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Title

Teachers teaching students from a multicultural background : the case of Malaysia

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Abstract

Teacher educators like talking about the pre-service ? in-service continuum as a way of expressing their views, that inevitably, they are expected to play a multifaceted role in and outside of the classroom. In this respect, what is of greater concern is that many teachers are inadequately prepared to teach ethnically diverse students. Malaysia is a multiracial country comprising three main races: Malays, Chinese and Indians. All three bring with them significantly different cultural beliefs, norms and practices. A typical Malaysian classroom has students from all three races. The question is: are teachers adequately prepared to teach students who come from three different cultures? This paper will attempt to present snapshots of a number of issues concerning teachers currently teaching students from a multicultural background in Malaysian classrooms. Data for this initial investigation were gathered in 2004 using survey questionnaires. While teachers generally strongly support the notion that knowing cultures of all races is important in establishing harmony in Malaysia and believe that they need to be familiar with cultures of the students they teach, there seems to be a number of

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issues that are of serious concern, including those related to syllabus, teacher education, teaching and learning processes and school climate, if teachers are to teach effectively a multicultural student body.
(HRK / Abstract übernommen)