Re-Conceptualizing Inclusive Pedagogy in Practice in Higher Education

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IN PRACTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Twenty-first-century classrooms are becoming increasingly culturally, ethnically, and racially diverse and are looking more and more like microcosms. Consequently, students and some educational stakeholders are demanding the inclusion of race, culture, justice, and equality in the curricula and pushing the envelope for more inclusive pedagogy. Central to the concept of inclusive pedagogy are the values of fairness and equity. Proponents of inclusive pedagogy have indicated that numerous variables influence pedagogy, particularly inclusive pedagogy. These values have elicited concerns throughout the educational system regarding how instructors and facilitators serve all learners academic needs in their academies. However, there is no consensus on what constitutes inclusive pedagogy

in higher education (HE) or if inclusive pedagogy even exists in that space. Therefore, educational institution leaders need to re-conceptualize their thoughts on inclusive pedagogy.

This paper reviews some of the existing literature applicable to inclusive education and inclusive pedagogy. It proposes inclusive pedagogy dimensions that instructors in HE need to consider to effectively implement inclusive pedagogy practice (IPP) in the classroom. It concludes with a conceptual framework for inclusive pedagogy in practice (IPIP) in HE and suggestions of how administrators, faculty members, and course designers can advance the IPIP framework across their campuses.

Introduction

*T*he conversations regarding inclusive pedagogy as a concept evolved out of research surrounding inclusive education that emerged in the early 21st century (Vrășmaș, 2018). Seminal researchers exploring the efficacy of inclusive education relative to special education expressed the need for a paradigm shift in teacher education and school organization and structure (Dunn,1968). At that time, research and discussions focused primarily on where students identified as having special needs should be educated: in pull-out or regular classrooms. Despite more than 20 years of research, inclusive education as a concept remains elusive and has been defined in numerous ways. The literature reveals that early definitions were contextualized and generally lacked consensus (Artiles et al., 2006; Florian, 2014; Loreman, 2017). To distinguish the concept from a location, such as a classroom, Florian (2014) noted that early definitions emphasized inclusive education as a process or an approach. She proposed that though problematic, the lack of a clear definition may indicate the wealth of information on inclusive education that researchers need to uncover. Graham and Slee (2008) concurred with Florian that for the concept to be distinctive and recognizable, those involved in pursuing a more concise definition should acknowledge gaps created while implementing inclusion and identifying assumptions that inform their personal and collective philosophies apropos inclusive education.

Globally, inclusive education still has the stigma as an approach geared primarily towards special needs students in mainstream classrooms. However, in the last decade, inclusive education definitions continue to evolve. The majority cluster around the notion of an educational philosophy or belief system reflected in schools that welcomes all learners and treats them as valuable citizens. Such schools also allow all learners to actively engage in learning in a communal educational context and learn curricula that reflect the cultures and communities from which they come (Booth & Ainscow as cited in Florian, 2015; Gannon, 2018; Moriña, 2017). The concept is based on the premise that education is a fundamental human right for all, including persons with disabilities (United Nations, 2006) and represents the basis for equity and fairness promoted in the broader society. Currently, inclusive education has extended beyond the placement needs of learners with disabilities to include access for all learners and opportunities for maximized engagements in a diverse learning community with no fear of discrimination and/or appraisals.

Inclusion in education has been under scrutiny in the United States, the UK, Canada, and other parts of the world (Florian, 2014). In the United States, early attempts to address inclusion specific to learners with disabilities included enacting the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Act delineates that educational institutions should educate students with disabilities in regular classes with peers who are non-disabled unless the severity of their disabilities prevents learning even with requisite support (Texas Education Agency, 2017). Other responses include increased efforts to reinforce existing laws, to equalize or increase school funding, address racial inequities, and establish uniformity among school practices and policies (Husted & Kenny, 2002).

However, while policies regarding inclusion were being developed at the P-12 level, competing school reform initiatives were being developed simultaneously, which often meant trading or sacrificing one set of goals for another. Rouse and Florian (as cited in Florian, 2014) liken this ongoing competition between inclusion policies and other school reform initiatives to marketplace principles. This marketplace application has created significant concerns among many educators who

fear that the competition between the agendas of school reforms and the moral obligations of inclusion would only retard progress towards inclusive education. Florian (2014) indicates that some inclusion supporters fall short of inclusive education practices, as they are only committed to doing things that give some allusion to inclusion. Irrespective of intent and extensive efforts, critics have argued that anticipated promises of inclusivity are yet to be delivered, as prevailing efforts about inclusive education seem to place greater emphasis on learning contexts (i.e., the "where") rather than on teaching practices and approaches (Artiles et al., 2006; Florian, 2014). Over time, the focus on inclusion and inclusive education has generally shifted to inclusive pedagogy, which has now invaded university meeting agendas, processes, policies, and teaching and learning methodologies (Moriña, 2020).

The purpose of this paper is to examine some of the existing literature pertinent to inclusive education and inclusive pedagogy and highlight dimensions of inclusive pedagogy for consideration if instructors in higher education are to succeed in effectively implementing inclusive pedagogy practice in the classroom. The paper concludes with a conceptual framework for inclusive pedagogy in practice and suggestions of how administrators, faculty members, and course designers in higher education can support and advance the inclusive pedagogy in practice framework across their campuses.

Inclusive Pedagogy and Higher Education

A review of extant studies conducted by Blankenship et al. (2005) reveals that the paradigm shift advocated by Dunn (1968) relative to inclusion has yet to be realized. McIntyre (2009) implies that teacher preparation programs could play an influential role in initiating a paradigm shift and could effectuate significant pedagogical changes relative to inclusive pedagogy. Teacher trainees invariably tend to adopt and transport their training institutions' practices, attitudes, and thinking to their classrooms. McIntyre further alleges that teacher trainees' struggle to work with exceptional students might be due to their not being espoused to other ways of thinking about inclusive education for diverse learners. In concurrence with McIntyre, the

Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU, 2015) notes copious evidence in the existing literature highlighting many of higher education's existing inequities, especially relating to students of color's traditionally underrepresented communities. In its work Step Up & Lead For Equity, the AACU (2015) calls higher educational institutions to act instead of talking about the issues associated with educational inequities.

Although teacher training institutions have an essential role in the shift toward inclusive pedagogy in schools, the literature indicates that higher educational institutions, in general, can facilitate this shift through their policies, philosophies, campus cultures, administrative services, and support (Moriña & Orozco, 2020). Ultimately, the responsibility of advancing inclusive pedagogy has been placed on teachers and faculty members (AACU, 2015; Loreman, 2017; Moriña & Orozco, 2020; Sandoval & Doménech, 2020; Spratt & Florian, 2015). Consistent with that thought, Loreman proposes that to be inclusive, institutions must attend to pedagogy, which is primarily concerned with how teaching and learning occur.

Interpretations and Intersections of "Pedagogy" and "Inclusive Pedagogy"

The debate regarding the meaning of pedagogy dates to Simon's exploration of pedagogy as a topic (1981,1994). Simon argues that what was paraded as pedagogy—the activities and discourses associated with teaching—were simply teachers' conceptualizations, plans, and justifications that represented a combination of pragmatism and ideology that they obtained from their teacher training. Although pedagogy has been associated with curriculum design, strategies, techniques, and assessments, Giroux and Simon (1988) submit that pedagogy's discourse involves more:

It stresses that the realities of what happens in classrooms organize a view of how a teacher's work within an institutional context specifies a particular version of what knowledge is of most worth, in what direction we should desire, what it means to know something, and how we might construct representations of ourselves, others, and our physical and social environment. (p. 12)

Alexander (2004) concurs with Simon's argument that pedagogy calls for refining experience and exploring various evidence points to develop a professional knowledge base. Alexander acknowledges teaching, learning, and curriculum as core elements of any pedagogical discourse. He insists that as a foundational step, an intelligent understanding of pedagogy requires the synergistic interplay among the following three domains: (1) the learner, learning, instruction, and curriculum; (2) the institution and its policies; and (3) the culture, individual, and history—which enable, legitimize, formalize, and locate teaching, respectively. In light of these arguments, Loreman (2017) argues that pedagogy is critical to any practical, inclusive approach. Without an effective process for instructors to reflect on their knowledge, understanding, and ways of engaging in developing proposed inclusive approaches, there is no foundation for inclusion.

Inclusive pedagogy is an instructional approach whereby teachers practice educational inclusion by supporting all students in their classrooms by mindfully employing instructional approaches that are advantageous to all learners and foster a sense of community (Florian, 2014). The distinctive factor is that inclusive pedagogy is not defined by teachers strategies but by how they are performed (Florian, 2015). According to Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011), the use of the term "inclusive pedagogy" was intended to specifically focus on the activity of teaching and its related discourse. The concept was introduced to oppose systemic bell-curve thinking and tendencies related to teaching and learning that reflected predetermined notions about students' abilities (Florian, 2014)—hence her appeal for the literature to provide an understanding of what counts as evidence of inclusive pedagogy.

According to the Center for New Designs in Learning & Scholarship at Georgetown University (n.d.), inclusive pedagogy is a way for instructors and students to work together. It involves teamwork that is explicitly designed to bring social justice into the classroom through learner-centered and equity-focused teaching, where everyone has space to be present and feel valued. This inclusive pedagogy perspective implies that students come to the classroom as contributors to the learning process and not merely consumers. The Institute for Learning and Teaching at Colorado State University

defines "inclusive pedagogy" as a "student-centered teaching approach that considers all students' backgrounds, experiences, and learning variabilities in the planning and implementation of student engagement activities, equitable access to content, mutual respect, and a more robust learning experience for all learners" (Buchan, T., et al., 2019). The language of Georgetown University's Center for New Designs in Learning & Scholarship's definition suggests that inclusive pedagogy enables opportunities to expand inclusive pedagogical discourse into higher education. This mindset is depicted in the inclusive pedagogical approach in action framework submitted by Florian (2014). It includes three assumptions with corresponding actions, challenges, and evidence about instructional practices appropriate to primary, secondary, and postsecondary levels of education.

First, instructors recognize that difference is an inherent part of the human element: (a) the evidence of an understanding that ways of knowing and learning are not a one-size-fits-all approach and includes the development of classroom environments where everyone participates in the process; (b) using rich and varied learning strategies; (c) incorporation of differentiated learning through choice; (d) creating diverse classroom working groups instead of ability grouping; (e) showing that everyone in the room has value; and (f) incorporating active participation through social constructivism and recognition of asset vs. deficit learning.

Second, instructors believe they are capable of teaching all the students in their classrooms. Evidence includes a focus on what and how to teach the material (rather than to whom the material is taught) while providing students with opportunities to engage with information and use reflective responses in providing support.

Third, instructors should develop new ways to relate to and creatively engage with their students and prioritize care for them over acquiring knowledge. Besides, they should develop a flexible approach to teaching and learning, view student difficulties as opportunities for growth, display a commitment to personal and professional development, and display dedication to holistic, community-centered practices that support learning.

This newer, broader lens frames the ensuing theoretical discussion and the proposed conceptual framework for higher education's inclusive pedagogy. The framework offers practical situational examples of inclusive pedagogy in practice—what it looks like when it works and when it does not—and identifies possible results for students, faculty members, and higher education organizations. Inclusive pedagogy in higher education is crucial for these constituents because colleges and universities have become more culturally, linguistically, economically, and ethnically diverse. Social justice, equity, and learner-centeredness are paramount to these learners' successes.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for inclusive pedagogy was founded on Alexander's (2004) perception of pedagogy as a composite of knowledge and competencies that the teacher should possess to inform and validate decisions made in the teaching process (Florian, 2015). Since then, several compelling theories and inclusive pedagogy models suited to the postsecondary education environment have emerged. Socio-cultural Learning Theory (SCL), Multiliteracies, Critical Race Theory (CRT), and the Universal Design of Learning (UDL) each have been used individually and represent an excellent start to the conversation of the applicability of a broader concept of inclusive pedagogy in higher education. The following section provides an overview of these theories and models and identifies why none of them alone suffices as a foundational methodology that all institutions could adopt.

Socio-cultural Learning Theory

The findings and discussions relative to inclusive pedagogy in the literature generally focused on theoretical concerns about all learners and learning, and to some extent, the transformation of an institution's culture. However, inclusive pedagogical practices are rooted in the socio-cultural learning theory drawn from Vygotsky's work, highlighting the importance of language learning. It is based on the premise that humans social, cultural literacy, and cognitive development occur when

they can mediate "symbolic and socially constructed artifacts, the most significant of which being the language" (Vygotsky, as cited in Shabani, 2016, p. 2). For example, before learning course content, students whose first language is not English must first learn the language to navigate social landscapes and context (Halliday, 1993) before they can benefit from inclusive pedagogy. However, focusing on language and going beyond the lingua franca (i.e., the common language of the region or location) to engage students is merely a first step in developing inclusive pedagogy in practice in higher education.

Inclusive pedagogy is better understood by those with an understanding of socio-cultural relationships on learning (Claxton, 2009; Spratt & Florian, 2015). Findings from studies conducted by Black-Hawkins et al. (2007) and Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) helped develop a clear articulation of inclusive pedagogy that represented this understanding. The researchers opted not to use interviews for data collection. They indicated that some of the most robust and authentic data emerge from the social context or community of the classroom, where they could observe the teaching approach and social interactions between teachers and learners during active teaching and learning. Evidence from this study led to the conclusion that inclusive pedagogy practices were different from common pedagogical approaches. The latter was noticeable in the ways teachers responded to learner differences, the choices they made about whole-group and individual learning activities, and how they used their specialist knowledge. In support of socio-cultural learning, Claxton posited that each learner is a "person plus," where "plus" symbolizes things or people within the learning context. Spratt and Florian concur with Claxton underscoring the significant impact that teachers have in the learning community. Within the socio-cultural space called the classroom, learners are expected to manage a complex web of relationships. How teachers respond or interact with all learners individually and as a group could convey messages that supplant the content being formally taught, ultimately impeding learning (Claxon, 2009; Kuzolin, 2014; Spratt & Florian, 2015).

Multiliteracies

The pedagogy of multiliteracies, a model proposed by the New London Group (2000), offers an early example of inclusive pedagogy in practice (IPIP) that embraces diverse cultures, languages, communities and depicts literacy teaching and learning integrating multiple modes and technological media. Recognizing the need to address these linguistic nuances in higher educational classrooms, the New London Group provides a theoretical underpinning to support a discussion about appropriate education for women, immigrants who are non-native speakers of the national language, aboriginals, and people who speak unstructured dialects. They advocate a shift from traditional literacy approaches to a multiliteracies pedagogy, which accounts for critical factors associated with linguistic and cultural differences impacting connectedness within and across groups. They also note the availability of a cornucopia of communication channels for learner engagement and language skills development that are critical to social interactions and employment satisfaction. Being aware of the sociocultural differences in her classroom, Mills (2007) used an ethnographic approach to explore the New London's multiliteracies to expand her literacy pedagogy discussion. She asserts that learning means more than verbal language, as verbal language contains multi-textual nuances, depending on the doer's student or faculty orientation.

Brown and Croft (2020) advanced the discussion of linguistic diversity from how faculty and students engage verbally to recognize technology's influence on the written form. They advocate for an open pedagogical approach in higher education classrooms. Open pedagogy relates to the issues faced by students who may not have the level of academic prowess as those who came to university in the past but—because of engagement with the material and their faculty—have been able to gain access to levels of education that they may not have before. Brown and Croft suggest that open pedagogy supports the diversity of culture and educational level within college and university classrooms. Additionally, the New London Group (2000) state that it is vital to identify a classroom that recognizes gender differences.

Critical Race Theory

However, despite that gender, identity, linguistic, age, culture, and ethnic diversities exist in college, university, and graduate classrooms, higher education's developmental history is grounded in a faith-based, European, male perspective: the first U.S. colleges and universities were founded for White males. Arday et al. (2020) reflect on the importance of incorporating critical race theory to focus on "centrality of Whiteness as an instrument of power" (p. 1) as an influence on Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) student feelings of belonging, inclusiveness, and ability to engage. As Harris and Clarke (2011) indicate, BAME experiences have been misinterpreted or are notably missing from class materials. Textbooks, assigned articles, and lectures often omit the narrative of non-majority people groups, resulting in a feeling of ostracism, general exclusion from education, underrepresentation in the curricula, and denial of opportunities for learners from majority backgrounds to gain insight into the present and formerly lived experiences of other cultural groups in the learning community.

Critical race theory pulls from and spans a broad literature base across several disciplines, including sociology, law, history, and ethnic studies (Yosso, 2005). It is admitted to this discussion because of its concerns about race, equity, social justice, multiculturalism, and multilingualism. It also deepens the perspectives of various opinions about inclusive pedagogy. Scholars such as Ladson-Billings (2000) and Solorzano (1998) argue that in many learning contexts, some students' knowledge is often discounted based on their color and race or other demographic characteristics by teachers who operate from a deficit model mindset. Garcia and Guerra (2004) suggest that deficit thinking pervades U.S. society, and many stakeholders in the school environment reflect such beliefs. They propose that teachers who practice racial, gender, and class prejudices should be challenged. Administrators and departmental leaders should conduct an analysis of systemic factors that promote deficit thinking and nurture educational inequities among learners, particularly those from non-dominant, socio-culturally, and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Advocates of critical race theory are cognizant that the theory does not serve all the needs of inclusive pedagogy but is a helpful lever to promote the practice. Inclusive pedagogy and CRT are frameworks advocating for an understanding that every learner is an asset and brings wealth to the learning community (Bernal, 2002; Franklin, 2002; Gannon, 2018; Garcia & Guerra, 2004; Yosso, 2005). Educators committed to learning how to practice inclusive pedagogy possess a CRT lens value and nurture the cultural wealth students from communities of color bring to the learning environment. Yosso observed that the cultural wealth that students bring to a college is represented in multiple forms of capital that are mutually inclusive and dynamic. Gannon (2018) and Lac (2017) concur that learners increase the learning community's asset portfolio. However, Gannon emphasizes that inclusive pedagogy is more than being invited and welcomed to sit at the table. Inclusive pedagogy in practice also includes having a voice at the table, being supported, and being made comfortable at the table.

Universal Design of Learning

Universal design for learning (UDL), a principle-based framework, was inspired by the architectural concept of making buildings accessible to all (Posey, 2021). The framework is grounded in socio-cultural theory, built on the general premise that learning occurs when there are interactions among students, peers, teachers, and other experts. It provides insight into how people learn from each other in social settings. Socio-cultural learning theory and UDL involve valuing student differences across the curriculum, teaching practices, and assessment strategies (Hockings, 2010) and relate to two fundamental principles of inclusive pedagogy: equity and fairness for all learners. UDL was designed to help educators proactively design learning experiences that would include all learners. It is a useful guide for teachers interested in constructing active learning communities, has an inherent potential to influence learner success, and is flexible and adaptable to various contexts or circumstances (Loreman, 2017; Posey, 2021; Rappolt-Schlichtmann et al., 2012).

The UDL framework includes three underlying principles: (1) multiple means of engagement, (2) multiple means of representation, and (3) multiple means of action and expression (Fornauf & Erickson, 2020; Loreman, 2017; Posey, 2021). These principles are critical to learning in higher education, where the learning is now delivered through various media to learners from diverse linguistic, cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. The universal design for learning framework has garnered some support at the K-12 level, but there is a lack of empirical data to support its effectiveness. However, Rappolt-Schlichtmann, et al. (2012) and Fornauf & Erickson (2020) report that the model is widely accepted among scholars and practitioners and that there is support for UDL inclusion in postsecondary education. Implicit in references to the word "multiple" in the UDL frameworks principles is recognizing there are various learners in the higher education classroom requiring pedagogical practices that will afford them opportunities for academic success. If students are underserved or marginalized, inclusion is simply an illusion (Vasquez et al., 2012).

Decolonizing Higher Education Curriculum through IPIP

Williams et al. (2020) explored student feedback related to diversity as a component of classroom pedagogy and discussed the need for educators to have appropriate learning to help students gain cultural competence. The authors identify the value of bringing together multiple disciplines to develop a greater faculty understanding of cultural and ethnic differences through professional development. They report that higher education organizations' overall culture can change to become more inclusive when faculty members take the initiative to work in multidisciplinary teams to bridge diversity and inclusion discussions across them all.

One of the first steps to understanding the need for inclusive pedagogy in practice (IPIP), where "inclusion" refers to the involvement of all members of the higher education community—regardless of gender, identity, religious or irreligious belief systems, age, dis/ability, or culture—is recognizing that such a pedagogy involves four components of inclusion: beliefs, knowledge, design, and action

(Moriña, 2020). In a call to instructors, UNESCO (2006) states that the components might be represented in the following ways: (1) All students have something valuable to contribute (belief); (2) instructors must understand teaching strategies, student needs, learning styles, classroom management, and organization, as well as how to assess challenges, and how to get support as instructors (knowledge); (3) from an organizational standpoint, classes must be planned and designed appropriately (design); and last, (4) instructors should be prepared to include proactive—rather than reactive—practices to engage students (actions), which supports and aligns with Florian's (2014) inclusive pedagogy in practice framework.

The importance of a decolonizing framework as a part of inclusive pedagogy in practice is to address points of difference while avoiding stigmatizing differences in the classroom. Students, faculty, and administrators should avoid ignoring differences in favor of recognizing points of similarity; doing so lends toward a melting pot mentality rather than recognizing the socio-cultural mosaic that higher education classrooms represent. Stentiford and Koutsouris (2020) maintain that inclusion in higher education must incorporate an identification of student needs from three perspectives: needs shared by all students, needs of groups of students, and needs of the individual student. These perspectives could relate to exceptionalities, cultures, or any areas of difference. Such recognition does not mean that faculty should treat students the same, despite such needs. Instead, it means that faculty must attend with equity to student needs within the classroom environment, taking a rights-based perspective when facilitating learning.

Ljungblad's (2019) conceptual framework offers an example of how inclusive pedagogy in practice is rights-based, focusing on what students should have instead of operating through a deficit lens. The framework is composed of three components (i.e., instructor competencies)—relational, didactic teaching, and leadership—of which relational is key to pedagogy and inclusive education that accounts for student (and instructor) differences. Ljungblad posits that classroom relationships should be sustainable as well as relational, yet more research is necessary to clarify the nature of relationship-building in higher education spaces.

Higher Education Inclusive Pedagogy in Practice: A New Model

Although many of the perspectives on inclusive pedagogy in practice in P-12 education have applicability to higher education, inclusive pedagogy in practice within the various levels of higher education require a theoretical model to incorporate many of the elements indicated in previous research. Research thus far has shown a slow but progressive shift from inclusion—which has been primarily concerned with where to educate learners with disabilities or special needs—to inclusive education as a process of eliminating exclusion, barriers, and discrimination so that all learners can have equal access to learning opportunities in mainstream classrooms—to the current focus on inclusive pedagogy. Summatively, the focus has been on students' needs and rights and the relationships between them and their instructors. These two elements are vital to the success of inclusive practices in higher education, where there is recognition of the many areas of diversity. However, two additional components have not yet been fully explored or included in the existing theoretical frameworks. As Ljungblad (2019) indicates, first it is vital to continue dialoguing about developing relationships between faculty and students as a learning dichotomy. The second element necessary for a more fully developed inclusive pedagogy in practice in higher education, which is generally absent from the literature, is the organization and its leaders. These two additional components lead to a new model of inclusive pedagogy in practice in higher education.

Relationships are central to education and inclusive education and are foundational to teaching (Ljungblad, 2019; Moriña, 2017; Spratt & Florian, 2015; Veitch et al., 2018). The relationship chasm between college students and their instructors is narrower than that of P-12 students and their teachers, affording more significant opportunities for developing interpersonal relationships. However, although instructors are ultimately responsible for practicing inclusive pedagogy, it is becoming increasingly apparent that there are numerous influential variables and stimuli in their learning communities and institutions

that affect how they perform their roles. Consequently, interpersonal relationships in higher education are not always organic, but complicated. Variables such as students' socio-cultural, socio-economic, linguistic, religious, racial, and ethnic backgrounds influence inclusive pedagogy in practice—as do other variables, such as (1) students' experiences, personalities, capacities, aspirations, expectations, and non-academic responsibilities; (2) program curricula design; (3) university vision, mission, and policies, as well as class size; (4) campus structure, services, and personnel; and (5) the philosophy of the instructor (Ljungblad, 2019; Renn & Reason, 2013).

Unfortunately, instructors are often left to contemplate in isolation how they will reflect inclusive pedagogy in practice, considering the confluence of extenuating variables and multiple expectations to be met. The authors of this paper submit that the latter should also be a critical concern for all institutional stakeholders involved in policy and decision-making. Administrators must ask whether they provide teachers the tools and autonomy to meet work expectations, professional expectations, and students expectations. Instructors should engage in honest self-assessment or introspection to identify active or potential biases, misjudgments, and the type of mindset and beliefs they have of all students. Students also need to answer questions of capacity, preparedness, commitment, grit, and motivation to support their expectations.

Inclusive pedagogy in practice in higher education is a process of growth and involves leaders, faculty, and students. As suggested by Figure 1, the "rain," or nurturing of students within the system, occurs through instructor training and ongoing professional development. College and university leaders nurture faculty and guide growth through positive feedback, a willingness to hear new ideas, and encouraging interdisciplinary learning, where faculty from different colleges and programs work together to modify (i.e., decolonize) course materials. The entire process is grounded in the classroom environment, where faculty members encourage the development of relationships between themselves and between the students in their classes. Systemic growth and change across the institution are evident when the

information students receive lines up with their experiences (e.g., what they are told at admission, the alignment of how they are treated from class to class, and how their expectations match those experiences).
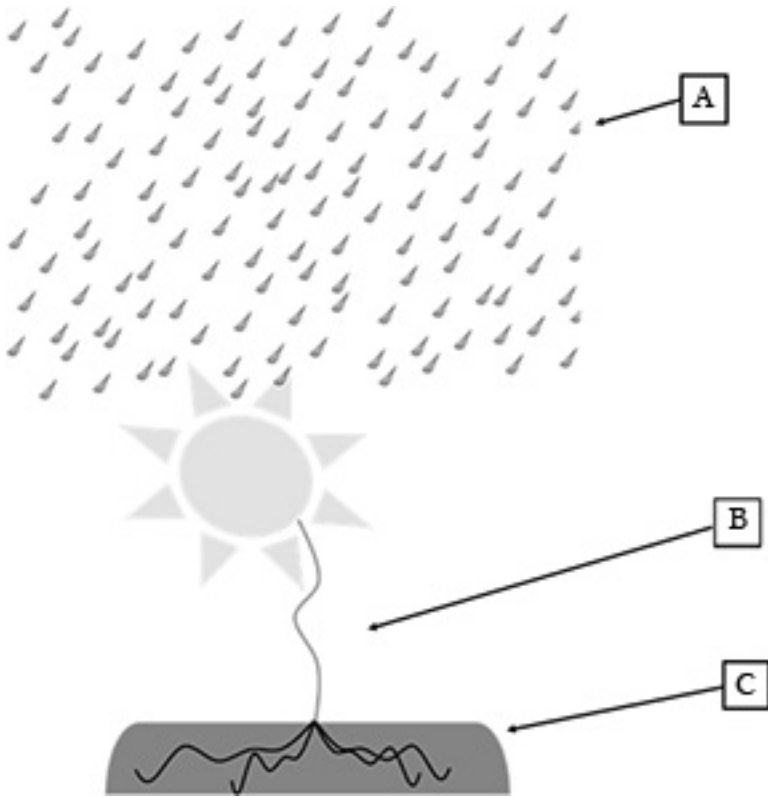

Figure 1.*Cyclical Growth Path of Higher Education Inclusive Pedagogy in Practice*

Note. This figure represents the three necessary components of IPIP in higher education. Faculty training, incentives from leadership, and information provided to students (A) nurture growth of diversity, equity, and inclusion across the university through interdisciplinary engagement (B), while relationships and the classroom experience (C) anchors both faculty and students.

Renn and Reason (2013) propose that college students must navigate the human, organizational, and natural elements that comprise the environment they are expected to learn and develop to achieve academic success. Like organisms in an ecological environment, stimuli

in the learning community may reinforce learner traits, behaviors, and attitudes as well as influence adaptations within the learning environment or themselves. When these interactions occur in the learning community, Renn and Reason assert that learning, personal development, and academic success are potential outcomes. In this regard, Strange and Banning (2001) purport that since the higher education environment shares a reciprocal relationship with learners, campus leaders or college administrators should consider how they can design or adapt their campus buildings and physical layout to promote safety, increase learner engagement, and improve success for learners from a broad cross-section of backgrounds and individualities in order to support inclusive practices.

Figure 2 represents a construct of some of the micro and macro variables with varying degrees of impact on inclusive pedagogy. It is not an exhaustive list or neat arrangement of variables, which all have implications for inclusive pedagogical practices. These and other variables represent the messy realities of many students who enter our postsecondary institutions from across the globe. Nevertheless, some of the same variables are pertinent to other stakeholders' experiences in the learning community. Furthermore, this model proposes that inclusive pedagogy in practice in higher education is best served when learning is at the center rather than the student or instructor. When the latter is in effect, three purposes of education—(1) qualifying learners for future careers, (2) introducing them to existing socialization processes locally, and (3) helping them discover and develop their uniqueness within the broader learning community—are more likely to be achieved (Ljungblad, 2019). The authors of this paper are fully cognizant of existing disagreements about achieving inclusive pedagogy. Thus, this model is intended to be a starting place for those who want to grow their inclusive pedagogy in practice intelligence.

Practical Examples: Potential Growth Steps to Inclusive Pedagogy in Practice

Understanding the existing literature related to inclusive pedagogy and developing a model of inclusive pedagogy in practice is the first step. It is then necessary to identify opportunities for instructors and

facilitators interested in applying inclusive pedagogical practices in their classrooms. The interactive model in Figure 2 leads to ways individuals and department teams (e.g., instructors, administrators, department heads, and staff members such as librarians, counselors, financial aid personnel, and housing leaders) might begin reflecting on areas where they can incorporate more inclusive practices. Like the model itself, the list is not meant to be the only ways to begin or advance inclusive pedagogy in practice in higher education, but it is offered as a starting point and incorporates components from inclusive pedagogy researchers identified earlier in this work (Drewry, 2017; Florian, 2014, 2015; Florian & Camedda, 2020; Gannon, 2018; Hockings, 2010; Posey, 2021; Rothe as cited in Loreman, 2017).
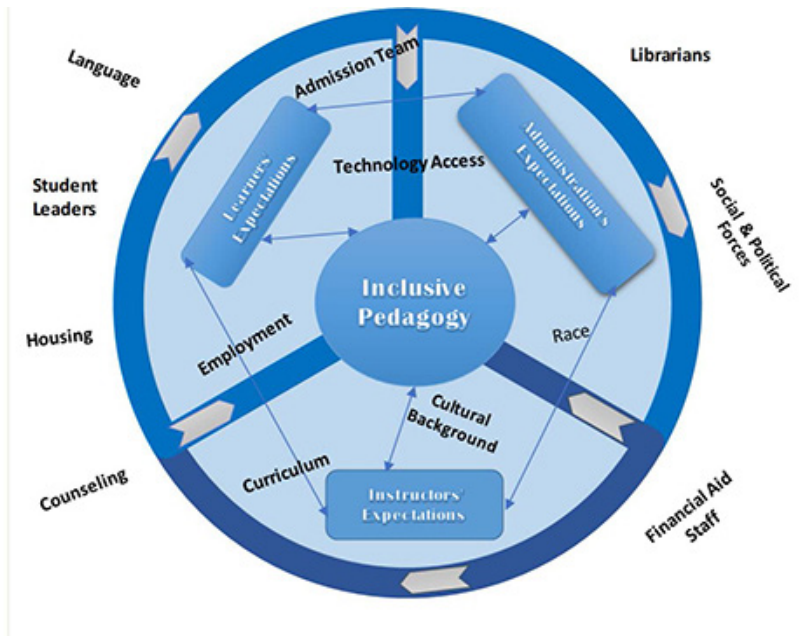

Figure 2. *Interactive Model of Inclusive Pedagogy in Practice (IPIP)*

Table 1 provides a summary of these three models of inclusion-inclusive pedagogical approach in action, multi-dimensional, and inclusive pedagogy in practice for higher education. The table compares and contrasts the models' (1) principles and underlying assumptions, (2) fundamental challenges, (3) opportunities for growth, and (4) evidence of inclusive pedagogy in practice.

Dimensions of Inclusion				
Models	**Principles/ Underlying assumptions**	**Fundamental Challenges**	**Actions/Opportunities for Growth Pedagogical approach**	**Evidence of Inclusive Pedagogy in Practice in Higher Education**
General Inclusion	1. Education is a fundamental human right, and every student should be afforded the opportunity to have equal access to quality education. 2. Teachers must believe they are qualified/capable of teaching all children.	1. The belief that inclusion is an attempt to accommodate students with disabilities. 2. The exclusion of some learners from challenging learning experiences & communal interactions. 3. The teachers & school leaders who operate from a deficit mindset or practice bell curve thinking (i.e., I can only meet the needs of average learners. Those at the two ends will need something different or extra). 4. Learner diversity & exceptionalities impede learning success.	1. Look for learning potential & teachable moments with every student. 2. Replace the deficit mindset with one that says all students enrich this learning because they bring diverse assets to the learning community. 3. Believe that every student will make progress & foster the environment to do that.	

Dimensions of Inclusion				
Models	Principles/ Underlying assumptions	Fundamental Challenges	Actions/Opportunities for Growth Pedagogical approach	Evidence of Inclusive Pedagogy in Practice in Higher Education
Inclusive Pedagogical Approach in Action (IPAA) (Florian, 2014, pp. 290-292)	1. Differences are accounted for as an essential aspect of human development in any conceptualization of learning. 2. Teachers must believe they are qualified & capable of teaching all children. 3. Teachers continually develop creative new ways of working with others.	1. The identification of difficulties in learning & the associated focus on what the learner cannot do often puts a ceiling on learning & achievement. 2. Seeing all students as the teacher's responsibility. 3. Teachers believing some learners are not their responsibility. 4. Changing thinking about inclusion from "most" & "some" to "everybody." 5. Teacher as the sage & provider of knowledge & students as consumers & passive participants.	1. Reject deterministic views of ability. 2. Accept that differences are part of the human condition. 3. Reject the idea that the presence of some will hold back the progress of others. 4. Believe that all children can make progress (if conditions are right). 5. Commit to supporting all learners. 6. Believe teachers can promote learning for all children.	Teachers . . . 1. Cultivate a classroom where all learners get to participate in the life of the learning community. 2. Create a rich learning community rather than using teaching & learning strategies that are suitable for most alongside something additional or different for some who experience difficulties. 3.Focus on what is to be taught & how, not on who the learner is. 4. Provide opportunities for learners to choose the level at which they want to engage in lessons. 5. Engage in strategic/reflective responses to support difficulties that children encounter during learning.

Dimensions of Inclusion				
Models	**Principles/ Underlying assumptions**	**Fundamental Challenges**	**Actions/Opportunities for Growth Pedagogical approach**	**Evidence of Inclusive Pedagogy in Practice in Higher Education**
Multidimen-sional (Ljungblad, 2019)	1. Humans have rights to life & development, to voice their opinions, and to non-discrimination. 2. Relationships form the cornerstone of education. 3. Education aims to prepare the next cadre of professionals & leaders, to teach social behavior for relationships inside the school, community, & the world.	1. The belief that a quiet classroom is evidence of effective teaching & learning success. 2. The perception that if teachers develop relationships with students, it may lead to disrespect & create a teacher-student dichotomy. 3. That creating opportunities for students to speak will diminish teaching/ learning time.	1. Give all learners opportunities to speak & be taken seriously. 2. Develop a trusting, respectful professional relationship with students. 3. Conduct an overall assessment of the campus environment (e.g., people, facilities, & policies) to ensure inclusive pedagogy friendliness.	Teachers . . . 1. Cultivate relationships with students through verbal & non-verbal communication (tone of voice, pitch, facial expression, eye contact) 2. Model collaborative learning & demonstrate care for all students who need educational support.

Dimensions of Inclusion				
Models	Principles/ Underlying assumptions	Fundamental Challenges	Actions/Opportunities for Growth Pedagogical approach	Evidence of Inclusive Pedagogy in Practice in Higher Education
Inclusive Pedagogy in Practice (IPIP) for Higher Education (Livingston-Galloway & Robinson-Neal, 2021)	1. Humans have rights to life & development, to voice their opinions, & to non-discrimination. 2. Developing relationships is the cornerstone of education. 3. Higher education prepares the next set of world leaders. 4. Learner accommodations or learning modifications are available to all learners, if necessary.	1. Identifying & admitting personal prejudices & biases as essential. 2. Administration, staff, & teachers often operating in silos. Inclusive pedagogy resides in the domain of the teacher inside his/her classroom.	1. Consider *if, when, & how* students are given opportunities to share their unique voices in classroom conversations. 2. Allow the curricula to reflect global diversities & student differences. 3. Adopt the belief that teachers can build a healthy & meaningful interpersonal relationship with all learners. 4. Accept that teacher relational proficiencies contribute to learner success.	1. Inclusive pedagogical practices are embedded throughout curricula & interwoven across campus. 2. Academic & non-academic constituents & stakeholders affiliated with the institution adopt inclusive practices. 3. All constituents are allowed to speak truth to power relative to issues that impede IPIP (e.g., race, social justice, culture). 4. Ongoing training pertinent to inclusive pedagogy for staff, faculty, and students during onboarding process & as necessary. 5. Faculty members demonstrate a willingness to initiate & engage learners in conversations around inclusive pedagogy & invite constructive feedback on learners' perceptions of how inclusive practices are evidenced in instructors choices & relationships with them. 6. Guests to class & other on-campus events represent the demographics of the student body & employees in general.

Table 1. *Summary Comparison of Three Models of Inclusive Pedagogy and the IPIP Model for Higher Education*

Individual Opportunities for Growth

Instructors

Identify personal prejudices and misconceptions. Admit and bracket biases to include questions like the following:

1. What am I taking for granted in the pedagogical approach I am considering? Is there something I am missing?

2. What are the assumptions and beliefs informing the basis for this approach? Do I hold biases towards particular learning theories (such as critical race theory or social constructivism)?

3. To what extent do my traditional classroom practices influence my pedagogy?

4. What are the roles of the instructor/facilitator and the learner?

5. Does my approach dishonor or disrespect the religion, culture, or other diversity in my classroom?

6. Does my approach make allowance for students to express their particular orientation? How might that affect the identity of a learner?

Tip: Invite your peers to reflect on the questions and to give constructive feedback.

Other Ways to Build IPIP

1. Be authentic. Be committed to growing even in the face of challenges, difficulties, or mistakes.

2. Know your students. Learn their names, pronunciations, meanings, and significance, and permit them to correct you. Conduct a cultural inventory in your class that you can use to help plan lessons that are culturally considerate.

3. As much as is feasible, visit the learners' communities/contexts and attend some of their cultural events to learn more about them.

4. Recognize and give students multiple opportunities to share and use their culture in the learning environment. Encourage

the integration of cultural elements in assignments as appropriate.

5. If a student's native language is not English (be sure to ask), encourage them to teach you (and the class if appropriate) something in the language.

6. Set English-language learners up for equitable success by occasionally removing time frames on quizzes and tests.

7. Allow students to occasionally collaborate on tests and quizzes because some students do learn during those moments.

8. Complete an interest inventory with students. In class introductions, include personal elements such as the books, movies, music, sports, food, or other things of interest and create learning opportunities for students to share theirs. Create opportunities for students to grow their knowledge in those areas as they relate to the course.

9. Make connections between learning and life without trivializing issues. Ask students to identify ways that they can use the knowledge or skills they are learning.

10. Where possible, periodically rearrange the classroom to depict contexts and themes or simulations relevant to the lesson focus.

11. Be willing to reframe questions when students indicate they do not understand and allow their peers to provide clarifications.

Administrators, Counselors, Course Developers, and Other Teams

There are elements of organizational oversight and development that also should be evaluated to determine areas of opportunity for the development of IPIP across the campus:

1. Create cross-campus opportunities for students to use their native language when trying to process learning, especially if their native language is not alphabetic. It takes between seven to nine years for non-native English speakers to develop academic English language proficiency.

2. For virtual learners, develop systems across all courses to assess needs and challenges they may have. Work across campus teams to develop solutions. For example, create and build guidelines for faculty to incorporate extended assignment deadlines and connect students with appropriate staff to guide proactive problem solving before or at the start of the semester regarding how to resolve technology challenges that may arise.

3. Develop flexible syllabi that allow students to present and demonstrate their knowledge and learning (e.g., videos, re-enactments, poetry, art, virtual showcase, storytelling, interviews, co-presenting with experts including resourceful family, friends) to connect with various learning styles.

4. During semester opening sessions, first-year orientations, or planned interactions with prospective new students, invite them to share about their journeys to college.

5. Create a campus culture—starting from leadership through instructors and staff—that uses person-centered language styles in all situations. Prepare the community with ways to ask meaningful questions and have dialogues that are not intrusive.

6. Understand that inclusive pedagogy in practice development takes time. Allow space for mistakes, apologize quickly when made aware of an offense, and encourage others to do the same. Be realistic. Select and implement manageable inclusive pedagogical moment(s) regularly. Solicit meaningful feedback across campus.

7. Encourage group collaborations across departments, disciplines, and classrooms to identify successful approaches. Be willing to take calculated risks.

8. Cultivate a campus where learning is at the center, not an individual instructor or student differences.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research

The current exploration of literature and suggestions for moving inclusive pedagogy into a new practice model summarized in Table 1 creates opportunities for educators and researchers alike. Higher education administrators and departmental leaders must foster an atmosphere for learning that helps faculty, staff, and students belong. Leaders need to recognize the value of culture across academic teams. For a fully inclusive community, instructors should understand that the college or university where they work is dedicated to their belonging; they should be educated on the importance of similarly valuing the students in their classrooms. Hiring and onboarding can incorporate elements of inclusive pedagogy in practice, where human resourcing and recruiting conversations include discussions of intercultural understanding and practice. Course development can be guided through a cultural lens, where those who create content include global perspectives in selecting materials, address learning and teaching styles through varied types of assignments and course engagements, and provide student course assessments that include questions about the overall cultural climate of the class.

There are also opportunities for researchers to explore inclusive pedagogy in practice in higher education as well. Much of the existing work on inclusive pedagogy in higher education has occurred outside the U.S., presenting a need for further exploration within a general North American context. Specifically, the literature would benefit from qualitative works used to explore the experiences of faculty, the types of IPIP-related professional development and inter- and intra-departmental training offered on campus, and the processes for faculty-to-faculty mentorship. Explorations of the overall student experiences to gather their stories and feedback related to inclusive pedagogy in practice would also be salient. The list of ways to incorporate inclusive pedagogy in practice in higher education classrooms could serve as a starting point for these qualitative explorations.

Quantitative research in the form of longitudinal examination of change across time after incorporating IPIP techniques and causal-

comparative works to identify the potential for improved student outcomes when intercultural needs are addressed on campus might further the conversation. The list of ways to incorporate inclusive pedagogy in practice in higher education could help develop an instrument requiring validation and testing. Future researchers interested in doing so could advance the development of IPIP in a scientific way beyond the scope of the current endeavor.

Inclusive practices in higher education contexts must account for the confluence of variables that expand beyond differentiating and accommodating special needs students in the classroom. Inclusive pedagogy "is a mindset, a teaching-and-learning worldview, more than a discrete set of techniques. But that mindset does value specific practices which, research suggests, are effective for a mix of students" (Gannon, 2018, p. 3). Inclusive pedagogy in practice should (1) inform the way courses are designed; (2) bracket administrator, instructor, and student cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and racial biases; and (3) result in a deconstruction of deficit thinking to a growth mindset to recognize the resourcefulness and wealth that students bring to the learning environment (Spratt & Florian, 2015; Yosso, 2005). Inclusive pedagogy in practice necessitates that all learners have access to learning and are invited to invest in and withdraw from the bank of knowledge and skills critical to gaining perspective and solving problems in a world that have become a microcosm. The "cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of diverse students" (Gannon, 2018, p. 106) are channels to more effective teaching, and instructors should purposefully engage in culturally relevant instructional practices that draw upon sociocultural learning principles (Lopez, 2011). Inclusive pedagogy in practice in higher education enables students, faculty members, and administrators to decolonize and infuse diverse perspectives in all classes, programs, and curricula. How will you re-think your pedagogy in the face of an increasingly diverse global student population?

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