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The changing face of America, the role of immigration and the need for transformation

With the changing demographics in North America, comes the need to transform our educational system to include new innovative ways of teaching and training not only the future teachers but our future leaders.

Immigration has played a key role in the building of our nation and will play a key role in the “New Face” of America as a new minority becomes the future majority. There are many key elements to learn about this new phenomena including the concept of “funds of knowledge;” a phrase previously researched as a simple concept and now becoming a more of a catalyst for the way a powerful nation is transformed. Previously the Educational System in America ignored the cultural and linguistic background of the individuals, specifically immigrant children from Mexico.

New research shows funds of knowledge will soon play a key role in how we not only teach but lead the nation.

Globally we grapple with the topic of immigration, in the U.S. Immigration has been key. Furthermore a part of the country once belonging to Mexico where Mexicans have once been alienated, now becomes a key transformational point that perhaps the rest of the world can model after.

Changing demographics have been discussed for at least ten years and now has become a reality as we see everything around us changing in day to day activities and daily life. We see more commercials using the language, the food, music and culture. Grocery stores are now including aisle signs in both English and Spanish and stores are beginning to carry more cultural staples such as salsas, tortilla and Mexican spices. Funds of Knowledge are more visible.

After the downturn of the economy in 2008 when families such national news stations as CNN frequently reported the “new phenomena” of families having to move in together to make ends meet. The need for parents to suddenly allow their children with families to return home. This new phenomena is a small aspect of funds of knowledge. The very idea that is automatic to Mexican families. Funds of knowledge are defined as a non-market form of exchange which is cultural capital; also referred to as skills, knowledge, ideas, and values.

The daily lives of Americans have become an educational system where the transformation is occurring subconsciously and driven by economics while other “institutions” will require the re-evaluation of the legacy system especial the educational system.

As we see immigration patterns change in the U.S.A, we see that the educational system was based on the European system/style and the majority of immigration was European during era. Policy was developed to specifically education a certain population of citizens while others accommodated or simply dropped off the system.

For Mexican children (immigrants or children of immigrants) in a territory that once belong to Mexico the system was unjust with little concern or regard of their future and wellbeing. It was believed that absolutely nothing had to be done for this class of citizens as they were merely migrant farmers or had had minimal intellectual capacity as they spoke another language and had a different look. Late 1900’s we see a trend of immigration changing and recently statistics from Pew Hispanic Center indicate the face of immigration is also changing from predominately European before to Hispanic and that of Asian backgrounds.

This new trend of demographics requires us to carefully review our policy, educational, economic and political systems and make necessary changes to ensure this new majority is equipped with tools they need to lead the nation and grasp the economic and political system previously in existence incorporation the cultural capital of the new population.

Recently taken changes in scenery at various locations:



Mural, San Francisco, CA 2015



Fry's Supermarket, Tucson AZ 2016



El Nene Food Truck, Tucson AZ 2016

In conclusion, we are at an intersection of the road where transformation can no longer be avoided in part where the new majority once existed as a minority. This phenomenal changes are a direct result of immigration specifically from Mexico.

References

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