

ABSTRACT

Tuomi, Margaret Trotta 2004/2001. Human Dignity in the Learning Environment: Testing a Sociological Paradigm for a Diversity-Positive Milieu with School Starters. University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Institute for Educational Research.

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Preventative research for creating a diversity-positive, just environment. A holistic theory was developed and action research used with first and second grade children to evaluate its viability. Data sources included personal interviews, personal diaries, reports, ethnographic observations, video recording, audio recordings, and anonymous questionnaires.

The theory's value base, human dignity and world citizenship encompassed both one's own integrity and that of others, and the moral right and obligation to work for the realization of the well-being of all. The core principle, unity in diversity, provided the balance of the individual and the group in the realization of both their rights and obligations. Consultation and a partnership between parents and the teacher provided the tools. The factors for creating an environment conducive to consultation needed to be present. Results indicated that it was possible to prevent problems from starting in the classroom, to teach children to solve problems and to provide an environment conducive to learning thus lightening the load of the teacher.

Key Terms: world citizenship education, systems theory, holistic thinking, global education, human rights education, peace and justice education, school environment, diversity-positive environment, consultation skills, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, action research, school starters, sociometric meters, parent and teacher collaboration.