

Multicultural Education

Issues and Perspectives

SEVENTH EDITION

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Preface

Both diversity and the recognition of diversity have increased in nations around the world within the last two decades (Banks, 2004, Banks, 2009; Castles, 2009). The near zero population growth in many of the Western nations and Japan and the rapid population growth in the developing nations have created a demographic divide and a demand for immigrants to meet labor needs. The growth of the population of ethnic, racial, linguistic, and religious minorities within the Western nations is also increasing at a much faster rate than are mainstream groups. The percentage of the non-Hispanic White population in the United States is projected to decrease during the 2030s and 2040s and comprise 50 percent of the population in 2042, down from 66 percent in 2008 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2008). Ethnic minorities are projected to increase from one-third of the nation's population in 2006 to 50 percent in 2042 (cited in Roberts, 2008).

The election of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States in 2008 is a significant marker of important demographic changes in the United States as well as the promises and challenges of diversity. Obama received significant support from young people, many of whom worked in his election. His support among the college-educated population, Asian Americans, Hispanics, and Jewish Americans was also significant. Obama was supported by 63 percent of Asian, 67 percent of Hispanic, and 77 percent of Jewish voters (Nichols, 2008). Forty-two percent of White voters also voted for Obama, which exceeded the percentage who voted for John Kerry in 2004 (Boynton, 2009). Despite the impressive support he received from many demographic groups, Obama was the victim of veiled racial attacks that tried to depict him as an "Other" who would not be an acceptable American president. Massing (2008) states that the attacks on Obama were "perhaps the most vicious smear campaign ever mounted against an American politician" (p. 26). Consequently, the campaign and election of Obama illustrate both the promises and challenges of diversity in the United States.

Because of worldwide migration and globalization, racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity is increasing in nations around the world, including the United States (Banks, 2009; Castles, 2009). Diversity in the United States is becoming increasingly reflected in the nation's schools, colleges, and universities. In 2006, 43 percent of the students enrolled in grades one to 12 in the public schools were students of color (Planty et al., 2008). It is projected that 66 percent of the students in the United States will be African American, Asian, Latino, or Native American by 2020 (Johnson, 2008). In 2007, 20 percent of school-age youth spoke a language other than English at home (Planty et al.). Consequently, a significant percentage of students in U.S. schools are English-language learners. It is projected that by 2030 about 40 percent of the students in the United States will speak English as a second language (Peebles, 2008).

Many of the nation's students are poor. In 2007, 37.3 million people in the United States were living in poverty, including 17.4 percent of students (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & Smith, 2008). The gap between the rich and the poor is also widening. In 1980, the top five percent of

Americans owned 15.8 percent of the nation's wealth. The top five percent owned 21.2 percent of U.S. wealth in 2007 (DeNavas-Walt et al.).

These demographic, social, and economic trends have important implications for teaching and learning in today's schools. As U.S. students become increasingly diverse, most of the nation's teachers remain White, middle class, and female. In 2004, approximately 83 percent of the nation's teachers were White and 75 percent were female (Planty et al., 2007). Consequently, a wide gap exists between the racial, cultural, and linguistic characteristics of U.S. students and teachers.

The increasing diversity within U.S. schools provides both opportunities and challenges. Diverse classrooms and schools make it possible to teach students from many different cultures and groups how to live together cooperatively and productively. However, racial prejudice and discrimination are challenges that arise when people from diverse groups interact. Teachers need to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to maximize the opportunities that diversity offers and to minimize its challenges. Teacher education programs should help teachers attain the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to work effectively with students from diverse groups as well as help students from mainstream groups develop cross-cultural knowledge, values, and competencies.

Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives, seventh edition, is designed to help current and future educators acquire the concepts, paradigms, and explanations needed to become effective practitioners in culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse classrooms and schools. This seventh edition has been revised to reflect current and emerging research, theories, and practices related to the education of students from both genders and from different cultural, racial, ethnic, and language groups. Exceptionality is part of our concept of diversity because there are exceptional students in each group discussed in this book.

Chapters 8 and 9 are new to this seventh edition. The coauthors added to Chapters 14 and 16 have brought new information, insights, and perspectives to the revisions of these chapters. Chapters 2, 6, 12, 13, and 14 have been significantly shortened, which enabled the authors of these chapters to focus them more tightly as well as to revise them substantially. All of the chapters from the previous edition have been revised to reflect new research, theories, census data, statistics, interpretations, and developments. The Multicultural Resources in the Appendix have been substantially revised and updated. A new section on Sexual and Gender Minorities has been added to the Appendix. The Glossary has been revised to incorporate new census data and developments in the field.

This book consists of six parts. The chapters in Part I discuss how race, gender, class, and exceptionality interact to influence student behavior. Social class and religion and their effects on education are discussed in Part II. Part III describes how educational opportunity differs for female and male students and how schools can foster gender equity. Chapter 8—which is new to this seventh edition—describes how race and gender are interacting rather than separate and discrete variables. The other new chapter to this edition—Chapter 9—examines the role of queer studies and sexual and gender minorities in multicultural education. The issues, problems, and opportunities for educating students of color and students with language differences are discussed in Part IV. Chapter 11—on the colorblind perspective—highlights the importance of race even when it is unacknowledged by teachers. Part V focuses on exceptionality, describing the issues involved in creating equal educational opportunity for students who have disabilities and for those who are gifted. The final part, Part VI, discusses multicultural education as a

process of school reform and ways to increase student academic achievement and to work more effectively with parents. The Appendix consists of a list of books for further reading, and the Glossary defines many of the key concepts and terms used throughout the book.

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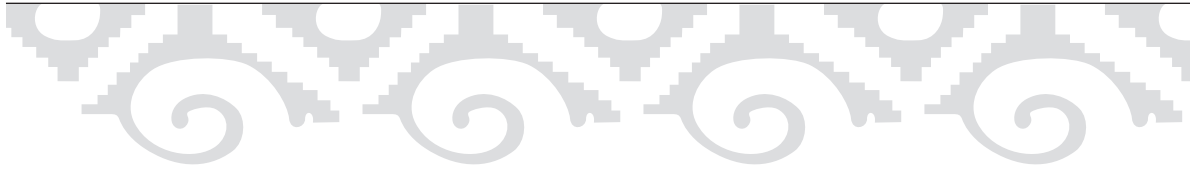
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James A. Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks

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