



UNIVERSITY OF
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EXTENSION

The UALSA Summer Institute: Advancing Culturally Responsive Practices in School-Based Agricultural Education Through Teacher Professional Learning

Aaron Golson & Dr. James C. Anderson II

Department of Agriculture Leadership, Education and Communication

BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK

Historically, agricultural education has served as an integral part of preparing and transforming individuals to address problems within the field. However, previous studies have shown that the connection between urban populations and agriculture has widened, leading to a lack of understanding of the importance and relevance of agriculture to their everyday lives. The US government has provided numerous resources to educate and support urban agricultural literacy through agricultural and extension education. Yet, these traditional forms are not working to recruit and retain this population due to cultural disconnects. Therefore, the concept of culturally responsive teaching has surfaced as a pedagogical framework for educating students from diverse backgrounds (Murff, 2020). Confident culturally responsive agricultural educators and their students can serve as catalysts for resolving future global environmental problems. Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to evaluate urban agriculture teachers' satisfaction and knowledge gained at a summer institute on culturally responsive pedagogy. The conceptual framework for this study is based on Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Evaluation Model. Kirkpatrick's model focuses on evaluating a program based on four levels which cover participants' perceptions (Levels 1 and 2) and program impact (Levels 3 and 4). The scope of this study will focus on the first two levels, which are participants' satisfaction and knowledge gained while participating in a professional learning experience.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives guiding the study were:

- 1) Describe respondents' perceptions of satisfaction during the summer training institute
- 2) Describe respondents' perceptions of knowledge in culturally responsive pedagogy.

METHODOLOGY

- ❖ Two comprehensive agriculture programs in Chicago and Milwaukee were chosen to participate in a summer institute due to their large urban student enrollment.
- ❖ Eleven agriculture teachers, educational specialists, and administrators from the selected high schools, were invited to a 4-day training at the University of Georgia.
- ❖ The training included sessions on implementing culturally responsive practices in the classroom including student engagement and student voice.
- ❖ Field visits with experts focused on how agricultural practices are being applied in urban areas and how to implement them.
- ❖ After completion of the summer institute, a Qualtrics survey with 49 questions was sent to participants to assess their reaction and learning during the summer institute.



RESULTS

- ❖ Participants were somewhat to extremely satisfied with the 4- day training sessions.
- ❖ Sessions related to culturally responsive pedagogy received a 5.5 out of 6 or higher rating.
- ❖ Participants reported learning more about incorporating culturally responsive strategies in the classroom but indicated wanting more time to focus on implementing what they had learned.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, participants were satisfied with the summer institute but wanted additional opportunities to practice the skills learned. The implementation of an additional day for collaborative planning and lesson writing should be added to the summer institute. Also, since participants have shown a desire to relate to their targeted population creates an opportunity for self-efficacy to be a consideration for future research.

REFERENCE

- Kirkpatrick, J. (2016). *Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Training Evaluation* (1st ed.). Association for Talent Development.
 Murff, D. (2020). *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Promising Practices for African American Male Students (Research for Social Justice: Personal~Passionate~Participatory)*. Information Age Publishing.