

Why Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is Important in K12 Education

Aaron Laquan Nance¹, Ashley Harden Reid²

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Abstract

Gloria Ladson-Billings coined the term Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in the mid-1990's and described it as “a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural references to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Billings developed three main components for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: (a) “a focus on student learning and academic success, (b) developing students’ cultural competence to assist students in developing positive ethnic and social identities, and (c) supporting students’ critical consciousness or their ability to recognize and critique societal inequalities” (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is paramount because it advocates for students who are sociocultural and marginalized. CRP helps to close the achievement gap by expanding on topics that seek to dismantle implicit biases and social structures in K12 education. This paper will explore the different aspects of CRP and will underscore the significance of teaching it in K-12 classrooms. It will also examine how diversity, equity, and Inclusion has an effect on pedagogy, and the benefit of learning CRP in a diverse classroom setting. The paper will conclude by providing relevant solutions for moving forward as a classroom teacher in K-12 education and how to best serve students in a multicultural setting.

Keywords: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy; Diversity; K12 Education; Multicultural; Sociocultural