



# The Relevance of Multicultural Education in Contemporary Society

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**Abstract:** - India is a country with great potential, full of different language, religious and cultural groups. Unity in diversity is the strong foundation of the democratic life process in India. The rapid invasion of science and technology has transformed the whole world into a global village. Similarly, the concept of one world, one culture is spreading all over the world. People are attracted to world cultures, avoiding narrow mindedness and extreme cultural consciousness. However, in view of the contemporise situation, it is felt that narrow minded thinking, religious, tensions, communalism, extreme cultural consciousness etc, have aroused hatred among the people. At present it is necessary to strengthen the desire for harmony among everyone. This has increased the importance or need for multicultural education. This paper discusses the need of multicultural education, the dimensions and challenges of multicultural education for the present time.

**Key Words:** - Multicultural, Education, Religious, Culture

**Introduction:** - Multicultural education is a way to preserve cultural diversity. Multicultural Education is the process of establishing cultural cohesion among people from different cultures of subcultures of a country through intercultural communication, cultural exchange, respectful attitude towards each other's cultures and cultural protection. The maintenance of democratic values such as freedom, equality, justice, human dignity etc is the basis of Multicultural Education.

Multicultural Education is a cutting-edge concept, a movement for educational change and a successful 21<sup>st</sup> century method. According to the concept, Multicultural Education works to provide all pupils including those from different racial, ethnic and socioeconomic class, grouping, with equal educational opportunities. Multicultural Education is a reform movement that modifies the traditional classroom to reflect the various cultural and racial group that make up a society, a community or a country in order to establish a just environment where all students have equal access to fair and just educational opportunities. Multicultural Education is a process that consistently offers and goals that put administrators and teachers on the right path to achieving these objectives.

As was correctly stated, Multicultural Education is a very successful and cutting-edge procedure that is slowly but surely becoming more and more prevalent in the 21<sup>st</sup> century's educational mainstream. Multicultural model that emphasises the idea of inclusion and values both individual and group differences. In other words, it's a collection of instructional practices created primarily to help teachers deal with a range of significant educational difficulties brought on by the fast-shifting demographics of their students. It aids pupil in learning about various world and in particular, local cultural histories. In addition, it offers a variety of cultural traditions from other communities. Multicultural Education can be regarded of as a method of instruction that supports the values of inclusivity, diversity, democracy, skill development, inquiry, critical thinking, value of perspectives and self- reflection. According to NAME (The National Association for Multicultural Education), "Multicultural education as a philosophical concept built on the ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equality and human dignity".

According to EIKIND," Multicultural education is the philosophical concept which advocates that all children should have an equal opportunity to learn in school, regardless of the children's race, social class or gender. He emphasized on the truth that our differences just make us different not better or worse than on another."

Finally, it can be said that the concept of Multicultural education is very broad. Multicultural education is an educational process that covers cultural diversity, linguistic differences, gender differences; religious belief, race, caste, social background etc successfully implement democratic values while maintaining human dignity.

**Objective of the Study:** - To study the importance of Multicultural Education in present situation.

**Significance of the Study:** - Multicultural education will create a democratic environment of education irrespective of caste, religion, language, gender and race in a traditional country like India. This will enable every citizen to live a dignified life while protecting human rights. Multicultural education will help strengthen the foundation of unity among the diverse society through cultural exchange.

**Methodology:** - Analytical methods have been used for this study. Data are collected from secondary sources like books, magazines, journals internet etc.

**Dimensions of Multicultural Education:** - There are five different Dimensions of Multicultural Education. They are- content integration, Strategies for building knowledge. Prejudice reduction, equality pedagogy and a solid social and Cultural Climate in schools. The degree to which teachers incorporate examples and content from many cultures and groups to highlight important ideas, stereotypes, and problems within their subject or field is known as content integration. To effectively teach pupils about the various facets of culture, teachers should use relevant examples from various cultures in the classroom

Prejudice reduction refers to the lectures and exercises that educators use to encourage their students to adopt favourable view points of their racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. Children frequently arrive at school harbouring a variety of prejudices and false beliefs about other racial and ethnic groups. Therefore, if

specific conditions exist in the educational materials that include content about various races and ethnic groups can assist students develop more positive intergroup attitudes. These prerequisites include treating international products consistently and sequentially as well as portraying ethnic communities favourably in the products.

The process of knowledge construction refers to the process of enhancing learner's knowledge through cognitive ability, investigative ability and self-effort. In addition, curriculum developers seek to influence students by incorporating diverse cultural perspectives and cognitive topics.

For Equality Pedagogy to be successfully implemented, a teacher must provide adequate opportunities for the academic success of students from different races, religious, cultures, languages and social backgrounds through refining their behaviour.

When the culture and structure of the school are changed in ways that allow students from various racial, ethnic, and equal status an empowering school culture and social structure are produced. It is necessary to change every aspect of the school's environment in order to adopt this dimension, including the administrators and instructors' attitudes, beliefs and behaviour as well as the curriculum, course of study methods of evaluation and teaching methods.

Teachers and administrators must pay attention to each of the five multicultural education elements listed above in order to execute it effectively. In order to ensure that students from various racial, cultural, and social – class groups will have equal access to educational opportunities, teachers should modify their teaching methods, use content from diverse groups when teaching concepts and skills, assist students in understanding how knowledge in various disciplines is constructed, encourage the development of positive intergroup attitudes and behaviours and use content from diverse groups when teaching concepts and skills. Students from various ethnic and cultural groups must experience equal standing in the school's culture and life, which requires changing the school's overall environment and culture.

**Importance of Multicultural Education in Present Day:** - Multicultural education refers to a method instruction that accepts racial, ethnic and cultural diversity within a society and aims to foster tolerance and cultural pluralism. The basic purpose of multicultural education is to fill a need for an education that incorporates a variety of it fosters in pupils a favourable mental attitude toward interacting and communicating with peers from various cultural back grounds in order to build a moral and civic society. Additionally thud teaching strategy is absolutely essential for pupil's quick growth of democratic values. Additionally, this multicultural education is crucial for reducing or eliminating the sense of ignorance and division that exists among different cultures. The main goal of multicultural education is to promote tolerance across many cultures and to instil the value of a society that inclusive of all people, regardless of gender, race, creed, age, religion, ability or other characteristics.

The society of today is split. Progress is hampered by increased negative thinking from a variety of angles, including caste, religion, race, language, gender, cultural background etc. Such a constrained conscience will undermine interpersonal relationships in a democratic, secular nation like India and

jeopardize the nation's honour and history. Therefore, in order to preserve the Indian identity, education must be in national life given the current scenario. The primary components of the demand's foe and applicability of Multicultural education are as follows: -

- A democratic nation like India must educate its citizen well if it is to be successful. This is so that they can use their rights and be mindful of their obligations. Multicultural education is therefore necessary to actualize the democratic values of the nation by giving everyone access to education regardless of caste religion, race, language or gender.
- Strong leaders who can represent the goals of people from various communities can be developed by students through multicultural education. This is due to the fact that multicultural education promotes harmony rather than prejudice and discriminating thinking.
- Human values are a decorative feature of man. You have a lot of options for expressing your attractiveness. Therefore, by infusing human values like fraternity, equality, tolerance, responsibility etc, in student's characters, multicultural education contributes to the development of a just society.
- Numerous civilizations have merged in India. To promote intercultural harmony through cultural interchange, multicultural education is particularly crucial.
- The establishment of social justice is a further prerequisite of multicultural education. Students benefit from multicultural education by learning about all the concerns required to defend the right of all citizens. We must uphold that state's Constitution and be conscious of injustice, if we are to promote justice and given power through multicultural education.
- Students that participate in multicultural education learn about the history of Indian culture. Such Information helps pupils understand the diversity of the nation and transmits its culture to the following generation.
- By offering sufficient possibilities for growth, multicultural education contributes to Improving the quality of life for the different marginalised groups in society including women, Sc's and minorities.
- To help pupils develop critical thinking skills and a greater understanding of the societal concerns that continues to plague culturally different populations, multicultural education is necessary.
- The education a student received while in a school and the upbringing they had as children will have a significant impact on society in the future. This instruction demonstrates how to encourage cross-cultural communication among students, while directly contributes to the development of peace and equality in the student's impressionable minds.
- In order to foster a multicultural society, Multicultural education is not only important for the student population but also for instructors and other education.
- In the present era of globalization, the concept of one world, one culture exists. Therefore, every conscious citizen of the country is feeling proud as a citizen of his country and the world. Multicultural education is a welcome step towards establishing world peace in the present day.
- A pupil who doesn't fit in one culture can adjust to it with the help of multicultural education. The learner can acclimatise to a foreign place with a different cultural background language and way of

life with the aid of this education. Although it can be difficult for a new student, this education sparks their desire to learn and thrive in their new cultural environment.

Cultural diversity can be preserved through multicultural education. It is clear from the debate above that multicultural education is highly necessary. By clearing the student's minds of superstitions, stereotypes, narrow-mindedness, religious prejudices, etc., this multicultural education encourages intercultural understanding. Student's critical thinking abilities and respect for India's various cultural groups are both facilitated by this. Knowledge is provided by multicultural education. A reasonable approach to society's shifting attitudes towards both the material and immaterial components of life such as manners, lifestyles, religious beliefs, and cultural values can be adopted with the aid of multicultural education. Students are taught to know, comprehend and experience their country's unique surroundings from a national perspective.

**Issues and Challenges of Multicultural Education:** - India has a diverse cultural heritage. The country's democratic identity, however, is seriously threatened by the rising sense of superiority, gender discrimination, communalism, religious conflict etc. among the populace. These issues have given rise to destructive thoughts in the populace.

A nation's residents must be able to express their personalities through democratic behaviour in order to create a diversified society. Multicultural education is more difficult to implement in a populous nation like India. This is due to the fact that the country's demographic fluctuations are linked to numerous socio-economic, political, cultural and other challenges. Foreign thought has caused the social system to become disorderly at the same time as these growing issues.

The following are the main difficulties faced by Multicultural education: -

- **Linguistic Challenge:** - If we look closely, we can see that one of the biggest problems facing multicultural education is the language barrier. In contrast to a standard classroom, a multicultural classroom has pupils who speak a variety of languages and dialects and come from various linguistic and racial backgrounds. As a teacher it gets more difficult to convey knowledge, and as a pupil, the level of understanding decreases.
- **Difficulties with Learning Styles:** - The difficulties associated with learning styles in a classroom setting where each student comes from a different background has distinct approaches or techniques of learning are clearly apparent, aside from language barriers. In order to convey knowledge using various learning styles, the work of the instructor becomes significantly more stressful in such circumstances.
- **Nonverbal Communication:** - Sometimes it is far simpler to comprehend a foreign language than an ethnic group's body language. There could be a number of issues and difficulties with accurate interpretation if a teacher is not aware of the non-verbal actions typical of the society where his students are from. Even simple body language like raised hands, eye contact and head nods might have a completely different connotation in another culture.

- **Obstacle Resulting from Pre-existing Assumptions and Beliefs:** - Preconceived notions and beliefs of students and teachers provide obstacles to multicultural education because they do not value interactions with culturally diverse individuals and hold prejudiced attitudes of others even before engaging with a particular ethnic or minority group.
- **Difficulties with Nationalism:** Additionally, there are certain significant multiculturalism-related problems that can be seen. Many detractors of multiculturalism hold the opinion that it undermines national identities and shared cultural heritage. They contend that the blending of many cultures and traditions fosters a stronger sense of place, which influences each citizen's sense of nationalism.
- **Educating Students in Communication:** Students may feel hesitant or unable to communicate their opinions due to other reasons besides language barriers, such as the terror of not being understood. While it is quite normal in the new setting, boys will avoid interacting with girls in some Muslim nations. Teachers should encourage students to explore many topics, express their opinions on a range of subjects, and foster a positive learning environment.
- **Many Extracurricular Pursuits:** - The presence of children from different cultures in their classroom means that they must also become adjusted to new customs, a way of life, and interpersonal connections in this new community. Most of the time, teaching involves showing and explaining. Typically, it takes place during various extracurricular activities. Children ought to be taught about important dates and holidays.
- **Presenting One Issue from Several Perspectives:** - Regardless of the nationality of the students, each instructor should approach a subject from a distinct angle in the classroom. Of course, it would be fantastic, but this option isn't always available due to the limited number of school lessons. The situation is different with multicultural classes. History courses are particularly affected by this because various populations may have opposing views of the same events. For example, some movements should be called not only an expansion of one country but also the displacement of another nation. A teacher must take great care when choosing his words and expressions so as not to hurt some students' sentiments. Moreover, he should not strive to persuade in the unquestionable truth of his words and opinions since it may result in a conflict or disappointment among students. History should be presented as accurately as possible. There is no need to minimize any drawbacks, but a teacher's job is to avoid stereotyping and present data from reliable primary sources to appear impartial.
- The challenge of multicultural education is ensuring that all students receive high-quality education without discrimination.
- Another challenge facing multicultural education is to provide security and development opportunities for minorities and other disadvantaged groups.
- The issue of migration from neighbouring countries and its effects on the socioeconomic, political, and cultural facets of the nation make multicultural education a complex and sensitive one.
- The challenge for multicultural education is to uphold the democratic traditions of the nation by respecting student differences in opinion and cultural diversity.

It is clear from the discussion above that there are numerous difficulties with multicultural education. Only by tackling these issues head-on and forcefully can multicultural education be successfully implemented. In a country like India, multicultural education is essential for the success of democracy.

**Strategies of Multicultural Education:** - In Indian society, cultural diversity and national pride go hand in hand. Therefore, maintaining this cultural diversity through multicultural education requires the efforts of instructors, students, curriculum, and extracurricular activities. In a nation like India, multicultural education faces a number of difficulties. Planning is necessary for putting this education into practice. A multicultural education can improve pupils' performance in the future. The various methods of delivering multicultural education are as follows:

- In order for teachers to better understand the difficulties posed by multicultural education, they must receive training.
- The various cultural groups in the nation and their traits should be introduced to the students.
- Educational institutions should set up a variety of cultural integration programmes where students can show off the ideals of their own culture.
- Integrate various cultures into the curriculum.
- To ensure that students have a sufficient understanding of their culture.
- Students should be made aware of the various national differences, including those in language, culture, and religion.
- To inform students of the cultural contributions made by legendary figures.
- Cultural conflicts should never exist in the educational institution's environment.
- In order to improve students' awareness of different cultures, they should be taken to various tourist attractions.
- The classroom should be democratic so that all students have the same opportunities for growth based on their individual merits.
- Comparative studies should be prioritised in order to learn more about global cultural and educational trends.
- To meet the various needs of students, teachers should use a variety of strategies or methods.
- A variety of human rights-related topics ought to be covered in the curriculum.
- To offer students instruction in language acquisition and skill development.
- To educate people on various social justice-related issues.
- It is important to emphasise the cultural heritage, present circumstances, and upcoming difficulties of the nation.
- To research the nation's rich history and how it relates to the present.

**Conclusion:** - Today's society and time are both dynamic. Life has altered significantly for most people as a result of this dynamic culture. Due to the demands of human cognition and civilized existence, the 21st century has advanced. The speed of scientific and technological advancement in this century has improved

people's lives to the greatest extent possible. Thoughts of exclusivity, nationalism, and religious prejudice still exist in some peoples' thinking. There is a revolution taking place in the country, and there is a lot of animosity in the thoughts of the people. To solve this significant issue, multicultural education is required. India is a culturally diverse nation. With its diverse civilizations, India stands out in front of the rest of the world. Multicultural education is currently in great demand in India, the home of this culture. This paper explores the importance of multicultural education in today's world as well as some of the biggest obstacles to its implementation.

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