

DEVELOP TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Outdated: The teaching force in Canada is no longer growing. Many in the current field were trained before the multicultural policy was introduced and even before their schools took on a multicultural character. As a result, there is a need for new programs.

Insensitive: "Another aspect that my friends and I have found in the school system in Canada is that the teachers are very insensitive about the issue of race. Many of them cannot cope with it when they are faced with it. Apparently their background and training have not covered this properly, and therefore they are at odds and ends when they have to meet a situation head-on in the classroom. We think these special issues of race relations should be discussed in teacher training colleges, and teachers should be sensitized with respect to handling delicate situations that will always appear in classrooms that are becoming more and more mixed." (West-Indian Canadian Association of Kingston)

Others: There are problems associated with programs designed to enhance effectiveness of teachers working in multicultural classrooms as presently constituted:

- The emphasis is upon learning about others. Learning about them is not enough.
- Often teachers are able to demonstrate knowledge of appropriate behaviour in a multicultural environment but they may not have the ability or desire to act in a manner consistent with that knowledge.

Methods: Although the need to sensitize teachers was mentioned many times in submissions to the Committee, effective methods for achieving the goals were not mentioned. The knowledge, attitudes and abilities of effective teachers in multiethnic and multiracial classrooms are as follows:

- A philosophy of multicultural education
- Knowledge of cultural pluralism
- Respect for minority students
- Interaction posture and management skills
- Non-judgemental orientation
- Ability to respond with empathy
- Tolerance for ambiguity

Evaluation: A review of the literature found many teacher education programs but few have been evaluated. Of those that have been, successes have been achieved in:

- Voluntary contact and field experience;
- Human relations laboratory training or sensitivity training;

RECOMMENDATION

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