

Plugging the School-to-Prison Pipeline: The Impacts of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices

Cynthia Maceda, Traci Baxley, Ed.D., and Martha Brown, M.Ed.

Research Question

- How do Culturally Responsive Practices (CRP) impact the engagement of incarcerated students in the school-to-prison pipeline?

Population

- 6-12th grade students
- African American, Hispanic and Caucasian males
- 30 students

Setting

- Palm Beach County Jail
- Overcrowded classroom
- Lobby of jail wing

Type of Study

- Case Study/Qualitative

Methodology:

- Field Notes
- Literature Review
- Analysis of Lesson Plans



Culturally Responsive Practices (CRP)

VS.

Standard Teaching Practices (STP)

Student-Centered

- Builds relationship between teacher and student
- Uses relevant and engaging material
- Involves students by using personal experiences
- Utilizes and builds on students' prior knowledge to learn new information

Teacher-Centered

- Driven by and based on the FCAT
- Common teaching methods
- FCAT used as formal assessment
- Void of students' experiences and interests

Personal experiences

- One-on-One / group work
- Contemporary media
- Relevant and engaging examples
- Applying material to their situation
- Scholastic 'Scope' Magazines

- FCAT generated worksheets
- Generic, non-relatable examples
- No differentiation
- Non-contemporary media

FINDINGS: Evidence Of Increased Engagement

One on One work session

- Increases confidence
- Participates in class
- Answers questions

Student becomes aware of voluntary involvement

- Chooses to participate in class
- Avoids lockdown
- Remains engaged throughout entire class period

Relatable material

- Attentive
- Includes personal anecdotes

Continuous group work

- Work with same group to build relationship
- Attempts/completes work
- Lower frustration levels

Implications / Recommendations

1. Diversity Training

- ESE Certification
- CRP Training
- Critical Pedagogy
- Multicultural Education
- Differentiated Instruction

2. Systemic

- More unified connection between public schools and the jail.
- More flexibility to choose curriculum/content
- Content: relevance
- Delivery of content
- Mandating class attendance

3. Future Research

- Longer studies
- Multiple locations
- Varied facilities
- Effects on females
- Comparison of Public Education and Alternative Education

References:

- Irvine, J. J. & Candler, H. C. (n.d.). Teaching Tolerance: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy Primer. Retrieved from: http://www.tolerance.org/tdsi/crp_primer_intro
- Elias, M. (2013). Teaching Tolerance: The School-to-Prison Pipeline. Retrieved from: <http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-43-spring-2013/school-to-prison>
- Clark, L.C. (2007). Expectations and 'At-Risk' Children (Ed. 1), Rethinking Our Classrooms (pp.151-153). Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking School, Ltd.
- Children at Risk. (2013). Southern Poverty Law Center. Retrieved from: <http://www.splcenter.org/what-we-do/children-at-risk>.