

Acknowledging the “I” in Multicultural Education

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Abstract

Banks (2001) claims for students to become successful in a diverse world, they need to have the ability to communicate and negotiate among diverse cultures. Some argue that when the cultural diversity and global tolerance are promoted within multicultural education, traditional elitism and its shortcomings would be overcome (Schugurensky, 2002). Others argue that multicultural education hinders the assimilation efforts and creating a divisive society (Bernstein, 1994).

There are many views on the benefits or shortcomings of multiculturalization of education. The question is not whether a multicultural education should be adopted but it is rather what we understand from multicultural education and how we are going to initiate such a reform within an educational system when we cannot even define “multicultural”, which indeed includes involvement of more than two cultures and all those cultures are appreciated through a deeper understanding of each. It starts with a deep exploration of “I” regarding our intercultural communication competence.

This study explores intercultural consciousness and leadership developmental progression model developed by Karim (2003). Through this model, he explains intercultural consciousness and how it can be integrated in a leadership model. In this study, these assumptions and suppositions explained by Karim (2003) are explained and solutions are offered stemming from these assumptions and suppositions.

Introduction

Multicultural education is adopting a culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994) with trained instructors facilitating it (Nieto, 2000). Jay (2003) defines multicultural education as “the common term used to describe the type of pluralist education” where “its advocates are seeking for all children receiving an education, pre-K through college” (p. 3). Intercultural communication competence is the ability to communicate and negotiate among diverse cultures and for students (Banks, 2001). Banks (2001) argues that for students to become successful in a diverse world, multiculturalization of education is essential and it can be achieved through intercultural communication competence of the people involved. Hains, Lynch, and Winton (2000) explain that intercultural communication as “the ability to relate and communicate effectively when individuals involved in the interaction do not share the same culture, ethnicity, language, or other salient variables” (p. 2) and is the key for the successful outcome of a multicultural education. It is essential to the survival of democratic

political systems in increasing pluralistic societies. It helps establish a system with roots in mutual respect, understanding, and tolerance. By tolerance, it is explained as the recognition of the commonalities among all peoples (Shor, 1987; Banks, 1994) and appreciating the differences as strengths rather than weaknesses.

Some argue that when the cultural diversity and global tolerance are promoted within multicultural education, traditional elitism and its shortcomings would be overcome (Schugurensky, 2002). Others argue that multicultural education hinders the assimilation efforts and creating a divisive society (Bernstein, 1994). Some further claim that a good liberal education embodies a rather mono-cultural education, where national origins and race are not confused with culture as a learned attribute (Bloom, 1994; Bernstein, 1994; Souza, 1991; Grant, 1994; Chavez, 1994).

There are many views on the benefits or shortcomings of multiculturalization of education. However, the problem remains with the definition of a multicultural education, its poor applications (classroom and policy applications), and most importantly, its disregard for intercultural communication competence of individuals. Intercultural communication competence is the essential ingredient of an education system where many cultures co-exist and need each other. In this context, the question is not whether a multicultural education should be adopted and how we are going to implement it, but it is rather what we understand from multicultural education and how we are going to initiate such a reform within an educational system when we cannot even define “multicultural”, which indeed includes involvement of more than two cultures and all those cultures are appreciated through a deeper understanding of each. It begins with an understanding of “I”.

In this study, I will first look at the views on Multicultural Education in the U.S. After reviewing the definition and how so-called multicultural education is implemented by the US educational institutions, I will then further explore what kind of role intercultural communication competence plays in multiculturalization of education. Recommendations are then made based on the assumptions defined by Karim (2003) and current application of multiculturalization of education within U.S. schools.

Definition and Application of Multicultural Education

One significant shortcoming of intercultural communication competence research and multiculturalization of education attempts is that it focuses on majority interacting with minority groups (Giles & Evans, 1986; Glaser, 1994; Taylor, 1998). Exceptions to this include Sigelman and Welch (1993) and Sigelman, et. al. (1996) studying the racial attitudes of Blacks toward whites and Powers and Ellison (1995) studying Blacks’ convictions on interracial dating and friendship. All these studies focus on Black/African American and White/European American populations. Many ethnic and racial groups (Black/African Americans, Latino, Asian Americans, and White/European Americans, etc.) that form the basis of today’s multicultural environment are ignored (Stein & Rinden, 2000; Hood & Morris, 1997).

Advocating for Multicultural Education, as it is defined and practiced today in U.S. schools, whether K-12 or higher, has become a shallow application of a bi-cultural education. Bicultural, in this study, is defined as interactions between African-American & European-American in certain States in the U.S., and Hispanic & European – American in certain States. ‘Shallow’ in this context is the poor and misguided attempts to multiculturalize the education. One example to underestimation of the significance of a multicultural education is even though multicultural education is a necessary ingredient of quality education, it is perceived by most educators as to be embraced in times of crisis or simply a luxury (Banks & Banks, 2002).

A scholar and practitioner Nieto (2000) limits the shortcomings of the multicultural education to the “color-blindness”:

Many teachers and schools, in an attempt to be color-blind, do not want to acknowledge cultural or racial differences ... Although it sounds fair and honest and ethical, the opposite may actually be true ... color-blindness may result in refusing to accept differences and therefore accepting the dominant culture as the norm. (p. 138)

It is the lack of the ability “to relate and communicate effectively when individuals involved in the interaction do not share the same culture, ethnicity, language, or other salient variables” (Hains, Lynch, & Winton, 2000, p. 2). Another strong advocate of so-called multicultural education is Lisa Delpit. She argues that educational reforms are not designed with children of color in mind (Delpit, 1995).

Delpit (1995), Nieto (2000), Banks and Banks (2002), Fuller (1992), and many other scholars argue that it is rather the mono-cultural curriculum and the shortcomings of teacher education programs that are mainly composed of female European Americans. Fuller (1992) compiled the statistics revealing that the majority of students in teacher education programs are European American, middle class females, product of suburbs, small cities or rural areas. Furthermore, Dilg (1995) warns that white teachers’ approach to multicultural education (mostly curriculum aspect of multicultural education) as an outsider carries the danger of ignorance and thus its consequences.

Despite increasing ethnic diversity in the United States, many educators do not seem to understand that the multicultural education is the broader understanding, involvement, and appreciation of more than two cultures. Jay (2003) explains that “Despite a tendency to equate ‘Americanness’ with ‘Whiteness’ by individuals both outside and inside the United States, the United States is comprised of many different racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural groups” (p. 3). Contrary to the popular discourse of creating equity within the current education system, King (1991) argues that culturally relevant teaching that is successful helps produce a relevant black personality. His argument is relevant in the sense that culture is significant for individual and group identity. It “gives people a sense of who they are, of belonging, of how they should behave and of what they should not be doing” (Harris & Moran, 1991, p. 12).

With all the shortcomings of the application of so-called multicultural education, the author argues, that the focus, as it is presented in the current literature, is on why the children of African-American population in the U.S. schools are not excelling in their classes comparable to the children of European-American population. There are facts and the author does not argue against these facts where African-American students are weaker in U.S. classrooms. For example, Garcia (1994) argues that research on African American students tends to focus on dropouts, literacy gaps, and educational delinquency. Another example to arguing the dominance of the White race is Critical Race Theorists' argument that official school curricula are designed to maintain a "White supremacist master script" and they are "culturally specific artifacts" (Delgado, 1995, p. 21). Regarding instruction, Delgado suggests that the "current instructional strategies presume that African American students are deficient" (p. 22). When the African-American/Black students are given tests, Gould (1981) argues that it is a movement to legitimize African American students' deficiency. Tate (1997) argues that current multicultural paradigm, currently popular in the U.S., exists to benefit Whites. The question here is whether Whites are promoting advances blacks when only Blacks promote White interests (Bell, 1980)?

Whatever the real reasons behind the so-called achievement gap between the European-American & African-American student population in the U.S. are, it is widely argued in the literature that it is the lack of a multicultural curriculum and monopoly of middle class European-American, mostly female, teachers living in the suburbs. Neither "Whites" nor "Blacks" take responsibility of failure (this can be extended to "Hispanics" nor "Whites"). One thing is for sure: It is never "I" but always "the other" that are responsible.

In order for learning to occur in classrooms, we need to examine a wide variety of perspectives, including our own (Curtis, 1998). Lawrence (2005) claims that for an antiracist multicultural education to be more than superficially effective, it must go beyond the lack of multicultural ingredients in the curriculum, policy and structure issues within schools and how school personnel, specifically teachers, interact with students and with each other (see also Banks & Banks, 1995; Lee, 1995; Nieto, 2000). It is the innate rejection of culture difference as threatening as it is because "it challenges an individual to reconsider ethnocentric views of the world and negotiate each intercultural encounter with an open mind and as a unique experience" (Mahoney and Schamber, 2004, p. 312).

Through this study, I postulate that the solution to the challenges of establishing a multicultural education lies in the understanding of the relationship between the individuals rather than implementation of a policy model or educational reform within an educational system. An education system, which does not recognize its problems and challenges as they are, rather than creating superficial challenges and solutions, bound to fail in the long run. Therefore, a realistic approach to why a 30 year old multiculturalization of education attempts cannot offer a practical solution that will help explain the reasons behind a failure in an educational system.

However, it should also be noted that intercultural communication and thus research is problematic as members of cultural groups may be blinded to significant aspects of their own culture. This is also limitation of an education system where educators “represent ethnically diverse individuals and groups in all strata of human accomplishment instead of typecasting particular groups as dependent and helpless victims who make limited contributions of significance” (Banks & Banks, 2002, p. 33).

Multicultural Education Through Development of Intercultural Communication Competence

I argue that even though the curriculum, teacher education, and policies within the current education system have shortcomings, learning occurs in a system where intercultural communication competence is valued. With the most culturally sensitive curriculum and appropriate legislations regarding teacher education, intercultural communication competence remains the first big step towards success.

Karim (2003) developed a leadership developmental progression model. In this model, he made nine assumptions and suppositions about human tendencies and inclination. Through this model, he explained intercultural consciousness and how it can be integrated in a leadership model. In this study, these assumptions and suppositions explained by Karim (2003) will be explained and solutions will be offered stemming from these assumptions and suppositions. Relevance of intercultural competence and thus consciousness in achieving multiculturalism in education will be explained further in this study.

Leadership Developmental Progression Model

Karim (2003) explained that:

Intercultural consciousness goes beyond mere recognition and knowledge of cultural differences and language acquisition (in case of language differences). Intercultural consciousness is a state of mind that requires holistic engagement of one's cognitions, behaviors, emotions, and beliefs. It requires extensive self-reflection and critical self-analysis. It demands intentional inquiry and comprehension of the lived experience and world view of the ‘Other’ [Said (1979) defines “other” as people that are alien to the West]. It requires patience, tolerance of uncertainty, creativity, and flexibility in behaviors and thinking. (p. 37)

These nine assumptions and suppositions developed by Karim (2003) are:

1. Most people are culturally encapsulated and ethnocentric in their world view.
2. People tend to behave differently in their dealings and action with in-groups versus out-groups.
3. People feel cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally challenged in unfamiliar situations and settings.
4. People prefer to avoid uncertainty and reduce anxiety.

5. People tend to behave in self-protective ways if they perceive threats to their psychosocial identity.
6. People attempt to reduce cognitive dissonance.
7. People repeat or avoid behaviors and experiences that have pleasant or unpleasant outcomes, respectively.
8. People's evaluation of self and others is influenced by violation or confirmation of their expectation, and their attribution processes.
9. Most people perceive themselves as morally decent, interpersonally sensitive, and socially just. (p. 35)

Intercultural Consciousness

Rest of this study will focus on explaining these assumptions and suppositions and offer a starting point, which is understanding 'why we do what we do'. It begins with an exploration of "I".

1. Most people are culturally encapsulated and ethnocentric in their world view.

Banks and Banks (1993) use the term "ethnic encapsulation" to refer to the cultural deprivation that results from the limited knowledge of any culture other than one's own. Not knowing other cultures significantly handicaps the attempts to help them. More importantly, misconceptions and stereotypes about other cultures limit the solutions. Antal (2002) argues that misunderstandings and conflict occur when people interpret and judge what they see, the tip of the iceberg, according to their own norms, values, and assumptions. Thus the behavior of others may seem strange, illogical, or "barbaric" (Barnlund, 1998, p. 39).

It is significant to mention Howard Gardner in this part of the study. Howard Gardner (1995), in *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership* explains that in order for a leader to lead a country or an organization need to be aware of the presence of other opinions, ideas, and alternative solutions to the problems. He further explains that Churchill traveled widely to Cuba, India, Sudan and South Africa; Chiang Kai-shek traveled to Japan and Soviet Union; Tojo Hideki (prime minister and military leader of Japan during much of the WWII) completed military training in Berlin; Lenin first traveled voluntarily and then was exiled to Europe; and Roosevelt made the European tour. He then claims that what stands out is that the individuals who did not travel. Stalin traveled entirely within the Soviet Union; Mao traveled widely within his own country but did not go abroad. Young Hitler traveled on in Germany and Austria.

Traveling abroad, as Gardner claims, "opens one up to the perspectives of different cultures and ideologies" (p. 248). He then continues explaining that "It is more difficult to maintain a monolithic perspective—a simplistic, often exclusionary story—when one has been exposed regularly to contrasting viewpoints. Those individuals who have not traveled widely are therefore in a more favorable position to see everything from the perspective of their compatriots, most of whom are also parochial, if not xenophobic" (p. 249).

However, Gardner notes that the traveling is facilitated by the possession of wealth. The decision not to travel is the problem in this context. Even when one has the opportunity to do so, one deliberately might wish not to be exposed to experiences that might complicate his/her view of the world. One of the most important qualities of a leader is his/her adaptation to the world, and thus his/her response to the change. As Gardner says, “Those who would lead in the world of the future must be aware of, and find ways of coping with, new and often complex ifying trends” (p. 303).

It is relevant to review the National Geographic and Roper Public Affairs conducted in 2006 in this stage of the article. “The National Geographic - Roper Public Affairs 2006 Geographic Literacy Study assesses the geographic knowledge of young American adults between the ages of 18 and 24” (Roper Poll, 2006, p. 4). In this report, the researchers found that knowing about foreign countries and languages were seen as less critical skills as “slightly over a quarter (28%) say is it necessary to know where countries in the news are located. Half say it is important but not absolutely necessary and a fifth (21%) say it is not too important” (p. 15). It is further explained that Young Americans had limited contact with other cultures outside the U.S.:

- Three-quarters (74%) have traveled to another state in the past year, but seven in ten (70%) have not traveled abroad at all in the past three years.
- Six in ten (62%) cannot speak a second language .fluently..
- Nine in ten (89%) do not correspond regularly with anyone outside the U.S.
- Only two in ten (22%) have a passport. (p. 9)

In the light of these findings, teachers, students, and administrators who have limited (and are often misinformed and stereotyping) knowledge of other cultures are part of the problem rather than part of a solution. *Do I know enough about other cultures?*

2. *People tend to behave differently in their dealings and action with in-groups versus out-groups.*

An essential part of intercultural communication is sincerity. When in-group interaction differs from out-group interaction in a way that it goes out of the honesty limits, then, it becomes an issue. Poskanzer (2002) claims that “we live in a litigious age, one in which faculty conduct (or misconduct) is increasingly likely to be challenged by students or colleagues, perhaps to become the subject of institutional discipline” (p. 2).

United States, for the sake of so-called democracy and freedom, has become a society where people are scared of being labeled as “racists” and, “discrimination” has been a very thin ice to walk on. Within the limits of popular discourse, “Boon, bane, or something in between, legal considerations now exert an enormous impact on the day-to-day work of colleges and universities (Kaplin & B. Lee, 1995, quoted in Poskanzer, 2002, p. 1).

In this, it is important, for all the races within the U.S. educational system, to exercise their rights to freedom of speech. We need to understand that intercultural communication requires a great deal of accountability between what we say and how we act. A big step is how close these two are to each other. *Am I doing what I am saying? Am I “walking the talk”?*

3. *People feel cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally challenged in unfamiliar situations and settings.*

Once we place a young female European American in a classroom where she is called ‘White’ rather than ‘Madam’, or ‘Miss’, it is rather unfair to expect her to disengage her from her “convictions” if there is any. That is, calling the teacher “White” enforces the difference and widens the gap. Educated in a system where there were only “similar cultures”, we cannot expect her to grow as a teacher, disregarding the behavior she is getting from students and teachers of color. That is, rather than blaming the ‘young female European American teacher of suburbs,’ we need to understand that with the education and life experiences she had, more help needs to be extended to her especially during her first few years in the profession. If White students label their teachers as “Black”, their Hispanic teachers as “Brown”, and Asian teachers as “Yellow”, it is as unacceptable and discriminatory as labeling the students of color labeling their white teachers, as “White”.

Once you add the pressure of being a new teacher to the pressure of racial sensitivity, it is therefore natural for any color [teacher] to be less effective. Macphee (1997) claims that rural children do receive images of socio cultural diversity mostly through the media, but, and these images alone cannot provide a complete or accurate portrayal of any cultural group. Barta and Grindler (1996) explain that despite the teacher's best intentions the fact that cultural differences are not always perceived positively, particularly when viewed from the perspective of the mainstream culture [in some institutions, Black population forms the mainstream culture, in some “Hispanic population, and in some White population forms the mainstream culture] and bias against diversity, not diversity itself, is the cause of the turmoil. *What am I expecting when I educate the educators and do not take responsibility of my teachings? How informed am I about ‘diversity’? What is my perception of “diversity”?*

4. *People prefer to avoid uncertainty and reduce anxiety.*

Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) define Uncertainty Avoidance as the “extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations” (p. 167). In a research conducted by Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) U.S. ranked #62 among 72 countries that were included in the study. That is, U.S. society was considered to be weak in regard to its dealing with uncertainty. There is tolerance for ambiguity and chaos in weak uncertainty avoidance cultures whereas in strong uncertainty avoidance cultures, there is a need for precision and formalization. However, tolerance for ambiguity and avoiding uncertainty create a system where it becomes a diversion and an excuse for the failure as avoidance of uncertainty reduces anxiety and creates a superficial cultural

shield. Once you do not see it, it does not exist. But the truth is, it is here and it is here to stay. Identifying the problem is not sufficient but taking responsibility and acting upon it is the big step towards the solution. *What am I doing to face the truth?*

5. *People tend to behave in self-protective ways if they perceive threats to their psychosocial identity.*

This is related to above discussions of uncertainty avoidance and the fear of the unknown. With the limited knowledge on different cultures, people tend to form a protective shell around them and avoid the change. That is, if someone needs to change, it has to be the “other”, rather than “I”. If someone violates the space we are living in, we tend to be defensive and this defensiveness leads to more failures.

Individualistic characteristic of the U.S. society is also significant. Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) explain that “Individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself and herself and his or her immediate family” (p. 76). Again, in their study, they found that the U.S. ranked #1 in the Individualism Index among 74 countries included in the study. If a culture, other than my own, violates my space, and if I know that it is here to stay, I will defend myself and protect my own culture. If my cultural space is violated by the “other”, I can not only turn on my cultural shield but initiate my cultural weapon and the power provided to me by birth. *Why am I being defensive? What is the threat?*

6. *People attempt to reduce cognitive dissonance.*

“Cognitive dissonance” as defined by Merriam-Webster Online dictionary is “psychological conflict resulting from incongruous beliefs and attitudes held simultaneously”. That is, by leaning towards the long-established convictions since the childhood exerted by the family and the society in general, cognitive dissonance is reduced, giving a feeling of relief. It is therefore, unnecessary to deal with the problems. It is also in accordance with uncertainty avoidance where people also avoid the unknown.

Rothman (1997) exerts that cultural misunderstandings are often experienced as conflicts. These conflicts are seen as threats not only to goal achievement, but also to the sense of self respect, competence and identity of people involved.

If there is a problem, it is not because of me, but because of the “other” and I do not take any responsibility in its creation and growth. *How responsible am I for the creation and growth of this problem?*

7. *People repeat or avoid behaviors and experiences that have pleasant or unpleasant outcomes, respectively.*

People tend to avoid situations where they previously have encountered unpleasant outcomes and repeat the behaviors where they have previously were rewarded / appreciated by the society. It is the expectations of the society and norms within the society that determines my behaviors. By repeating the popular discourse of being strong

supporter of a multicultural education, blaming either the curriculum or the new generation (mostly young female European) teachers, I will be accepted into an elite group where such discourse does not create a conflict and thus I am legally, culturally, socially, and psychologically accepted into the system. Therefore, I will keep on doing what I am doing and I will not step outside the social and political norms of the society. *Should I go outside the line by initiating a rather provocative discussion and face losing my place in the society?*

8. *People's evaluation of self and others is influenced by violation or confirmation of their expectation, and their attribution processes.*

Social expectations and norms have been discussed above. People tend to repeat their actions if they are confirmed by the society. Then, the definitions and cultural labels attributed to the other people are natural outcomes of such confirmations. If others are not behaving as I am expecting them to do so, then, it is my responsibility to define them as nonconformists, creating an unnecessary conflict and dividing the society. Vygotsky (1986) argued that learning does not take place in cognitive isolation, but within the context of activities and social interaction likely informed by the day-to-day contingencies of culture. *Who am I? What are my expectations from the society and what does society expect from me?*

9. *Most people perceive themselves as morally decent, interpersonally sensitive, and socially just.*

It is in the human nature to justify the behaviors through various situations that they have encountered. It is the selective perception and acceptance of the partial truth as it is psychologically comforting. It is the avoidance of understanding of "I" and accountability that it brings along. Since our childhood, we have been blaming others - our sister or brother for breaking mom's most valuable vase - . When we are young, it is our siblings. When we are older, it is other people, but never "I". While an advocate of the popular discourse, Lewis (2001) explains, "Color-blindness enables all members of the community to avoid confronting the racial realities that surround them, to avoid facing their own racist presumptions and understandings, and to avoid dealing with racist events" (p. 801), it is rather questionable whether such attributes can be expanded to the overall society. Sonio Nieto (2000) argues that multicultural education "challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts" and "affirms the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and gender among others) that students, their communities, and teachers reflect" (p. 305). She does not only argue that multicultural education "rejects racism", she also confirms the importance of teachers' cultures in the learning process. *Am I truly sensitive to the racial elements in the culture I am living, including the cultural differences of the dominant race? What are my standards of judging "the other"? What is "morally decent" and "socially just" for me? Have I ever met a person identifying himself/herself as "racist"?*

Discussion and Conclusion

Bennett (1993) argues that, “Probably one of the most threatening ideas encountered by students is this concept of difference and the implications this concept brings along with it” (p. 181). That is, how we perceive the differences determine the scale and limit of our interactions with other cultures. In this context, intercultural communication competence is the first big step towards creating a culturally sensitive education. “Exploring the construct of cultural difference is fundamental to learning about other cultures” (Mahoney & Schamber, 2004, p. 311) and we need to start with a close look at our intercultural communication competence. Are we communicating our sincere attempts effectively, or are we simply blinding ourselves with our convictions on what is right for the students?

The solution is not simply to create a culturally responsive pedagogy with a curriculum designed with children of color in mind, and turning young, female, white suburban teachers into cultural receptive and responsive educators. I do not argue the relevance of such discourses in the current education system. However, what I am arguing is that these do not constitute the essence of the solution but it is, rather, an understanding of “who I am”, and “why I do what I do” as to start the ‘change’.

It is also not necessarily the information provided by the schools that will enhance our intercultural communication competence but an understanding of why we do what we do will. Gudykunst (1998) explains that intercultural competence includes not only knowledge of the culture and language, but also affective and behavioral skills. Examples to such affective and behavioral skills are empathy, human warmth, charisma, and the ability to manage anxiety and uncertainty. There is no question that racism is a big concern and dominance of a single culture is a real threat for any education system, however, not belonging to the “mainstream culture” should not justify the failure within an education system.

From a pedagogical and educational point of view, cultural sensitivity provides a road map to multiculturalization of education and thus equity. From a political point of view, ‘divide and rule’ concept applies where schools, through singling out the differences (unique characteristics), are creating groups. Through these divisive policies, it becomes easier to focus on a problem where political sensitivity becomes a handicap, and school management focuses on maintaining a superficial equal education rather than focusing on advancement of the education system. In order to have a better understanding, we need to have a close look at the policies as how an educational ideology is transferred to procedures, and regarding application, and how these procedures are practiced.

To achieve multiculturalism in education, we need to have a clear definition of what we understand from “multicultural education”. Through a clear definition, we can make the necessary changes in the policies. After we make the necessary changes in the policies, we need to have leaders with strong intercultural communication skills in order to communicate the vision of a multicultural education. The process of defining

multicultural education, making the necessary changes in the policies, and finding a leader to communicate these can be achieved through serious and sincere applications of each of these steps, respectively. However, before we start to ‘change’ the world, we need to understand “why I do what I do.” Whoever you are, wherever you are, whatever you want to accomplish, it all begins with an understanding of “I”.

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