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Trauma-Sensitive Classroom Strategies

Dr. Patricia Crain de Galarce , Merlyn Mayhew

Lesley University, The United States

Abstract

Classrooms today are more diverse even as public discourse increasingly challenges principles of equity, dignity, and inclusion. Educators are called to create learning environments that honor students varied cultural, linguistic, social, and lived experiences. This paper examines trauma-sensitive classroom strategies as a foundational approach to inclusive educational practice, arguing that equity, accessibility, belonging, and student voice are mutually reinforcing conditions for meaningful learning and human flourishing. Drawing upon mixed-methods research and scholarship in trauma-sensitive education, inclusive pedagogy, literacy education, and culturally sustaining practice, the paper explores how everyday instructional decisions can foster safety, agency, relational trust, and authentic participation for all learners. Rather than positioning trauma-sensitive practices as a collection of discrete interventions, we conceptualize them as a pedagogical framework that shapes the daily life of classrooms. Central to this framework is the recognition that students want to be active contributors to their own learning and to the collective well-being of their communities. By centering accessibility, voice, and relational care, trauma-sensitive approaches create conditions in which learners experience dignity, connection, and opportunity. This paper contributes to an international dialogue on the role of educators in cultivating resilient, equitable, and liberatory learning environments where every student has the opportunity to belong, participate, contribute, and thrive.

Keywords: Belonging; Equity; Inclusion; Pedagogy; Voice