

How is the Multiple Intelligence Theory Related to Differentiated Instruction?

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Introduction

Teachers around the world every so often be amazed by at least one student with the way he/she is able to get to the bottom of a particular problem or demonstrated that he/she understood something: It may have been a child who solved a math problem correctly but differently from the way it was taught. It may also have been an adolescent who played an operatic scene in a play. Perchance it was a withdrawn seventh grader who was able to shock his/her classmates by becoming the most articulate voice in leading the group through a web of moral and social dilemmas and resolving a crisis over a case of unethical actions in the classroom.

But there may be two reasons for this occurrence. First, there were things about these children their teachers did not know—things about the ways their minds worked (the students may not have known these things about themselves either). Thus, their teachers did not anticipate that the students would solve a problem or express their ideas in a particular way. On the other hand, the second reason would be possibly because teachers themselves may not have ever thought about the problem in that way.

Our understanding to the varied ways in which children think, solve problems, and express themselves is often limited both by our notions of intelligence (e.g., that it is something finite; one that is instinctive) and our own intellectual preferences. Deliberate or not, teachers model their educational media (e.g., curriculum, instruction, and assessment) to imitate their ideas about intelligence and how learning happens as well as their own ways of making sense of the world. It is almost certain that everyone can believe that if there is a

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possibility for clarity, there is a possibility to comprehend something and others might have the possibility to be understood.

Based on long and careful examination, particularly of children who do not seem to comprehend easily what may seem obvious to others, many teachers recognize that there are indeed many different ways of perceiving the world and multiple ways of making sense of one's experiences. Certainly, in any group, each person notices and attends to different aspects of an experience. It often seems that there are as many ways of knowing as the number of people. However, a closer examination of the theories on multiple intelligences can provide a middle ground between the idea that there is a single way in which how the minds work and the idea that all minds are unique. In attempting to comprehend the mind and particularly, the minds in a teacher's classroom, a good theory can help educators make sense of the surprising moves and strategies that students reveal.

Practically, all parts of the classroom are constructed within the region of what teachers want children to learn, and how they think they are most likely to learn it. In some classrooms, desks are in rows and children sit quietly much of the day. In other classrooms, there are workstations that are designated for distinctive kinds of activities. From the infrastructure of the room, the list of assignment, the resources provided to the questions posted during classes, to each choice a teacher makes reflects an idea about intelligence and learning.

In this study on multiple intelligences and differentiated instruction, we explore how the theory of multiple intelligences directly affects the system of differentiated instruction. The study presents several related literature tackling multiple intelligences and the method of effective differentiated instruction. This paper looks into the theory posed by Gardner in his book, *Frames of Mind* (1983/1993). The study also deals with the implications of a notion of

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intelligence which have overlooked the fact that students bring a broad range of capacities—each in a distinctive balance—to their work as learners. In particular, the study explains how teachers in various grade levels have applied Multiple Intelligence Theory to their teaching and assessment practices. It may seem that initially, being able to recognize and work with diverse kinds of students in the classroom seems overwhelming. On the other hand, this mix becomes an opening into the creation of much more vibrant learning environments in which all kinds of minds can be encouraged to do their best. Multiple Intelligence Theory can provide support for creating such environments.

The study includes analysis and conclusion based on the former. Toward the end, recommendations to the study of multiple intelligences and differentiated instruction are provided.

Review of Related Literature

When people hear about multiple intelligences, they sooner or later ask how is multiple intelligences measured. Even among practitioners, it is almost natural. In fact, within a small number of years of the publication of *Frames of Mind*, several of the leading testing and publishing companies approached me to develop an instrument to evaluate intelligences. In many ways, this request was perfectly reasonable; since an anthology of new intelligences was introduced—and the standard view of intelligence was evaluated at the same time—it was implied that one could calculate intelligence. Despite everything, for most of society, intelligence is a framework capacity that can be mathematically quantified by a set of diminutive questions and answers offered orally or in writing. Can the same technique be used to appraise a new company of intelligences?

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Aside from its unconventional foundation, Gardner's theory diverges from some conventional conceptions in more than a few ways. Gardner, like other past and current theorists, argued for a more pluralistic notion of intelligence. Rather than fixing intelligence at birth, as some conventional ideas of intelligence imply, MI theory suggests that intelligences change and grow in response to a person's experiences. Approximating a number of other scholars, it was viewed that intelligences is learnable. It is a result of a steady interface in the middle of biological and environmental factors. Listed below is the existing classification on varying multiple intelligences:

- Naturalist intelligence allows a community to differentiate among, classify, and even utilize his/her environment's potentials. People who have this kind of intelligence are farmers, gardeners, and geologists.
- Linguistic intelligence provides people with the venue to effectively communicate by means of language. People who are linguistically intelligent are journalists, novelists, and lawyers.
- Musical intelligence allows groups to generate, communicate, and have a handle on meanings through the art of music. Typically these are composers, conductors, and singers.
- Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence allows individuals to use all or part of the body to create products or solve problems. Classic professions include athletes, dancers, and actors.

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- Logical-mathematical intelligence enables individuals to use and appreciate abstract relations. Distinctive professions include scientists, accountants, and philosophers.
- Intrapersonal intelligence helps individuals to distinguish among their own feelings, to build accurate mental models of themselves, and to draw on these models to make decisions about their lives. Usually these individuals are therapists and certain kinds of artists and religious leaders.
- Spatial intelligence provides people with the capacity to make out visual or spatial settings, to transform this information, and to recreate visual images from memory. People who are classified as spatially intelligent are architects, sculptors, and mechanics.
- Interpersonal intelligence empowers individuals to effectively recognize and assess others' feelings and intentions. People with a high potential for interpersonal intelligence are teachers, people in government and even salespeople.

In addition, conventional conceptions of intelligence hold that intelligence remains the same in all situations; in other words, a person's intelligence does not change whether he/she is answering any analytical problems, learning a new kind of sport or trying to determine the best route in an unfamiliar city. Modern conceptions point out that the thinking and learning required outside of school are often situated and contextualized. Most intellectual works do not occur in isolation: When people work in different kinds of settings, their abilities to solve problems differ. Apart from conventional test settings, problem solving is usually tied to certain tasks or goals and often aided by other people and an assortment of tools and resources. ...]

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