which a student has begun to accept the validity of other cultures without judging them against his/her own. The student acknowledges that other cultural groups do exist, and that it is "OK" for others to think or behave as their culture dictates. The ideal state, according to Hoopes, is the attainment of attitudes exhibited in the seventh stage - "Multiculturalism". Like Bridges' "New Beginnings", students at this stage are open to form new self-concepts, perceptions, value systems and identities which transcend cultural considerations.

The other four stages in between illustrate the transitional aspects along developmental lines. It is within these transitional stages that students become aware of their own culture and begin to explore various components of other cultures. They begin to recognize strengths and weaknesses of differing cultures and eventually come to adopt various aspects which prove personally valuable.

Hoopes' Model of Intercultural Learning is just one of the tools available to student affairs professionals. After assessing students' needs, attitudes and behaviors, a professional can then begin the design and format of multicultural programs. Katz (1984) has much to offer in

the line of activities and inservice projects that have been created in this format. Although her approaches may at first appear extreme, she does contribute to the pool of "how to's" with her strategies for working through racism. Perhaps this training model can offer insight into tackling the other "ism's" - for example, separatism, sexism, and ethnicism.

Katz (1984), in her Anti-Racism training program, identified six stages that individuals move through:

Stage I - Racism: Definitions and Inconsistencies

Stage II - Confronting the Reality of Racism

Stage III- Dealing with Feelings

Stage IV - Cultural Differences: Exploring Cultural Racism

Stage V - Individual Racism: The Meaning of Whiteness

Stage VI - Developing Action Strategies

Through these stages or processes, students are able to look first at their own "selves" and explore who they are, the role of communication, and how they perceive and behave in light of other cultural groups. Katz (1984) contended that white students in American schools need the most assistance in understanding how they intentionally and unintentionally contribute to racism. For campuses experiencing extreme turmoil of racially intensified incidents, some of these strategies may prove worthy

of consideration.

Part II - APPLICATION

Administrative Approach

The current trend appears to be that universities rise to the top of their peer groups by demonstrating how their campuses have successfully created multicultural environments and sound programs. The recent report from Stanford University, <u>Building a Multiracial, Multicultural University Community</u> (1989), is replete with examples in which the entire campus is involved in intensive training and transition due to an emphasis placed on multicultural education.

Stanford University has implemented an all-campus effort to adjust to the changes and transitions associated with a diversifying campus. For at least twenty years the Stanford campus has been struggling to enhance sensitivity and acceptance in a campus community which has undergone rapid campus population diversification. Like many campuses today, it is contemplating its past and examining how it has met and how it will strive to meet the needs of its ever-changing student body.

In October of 1987, the President and Provost received demands raised by a minority student coalition called the Rainbow Agenda. This student group stated that changes needed to be implemented which would help the students to feel that the campus was truly inclusive and interactive. In response, the administration established a University

Committee on Minority Issues (UCMI) to examine the complaints and suggestions of the student coalition.

The UCMI's membership was comprised of 18 voting members - - 6 Academic Council faculty members, 4 student members, 4 staff members, and 4 members from the outside community. With the Provost and Affirmative Action Officer acting as ex officio members, the committee met monthly to examine the state of multicultural affairs on campus. The main goal of the committee was to "promote a University environment in which all members have equal opportunity to develop full human potential -- an environment in which respect, mutual regard for cultural differences and full participation and partnership are the norm" (p. 2).

To determine the extent to which they were reaching this goal the committee took an in-depth look at the following areas: the undergraduate curriculum, the faculty, undergraduate students, graduate students, student life and the university staff. Information was gathered from several sources to create a picture of the undergraduate student life:

1. A major survey of undergraduates was conducted by SRI International.
2. A qualitative survey was implemented by Pacific Management Systems.
3. A residence hall outreach project was implemented.
4. A series of meetings were held with minority student communities.
5. Material from the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs (DOSA)

was collected.
6. Responses were gathered from the Senior Survey and the Residential Evaluation Survey for 1988.
7. Direct discussions with students were made possible.

Following a one year intensive study, the committee presented findings, arguments, new objectives and recommendations. This, in turn, led to the creation of a new comprehensive university plan which aggressively declared new commitments, basic values, and capable leadership. One of the findings, indicated in the final report of the committee, reaffirmed how tensions and social distance were product of "manifested misunderstandings and misconceptions" (p. 162).

Committee recommendations to combat the misunderstandings and misconceptions go to the heart and mission of any university - education. To take this a step further, Stanford is staking its future on efforts to provide systematic orientation programs "that educate all students . . . on ethnicity and multicultural issues" (p. 195). It recognizes that "an institution transmits values to students by the way it approaches policies, decisions, and issues" (p.186). With noted failures in many areas regarding race relations, the committee found that it had to create a new vision and set the stage for greater dialogue between groups. But, more importantly, it has to listen to the individual student with the knowledge that trivializing students' feelings can bring about detrimental end

results. It was determined that friendships and acquaintanceships bring about a general sense of interracial comfort. One goal, therefore is to "facilitate conversations, acquaintances, and friendships between students of different racial backgrounds in ways that encourage mutual respect and understanding" (p. 168).

Responses, regarding tensions, pressures and general feelings of fitting in or being accepted, led the committee to believe that it could do more to assist students with "concerted institutional and programmatic efforts" (p. 174). This, according to the committee, can start with a more "visible and proactive leadership" (p. 203). Stanford has accepted the challenge of listening to student needs and paying attention to multicultural issues. It is now in the position to act with renewed vigor upon those voiced student needs with multicultural education.

Student Affairs Approach

ACU-I has heard the same nationwide cry for attention to multicultural issues. This professional organization has compiled useful recommendations in its monograph, Valuing Diversity on Campus: A Multicultural Approach. Hoopes' and Katz' models for Multicultural education are referred to as the models for developing a multicultural consciousness. In nine short chapters, various student affairs professionals build upon these basic models with programming ideas.

Each chapter explores the history, trends, images, programming efforts, and some of the realities of today's campus environments. We are exposed to various issues paramount to the student experience of Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, Gay and Lesbian community members, and members of religious organizations.

The monograph was developed for student affairs professionals to envision and assert their role of educator and agent who will take an aggressive stand on issues of social perspective. Katz (1989), a contributor of the monograph, added that:

Organizations do not attain a multicultural perspective overnight. Those committed to creating change must first have some belief that serves as an underpinning for their effort. Secondly, organizations need models to help them understand and manage such alterations. These models help key people know where and how to intervene (p. 7).

Woolbright, editor of the monograph, suggested that "Once we have educated ourselves and taken responsibility for educating others . . ." we can then begin thinking about the implemention of multicultural programming (p. 50). According to another contributor of the monograph, Chin (p.8), this implementation will take place on three levels - the institutional, cultural and individual. To move from monoculturalism to

multiculturalism along these three dimensions, it is suggested that we should strive to understand how the "ism's" operate on the three levels and then envision how a multicultural environment could be. We are forced to think beyond our common ideas and not be held back by conceptual traps.

Some of the traps this monograph is speaking of are listed in the recommendations and warnings of items which impede multiculturalism. Of a list of twelve recommendations, seven are cited here. It is felt that these seven best represent ideas most pertinent to the student affairs educator. This list advises us to:

1. Develop a long-term vision, including a comprehensive system of change with a built-in mechanism of accountability.

2. Connect with the goal of diversity to the mission, culture, and success of the organization. Identify the ways in which being multicultural will make the organization and its people more effective and more productive.

3. Recognize that individuals' perceptions and feelings are data and begin to act on that reality. Stop conducting studies on the problem and start constructing and acting on long-term plans for change.

4. Prepare to respond to the backlash as a sign of positive change.

5. Involve a broad base of key individuals and groups in all functions of the system.

6. Build support systems. Don't designate a single agent to do it alone. Find others in the organization to carry the load and thus invest in the process. Celebrate your successes.

7. Recognize that addressing these issues involves a process, not a product. New issues will emerge. Be prepared to see this effort as a continual one in the life of the organization. (p. 18)

Part III - IMPLICATIONS

To design and implement multicultural programming, we, as educators, need to look to developmental theory, talk less and listen more (Griffith and Conner, 1989, p.B2). Baker and Bloom are cited in Heller's (1989) discussion of current trends to say that if we desire to avoid "the surest path to white cultural illiteracy and the closing of the American mind" we have a lot of work to do. We may need to redefine the concept of an educated person "to include the capacity to work effectively in diverse contexts and with diverse peoples" (ACU-I, 1989, p. 19).

Transition has been the rule rather than the exception on college campuses, especially following the civil rights movement and the advent of a "new consciousness" of cultural issues (Stanford, 1989). Transition or change appear to be common terms in Multicultural Programming. This rarely, however advances practitioner acceptance of the fact. It is as difficult to separate the idea of transition from advancements toward multiculturalism as it is to take the growth stages out of developmental theory. Bridges (1980, 1988) offered examination of natural transition

aspects of growth. His two models are applicable to the institutional setting where commitment to welcome and embrace change are loudly pronounced on campuses nationwide. It is believed that "student personnel programs have cultivated nonacademic territory . . . and have become aligned with the central administration of colleges and universities" (Blaesser, 1978, p. 109). Numerous studies indicate that systematic multicultural programming is a reality at institutions where a commitment to implementation exists (Beal & Noel, (1980); Richardson (1989); Simmons & de los Santos (1987). Creamer and Creamer (1986) provided a model that hypothesizes whether or not an educational institution will undergo and implement new programs according to their "Probability of the Adoption of Change (1988). These writers help us understand that programs may not even be considered if the institution is unwilling or unable to smoothly move through its own developmental stages.

The current focus on educating students about themselves and other cultural groups, in the midst of stabilizing the campus in racially tense times, has brought about the creation of many new programs. Stanford University (1989) has stated that black students have set the trends in voicing their frustrations with institutional policy and procedures. Other cultural group members are following suit. Richardson (1988) and de los Santos (1987) have been quite vocal, in turn, with strategies for building

and sustaining multicultural environments. They, along with the efforts

of Astin (1984), Boatman (1985), Chavez and Carlson (1985), Knefelkamp

& Golec (1983), Morton (1982), and Quevado-Garcia (1983), have been

instrumental in providing information, guidance and support for both

educator and student alike. Each offers models upon which to base

multicultural programs.

The 1937 Student Personnel Point of View first called for the

development of the "whole student" (American Council on Education,

1937). If we broaden our view to see the campus as a whole, in the same

light, we can begin to program for multicultural issues. We can use the

total campus environment to promote cultural awareness, heightened

value for diversity and the fullest development of each student. In and out

of the classroom we can delve into the cognitive domain without

overlooking the affective domain.

Boyer (1991) listed eight common elements of all human beings

which transcend all cultures. He also offered seven ways to enhance a

"sense of community", which is a necessary element in a multicultural

environment (1990). Student development theorists, Miller & Prince

(1975) and Brown (1989) give foundation to these ideas.

The aforementioned nationally recognized leaders' ideas will serve

as guides for the initial design of multicultural programs. They offer

information and developmental models that can assist us in directly and

confidently facing the issues involved with the creation and implementation of multicultural programming.

Multicultural programming can serve as the stabilizer of diversity on a campus. Student affairs professionals can develop programs, training sessions and activities which inform, educate and advance an appreciation of cultural identities. The goal is not to create likeness, but to accept differences. With multicultural programming, we can build more unified, yet more diversified campuses.

We are challenged to do this by our community leaders, our state offices, and by legislative task forces (Job Service of Iowa, 1988; Legislative Higher Education Task Force, 1989). Now that we perceive the relatedness of developmental theory to change, we truly can serve as change agents. "It may very well be", as Kramer (1989) suggested, "that ["other"] student presence in higher education is a necessary precondition for the emergence of institutional environments which fully accommodate cultural diversity". Now that culturally diverse student enrollments are increasing, we can accept this window of opportunity to start the dialogue with students, activate needs assessments and implement multicultural programming.

CONCLUSION

We can enhance the campus environment and the overall education of the students who enroll in our campuses by instituting multicultural programs. With sound definitions related to student development and multiculturalism, an understanding of the anticipated outcomes of multicultural education, and the integration of sound developmental models, we can build practical programs to address real needs. Starting with basic human and student development models will make our work with students more meaningful and more effective. After we examine the state of affairs on our own campuses, we should be able to determine where to begin and which models will be most appropriate.

The obvious conclusion is that there is a great number of models and materials available to support our programming efforts. We have much work ahead of us to achieve the goals of education in a diversified campus. Our survival depends on it.

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