Identifying Identities

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Professional Introduction

• Secondary Principal in Richmond, BC

• Worked as a teacher, department head, and Vice Principal in Brampton and Mississauga, ON

• Focus of Postgraduate Studies: 2nd Generation Sikh Males in Canada
Step In The Circle (Raise Your Hand)

• A list of statements will be displayed
• If they are applicable to you, please raise your hand and take a cursory glance around the room
• You are not obliged to participate if you do not feel comfortable

• PLEASE DO NOT SPEAK AT ANY TIME DURING THIS EXERCISE
If your primary ethnic identity is Canadian, raise your hand
If you were called names because of your race, class, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, raise your hand
• If you were ever ashamed or embarrassed of your clothes, house, car, etc., raise your hand
• If you ever tried to change your appearance, mannerisms, or behaviour to avoid being judged or ridiculed, raise your hand
• If you ever studied the culture of your ancestors in elementary school, raise your hand
• If you went to school speaking a language other than English, raise your hand
• If there were more than 50 books in your house when you grew up, raise your hand
If you were taken to art galleries or plays by your parent(s) or guardian(s), raise your hand
• If one of your parent(s) or guardian(s) were unemployed or laid off, not by choice, raise your hand
• If you attended private school or summer camp, raise your hand
• If your family ever had to move because they could not afford the rent, raise your hand
• If you were ever discouraged from academics or jobs because of race, class, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation, raise your hand
If you were encouraged to attend a post secondary institution by your parent(s) or guardian(s), raise your hand
• If you were raised in a single parent household, raise your hand
• If you saw members of your race, ethnic group, gender or sexual orientation portrayed on television in degrading roles, raise your hand
• If you were ever afraid of violence because of your race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation, raise your hand
• If you were generally able to avoid places that were dangerous, raise your hand
• If you were ever uncomfortable about a joke related to your race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation but felt unsafe to confront the situation, raise your hand
• If you were ever stopped or questioned by the police because of your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, raise your hand
• If your parents did not grow up in Canada, raise your hand
Debrief

• What did you notice in terms of who was raising their hand?

• How did you feel as you raised your hand?

• Consider how this activity promotes empathy amongst educators.
An Intersectional Approach to Discrimination
• "An intersectional approach takes into account the historical, social and political context and recognizes the unique experience of the individual based on the intersection of all relevant grounds." (Aylward, 1999)
  – we need to look at the overlapping factors of race, class, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexual orientation
Personal Introduction

• Growing up in Brampton, ON
  – elementary school
  – playing sports
  – changing demographics of the city

• High School
  – Grade 9
  – Grade 10 History
  – OAC Accounting

• Post-Secondary/Entering profession/20 years later
  – How do I fit in?
Empathy Amongst Educators

• Reflecting on our own experiences
  – How are our own experiences similar/different from students in the classroom?

• Recognizing privilege
  – How am I privileged?
    • i.e. class background, two parents, English-speaking home environment
Critical Reflection

• Notice your own defensive reactions, and attempt to use these reactions as entry points for gaining deeper self knowledge.

• Recognize how your **social positionality** (such as your own race, class, gender, sexuality, ability-status) informs your reactions to others (i.e. students/staff/parents).
Questions

• What is the difference between accepting and tolerating diversity?

• How do we define “Canadian values”?

• How is racism manifested in Canada?
  – Personal level
  – Institutional level
Multiculturalism & Multicultural Education

- Like Canada’s policy of Multiculturalism, the main tenet of multicultural education is that cultural diversity should be cherished.
- This approach focuses primarily on individual racism.
- Attempts to eradicate negative stereotypes and prejudices at a personal level.
Multiculturalism & Multicultural Education

BUT…..

• Does it attempt to challenge racism at an institutional or systemic level?
• Does it promote tokenism?
• Does it reinforce stereotypes of certain groups of people?
  – Foods, festivals, and famous men
  – Saris, samosas, and steel bands
“My family taught me that everyone is equal.”

- What type(s) of people may hear this from their families?
- What is the aim of this statement?
- Was this your experience?
EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY

In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.

In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.

In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.
Diversity in BC

Canada’s visible minority population (%)

- 1981: 4.7%
- 1986: 6.3%
- 1991: 9.4%
- 1996: 11.2%
- 2001: 13.4%
- 2006: 16.2%
- 2011: 19.1%
- 2016: 22.3%
- 2021: 25.4%
- 2026: 28.4%
- 2031: 31.4%
- 2036: 34.4%

PROJECTED

SOURCE: Statistics Canada

CBC NEWS
### B.C.'s most diverse cities

Chart shows percentage of population who identified as visible minority in 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richmond</td>
<td>76.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Vancouver A</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnaby</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coquitlam</td>
<td>50.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Westminster</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Vancouver</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delta</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Statistics Canada's definition of visible minority does not include First Nations, Métis, or Inuit.*

Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census
APPRAOCHES TO AN INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

Contributions
Adding diverse hero/ines to the curriculum, selected using criteria similar to those used to select mainstream hero/ines for the curriculum.

Additive
Adding a variety of content, concepts, themes, and perspectives to the curriculum without changing its basic structure.

Transformation
Changing the actual structure of the curriculum to help students to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspectives of diverse groups.

Social Action
Allowing students to make decisions on important social issues and take actions to help solve them.
DIMENSIONS OF AN INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

Content Integration
Using examples, data and information from a variety of groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in particular subject areas or disciplines.

Knowledge Construction
Understanding how people create knowledge and how implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases influence the ways that knowledge is constructed within a discipline.

Prejudice Reduction
Using characteristics of prejudicial attitudes and strategies to help individuals develop more democratic attitudes and values.

Equity Pedagogy
Using techniques and methods that facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse groups.

Empowering School Culture
Restructuring the culture and organization of the school so that students from diverse groups will experience educational equity and societal empowerment.
CURRICULUM REFORM AND AN INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

• How do we move from:
  – a Contributions & Additive approach to Transformation & Social Action?
  – Content Integration and Knowledge Construction to Prejudice Reduction, Equity Pedagogy, and creating an Empowering School Culture?
  – What is the role of:
    • faculties of education?
    • school districts and schools?
    • local communities?
School Based Initiatives

- Interwoven Staff and Student Expectations
  - Professional Development
    - Up to date with current literature
    - Engaging and reflective staff development
    - Revisit and continuously examine school procedures with the input of all stakeholders
    - Focus on high academic expectations for all students
School Based Initiatives

- Commitment to a diverse extra-curricular program

- Emphasize and Reward Positive Student Conduct
  - Set high standards and students will reach them!
District Based Initiatives

• What do we have to work with? Lots of documents!!!
  – Federal and Provincial Government Resources
    • Charter of Rights and Freedoms
    • Human Rights
      – Ministry of Education
        » Curriculum documents
  – School District Policies
    • Codes of Conduct
    • Role of HR
Conclusion

• What needs to be done?
  – Move beyond words and continue to put more ideas and concepts into practice!
  • Continue to…..
    – challenge ourselves
    – collaborate and share

WE ALL HAVE A VESTED INTEREST TO MAKE EQUITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES A TOP PRIORITY!