

The Effects of Multicultural Classroom Setting on the Academic Performance of Students at Bangcud National High School

Mary Bel Capangpangan¹, Liasa Ecuacion², Marie Joy Telic³

(Language Education Department, CMU, Maramag (Buk)

Email: capangpanganmarybel11@gmail.com)

(Language Education Department, CMU, Maramag (Buk)

Email: liasa.ecuacion@deped.gov.ph)

(Language Education Department, CMU, Maramag (Buk)

Email: mariejoytelic1998@gmail.com)

Abstract:

This study investigates the impact of multicultural classroom settings on the academic performance of students at Bangcud National High School. By employing a quantitative research design and utilizing descriptive survey methods, the study examines students' perceptions and experiences in a diverse learning environment. Findings reveal a positive correlation between a multicultural environment and enhanced academic outcomes, highlighting its role in fostering cognitive, social, and cultural development. However, challenges such as cultural misunderstandings, language barriers, and underrepresentation persist. Recommendations include targeted teacher training, curriculum revisions, and enhanced support programs to address these challenges. This research contributes to the discourse on culturally responsive education within the Philippine context.

Keywords — Multicultural education, academic performance, inclusivity, Philippine education, culturally responsive teaching.

I. INTRODUCTION

In an era characterized by globalization and cultural exchange, educational institutions are increasingly becoming reflections of the diverse societies they serve. Multicultural classrooms, which include students from various cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds, present unique opportunities and challenges for educators. The significance of multicultural education lies in its potential to foster an inclusive learning environment that not only acknowledges but also celebrates diversity. This study investigates the effects of a multicultural classroom setting on the academic performance of students at Bangcud National High School, aiming to explore how cultural diversity influences learning outcomes and student engagement.

Research has shown that multicultural education can enhance academic performance by promoting

critical thinking, creativity, and social skills among students (Banks, 2016). When students are exposed to diverse perspectives, they are more likely to develop a broader understanding of the world, which can lead to improved academic outcomes. However, the effectiveness of multicultural education is contingent upon various factors, including teacher training, curriculum design, and the socio-economic context of the students (Gordon, 2018). This study seeks to fill a gap in the existing literature by examining the specific context of Bangcud National High School, providing insights that may apply to similar educational settings in the Philippines and beyond.

The Importance of this research is underscored by the Philippine educational landscape, which has undergone significant reforms aimed at promoting inclusivity and cultural responsiveness. The K-12

educational system emphasizes the need for teaching practices that reflect the diverse backgrounds of students (Department of Education [DepEd], 2019). By investigating the relationship between multicultural classroom settings and academic performance, this study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on effective teaching strategies in diverse educational environments.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Multiculturalism in Education

Multiculturalism in education is a pedagogical approach that integrates diverse cultural perspectives into the curriculum and teaching practices, aiming to create an inclusive environment where all students feel valued and respected, regardless of their cultural backgrounds (Banks, 2016). This educational framework not only celebrates diversity but also addresses issues of equity and social justice within the educational system (Ladson-Billings, 2014). The significance of multicultural education is underscored by research indicating that it can enhance academic performance by fostering a sense of belonging and engagement among students (Gorski, 2016).

Multicultural Education in the Philippine Context

In the Philippines, the K-12 educational reform has brought to light the importance of multicultural education. The Department of Education (DepEd, 2019) emphasizes the necessity for culturally responsive teaching practices that recognize and value the diverse backgrounds of students. Studies conducted in various regions of the Philippines have demonstrated that multicultural classrooms can enhance students' critical thinking skills, creativity, and overall academic performance (Bautista, 2020; Reyes, 2021). For instance, Bautista (2020) found that students in multicultural settings exhibited higher levels of engagement and motivation, which positively correlated with their academic achievements.

Academic Performance and Multicultural Education

Academic performance is often assessed through standardized tests, grades, and overall student achievement. Research consistently shows that students in multicultural classrooms tend to perform better academically compared to their peers in homogeneous settings. A meta-analysis by Villegas and Lucas (2002) concluded that culturally responsive teaching practices significantly improve student engagement and learning outcomes. This is particularly relevant in multicultural classrooms, where students are encouraged to share their cultural experiences and perspectives, leading to richer classroom discussions and enhanced learning.

Internationally, studies have corroborated the positive impact of multicultural education on academic performance. Gorski (2016) found that students in multicultural settings exhibited higher levels of academic achievement and social skills compared to their peers in more homogenous classrooms. This is further supported by research from the United States, where culturally relevant pedagogy has been shown to improve the academic performance of minority students (Ladson-Billings, 1994). However, there remains a gap in research specifically focused on the effects of multicultural classroom settings in the Philippine context, which this study aims to address by exploring the relationship between multicultural classroom environments and academic performance at Bangcud National High School.

Multiculturalism and Diversity in Education

Multiculturalism in education serves as a framework that recognizes and values the diverse cultural backgrounds of students. It aims to create an inclusive learning environment that respects and integrates various cultural perspectives into the curriculum and teaching practices. According to Banks (2016), multicultural education is essential for fostering an equitable educational landscape where all students feel valued and included. This is particularly relevant for Bangcud National High School, where a diverse student body may benefit from an educational approach that acknowledges and

celebrates their varied cultural backgrounds. By enhancing students' cultural awareness, multicultural education can promote social justice and equity, which are vital for improving academic performance.

Gorski (2016) argues that classrooms that embrace diversity can lead to improved student engagement and motivation. In the context of Bangcud National High School, incorporating multicultural elements into the curriculum can help students connect with the material, thereby enhancing their overall learning experience. This connection is crucial for academic performance, as students who feel a sense of belonging are more likely to participate actively in their education.

Impact of Multicultural Classroom Settings

The multicultural classroom setting provides a unique opportunity for students to interact with peers from various cultural backgrounds, significantly enhancing their social and academic skills. Ladson-Billings (2014) emphasizes the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy, which encourages educators to connect the curriculum to students' cultural contexts. For students at Bangcud National High School, this approach can foster a sense of belonging and improve academic outcomes by making learning more relatable and meaningful.

Furthermore, diverse classroom environments promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as students are exposed to multiple perspectives (Zhang, 2018). In a multicultural setting, students at Bangcud National High School can engage in discussions that challenge their viewpoints and encourage them to appreciate diverse perspectives. This exposure is particularly beneficial in developing higher-order thinking skills, which are essential for academic success.

Academic Performance and Diversity

The relationship between diversity in the classroom and academic performance has been a focal point of educational research. A study by Lee and Smith (2017) found that students in diverse classrooms tend to perform better academically compared to those in homogeneous settings. This

finding is particularly relevant for Bangcud National High School, where a multicultural classroom may provide collaborative learning experiences that enhance cognitive development and academic achievement.

Moreover, a meta-analysis by Wang et al. (2020) revealed that students in multicultural environments demonstrate higher levels of creativity and innovation. These skills are increasingly important in today's globalized world, where the ability to think critically and creatively is essential for success in higher education and the workforce. For students at Bangcud National High School, exposure to diverse perspectives not only enriches their learning experience but also equips them with the skills necessary for future challenges.

Local Context, International Perspectives, and Challenges

In the local context, studies have shown that Filipino students benefit from multicultural education, particularly in areas with diverse populations. For instance, a study by Alonzo (2019) highlighted that multicultural education in Philippine schools fosters inclusivity and enhances students' academic performance by promoting respect for cultural differences. This is particularly relevant for Bangcud National High School, where students may come from various cultural backgrounds.

While the benefits of multiculturalism and diversity in education are well-documented, challenges remain. Teachers at Bangcud National High School may face difficulties in implementing culturally responsive teaching practices due to a lack of training or resources (Gay, 2018). This gap can hinder the effectiveness of multicultural education, as educators may struggle to connect with students from diverse backgrounds.

Additionally, students from marginalized backgrounds may still experience systemic barriers that affect their academic performance (Oakes, 2017). These barriers can include socioeconomic challenges, language differences, and cultural biases

within the educational system. Therefore, Bangcud National High School must provide adequate support and professional development for educators to effectively address these challenges. By equipping teachers with the necessary tools and knowledge, the school can create a more inclusive environment that maximizes the benefits of multicultural education.

Internationally, research has shown that multicultural education positively impacts student outcomes. For example, a study by DeAngelis (2020) in the United States found that students in multicultural classrooms exhibited higher levels of academic achievement and social skills. Similarly, a study in Canada by Kanu (2011) emphasized the importance of integrating Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum, which not only improved academic performance but also fostered a sense of identity and belonging among students.

In summary, the literature indicates that multiculturalism and diversity in educational settings significantly enhance students' academic performance. For students at Bangcud National High School, fostering an inclusive and culturally responsive classroom environment can promote equity and improve learning outcomes. The connection between multicultural education and academic success is evident, as diverse classrooms not only enrich the learning experience but also prepare students for a diverse and interconnected world. Continued research and practice in this area are essential to address the challenges and maximize the benefits of multicultural education.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This study is grounded in four primary theoretical frameworks: *Social Constructivist Theory*, *Culturally Relevant Pedagogy*, *Critical Race Theory*, and *Transformative Learning Theory*. Each of these theories provides a unique lens through which to examine the relationship between multicultural classroom settings and academic performance.

1. Social Constructivist Theory:

Rooted in the work of Vygotsky (1978), Social Constructivist Theory posits that learning is a social process influenced by cultural and contextual factors. In a multicultural classroom, students engage in collaborative learning, where they construct knowledge through interactions with their peers and teachers. This theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction and cultural context in the learning process, suggesting that diverse cultural backgrounds can enrich classroom discussions and promote critical thinking. By fostering an environment where students share their cultural experiences, educators can enhance the learning experience and improve academic performance.

2. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy:

Developed by Ladson-Billings (1994), Culturally Relevant Pedagogy emphasizes the importance of incorporating students' cultural references into the curriculum to enhance their academic success and personal growth. This framework advocates for teaching practices that are responsive to the cultural backgrounds of students, thereby making learning more relevant and engaging. Culturally relevant pedagogy not only aims to improve academic performance but also seeks to empower students by validating their cultural identities and experiences. By applying this framework, educators can create a more inclusive classroom environment that recognizes and values diversity, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes for all students.

3. Critical Race Theory (CRT):

Critical Race Theory provides a framework for examining how race and racism intersect with other forms of social stratification in educational settings. It posits that racism is not merely an individual bias but a systemic issue embedded in the fabric of society, including educational institutions (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). In the context of multicultural education, CRT encourages educators to critically analyze how power dynamics and social inequalities affect student learning and engagement. By recognizing and addressing these systemic barriers,

educators can create more equitable learning environments that support the academic performance of all students, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds.

4. Transformative Learning Theory:

Proposed by Mezirow (1991), Transformative Learning Theory focuses on the process of critical reflection and the transformation of personal beliefs and assumptions. In a multicultural classroom, students are exposed to diverse perspectives that challenge their preconceived notions and encourage them to think critically about their own cultural identities. This theory posits that transformative learning occurs when students engage in dialogue and reflection, leading to a deeper understanding of themselves and others. By fostering an environment that promotes critical reflection, educators can enhance students' academic performance and personal growth.

Through the lens of these theoretical frameworks, this study will explore how a multicultural classroom setting at Bangcud National High School influences students' academic performance. By understanding the interplay between cultural diversity and educational practices, the research aims to contribute valuable insights to the field of multicultural education, particularly within the Philippine context.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research design to examine the effects of a multicultural classroom setting on the academic performance of students at Bangcud National High School. A descriptive survey method was employed to gather data regarding students' perceptions, experiences, and academic outcomes in a multicultural environment.

Participants

The *participants* in this study consisted of **50** students from Bangcud National High School. The sample included **23 (46%)** male respondents and **27 (54%)** female respondents. Participants were

selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure representation across different grade levels (**7 to 10**) and to capture a diverse range of experiences within the multicultural classroom setting. The sample size was determined based on practical considerations, including time, resources, and the need for a manageable dataset for analysis. This population is characterized by a diverse mix of cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds, making it an ideal setting for examining the effects of a multicultural classroom environment on academic performance.

Instruments

A structured questionnaire was adopted in the study "*Research Methods in Education*" by *Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018)* to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of the following sections:

- a. **Demographic Information:** Questions regarding age, gender, grade level, ethnic background, and languages spoken at home.
- b. **Perceptions of Classroom Environment:** Items assessing students' perceptions of classroom diversity, comfort in sharing cultural backgrounds, and the incorporation of multicultural perspectives in lessons. This section included **Likert-scale items (e.g., 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree)**.
- c. **Self-Reported Academic Performance:** Questions regarding students' self-assessment of their academic performance, including overall performance ratings and specific challenges faced in a multicultural setting.

The questionnaire was pilot-tested with a small group of students to ensure the clarity, reliability, and validity of the items. Feedback from the pilot test was used to refine the questionnaire before full administration.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted during the academic year 2024-2025. The following steps were taken:

- **Ethical Approval:** Approval was obtained from the School Principal and classroom advisers. Informed consent was secured from all participants, and parental consent was sought for respondents under 18 years of age.
- **Recruitment of Participants:** Participants were recruited through announcements in classrooms ensuring that students understood the purpose of the study and their right to participate voluntarily.
- **Administration of the Questionnaire:** The questionnaire was administered in a controlled environment, where students were given clear instructions on how to complete it. The researchers were present to assist with any questions and to ensure that the responses were collected confidentially.

Data Entry: Completed questionnaires were collected, and data were entered into a statistical software program (e.g., SPSS and Excel Program) for analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The following analyses were performed:

Descriptive Statistics: Frequencies, percentages, and means were calculated to summarize demographic information and responses to survey items.

Correlation Analysis: Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the relationships between students' perceptions of the multicultural classroom and their self-reported academic performance.

Limitations

The study acknowledges potential limitations, including the relatively small sample size and the reliance on self-reported measures of academic performance, which may be subject to bias. Future research could benefit from a larger, more diverse sample and the inclusion of objective academic performance metrics (e.g., grades, and test scores).

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

1. Gender Distribution

The analysis of the gender distribution of the respondents reveals that there are slightly more female respondents **27 (54%)** than male respondents **23 (46%)**. This suggests that the sample is relatively balanced in terms of gender, which is important for ensuring that the results of the study are representative of the population. A balanced sample can help to reduce bias and increase the validity of the findings.

2. Age Distribution

The age distribution shows that the majority of respondents are **15 years old (46%)**, followed by **16 years old (30%)**. This indicates that the sample is predominantly composed of students in the middle of the high school age range.

The presence of **only 2 students aged 13 and 1 student aged 17** suggests that the sample is skewed towards the typical ages of students in grades 9 and 10, which aligns with the educational structure of high school.

The mean age of **14.8 years** indicates that the average respondent is just under **15 years old**, which is consistent with the age distribution.

Since the study aims to assess the effects of a multicultural classroom on academic performance, knowing that most respondents are 15 years old allows for a focused analysis of how this age group

interacts with multicultural elements in their learning environment.

3. *Ethnic Background*

The data on the ethnic backgrounds of the respondents reveal that 33 (66%) are not indigenous people and a significant proportion of respondents 17 (34%) identify as members of Indigenous people, indicating a notable presence of this group in the sample. The presence of a significant number of Indigenous respondents provides an opportunity for rich insights into the experiences and perspectives of this group in multicultural classroom settings.

4. *Language Spoken at Home*

The data on the language spoken at home by the respondents is presented in the form of a frequency distribution. The analysis of this data provides insights into the linguistic diversity of the respondents. The respondents speak a diverse range of languages at home, with six languages represented in the sample.

Cebuano is the most frequently spoken language at home, with 34.5% of respondents speaking it. This is consistent with the fact that Cebuano is one of the major languages spoken in the Philippines (Gonzalez, 2017).

The presence of languages such as Ilonggo (14.5%), Ilocano (10.9%), Higaonon (9.1%), Manobo, (14.5%) and Talaandig (7.3%) suggests that the respondents come from different regions of the Philippines, each with their own distinct linguistic and cultural traditions.

The linguistic diversity of the respondents highlights the need for language support programs that cater to the diverse language needs of students (Cummins, 2000). The presence of regional languages suggests that educators should be culturally sensitive and responsive to the linguistic and cultural diversity of their students (Gay, 2000).

B. **Multicultural Classroom Experience**

1. *Perceived Diversity in the Classroom*

A significant majority of respondents (76%) perceive their classroom as either "Very Diverse" (42%) or "Somewhat Diverse" (34%). This indicates a general recognition of diversity within the classroom setting. **Only 24% of respondents perceive their classroom as "Not Very Diverse" (16%) or "Not Diverse at All" (8%).** This suggests that while some respondents may feel a lack of diversity, the overall sentiment leans towards a recognition of diversity.

The perception of diversity can influence classroom dynamics, including student engagement, collaboration, and cultural exchange. A diverse classroom can foster a richer learning environment where students are exposed to various perspectives and experiences (Banks, 2006).

The findings suggest a need for curriculum development that reflects and incorporates the diverse backgrounds of students. Culturally relevant pedagogy can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Moreover, educators should receive training on how to effectively manage and leverage diversity in the classroom. This includes understanding cultural differences, promoting inclusivity, and addressing potential biases (Gay, 2000) and schools should implement policies and practices that promote inclusivity and respect for diversity. This can include creating a welcoming environment, celebrating cultural differences, and providing resources for students from diverse backgrounds (Nieto, 2010).

2. *Participation in Multicultural events/activities in school*

The data indicates that a significant majority (76%) of students have engaged in multicultural events or activities. This suggests a strong interest and involvement in cultural diversity initiatives within the school setting.

With only **24%** of respondents indicating they have not participated, it can be inferred that multicultural events are a common aspect of the school experience, and most students are exposed to diverse cultural perspectives.

Participation in multicultural events can enhance students' understanding and appreciation of different cultures, which is essential in today's globalized society (Banks, 2006).

The high level of participation suggests that students are actively engaging with diverse cultures, which can lead to greater cultural awareness and sensitivity.

The findings imply that the school likely fosters an inclusive environment that encourages participation in multicultural activities, which can contribute to a sense of belonging among students (Gay, 2000). Participation in multicultural events can enhance social skills, as students learn to interact with peers from different backgrounds, promoting collaboration and teamwork (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

3. Students' Comfort Level in Sharing Their Cultural Background

A combined total of **76%** of respondents (**40% always + 36% often**) feel comfortable sharing their cultural background in class. This suggests a positive classroom environment that encourages openness and inclusivity.

Only **10% of respondents (6% rarely + 4% never)** feel uncomfortable sharing their cultural background, indicating that discomfort is relatively low among the majority of students.

The data suggests that students are likely to feel supported by their peers and teachers when discussing their cultural backgrounds, which is essential for fostering a sense of belonging and community in the classroom (Hollie, 2017).

While the majority feel comfortable sharing, educators should be aware of the 10% who feel

uncomfortable. Strategies should be developed to support these students, such as creating smaller discussion groups or providing alternative ways to share cultural backgrounds (Milner, 2017).

In promoting inclusivity, schools should continue to promote an inclusive environment where students feel safe and encouraged to share their cultural backgrounds. This can enhance peer relationships and foster a sense of belonging (Gorski, 2017).

4. Integration of Multicultural Perspective on the Lesson

The mode of the data is "Always," indicating that the most common response is that teachers frequently incorporate multicultural perspectives in their lessons. The median response is between "Often" and "Sometimes," suggesting that at least half of the respondents perceive a regular inclusion of multicultural perspectives.

A combined total of 60% of respondents (32% always + 28% often) indicate that teachers regularly incorporate multicultural perspectives in their lessons. This reflects a positive trend towards inclusivity in education.

While **60% is a strong indicator, 20% of respondents (20% sometimes + 12% rarely + 8% never)** suggest that there is still a significant portion of students who feel that multicultural perspectives are not adequately represented in their lessons.

The findings suggest that while many teachers are making efforts to include multicultural perspectives, there may be inconsistencies in how this is implemented across different classrooms (Gorski & Parekh, 2020).

This calls for teachers to enhance their skills. There is a need for enhanced professional development focused on multicultural education to ensure that all teachers feel equipped to incorporate diverse perspectives into their lessons (Gorski, 2017).

In addition, schools should consider revising curricula to include more comprehensive multicultural content, ensuring that it reflects the diversity of the student population and the broader society (Chapman & Grant, 2010).

Monitoring and evaluation and so regular assessments of how multicultural perspectives are integrated into lessons can help identify gaps and areas for improvement, ensuring that all students benefit from a diverse educational experience (Au, 2017).

C. Academic Performance

1. *The General average of the Respondents during the First Quarter of the Academic Year 2024-2025*

The weighted average score of approximately **89.92** indicates that the overall performance of the students is in the "Good" range, suggesting that the majority of students are performing well academically.

A significant majority (**66%**) of students fall into the "**Good**" category, indicating a strong performance overall.

Only **4%** of students achieved an "**Excellent**" rating, suggesting that while many students are performing well, there may be room for improvement to reach higher performance levels.

The presence of **16%** of students in the "**Below Average**" category indicates that there are students who may need additional support to improve their academic performance.

The absence of students in the "Poor" category is a positive sign, indicating that no students are failing, which reflects well on the teaching strategies and support systems in place.

Good performance (**66%**) of students' high motivation and engagement levels contribute to good

academic performance (Hattie, 2017). Encouraging Excellence: While the majority of students are performing well, strategies to encourage more students to reach the "Excellent" category could be beneficial. This could include enrichment programs, advanced coursework, or recognition of high achievers.

- a. **Excellent performance (4%):** Limited students achieving excellence may indicate a need for a more challenging curriculum or differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 2017).
- b. **Below Average (16%):** Students struggling academically may benefit from targeted interventions, such as individualized support or remedial programs (Vaughn et al., 2017).
- c. **Differentiated instruction:** Tailoring teaching methods to meet diverse learning needs can improve academic performance (Tomlinson, 2017).
- d. **Targeted interventions:** Providing additional support to struggling students can help close achievement gaps (Vaughn et al., 2017).
- e. **Challenging curriculum:** Offering advanced courses or enrichment programs can encourage excellence (Wiggins & McTighe, 2017).

2. *The Relationship between Multicultural Classroom Settings and Academic Performance*

A significant majority (**55%**) of respondents (**N=50**) believe that a multicultural classroom setting positively influences their academic performance, with **14 (22%)** strongly agreeing and **21 (33%)** agreeing. Conversely, **15** respondents (**24%**) expressed dissent, with **9 (14%)** disagreeing and **6 (9.5%)** strongly disagreeing. These results suggest that multicultural education fosters an inclusive learning environment, promoting academic success and cultural awareness among students.

The analysis revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between multicultural classroom settings and academic **performance** ($t = 2.43, p < 0.05$). Additionally, the Chi-Square test confirmed a significant association ($\chi^2 = 10.23, p < 0.05$). With a mean score of 2.71 and a median of 3 ("Agree"), the results indicate that students generally perceive multicultural education as beneficial to their academic performance. The standard deviation of **0.93** suggests moderate variability in responses. Overall, these findings support the effectiveness of multicultural classroom settings in enhancing academic outcomes.

The study employs that **Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)** is crucial for promoting academic success among diverse student populations. Key strategies include (Gay, 2018):

1. Recognizing and valuing students' cultural backgrounds.
2. Incorporating diverse perspectives into curriculum design
3. Fostering inclusive classroom environments
4. Encouraging critical thinking and reflection

In addition, James Banks' seminal work, "Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives" (2019), underscores the pivotal role multicultural education plays in fostering inclusive learning environments. Banks advocates for education that promotes cross-cultural understanding, challenges dominant narratives, and encourages social justice and equity. Effective multicultural education, Banks argues, facilitates students' critical thinking, empathy, and civic engagement, ultimately preparing them to thrive in diverse societies (Banks, 2019). By integrating diverse perspectives into curriculum design and instructional practices, educators can create inclusive spaces where students from diverse backgrounds feel valued and empowered.

Inclusive learning environments promote student engagement, motivation, and social cohesion (Hattie, 2017).

3. *Multicultural Classroom Setting Challenges*

A survey of students in multicultural classroom settings revealed significant challenges. The primary obstacles included Cultural Misunderstanding 18 (34.6%), Language Barrier 13 (25%), Lack of Representation 11 (21%), and Discrimination 8 (15.4%). These findings underscore the need for educators to address cultural and linguistic diversity.

Multicultural classrooms present unique challenges that educators must navigate to foster an inclusive and effective learning environment.

Students from diverse cultural backgrounds may have different communication styles, values, and expectations regarding education. This can lead to Cultural Misunderstanding, which was identified as the most significant challenge in the survey, affecting 34.6% of respondents. Educators need to develop cultural competence to understand and respect these differences, which can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Language differences can hinder effective communication between students and teachers, as well as among peers. The survey indicated that Language Barrier was a challenge for 25% of students.

The survey found that Lack of Representation in curriculum and teaching staff was a challenge for 21% of students. When students do not see their cultures reflected in the classroom, it can lead to feelings of alienation.

Discrimination, reported by 15.4% of students, can manifest in various forms, including bias from peers and teachers. This can create a hostile learning environment and negatively impact student performance and well-being. Schools must implement anti-discrimination policies and training for staff to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all students.

The findings from the survey highlight the critical need for educators to address these challenges in

multicultural classrooms. By fostering cultural understanding, providing language support, ensuring representation, and combating discrimination, educators can create a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study underscores the importance of multicultural education in enhancing academic performance and fostering inclusivity. However, challenges persist, necessitating targeted interventions:

- 1. Teacher Training:** Provide professional development on managing diversity and implementing culturally responsive teaching strategies.
- 2. Curriculum Revision:** Incorporate Indigenous knowledge, local histories, and multicultural perspectives.
- 3. Language Support Programs:** Establish bilingual education and peer mentoring initiatives to bridge communication gaps.
- 4. Anti-Discrimination Policies:** Strengthen initiatives to ensure a safe and inclusive environment.
- 5. Community Involvement:** Collaborate with parents and local leaders to enhance cultural representation.
- 6. Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regularly assess multicultural initiatives to identify gaps and areas for improvement.

REFERENCES

[1] Alonzo, R. (2019). The impact of multicultural education on Filipino students' academic performance. *Philippine Journal of Education*.
[2] Banks, J. A. (2016). *Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum, and teaching* (6th ed.). Pearson.

[3] Bautista, M. (2020). The impact of multicultural education on student engagement in the Philippines. *Philippine Journal of Education*, 99(1), 45-60.
[4] DeAngelis, C. (2020). The effects of multicultural education on student achievement in the United States. *Journal of Educational Research*.
Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2017). *Critical race theory: An introduction*. NYU Press.
[5] Department of Education (DepEd). (2019). K to 12 basic education programs. Retrieved from [DepEd website].
[6] Gay, G. (2018). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (3rd ed.). Teachers College Press.
[7] Gordon, A. (2018). Teacher training and multicultural education: A review of the literature. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 69(3), 245-258.
[8] Gorski, P. C. (2016). *Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap*. Teachers College Press.
[9] Kanu, Y. (2011). Integrating Aboriginal perspectives into the school curriculum: Moving beyond the rhetoric. *Canadian Journal of Education*.
[10] Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). The dream keepers: Successful teachers of African American children. Jossey-Bass.
[11] Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: A.k.a. the remix. *Harvard Education Review*, 84(1), 74-84.
[12] Lee, V. E., & Smith, J. B. (2017). Effects of high school restructuring and size on early gains in student achievement. *Sociology of Education*.
[13] Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. Jossey-Bass.
[14] Oakes, J. (2017). *Keeping track: How schools structure inequality*. Yale University Press.
[15] Reyes, L. (2021). Multicultural education and its effects on student performance in the Philippines. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 15(2), 1-10.
[16] Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2002). *Educating culturally responsive teachers: A coherent approach*. State University of New York Press.

[17] Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.

[18] Wang, M. T., et al. (2020). The role of multicultural education in fostering creativity and innovation among students. *International Journal of Educational Research*.

[19] Zhang, Y. (2018). The impact of multicultural education on critical thinking skills in diverse classrooms. *Journal of Educational Psychology*.