Challenges Associated with Cross-Cultural and At-Risk Student Engagement

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Chapter 1  
The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy of Teacher Perception on Low Achievers  
*Rhonda Jeffries, University of South Carolina, USA*  
*Hope Reed, Richland School District Two, USA*

Using Rosenthal and Jacobsen’s Pygmalion Effect Theory and Bandura’s Social Learning Theory, this chapter explores the perceptions of high school English/language arts and math teachers who teach low academic level track courses. The teachers’ narratives describe their beliefs regarding academic ability grouping of students and the associated achievement gap that is often a result of this stratifying structure. Findings from the narratives reiterate the importance of teacher awareness regarding the impact of critical pedagogy as a fundamental element of teaching for social justice. The chapter indicates the usefulness of teacher narrative to influence alternative methods for course placement and schedule design in the high school curriculum.

Chapter 2  
Bhutan Education, Globalization and Preservation of Traditional Language: An Empirical Study with Bhutanese Educators  
*Miwako Hosoda, Seisa University, Japan*  
*Midori Hosoda, Seisa University, Japan*  
*Richard Keith Gordon, California State University, USA*

This study focuses on globalization and preservation of traditional language. Bhutanese government has promoted high education to be taught by English; however, present government tends to change it, and college students are going to learn their major subjects not only English but also their national language, Dzongkha. Researchers developed interview questions, drawn from research on Bhutanese education, education in southeast Asia and other topical sources provided a contemporary frame for these educators to discuss their current perception of Bhutanese education and influences felt from external forces (e.g. global assessments) as well as internal goals and economic and political motivations. Results of the interview will be analyzed in the context of educational progress on the GNH, discussion of issues in Bhutan that challenge the GNH perception, such as multiculturalism, and how these teachers feel Bhutan will embrace the ever increasing swath of global assessments.

Chapter 3  
Exploring Challenges and Possibilities in Pre-service Teacher Education: Critical and Intercultural Pedagogy in Post-Conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina  
*Larisa Kasumagić-Kafedžić, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Twenty years after the war (1992-1995) in Bosnia and Herzegovina the country is still very fragile, dysfunctional and continues to face numerous political and socio-economic challenges. Ethnically fragmented and exclusivist approaches to education in Bosnia and Herzegovina are anathema to the development of critical thinking and analytical skills necessary to open young minds, reduce intolerance and question the ethnic status quo narrative (Perry, 2015). This paper will try to present a good example of academic and social successes achieved with students who are attending English language teacher education program at the University of Sarajevo in the context of challenging teaching and learning environments. The paper will explore the possibilities and challenges for using critical pedagogy framework and intercultural approach to foreign language education in pre-service teacher education course that emphasizes reflection, critical thinking, empathy, multiperspectivity along with other aspects of intercultural communicative competences which are integrated in this course.

Chapter 4  
Japanese Adolescent School Refusal: Disengagement or Self-Protection  
*Dr. Hideki Sano, Department of Educational Psychology, Tokyo Gaikei University, Japan*
In Japanese education, one of the most serious problems is school refusal. Many young children and older students refuse to attend schools due to reasons other than economical or physical problems. They are not school truancy cases either as they are often high achievers. Instead, they seem to have problems with stress at schools (study stress) or human relationships problems such as peer pressure, bullying, and a sense of identity. They need a wide range and long lasting support for their recovery from school refusal, including counseling and alternative schools.

Chapter 5
The Education of Roma Children: Challenges and Promises
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The education of Roma children presents many challenges throughout the world because of poverty, issues of isolation and discrimination. In many countries where Roma reside, laws exist that prohibit discrimination against this minority group. A variety of conflicting issues exist for Roma children. On one hand, the Roma communities practice cultural norms that are in conflict with a typical schooling environment that requires significant structure and lack of independent support. Conversely, schools fail to provide appropriate bilingual instruction for Roma children who usually do not speak the local language. In most countries discrimination attitudes create segregated schools and insufficient social services. Many efforts and organizations are in place to positively impact these challenges to provide quality education for all Roma children.

Chapter 6
Collaborative Musical Theatre: A Nearly all encompassing teaching tool
Penny Prince, Lehman College, City University of New York, USA

The author describes her process of utilizing collaborative musical theatre as a teaching tool in three settings. These include an elementary school in the Bronx, New York, which adheres to the theory of Multiple Intelligences; undergraduate and graduate music education courses at Lehman College, City University of New York; and in a College/Community Collaborative Musical Theatre Project at Lehman College. The chapter depicts how the collaborative process closely resembles the goals of the Multiple Intelligences theory by the way it stimulates, encourages and nurtures the many capacities and ways of expression of the participants: Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Mathematical/Logical, Spatial, Kinesthetic, Linguistic, Musical and Naturalistic, and therefore, serves as an effective, all-encompassing teaching tool.

Chapter 7
Africanizing Science Education: Engaging Students in Context-Based Science Instruction
Irene U. Osisioma, California State University, Dominguez Hills, USA

The development of Science and Technology has been positively associated with every nation’s economic well-being and quality of life. Even though the importance of science in people’s daily lives may not be readily noticeable, people engage in many science related activities and experiences, most of which enable them to make science-related decisions and choices every day. This implies that science education will continue to shape humanity, the environment, quality of life, sustainability of the planet, and peaceful coexistence. Effectively participation in the scientifically and technologically driven world of the 21st Century implies a science education that produces scientifically literate citizens. This chapter provides justification for rethinking the way science education should be done in Africa generally, and Nigeria, in specific. Recommendations were made for the use of context-based science instruction as an effective way to Africanize science instruction.

Chapter 8
Engaging Urban Youth in Critical Media Literacy
Hyesun Cho, University of Kansas, USA
Randy Gomabon, University of Hawaii, USA

This chapter describes how urban youth engaged in critical media literacy in the high school classroom by creating public service announcement (PSA) videos. The study delineates the process in which critical media literacy was implemented into diverse urban high school classrooms in Hawaii over a period of three years. The process included (1) acquiring technological and linguistic skills; (2) critically analyzing media texts; and (3) producing media on social issues. The data were collected from students’ reflection journals, interviews with students and teachers, students' electronic portfolios, and participant observations by the researchers/teachers. Students expressed their voice toward
positive social actions by producing PSAs on a range of social issues, such as poverty and discrimination. Building on multiliteracies and critical media literacy, this chapter argues for the importance of critical media literacy pedagogy that is deliberate to make curricular space for students’ reflections and examinations of social issues.

Chapter 9
Flying Faster than the Birds and the Bees: Toward a Sex-positive Theory and Practice in Multicultural Education
Theodore Burns, Antioch University, USA

The need for multicultural education to analyze human sexuality education is an area of critical need in research and practice. Many current human sexuality learning experiences contain practices that are shaming to learners, producing values that problematize sexuality. The author of this chapter introduces a sex-positive approach to human sexuality education, honoring multicultural education by intentionally understanding sex-positivity outside of a White, western context. Implications of this approach for education research, practice, training, and advocacy are discussed.

Chapter 10
Implementing the Mixed Instrumental Ensemble Practice in Japan: The Application of Instructional Template (IT) and Flow Assessment
Taichi Akutsu, Seisa University / Shujitsu University, Japan
Richard K. Gordon, California State University, USA

This chapter investigates the cases of implementing the mixed instrumental ensemble practice in the field of music education in Japan; it rests on the belief that considering music as social phenomenon and human practice with interaction. This study sets two specific aims as follows: to blend various different kinds of musical instruments in ensemble settings. Particularly, in the process of implementing the practice, researcher designed Instructional Template (Gordon, 2015) was applied as a tool to foster and organize classroom interaction among learners and teachers. This study also explores the possibility to assess the affective component of music learning in practice. Custodero’s (1998, 2005) Flow Indicators in Musical Activities was cited to examine learners’ flow experiences. Implementation of the mixed instrumental ensemble practice fostered interaction among learners; thus, students experienced flow in more varied ways in their social/ musical context.

Chapter 11
Strategies of Engagement: Parent and School Connections
Kitty Fortner, California State University, Dominguez Hills, USA
Jose Lalas, University of Redlands, USA

School, parent involvement, and at-risk students do not always make a winning combination. However, for the students at Mountain View High School, things were different. Strategies used by the Mountain View Parent Advisory Group helped to transform education for students of color who participated in their program. This chapter follows a study at a high school located in an upper/upper middle-class neighborhood where barriers to academic growth were considered addressed. However, there was a pocket of students of color who were not being successful academically. Strategies used by a parent group to help re-engage at-risk students, raise their GPAs, and redirect their future towards success are highlighted. Understanding that these strategies can be initiated by any group of parents or teachers provides promise for at-risk students, parents, and schools.

Chapter 12
One Teacher’s Journey: Evolving Teacher Identity and Practice and the Changing Sociopolitical Context of Education
Amber Bechard, University of Redlands, USA

As our sociopolitical context evolves, student populations and teaching expectations become more complex. Teachers who entered the profession under one pretense are finding themselves faced with an entirely different set of circumstances: demographic shifts, increasingly diverse learners, curricular mandates, high-stakes accountability, technological advancements, globalization—the list continues. As the educational environment evolves, so must teacher identities. Contemporary teachers are tasked with creating an entirely new lens from which to develop new techniques and design more complex lessons to reach the diversity of students in their classrooms. This chapter traces one teacher’s evolving identity and practice amidst the changing sociopolitical context of education. The author’s autobiographical narrative depicts the impact of influential mentors, transformative moments in international teacher travel experiences, vignettes from 28 years as a classroom teacher, and specific instructional techniques developed to ensure effective student engagement in a pluralistic environment.

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About the Contributors
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