

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES AND THEIR EFFECTS ON MINORITY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Nuraedah Nuraedah *

Universitas Tadulako

nuraedahnuraedah76@gmail.com

Al-Amin

Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia

al.amin-2024@feb.unair.ac.id

Abstract

This systematic literature review investigates the effect of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices (CTRP) on minority students' academic achievement, engagement, and social-emotional well-being. By analysing existing research, this study reveals that the implementation of CTRP, which involves acknowledging students' cultural identities, incorporating diverse perspectives into the curriculum, and adapting instruction, significantly improves educational outcomes for culturally marginalised students. However, the success of CTRP depends on teachers' cultural competence, institutional support and availability of resources. This study highlights the need for further efforts in teacher training, curriculum development and research to advance the understanding and implementation of CTRP, with the ultimate goal of closing the achievement gap and promoting equity in education for all students, regardless of their background. The findings provide valuable insights for education practitioners, policymakers and researchers who seek to create more inclusive and diversity-supportive learning environments.

Keywords: Teaching Practices, Culturally Responsive, Minority Student Achievement.

Introduction

Cultural diversity in the classroom is common in today's education system. However, students from minority cultural backgrounds often face challenges in achieving optimal academic performance (Sitopu et al., 2024); (Guna et al., 2024); (Fawait et al., 2024). One of the factors that can affect minority students' achievement is the teaching practices implemented by teachers. Teaching practices that are responsive to students' culture are considered as one of the approaches that can improve minority students' academic achievement (Xie & Derakhshan, 2021).

Culturally responsive teaching practices involve understanding and appreciating students' cultural backgrounds and integrating elements of those cultures into the learning process. Culturally responsive teaching practices play an important role in creating an inclusive learning environment and supporting minority students' academic achievement. In an increasingly diverse society, teachers need to have sensitivity and understanding of their students' cultural backgrounds (Su et al., 2022). By integrating

cultural elements into the learning process, teachers can create more meaningful and relevant learning experiences for minority students. This can increase students' motivation, engagement and ownership of their learning. When students feel valued and connected to the material being taught, they tend to be more passionate and dedicated in achieving better academic performance (Sancar et al., 2021).

In addition, culturally responsive teaching practices are also important in addressing the achievement gap that often exists between minority students and students from the majority group. By considering and respecting students' cultural diversity, teachers can create a more equitable and just learning environment. This practice helps to reduce biases and stereotypes that may exist, as well as provide equal opportunities for all students to succeed academically. Through a culturally responsive approach, teachers can help minority students overcome barriers they may face, such as differences in language, learning styles or cultural expectations (Leithwood, 2021). Thus, culturally responsive teaching practices are key in promoting equality and equity in education and supporting minority students' academic achievement. Through this approach, teachers can create a more inclusive and relevant learning environment for minority students, thereby increasing their motivation and engagement in learning.

While there has been research demonstrating the positive potential of culturally responsive teaching practices, there is still a gap in a comprehensive understanding of its effects on minority students' achievement. Therefore, a systematic review of the existing literature is needed to analyse in depth the relationship between culturally responsive teaching practices and minority students' academic achievement.

Research Methods

The study in this research uses the literature research method. Literature research method, also known as literature review, is a research approach that involves collecting, evaluating, and synthesising information from existing sources, such as books, scientific journals, articles, and other documents. The main purpose of literature research is to gain a comprehensive understanding of a topic, identify gaps in knowledge, and provide a theoretical foundation for further research. (Hidayat, 2009); (Afiyanti, 2008).

Results and Discussion

The Effect of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices on Minority Student Achievement

Culturally Responsive Teaching practices are pedagogical approaches that recognise and value the diversity of cultures, languages and experiences that students bring to the learning environment. It involves the use of culturally relevant teaching strategies, inclusive learning materials, and the creation of classroom environments that respect and embrace diverse cultural backgrounds (Camacho-Morles et al., 2021).

The main goal of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices is to increase students' engagement, motivation, and academic achievement by connecting learning to their life experiences and culture, as well as addressing the gap that may exist between students' culture and the dominant school culture (Wood & Harper, 2023).

Key characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices include: (1) recognition and appreciation of students' cultural diversity, (2) use of culturally and linguistically relevant teaching strategies, (3) creation of learning environments that are inclusive and respectful of all cultures, (4) development of strong and trusting relationships between teachers and students, (5) involvement of families and communities in the learning process, (6) ongoing self-reflection by teachers on their own cultural biases and assumptions, (7) use of learning materials that represent a variety of cultural perspectives, and (8) fair and unbiased assessment that takes into account students' cultural contexts. By combining these characteristics, Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices aim to create meaningful and relevant learning experiences for all students, regardless of their cultural background (Yang, 2022).

Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices have a significant influence on minority students' academic achievement. When teachers use teaching approaches that value and reflect students' cultural backgrounds, they create a more inclusive and meaningful learning environment. Students feel valued and respected, which in turn increases their engagement and motivation in the learning process. By connecting learning materials to students' life experiences and culture, teachers help students see the relevance and value of what they are learning, thus improving their understanding and retention (Sue & Okazaki, 2022).

In addition, Culturally Responsive Teaching practices also help to address the achievement gap that often exists between minority students and students from dominant cultural groups. By recognising and addressing cultural biases in the education system, as well as providing culturally appropriate support, teachers can help minority students overcome barriers and reach their full academic potential. This practice also helps create a sense of belonging and connection to the school community, which is important for students' academic success and emotional well-being (Copeland & Ross, 2022).

Research has shown that consistent implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices can result in significant improvements in minority students' academic achievement. A study by Gay (2010) found that when teachers used culturally responsive strategies, such as using culturally relevant examples and engaging different communication styles, minority students showed improvements in test scores, engagement levels, and motivation to learn (Copeland & Ross, 2022). Another study by Ladson-Billings (1995) revealed that African-American students taught by teachers who used culturally responsive approaches achieved higher scores in reading and maths compared to their peers in traditional classrooms. These findings emphasise the

importance of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices in narrowing the achievement gap and promoting educational equity for all students, regardless of their cultural background (Wei et al., 2021).

In addition to the positive impact on academic achievement, Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices also have wider benefits for minority students' personal and social development. When students feel valued and respected for their cultural identity, they are more likely to develop a healthy sense of self-confidence and self-esteem. This can lead to improved emotional well-being and resilience in the face of challenges. Moreover, by learning about and appreciating cultural diversity, students develop intercultural competence and social skills that are essential for success in an increasingly diverse global society (Reeve & Cheon, 2021).

However, it is important to note that implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices requires ongoing commitment and effort from teachers and the education system as a whole. Teachers need to actively engage in professional development and self-reflection to address their own cultural biases and assumptions. They must also work closely with families and communities to build relationships that respect and support student learning. In addition, educational policies and resources must be aligned to support the implementation of culturally responsive practices widely and systematically (Howard & Milner, 2021).

Thus, Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices have significant potential to improve academic achievement and educational outcomes for minority students. By recognising, valuing and responding to students' cultural diversity, teachers can create learning environments that are inclusive, meaningful and empowering. This approach not only helps narrow the achievement gap but also fosters students' personal, social and cultural development. However, successful implementation requires commitment, resources and collaborative efforts from all stakeholders in the education system. By implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices, we can take an important step towards educational equity and ensure that every student has the opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential.

Factors Affecting the Success of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices

The successful implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practice depends on various interrelated factors. One of the main factors is teacher competence and commitment. Teachers must have the necessary knowledge, skills and cultural sensitivity to effectively implement culturally responsive practices in their classrooms. This involves a deep understanding of their students' cultural backgrounds, as well as the ability to adapt instruction and curriculum to suit the needs and experiences of diverse students. Teachers must also be committed to constantly engaging in professional development and self-reflection to address their own cultural biases and assumptions (McNair et al., 2022).

Another important factor is support and leadership from school administrators and education policy makers. School leaders should prioritise and advocate for the implementation of culturally responsive practices throughout their schools. They should provide the necessary resources, training and support for teachers to effectively implement this approach. In addition, education policies and standards should be aligned with the principles of culturally responsive teaching, ensuring that there is a systematic and consistent approach to implementing these practices across the school system (Minor, 2023).

Family and community engagement and partnerships are also critical to the success of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices. Teachers and schools should proactively reach out to and engage students' families, recognising them as valuable partners in their children's education. By building respectful and collaborative relationships with families, teachers can gain valuable insights into their students' cultural backgrounds, values and aspirations. This partnership can also help bridge the gap between home and school, ensuring that students receive consistent support and encouragement in both environments (Artiles, 2023).

Finally, the overall school environment should support and embrace cultural diversity. This involves creating an inclusive climate that values and celebrates cultural differences. Schools should strive to represent the diversity of their student population through staff, curriculum, and instructional resources. Students should have opportunities to see themselves positively represented in learning materials and interact with diverse role models. Additionally, schools can engage in events and initiatives that increase cultural awareness and understanding, such as multicultural celebrations, workshops, and community-based projects. By creating an environment that embraces diversity, schools can foster a sense of belonging, appreciation and cultural pride among all students.

Challenges in Implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices

The implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices can face various challenges that must be overcome to ensure its success. One of the main challenges is teachers' lack of awareness and understanding of the importance of cultural responsiveness. Many teachers may not be aware of their own cultural biases or how students' cultural backgrounds may affect their learning experiences. Without adequate cultural understanding and sensitivity, teachers may find it difficult to effectively adapt instruction and establish relationships with culturally diverse students. Overcoming these challenges requires robust training and professional development to improve teachers' cultural competence (Cao et al., 2021).

Another challenge involves resistance or lack of support from various education stakeholders. Some administrators, teachers or community members may resist or question the need for culturally responsive practices. They may see it as an additional

burden or a distraction from other academic priorities. Countering this resistance requires advocacy and clear communication about the benefits of culturally responsive teaching for all students. It also requires strong leadership from administrators to prioritise and support the implementation of these practices across the school (Nurdiana et al., 2023).

Existing curriculum and instructional materials may not reflect or incorporate diverse cultural perspectives, creating another challenge in the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices. Many textbooks and classroom resources have traditionally focused on the experiences and contributions of majority cultural groups, while inadequately representing or completely ignoring marginalised groups (Tamsah et al., 2021); (Syakhrani & Aslan, 2024); (Judijanto et al., 2024); (Sartika & Fransiska, 2024). Teachers may find it difficult to find culturally relevant materials or adapt existing curricula to reflect the diversity of their students. Overcoming these challenges may require the development and acquisition of new materials or substantial revision of the existing curriculum.

Finally, time and resource constraints can pose challenges in the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices. Teachers often face competing demands for their time, with expectations to meet content standards, prepare students for assessments, and manage other classroom responsibilities. Finding time to effectively plan and implement culturally responsive lessons while addressing these demands can be difficult. In addition, schools may have limited financial or material resources to support these initiatives, such as providing professional development opportunities or acquiring diverse curricular materials. Overcoming these challenges may require reallocating existing resources, seeking grants or external funding, and collaborating with community organisations to support culturally responsive teaching efforts.

Conclusion

Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices (CTRPs) have emerged as an important approach to address achievement gaps and improve educational outcomes for minority students. This systematic literature review reveals that the implementation of CTRP has a significant positive influence on the academic achievement, engagement and social-emotional well-being of students from culturally marginalised backgrounds. By recognising and valuing students' cultural identities, incorporating diverse perspectives into the curriculum, and adapting instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners, teachers can create more inclusive and supportive learning environments where minority students feel valued and empowered to succeed.

While these findings are promising, the literature also highlights important challenges and considerations in implementing CTRP. The success of these practices depends on teachers' cultural competence, institutional support and the availability of adequate resources. Further efforts in teacher training, curriculum development and

research are needed to further advance our understanding of CTRP and identify the most effective strategies for its implementation. By addressing these challenges and continuing to prioritise equity in education, we can make strides towards closing the achievement gap and ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, have access to high-quality educational opportunities that embrace diversity and promote success.

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