INSERVICE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF DIVERSITY AND THE PREPAREDNESS OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS TO EDUCATE ALL STUDENTS

By

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(Under the Direction of Stacey Neuharth-Pritchett)

ABSTRACT

The diversity of the population of elementary school children is increasing. Yet, the teaching force that educates children is relatively homogeneous. Preservice teacher preparation institutions depend on positive relationships with schools and cooperating teachers to serve as models and mentor for their apprentices. The current study sought to capture perceptions of eight public elementary school teachers and their views on diversity and the preparedness of student teachers to educate all populations. Data from interviews indicated teachers had limited views of self and other and did not perceive themselves as a critical component of the preservice teachers' professional development experience. Implications for teacher education include the need for better communication for the professional development team of the preservice teachers; the need to clearly define the role and expectations of the inservice teacher in the preparation of preservice teachers; and the influence NCLB is having on inservice teachers' willingness to work with preservice teachers;.

INDEX WORDS: Teacher education, Cultural diversity, Preservice Teachers, Achievement Gap

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"The entire object of true education is to make people not merely do the right things, but enjoy them; not merely industrious, but to love industry; not merely learned, but to love knowledge; not merely pure, but to love purity; not merely just, but to hunger and thirst after justice."

-- John Ruskin (1819-1900), British critic, author, and poet

My morning begins calmly, standing at the classroom door anticipating the ringing of the school bell. After the bell rings, beautiful smiles and "good mornings" flood the hallway. Children scurry about proudly carrying book bags as large as they are and calmness in me is replaced with an adrenaline rush. I am ready to take on the world. My classroom fills quickly with stories and events from the evening before, jokes, compliments, fusses on the bus, and my personal favorite – elaborate detailed excuses of why homework is not complete. I keep promising myself to write these stories down, honestly impressed by the creativity of why children cannot do homework. What job begins with such joy and humor? Teaching!

Though I meticulously plan the classroom instruction down to the minute, the plans remain flexible because I work with 24 diverse, socially complex, wonderful children. They enter my classroom with differing emotional needs, academic needs, health needs, family dynamics, cultures, languages, temperaments, background knowledge, motivation, attitudes towards school, socioeconomics, etc. Not to mention how the time of year, weather, season, holiday, school function, illness, news event, or major family or classroom event will completely overshadow our educational day prompting me to resort to desperate maneuvers of combining

compassion, empathy, experience, wit, and understanding, with academics. To complete our day on schedule has been a major feat, yet one to which to aspire. The joy of working with such diverse children in an ever changing society keeps my mind stimulated and happily challenged. Through the rich social discourse and relationships formed with the students I have learned much more about myself, my career, and formed stronger theoretical and philosophical views. Much to my surprise, my students have become my teachers, my mentors, my guides – guiding me on a journey toward deeper understanding of self and others.

Upon entering this chosen field, I admit that I began with anachronous and mistaken philosophical beliefs of traditional public education. I was going to change the world by teaching my students to be their best. I truly cared and that was all that mattered. Unfortunately, my "lens" through upon which I viewed the world was limited by my southern, female, White, middle-class, Christian view restricting my understanding of the young lives entering my classroom and how my philosophical ideals, values, and beliefs influenced my teaching. "We all carry worlds in our heads, and those worlds are decidedly different" (Delpit, 2006, p. xxiv) where I was captive in a world not familiar to the multifaceted social, cultural, political, and religious worlds of my students. My students' worlds were known to me only as "other". How could I reach the "world" of others when I didn't even know they existed? What was my culture, and how did it impact students? How were culture and learning connected, and how did it influence my teaching? Thus, the awareness of my journey began and continues today with great expectations for continuous personal improvement in the future.

Statement of the Problem

The years of my teaching experience and education have increased and I have realized the joy and multifaceted complexities of "other", not only in my students but in myself. Clearly, my simplistic paradigm of elementary public education has changed. Teaching children is very complex; however, legislators and society place more and more expectations on the public schools not fully understanding the comprehensiveness of the job. "Much of what teachers need to know to be successful is invisible to lay observers, leading to the view that teaching requires little formal study and to frequent disdain for teacher education programs" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 201). Darling-Hammond continues,

> "The realities of what it takes to teach in U.S. schools such that all children truly have an opportunity to learn are nearly overwhelming. In the classrooms most beginning teachers will enter, at least 25% of students live in poverty and many of them lack basic food, shelter, and health care; from 10% to 20% have identified learning differences; 25% speak a language other than English as the primary language (many more in urban settings); and 40% are members of racial/ethnic "minority" groups many of them recent immigrants from countries with different educational systems and cultural traditions (p. 201).

There is a definite disconnect between actual teaching of students and educational stakeholders perceptions, goals and objectives for public school. This disconnect is nothing new and has been throughout the history of the American public school. Public schools have served as a catalyst for promoting or addressing many of societies' political and philosophical ideals, i.e., perpetuating the democratic ideals (Glickman, 1993), equality, morals, values, (Dewey,

1916), propaganda, and eradicating racial discrimination (Spring, 2002; Banks, 1997). Yet, there is a limited awareness of how social, cultural, and political constructs influence learning, students, families, and educators (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2000; Rothstein, 2004; Portes, 2005; Delpit, 2006).

Rapidly changing society. The public school is a major governmental institution used for political, social, and economic purposes (Spring, 2002). Schools have been used as an influential and inexpensive agency to promote the morals and values of the day. Just as the demographics rapidly change in public schools, so have the goals and expectations. Many believe the major political goal of the public schools is to educate future citizens to continue to uphold the democratic ideals of the government. However, society uses schools to influence public opinion and promote beliefs of the day, such as war, racism, patriotism, language, laws, and customs (Spring, 2002). Schools have been used to get children off of the streets to help decrease crime to providing Americanization training for immigrants, such as learning the American laws, language, and customs. Schools have been used as a means of encouraging racism such as through WWII propaganda and discouraging racism such as desegregation and Johnson's War on Poverty (1964). Sex education and aids education are two controversial social values still debated today. Economically, schools are used to educate students to successfully work in the current economy and business world. The explosion of technology and the internet have created many new challenges for the educational system in just keeping abreast of the current knowledge-base and technological needs for this population. Given the historical ebb and flow of societal issues and their impact on the schools, challenges are ever present.

"America is a nation rich in diversity and this is exemplified in its children" (Secretary Spelling's *The Secretary's Fourth Annual Report on Teacher Quality: A Highly Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom*, 2005*).* Today's population differs from the population 10 years ago; whether we discuss "ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, or geographical area" (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2008). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2008) reports from the years 1972-2006 all population groups have shown an increase in public schools except for the White, non-Hispanic population which has decreased from 78% to 57%. During this time, populations in the public schools that considered themselves part of a racial or ethnic group increased from 22% to 43%. While the changing population is not a problem (Howard, 2007), this rapidly changing demographics demands vigorous, ongoing and systemic professional development to keep all educators prepared to work effectively in diverse school settings (Howard, 2007).

"Americans have believed in the ideal of equal opportunity and also believe that the best way to ensure that opportunity is to enable all children, regardless of their parent's stations, to leave school with skills that position them to compete fairly and productively in the nation's democratic governance and occupational structure" (Rothstein, 2004, p.1). "Among the most important challenges facing America is providing high-quality schooling for all students, especially those presently underserved by the educational system, including students of color, low-income students, English-language learners, and student in rural and urban settings" (Hollins & Guzman, 2005, p. 477). Central to the challenges are the issues of equality and social justice for all. The evidence supporting these injustices can be found in the disparities experienced by

populations living in poverty compared to populations living in higher socio-economic households and populations representing minorities compared to the White-non-Hispanic population. The main obstacles to excellence and equity in education depend upon understanding these disparities and how social inequality is socially organized and sustained in society (Portes, 2005).

The statistical evidence often used to represent these disparities is the "achievement gap". While the achievement gap is crucial to eradicate, it is only one piece of evidence supporting the disparities. A narrow focus on the achievement gap has resulted in lack of focus on the injustices and inequalities experienced by these populations. It has created a simple-minded blame followed by a naive fix.

The achievement gap. The steadfast "achievement gap" between these populations reported in the last 30 years of public schools has provided the statistical catalyst in which America could decide it was the fault of failing public schools (Rothstein, 2004). Researchers agree the achievement gap is much more than a difference in academic performance between White and Black students (Rothstein, 2008, McCall, et.al, 2006, Bracey, 2005; Portes, 2005). The gap is deeply rooted in a system of social inequalities and injustices which are organized and sustained in society and often go unrealized (Portes, 2005). Even though it is often unpopular to acknowledge, socio-economic levels influence students' academic performance (Rothstein, 2008).

A synthesis of the research reveals children living in poverty experience many social and economic conditions that influence or directly correlate to academic achievement (Portes, 2005; Rothstein, 2004; Kozol, 1991; Brice-Heath, 1983). While students living in poverty are not genetically predisposed to lower academic achievement, there are many social class differences

that influence their performance and a collection of these can have a great impact on learning. These differences can include embedded social and political structures; cultural stylistic patterns, environmental conditions, and experiences.

Foremost in mentioning is the very foundation of the American school is rooted in the social, political, and historical traditions from a Euro-white, middle class ideal system. The majority of teachers are White, middle-class females (Cochrane-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). As a result, schools and teachers are often predisposed toward certain cultural stylistic patterns not experienced by all cultures.

Students living in poverty often experience different patterns of parental styles than the White, middle-class population. Brice-Heath and her landmark study articulated how "schools are biased toward certain language patterns, ignoring the language strengths of students who aren't from mainstream cultures" (Brice-Heath, 1996, p. 55). She noted that children from different socio-groups bring to their classrooms different patterns of learning and using oral and written language. A closer looked revealed the focus on the language acquisition skills and communication at home during the early years of the child was considerably different from the culture of the schools and teachers. Brice-Heath found the population that was more similar to the culture of the school and teacher population was more successful in school.

The lack of adequate health care can relate to many problems for students living in poverty. For example, many mothers living in poverty do not receive appropriate prenatal care and parental education. This has shown to have direct implications for the children. Those children that have been born in poverty have lower birth weights and experience more problems with vision, lead poisoning, asthma, dental hygiene, and exposure to smoke and other environmental chemicals. They often experience inadequate, unsafe, and/or unstable living

conditions resulting in poor sleep and loss of continuity in schools. Conditions of poverty are also correlated to poorer quality diets resulting in lower academic achievement (Florence, 2008). Students living in poverty tended to have more unsupervised time after school and limited support for educational needs.

Another influence on the achievement gap is from the social-psychological perspective in which cultural groups operate and have developed and adapted to their world. Ogbu (1992) explains the way cultural groups perceive, act, and think have developed from the historical foundation of their immigrant status. While ethnicity is continually changing and multifaceted, the immigrant status is loosely built upon three categories: involuntary immigrant status, voluntary immigrant status, and invaded or conquered people status (Ogbu, 1992). The African American population is an example of the involuntary immigrant status. American Indians and Mexican Americans can be considered from the invaded or conquered immigrant status. An example of the voluntary immigrant group would be from those cultural groups that choose to come to America such as the Hmong. These experiences for the groups, such as being subjected to forced assimilation, removal, prejudices and discrimination have created strong psychological belief systems and ideals for many cultures. These belief systems may influence some students behavior and their academic achievement. Portes (2005) affirms students experiencing lower-socio-economic conditions and from an involuntary minority group learn and develop in qualitatively different ways from their middle- and upper- socio-economic status peers.

The educational system works better for some groups than others; however, "it is failing those students who are in a class/culture different from that for which it was designed and for those who remain in power" (Portes, 2005, p. 93). Even "after thirty years of compensatory programs and reforms for students placed at-risk, the achievement gap has remained" (Portes,

2005, p.4). What has not remained intact is America's commitment to public schools. This lack of commitment has made it easy to place the blame on the failure of the teachers and schools.

Reform and NCLB. Educational stakeholders have divided publically, professionally, and politically forming allies and enemies leaving teachers and students stranded in "No-Man's Land. The only consensus is that public schools are in need of reform. With the passing of Public Law 107-110, *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2002 (NCLB), many believed it to be the treaty of victory in educations' battlefield's of inequities. First, publicity NCLB received enlightened the public of the many challenges today's schools were facing. Educators were hopeful for the much needed assistance, resources, professional development, training, etc. to learn to teach all students. "Civil rights advocates praised it for its emphasis on improving the education for students of color, those living in poverty, new English learners, and students with disabilities" (Darling-Hammond, 2007, p. 11).

Yet, the achievement gap as described by NCLB is a narrow interpretation based on the assumption that wrongly designed school policies, low expectations for students, and inadequate teachers are the cause of the achievement gap (Rothstein, 2004). A quick solution of higher standards and high-stakes testing is all that is needed to "fix" the gap. NCLB provisions require schools to be measured by their ability to close the achievement gap although funding was not provided to fix issues contributing to that achievement gap (Darling-Hammond, 2007). While the law focuses on annual test scores as indicators of school quality, it largely ignores the importance of resources, professional development, and the affective domains of a society that promote school and teacher quality (Darling-Hammond, 2007). On paper, NCLB appeares to be a qualified victory. Yet, in reality instead of improving education for all students, Delpit (2006) states:

> schools are administering more standardized testing of children than the country has ever seen, with more and more urban school districts adopting "teacher-proof" curricula to address low test scores, along with school consultants whose sole purpose is to police teachers adherence to scripted lessons, mandated classroom management strategies, and strict instructional timelines that ignore the natural rhythms of teaching and learning. (p. xiii)

"We have given up the rich meaningful education of our children in favor of narrow, decontextualized, meaningless procedures that leave unopened hearts, unformed character, and unchallenged minds (Delpit, 2006, p. xiv)." In essence, teachers in public education are being forced to teach to a test. Much needed reforms and resources to adequately educate students and teachers were dismissed as excuses and overshadowed by accountability requirements. Supplying statistical evidence that the achievement gap is closing has become a blinding obsession, a compulsive "Search for the Holy Grail."

While critics of education may believe all that is needed to teach is a background check and a passing score of a state license, some have failed to consider the complexities of teaching children. "They touch, they feel, they observe, they think, they act and react, and, as they do, they learn" (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997, p. 8). Teaching and learning are human tasks involving socially diverse human beings with their own unique and individual needs, understandings, goals, and objectives. Children come to school with already developed ideas, concepts, perceptions, temperaments and personalities. Children are part of dynamic, richly-diverse, cultural groups that help them acquire knowledge and guide them in their interpretation of ideas, concepts, people, and events.

One can begin to understand the impact cultures have on learning. Culture is a social system that represents an accumulation of beliefs, attitudes, habits, values, and practices that serve as filters through which a group of people view and respond to the world in which they live (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997). A child's culture influences the way he or she focuses on and processes information, thus how one acquires knowledge. Similarly, the teacher's culture has knowledge frames and belief structures which filter practices, strategies, actions, interpretations and decisions (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). While classroom diversity continues to grow, teachers and preservice teachers continue to remain predominantly female, White, and monolingual (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). The majority of preservice teachers are from suburbs or small towns and have limited experience with cultures different from their own. The cultures of schools and the teachers are often different from many of the groups represented in the classroom. These discontinuities of cultures interfere with students' academic achievement (Gay, 2000). Therefore, teachers need to be able to understand and affirm the importance of culture and diversity to bridge this gap for their students.

Cochran-Smith & Zeichner (2005) state that even though it is now widely agreed that teachers are among the most significant people affecting children's learning, how to best prepare them is central to many debates. Today's teachers are constantly being challenged by reform initiatives to meet new requirements that have not been part of the conventional repertoire of expectations for effective classroom teaching and for which many teachers have not been adequately prepared during their professional training (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2001, p. 47). The NCES (2000) survey reported in Table 21, 54% of the teachers taught students with limited English proficiency, while 71% taught students with disabilities. When asked how prepared teachers were, NCES (2001) reported almost half (47%) of full-time public

school teachers indicated they were not at all prepared to address the needs of students with limited English proficiency or from diverse cultural backgrounds. Thirty-seven percent reported somewhat to no preparedness to address the needs of students with disabilities.

The American dream is based on a promise. "All children, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, gender, creed, color, or disability will have equal access to an education that allows them to enjoy the freedoms and exercise the responsibilities of citizenship in our democracy" (Wood, 2004, p. iv). Unfortunately, that promise has not come to fruition for all children. Educational disparities among socioeconomic and cultural populations can no longer be ignored. Gay (2000), states "The consequences of these disproportionally high levels of low achievement are long-term and wide-reaching, personal and civic, individual and collective (p. 1)." Thus, public schools need to be able to provide high-quality education for all populations, especially those populations underserved including students of color, low-income students, English-language learners, and students in rural and urban settings (Hollins & Guzman, 2005). While many educational professionals and stakeholders believe the disparities in education and the achievement gap cannot be solved by just the public school system (Gay, 2000; Rothstein, 2004, Portes, 2005), there is increasing agreement that teacher quality is a major factor influencing education and student success (Hollins & Guzman, 2005). Of particular importance to this nation's changing demographics and the need for social justice and equality in education is the preparation of teachers to teach all students (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Over the last several decades, teacher preparation programs have attempted to better prepare candidates to teach diverse populations by incorporating multicultural principles and practices into their teacher education programs (Hollins & Guzman, 2005: McNeal, 2005). In these multicultural teacher education programs, teachers become "knowledgeable about

multicultural principles and are provided with significant knowledge of and experiences with students from diverse cultures and backgrounds (McNeal, 2005 p. 406).” While many see the value and importance in preparing teachers to teach diversity, research on the influence these institutions are having on preservice candidates has been mixed and often inconclusive (Hollins & Guzman, 2005).

Amongst the many challenges and mandates public education currently faces, determining the preservice teachers’ preparedness has become critical to public school systems. In such a high stakes testing and accountability era, the abilities of the preservice candidates are of crucial importance to schools and cooperating teachers. If year-end test results do not show adequate scores or progress, teachers face possible reprimands, negative reputations, or the loss of their jobs. Schools can face public humiliation, loss of funding, or possible “take over” by the state government. These outcomes, along with the additional workload to train and mentor preservice teachers are proving too tasking for some overworked educators.

In spite of the many educational challenges, preservice teachers are still in need of field experience working with inservice educators in the public schools. Preservice teacher preparation institutions depend on positive relationships with schools and cooperating teachers to serve as models to guide preservice candidates in their application of theory and development of the pedagogical skills taught in methods courses (Anderson, Barksdale, & Hite, 2005). So with this mandate, are preservice teachers prepared to teach all students?

Purpose of the Study

As a public elementary school teacher, I have been privy to numerous discussions centered on the challenges many of us are facing to fulfill the added responsibilities and

expectations of the classroom and education system. The purpose of this investigation is to ascertain inservice educators' perceptions of preservice teachers' preparedness to work in culturally diverse classroom. Through this research I determine inservice teachers' belief systems about diversity, the incorporation of culture responsive teaching in a rural, elementary public school, and how well inservice teachers believe preservice teachers are prepared to work with all students. Additionally, inservice teachers were asked their beliefs on what they believe preservice teachers need to be better prepared. With this knowledge, I hope to provide an opening for teacher preparation institutions to form stronger relationships with public school and cooperating teachers in preparing teacher candidates.

To establish preservice teacher's abilities to work with culturally diverse populations, I interviewed educators at a rural, Title I school facing many of today's tough reform challenges. In framing the guideline for the interviews, I realized the educator's understandings of culture were crucial to their opinions and beliefs of working with diverse cultures. As Howard (1999) says, "We can't teach what we don't know." For preservice teachers to effectively teach diverse cultural populations, the inservice teachers must have knowledge of culture, multicultural education, and model appropriate practices. The inservice educator's culture and perception of culture may frame the development of preservice teacher's abilities.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Today's population differs greatly in diversity from 10 years ago. NCATE (2008) defines diversity as characteristics of "ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, or geographical area." Our public schools are becoming more diverse with the greatest increase experienced from Hispanic, Asian, and Pacific Islander populations (NCES, 2008). While our schools are becoming more diverse, our teachers and preservice teachers continue to be predominantly female, White, and monolingual (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). Further, "the majority of teacher candidates are from suburbs or small towns and have limited experience with those from cultures or areas different from their own (p. 21)." This limited experience with diversity presents challenges in the preparation of teachers in their work with diverse students. What produces the most problems for schools is not the *changing* diversity; it is the "persistent and pernicious disparities that exist in educational achievement, resources, and life chances between students of color and their White peers (Hollins & Guzman, 2005, p. 478)."

To provide a solid foundation for this research this literature review begins with defining culture, dispositions, culturally responsive teaching, cultural styles, and multicultural education. It is followed by how higher education has addressed diversity. A review of the literature on how teacher education includes diversity includes candidates' disposition, preservice teachers' preparation, field experience, recruitment of teachers of color and minority groups, and additional barriers to diversity in education.

Culture

Culture is a social system that represents an accumulation of beliefs, attitudes, habits, values, and practices that serve as a filter through which a group of people view and respond to the world in which they live (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997). Culture influences students' acquisition of knowledge. "Culture determines how we think, believe, and behave, and these, in turn, affect how we teach and learn (Gay, 2000, p. 9)." Culture is multidimensional and continually changing. It is influenced by time, setting, age, economics, and social events or circumstances. Despite the fact that there is some consensus about what culture is, there is much more limited awareness of how social, cultural, and political constructs of society influence learning, students, families, and educators. Beginning in the early years in America, many European-Anglo immigrants brought their cultural systems to America which provided the philosophical foundation for the establishment of this country as it is known today. Public schools were created out of these belief systems. Historically, they have served as a catalyst for promoting or addressing many of societies' political and philosophical ideals (Nieto, 2002), that are perpetuating democratic ideals, equality, morals, values, propaganda, and eradicating racial discrimination. It is understandable how the cultures of schools and cultures of populations are often not in harmony. These discontinuities between schools and children may negatively influence students' academic achievement (Gay, 2000) and their parents' understanding and acceptance of the educational process. In other words, many of the inequalities and injustices experience by culturally diverse populations can be traced to these discontinuities between cultural systems. For students to become successful, teachers need more than to be culturally aware and have "good intentions" (Gay, 2000, p. 13). Teachers must be able to understand different cultural interactions and incompatibilities to minimize tension and bridge the gap

between different cultural systems and improve student's success. Teachers need the necessary "pedagogical knowledge and skills, as well as the courage to dismantle the status quo" (Gay, 2000; p. 13).

One must understand the inequities and injustices experienced in schools, for the most part, are not a function of intentional discrimination (Howard, 2007). As students are influenced by their own culture and diversity, the teacher's knowledge frames and belief structures are the filters through which their practices, strategies, actions, interpretations and decisions are made (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). White teachers have their own cultural connections and unique personal narratives that are legitimate aspects of the overall mix of the school diversity as well (Howard, 2007). They bring their own attitudes, beliefs, values, dispositions, and experiences, and will interpret the teacher preparation courses through these filters (Garmon, 2005).

The European-Anglo White population is viewed as the dominant group or culture of power (Delpit, 2006). The culture of power is usually unaware of their own power and can carry on their lives without any considerable knowledge about, or meaningful interaction with, those people who are not part of their group (Howard, 1993, Nieto, 1999). Many inservices, beginning, and preservice educators are unaware they have a culture or that their culture influences their teaching.

Dispositions

Howard (1993) acknowledges accusatory interactions, being made to feel guilty for being White, or even being viewed as the "culture of power", has caused some educators to become uncomfortable and more resistant towards issues of diversity. Understandably, teacher's

dispositions must be positively fostered and encouraged to accept, respect, and become knowledgeable of their culture and other cultures to adequately teach all students. As dispositions are intangible and value laden, providing a specific definition can be complex. Teacher dispositions according to NCATE's (2008) position are defined as:

> "attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through verbal and nonverbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development" (p. 89).

Culturally Responsive Teachers (CRT)

"Culturally responsive teachers are warm, supportive, personable, patient, understanding, enthusiastic, flexible, and stay on task" (Shade, Kelly & Oberg, 1997, p. 47). Gay (2000) maintains "culturally responsive teachers are actively involved in promoting equity and excellence; teaching all students the knowledge, values, and skills they need to function effectively as citizens of the pluralistic U.S. society; and teaching relational competencies such as how to relate better with people from different ethnic, racial, cultural, language, and gender backgrounds (p. 20). Howard (2007) asserts essential elements of CRT include forming authentic and caring relationships with students, using curriculum that honors each student's culture and life experience, shifting instructional strategies to meet the diverse learning needs of students, communicating respect for each student's intelligence, and holding consistent and high expectations for all learners.

Culturally responsive teaching is bound by educators' proactive learning about their own cultural identity. Likewise, teachers must become knowledgeable about their students' cultures,

communities, and prior experiences, along with their students' ethnic historical significance and impact on the world which is often left out of our traditional discourse.

Cultural Styles

In addition to positive dispositions and culturally responsive teaching, educators need a solid knowledge base of how "culture correlates with styles individuals use in their perceptual, attentional, conceptual, and thinking activities, also known as stylistic patterns, cultural characteristics, or cultural style dimensions" (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997). These authors further assert "traits that are most likely to be found in a sample of the population (p. 21)." The authors further contend the most common cultural style dimensions that seem to have the greatest impact on student, teacher, and school relationships are communication style, personality or response style, linguistic styles, and social interaction styles.

By interpreting children's behaviors and learning style through culture, the teacher becomes a "cultural liaison and has the responsibility for developing a connection between the culture of the students and the culture of the schools" (Shade, Kelly & Oberg, 1997, p.19). It must be understood that cultural styles and characteristics are not absolutes. Not all individuals in a specific cultural group display the same learning and cognitive styles. Educators are cautioned about the fine line between cultural characteristics and guidelines versus stereotypes.

Multicultural Education (ME)

Gay (2004) in the *Handbook of Research of Multicultural Education*, reports that ME has been endorsed by influential professional organizations such as the Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

(ASCD). However, due to the misinterpretations, numerous definitions, and historical development of ME, the implementation of ME in public schools is varied presenting complex barriers for Teacher Education Programs (TEP) in preparing teacher candidates. A synthesis of research reveals ME as a(n) concept, curriculum, discipline, field, framework, ideology, lesson plan, movement, pedagogy, philosophy, result (of the Civil Rights Movement), set of criteria, theoretical study, viewpoint, way of thinking, etc. In reality, ME encompasses aspects of all of these (Gay, 2004).

It has been noted there are numerous definitions for multicultural education developed by many reputable researchers and organizations. The National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) published their official definition for ME on February 1, 2003. The group defines ME as:

> a philosophical concept built on the ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equity, and human dignity as acknowledged in various documents, such as the U.S. Declaration of Independence, Constitutions of South Africa and the United States, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations. It values cultural differences and affirms the pluralism that students, their communities, and teachers reflect. It challenges all forms of discrimination in schools and society through the promotion of democratic principles of social justice.

Unfortunately, a widespread belief amongst school and university practitioners of ME narrowly interprets ME as just an additive to the curriculum reducing ME to an inclusion of a holiday, a thematic unit of a historical person of color, or reading a book by an African American author (Banks & Banks, 2004). Some systems believe they have fulfilled the multicultural education requirements by just specifically addressing the academic needs of the diverse

population in their school. Often this may be through an early intervention program or tutoring. Basically, these programs view ME through a deficit perspective and a "fix" for a weak knowledge base. The deficit model of ME does not acknowledge the need for reforms in educational paradigms and curriculum; social and political ideals, and cultural and racial tolerance and prejudice reduction.

ME researchers have developed conceptual typologies of how ME is approached in education. One was developed by Banks (2004) and the other by Sleeter (1993). They are similar because they identify five approaches educators use, and each approach is different yet overlap and may be interrelated. In addition, educators using the approaches all want to improve the education of students. Banks (2004) developed a conceptual framework describing how ME is approached based on his research, observations, and work in the field extending from the 1960s to the present. He asserts there are five dimensions of ME which not only provide foundation for understanding ME, but also explain how the varied approaches have affected our education system and beliefs. The dimensions are (1) content integration, (2) the knowledge construction process, (3) prejudice reduction, (4) equity pedagogy, and (5) an empowering school culture and social structure. Each of the five dimensions is as a distinct classification; yet, implementation of the dimensions is often integrated and varied.

Content Integration began in the 1960s with the onset of ethnic studies during the Civil Rights Movement. Teachers incorporate examples, data, and information from a variety of cultures and groups in the curriculum. A typical example may include winter holidays around the world. Unfortunately, today many stakeholders and educational systems believe this constitutes the "whole of ME" (p. 4). While content integration is very important, it is often limited to just holidays, units, and biographies.

The Knowledge Construction dimension builds on the content integration. Teachers not only teach about a variety of cultures and groups in the curriculum, but help the students to "understand how knowledge is created and influenced by the racial, ethnic, and social-class positions of individuals and groups (p. 4)." Moreover, they "help students understand, investigate, and determine how the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it (p. 5)."

The Prejudice Reduction dimension focuses on the "characteristics of students' racial attitudes and how they can be modified by teaching methods and material (p. 5)." It suggests strategies that can help students develop more positive attitudes and values towards cultures and develop stronger democratic ideals. Prejudice reduction can be supported by making sure that all cultures are represented in a positive way in the classroom, curriculum, literature, and school-wide décor. Initiating positive discussions about race is important even at a young age and provides students with experiences that prepare them for equal discussion and encouraging cross-racial friendships. Classroom activities to encourage this would include group tasks, cooperative learning, etc.

Equity Pedagogy is when the teacher alters, modifies, or changes their teaching in ways that facilitate the academic success of students from diverse groups. This dimension acknowledges the need for a variety of teaching styles and the understanding of varied learning styles. It is undergirded by the belief that all students have a culture and can learn. Unfortunately, a negative outcome of this approach was the promotion of the cultural deprivation paradigm which is strong in public schools today.

The cultural deprivation theory emerged as a prominent theory for those educating low-income students (Banks, 2004; Nieto, 2002). Terms associated with this theory included culturally deprived, disadvantaged, and at-risk. Underlying assumptions are that a student must experience what a middle class person does to be "adequate" to have a culture; good mothers read to their young children daily; children should be submerged in children's literature at their homes; and the root of the low income children's problems is their home environment which does not transmit the cultural patterns necessary for society. This theory promotes an educational reform to "fix" the students by enhancing early socialization experiences with "the cultural of power's cultural beliefs. Head Start and DISTAR grew out of this movement.

While the first four dimensions above deal with approaches inside the schools, the dimension of Empowering School Culture deals with the entire school. The dimension of Empowering School Culture is restructuring the culture and organization of the school so that all students will experience equality and cultural empowerment. A complete transformation of the school system and paradigm takes place which must include all stakeholders involved with schools: the community, parents, policy makers, educators, administrators, students, etc. This involves analyzing grouping practices, labeling, social climate, and student achievement expectations.

Sleeter (1993) offers another conceptual framework based on her research which also divides approaches into five classifications. Educators using the approaches attempt to improve how schools address diversity; yet, similar to Banks' typology, Sleeter acknowledges the limitations to the approaches. The distinct classifications are teaching the exceptional and culturally different, human relations, single-group studies, multicultural approach, and multicultural and social reconstruction.

Teachers using the first approach of teaching the exceptional and cultural different, have high expectations for academic achievement. Teachers believe the traditional academic curriculum works for all students. This approach does not suggest the content of the disciplines need to be altered, but different students require different approaches to become successful. Teacher's instructional strategies are based on students' "learning styles, culturally relevant materials, the use of students' native language to teach academic content and Standard English to get them to "grade level".

The human relations approach fosters positive interpersonal relationships amongst diverse groups as well as tries to strengthen student's self-concept. This approach focuses on feelings. Lesson topics include stereotyping, individual differences and similarities, and diverse group's contributions to society. Ethnic fairs and celebrations are common with this approach.

The single-group studies seeks to raise awareness about a group by teaching its history, culture, and contributions, and how it has worked with or been oppressed by the culture of power. Teachers using this approach often attempt well-meaning lessons; however, history has been so distorted that misconceptions are still prevalent.

The multicultural approach attempts to transform the school paradigm to reflect diversity and uphold equality and cultural pluralism. Tracking and ability groups are eliminated or reduced. Recruitment and retention of a diverse staff are encouraged along with staff being placed in nontraditional roles. It encourages maintenance of native languages. This approach requires the entire curriculum to be rewritten to be multicultural, drawing on content developed from the Single-Group Studies. The multicultural and social reconstruction approach builds on the previous approaches. It requires students to analyze inequality and oppression, while helping them to develop skills for social action. However, this approach is not overtly political.

The final approach is social reconstructionist. It begins with contemporary social-justice issues that cross all diverse groups. Students learn to take action on issues and are encouraged to follow through on their beliefs. This approach is what Sleeter considers to be most like the American ideals of equality and democracy.

Both Sleeter and Banks conceptual typology for the approaches used in implementing ME believe educators and systems implementing these approaches do want to improve the state of our educational system. However, there are valid barriers as well as misunderstandings and beliefs that prevent a complete transformative process in education. Providing a consensus for the definition and schema of ME has proved complex. However, Banks states all multicultural educators aspire to the same common goal of the democratic ideals of equity and social justice for all. Further, they assert that all students should succeed in schools regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, socio-economics, or gender.

Just as providing these definitions for the terms diversity, culture, dispositions, culturally responsive teaching (CRT), cultural styles, and multicultural education (ME) are problematic, preparing teacher candidates successfully with the knowledge, skills and positive dispositions needed for diversity proves to be even more difficult. While still supporting NCLB, Secretary Spellings in her Fourth Annual Address (2005) admits "to meet federal and state accountability requirements and to achieve their goal of producing successful teachers who improve the achievement of **all** students, teacher preparation programs today must ensure that all new teachers are not only highly qualified by the NCLB definition but also possesses the following new areas of knowledge and expertise. The educators need to have the ability to demonstrate subject matter expertise as defined by NCLB and use proven research based strategies appropriate to their content area expertise; interpret data, including assessment data, to make

instructional decisions; adapt and individualize instruction for diverse learners; be prepared to teach in high-need schools; and use 21st-century skills (p. 6).

Obviously mandating desegregation in the 1950s did not equate to culturally responsive teaching for all students. Similarly, mandating NCLB did not elicit culturally responsive teaching for all students, nor does it equate to highly qualified teachers. Teacher preparation institutions are charged with preparing candidates to be competent as they face the challenges of today's diverse classroom settings. Candidates must be able to work with all students and receive training in diversity and cultural awareness (NCLB, 2002; NCATE, 2008). How do teacher preparation programs address diversity in their programs?

Higher Education Addresses Diversity

To understand how multiculturalism has developed in higher education illustrates the foundation for the complexities and barriers that are faced today. In the *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*, Fitzgerald and Lauter (2004) examined how multiculturalism and the college undergraduate core curricula began to "cohabit". While discussing the various methods of the development of multiculturalism within the core educational experience, specific changes could be correlated to strong influences of social, cultural, and political forces. From early days of curriculum modification, higher education faced a set of "tensions" or barriers for addressing issues of diversity. First, there was the perceived focus or centrality of the core curriculum by colleges. Should the core curriculum focus on un-aging intellect; historical conflicts, events, or circumstances, or be built around a theme, etc? In addition, Fitzgerald and Lauter explained higher education's philosophical dichotomy between the intellectual basis for

general education programs versus the specialization program, noting the intellectual basis had been eroding since *Sputnik* in 1957 which accelerated the call to specialize.

With the Civil Rights and student movements in the 1960s, a demand followed for social reform in society and education. Colleges had to rethink and reform policies for admission, texts, syllabi, classrooms, and faculties. However, the beginning focus was mainly on "Where are the Blacks?" and "Where are the women?" Specifically, it focused on rediscovering history and culture that had been suppressed and reexamining social, political, and economic structures that had marginalized women and minority men. New courses were created such as women's history, African American literature, psychology of sex and gender differences, etc. The new barrier was in how to offer this "new scholarship" to the wider academic community.

As multiculturalism began to develop, higher education was faced with more decisions of how to implement multiculturalism. Should the courses that explored differences focus on American society in the 21st or 20th century? Was diversity expressed through the lens of America or across international borders? Where were students in their own cultural identity and experiences? How would faculty determine where the student's were in their cultural identity and experiences? Moreover, how did this compare to the faculties' cultural identity and experiences? What was the faculty's perception of ideas, books, and symbols believed to be important for the students to know? Barriers included the wide range of multicultural curriculum, pedagogy, and practices in education throughout the years. Fitzgerald and Lauter's findings supported the fact that the term multiculturalism, as mentioned earlier, was used in many different ways.

They found that in the last 50 years, higher education addressed multiculturalism in 3 ways. Those ways were transforming baseline disciplinary courses; developing new required

courses that dealt with matters of central concern to multicultural study, such as racial and sexual discrimination; and transforming curricula directed at existing as well as at new core requirements. As this reform continued, a shift from inclusion in existing curricular and intellectual paradigms to altering the paradigms and curricular structures themselves began. The ME reform decision is where many higher education programs are today. Should multiculturalism be addressed only in single courses or be infused throughout all courses?

This brief historical background of how multiculturalism has developed in the core of higher education reveals only a small portion of some of the critical questions and decisions that have had to be made in the past. Yet, even this small portion reveals the real complexities and boundaries faced by teacher preparation programs today.

Teacher Education Programs Address Diversity

At the same time higher education was addressing diversity through ethnic studies and core curriculum during the 60s and 70s, teacher education programs (TEP) realized more needed to be done to bring about the structural changes in schools, colleges, and universities to promote educational equality for low-income students and students of color (Banks & Banks, 2004). While higher education has been faced with how and when to address multiculturalism in their programs, TEPs realized programs must also effectively prepare preservice teachers to be culturally competent, create communities that are supportive of multiple perspectives, experiences, and democracy, and successfully teach all students. “By deconstructing their own beliefs and critically analyzing their practices, students and faculty begin the journey toward reconceptualizing schooling toward a process that values the uniqueness and contributions of all

individuals," (Neuharth-Pritchett, Reiff, & Pearson, 2000, p. 303). This has proven to be a difficult task.

A synthesis of the latest research on preparing teachers for diverse populations revealed mostly short-term and small-scale qualitative studies performed at college and university-based teacher education programs (Hollins & Guzman, 2005). In addition, the findings were generally inconsistent and inconclusive; outcome measures were not well developed; and there were few longitudinal or large-scale studies. Their reason for the limited research is the reflection of where teacher education practice is today and the consistent marginalization and lack of funding for programs related to diversity (p. 480).

What is known is TEPs are not adequately preparing preservice teachers to deal with racial diversity (Neuharth-Pritchett, Reiff, & Pearson, 2001). As a result, Darling-Hammond (2006) proclaims TEPs need to design programs that help preservice teachers to understand deeply about learning, social and cultural contexts, and teaching in complex classrooms serving increasingly diverse students. TEPs must design programs that transform the kinds of settings in which novices learn to teach and become effective teachers for all students.

Many TEPs across the country have attempted to respond to these challenges by not only creating new courses, but altering courses, curriculum, fieldwork experiences, and other policies to include attention to diversity and multicultural education (Hollins & Guzman, 2005). Yet, Darling-Hammond (2006) believes the "enterprise of teacher education must venture out further and further from the university and engage ever more closely with schools in a mutual transformation agenda, with all of the struggle and messiness." One must understand though, teacher education is often a preservice teacher's first encounter with ideas about equitable teaching and learning that may challenge their experiences and beliefs (Watson, Charner-Laird,

Kirkpatrick, Szczesiul, & Gordon, 2006). Relying solely on TEPs to positively change candidates' dispositions towards diversity and encourage candidates to continually challenge their ideals and beliefs about diversity is not realistic.

Candidates' Dispositions

Reputable TEPs follow the rigorous standards of NCATE (2008) for accreditation. NCATE explains that positive dispositions of educators are necessary for all students to learn. They specifically address dispositions in Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions. The target for teacher preparation units is:

> Candidates work with students, families, colleagues, and communities in ways that reflect the professional dispositions expected of professional educators as delineated in professional, state, and institutional standards. Candidates demonstrate classroom behaviors that create caring and supportive learning environments and encourage self-directed learning by all students. Candidates recognize when their own professional dispositions may need to be adjusted and are able to develop plans to do so (p. 20).

NCATE defines dispositions as "attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through verbal and nonverbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development" (p. 89). Professional teachers' dispositions include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, and a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment. Other positive dispositions are caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice.

NCATE reconfirmed its commitment towards social justice and diversity in the updating of the standards. They include a "Call to Action" acknowledging their commitment to

requiring all educators "demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to work successfully with children of all races, ethnicities, disabilities/exceptionalities, and socioeconomic groups" (p. 7). They pledge to assure that:

- all new teachers are well prepared before children are entrusted to their care;
- all educators have the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions needed to help all children learn; and
- school districts and state authorities assure that every child has a caring, qualified, and effective teacher (p. 7).

Although candidates for teacher education are predominantly White and have limited exposure to diversity, research has shown they are generally interested in developing the competencies needed to teach diverse groups (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). However, TEPs are faced with the groups of students entering the programs displaying differing predispositions and prior experiences (Garmon, 2005). Moreover, Cross (1993), found most students showed discomfort in talking about their experiences, feelings, and beliefs about racial differences. To add to this complexity faced by TEPs, White and minority teacher candidates differ in their predispositions towards teaching as a career, perceptions, and experiences (Hollins & Guzman, 2005).

Garmon (2005) found the dispositions with which prospective teachers entered a ME course or experience influenced how they responded to and how much they learned from the course or experience. Garmon concluded there were six key factors associated with changing preservice teachers' attitudes and beliefs about diversity. These factors were classified into two broad categories: dispositions and experiential. The dispositional factors needed by preservice teachers were openness, self-awareness/self-reflectiveness, and commitment to social justice.

Experiential factors needed were intercultural experiences, educational experiences, and support group experiences.

Preservice Teachers' Preparation

To better prepare candidates for teaching diverse groups of students, most teacher preparation programs have implemented some type of ME course(s). This ranges from the elective or add-on courses to required multicultural course(s). Some colleges have implemented year-long programs to specifically address issues of diversity, while others infuse multicultural practices throughout the program. Researchers have discussed approaches to preparing preservice teachers for cultural diversity noting that one course in multicultural education is not enough to significantly impact multicultural awareness and classroom teaching (Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006). Those programs that infuse a multicultural perspective across the entire curricula and throughout the field experiences are proving to be more effective (Neuharth-Pritchett, Reiff, & Pearson, 2001). However, the best training must translate to appropriate classroom practices when the candidates leave the program and more research is needed in this area.

Cochran-Smith & Zeichner (2005) found more research studies than have been previously conducted, yet acknowledged the qualities of the studies were rather uneven. Their reviews for preparing teachers for diverse populations included these findings:

- Activities intended to reduce prejudice had mixed results. Although many studies showed short-term positive gains, there is little evidence about gains over time.
- Those students placed in urban field and community experience settings

acquired more complex understandings and awareness of cultural and experiential differences than do their peers placed in suburban settings.

- Teacher preparation programs are at different points in their preparedness for addressing issues of cultural and linguistic diversity. Some are still just an "add-on" class; leaving the rest of the program unchanged.

Garmon, (2004) reviewed literature concerning the impact ME courses had on preservice teachers attitudes towards and beliefs about diversity different racial groups. Garmon found mixed results. For example, Artiles and McClafferty (1998) had noted positive results in the change in preservice teachers' attitudes and beliefs about diversity. Yet, Garmon (1998) found no change after completing a ME course.

Hollins and Guzman (2005) reviewed research discussing the approaches of prejudice reduction and equity pedagogy used in the ME courses and the impact they had on preservice teachers' attitudes towards diversity. They found mixed reviews as well. Studies of prejudice reduction revealed that prior experiences, early socialization, and ways of thinking influenced teacher candidates' attitudes and beliefs. While there were a number of methodological concerns about most of the research, some studies did report positive short-term results of various course-based prejudice reduction activities on the candidates' attitudes and beliefs. However, none of the studies were longitudinal, nor were long term effects documented for candidates' attitudes and beliefs. There were some studies that revealed mixed and negative results. Many candidates still held negative attitudes about those different from themselves as well as felt inadequate to teach them. Many did not want to be placed in situations where they felt uncomfortable and inadequate.

Equity pedagogy refers to the "use of students' cultural and experiential background to facilitate learning and to provide students with the skills necessary to support the development of a more equitable society (Hollins & Guzman, 2005, p. 21)." This includes creating curriculum and instruction, encouraging self-awareness, and addressing diverse groups. Teacher candidates learn to apply knowledge of equity pedagogy in their planning of classroom instruction in all content areas to improve the academic performance of students of color. Research suggests that teacher educators do contribute to helping candidates develop pedagogies that will meet the needs of their diverse students.

How candidates had constructed their understanding of the subject matter for certain subjects did cause difficulty. For example, varied pedagogies were easier to implement in the language arts area, but were problematic in implementing in science methods often resulting in negative results. Once again authors caution the interpreting of the findings due to methodological shortcomings of the research. In addition, little is known about whether graduates actually used what they had learned once they were in the schools.

Teacher educators indicated that preservice teachers' resisted changing their beliefs about their own cultural identity and others during ME courses (Brown, 2004). Resentment was often revealed on teacher evaluations; whereas resistance was evident through preclass discussions and activities as well as a lack of commitment to required cross-cultural interactions and research (p. 326). Brown proposed that students in cultural diversity courses exhibited three forms of resistance that are selective perception strategies, avoidance strategies, and group support strategies.

The selective perception strategies minimize internal conflict and reinforce biased beliefs about self and others. Students may immediately accept or reject and idea based on experiences,

values, and current cultural beliefs. They evaluate and resolve remaining internal and external conflicts based on motivation and personal aspirations. Avoidance strategies protect and support the students' personal worldview and maintain acceptance within their current reference groups. Disengaging in discussions and not preparing for class are evidence supporting "avoidance".

The group support strategies maintain the membership within the group as well as protect one's self-respect and approval. Typical activities supporting these strategies are seeking alliances with a group who will defend and protect their values and beliefs while avoiding interactions with "others".

While courses have been added and altered to address ME, some TEPs have created year long programs. An example is the Urban Teacher Preparation program. The Urban Teacher Preparation program is an example of a year-long program addressing issues diversity in a teacher preparation program (Watson, Charner-Laird, Kirkpatrick, Szczesiul, & Gordon, 2006). This program consists of course work, including methods classes and courses addressing theories and practices of school reform and literacy across the curriculum. Students took part in a teaching practicum at an urban school, examined issues pertinent to urban schools and culturally relevant teaching. A positive effect of this program was that candidates began to articulate their definitions of effective urban teaching by referencing elements of culturally responsive teaching. Students' definitions included "bring in the lives of the students and knowing where your students are coming from". Participants in this study overwhelmingly wanted effective urban teaching and effective teaching to be congruent. Yet, they still made distinctions between effective urban teaching and effective teaching in a deficit-laden comparison between urban students and suburban students. The researchers in this study believed this to be a result of the

participants' life experiences, dispositions, and being direct products of a schooling system and social system based on the cultural of power being White.

Watson, et al. (2006) suggested teacher education programs and teacher induction programs need to develop an antiracist focus along with much more coherence across the program. This led to AERA's Executive Summary on student teaching requesting a need for research clearly documenting the internal operations of teacher education programs and how all the courses and field experiences correlate to better preparing teacher candidates to work with diverse populations (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005, p. 23).

While the implementation of prejudice reduction and equity pedagogy were supported positively in ME courses, TEPs using isolated courses as the only means of addressing issues of diversity revealed barriers. Using ME specific courses allowed many TEPs pedagogical and epistemological beliefs of the teacher education paradigm to remain unchanged. The courses are often separated from the other areas of teacher education perpetuating the "additive" curriculum belief of holidays, foods, and biographies. Cochran-Smith and Zeichner (2005) support infusing issues of diversity throughout the entire teacher education program instead of relying on a course.

Field Experience

Altering the field experience is another approach TEPs used to address ME. Field experiences have long been identified by both teacher educators and prospective and experienced teachers as the most important part of preservice teacher preparation. Field experiences are organized in different ways. Hollins and Guzman (2005) studied introductory field experiences - designed for exposure and observations in classrooms; practicum courses - simultaneously

engaged teacher candidates in field experiences along with methods courses; community-based field experiences - intended to familiarize candidates with diverse populations; and student-teaching placements - included context with diverse student populations. The duration of field experiences ranged from a few hours a week for several weeks to daily full-time work across two semesters.

Redesigning or enhancing field experiences is one of the major ways TEP have attempted to address issues of diversity. Hollins and Guzman (2005) reviewed research on field experiences and found community-based field experiences and field placements in urban settings revealed a short-term positive impact increased on candidates' sensitivity towards and awareness and acceptance of students from culturally diverse backgrounds. Researchers noted candidates' frames of mind such as open-mindedness, playfulness, previous experience with diverse cultures, and a desire for social justice had a positive influence on the experience as well. Again the authors caution the readers of the limitedness of the research and suggest that more research is needed to determine the particular elements in schools settings that support candidates' learning. Moreover, the limited studies were mostly qualitative and small scale and the researchers were also the instructors.

Placing preservice students in differing classroom environments to observe classroom teachers is another means of exposing preservice teachers to a variety of rich diverse cultures. However, Brown (2004) found that during traditional school-based observations, most preservice teachers focused their attention on teacher instruction and discipline methods and on student behavior and ignore the importance of classroom communication (verbal/nonverbal), dynamics, environment, and culture (p. 336).

Recruitment of Teachers of Color and Minority Groups

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2008) teachers of color and minority groups do not mirror the population in the public schools.
The need to increase the racial/ethnic diversity of the U.S. teaching force has been reported widely (Robinson, Paccione, & Rodriquez, 2003). The latest trends are showing the teacher candidates appear to be more diverse than in the past. However, candidates of color are finding teaching a less attractive career than in the past (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005, p. 21).

Research reveals there are many reasons that people of color and minority groups are not represented in teaching. First and foremost, patterns of inequitable education present obstacles for these potential candidates. Some admission standards act as "gatekeepers" preventing students of color from entering higher education. Further, financial, social, and personal difficulties hinder access to or completion of higher education. Second, as other professional opportunities have become available to these underrepresented populations, the number of African American teachers declined. In regards to recruitment in teacher education, the lacking of services, support, mentoring, and high expectations creates hindrances to the recruitment as well as the retention of people of color into teaching education (Robinson, Paccione, & Rodriquez, 2003).

Additional Barriers to Diversity in Education

Viewing ME as necessary presents a big problem in some areas. "Some teachers, administrators, and parents view increased diversity as a problem rather than an opportunity (Howard, 2007)." Issues of equity and excellence with respect to a diverse student population are assumed by many classroom teachers to be nonissues, whether they teach in urban or suburban

schools (Jenks, Lee, & Kanpol, 2001). In suburban schools in which the majority of the population is white and middle-class, ME is often viewed as unnecessary (p. 87).

One final barrier that would be remiss if not mentioned is the effect that the standards movement is having on ME. Multicultural education appears to be in a very real danger of getting shelved as the preoccupation about national and state standards and testing intensifies (Bohn & Sleeter, 2000). This statement would seem to be paradoxical since NCLB was mandated to assure all children receive a quality public education. Specifically, public education would be held accountable for the disproportionate achievement scores of children of color, the poor, and the handicapped (Darling-Hammond, 2004). As a result, states have implemented standards that are to be taught and tested to provide evidence for accountability. The goal of NCLB is admirable as well as the standards have produced some positive results. On the other hand, NCLB has created many problems that are having negative effects on our public schools, teachers, and students.

School success is achieved by student scores an annual standards-based, high-stakes test. Limiting all school success to one test score has actually presented more problems for public education which are unfortunately, disproportionately felt be schools that serve the poor and/or minority students. One problem has been the central focus of education on testing which has considerably narrowed the curriculum (Perkins-Gough, 2004; Portes, 2005; Sizer, 2004; Wood, 2004). Testing of reading, writing, math, social studies, and science has diminished the inclusion of the arts and foreign languages (Perkins-Gough, 2004; Rothstein, 2004). Curriculum is further narrowed by an exorbitant amount of time being spent on testing strategies and testing skills.

Another issue caused by the accountability and testing issues of NCLB has been funding. NCLB neglected to adequately fund much of the requirements (Darling-Hammond, 2004; Wood,

2004). Schools that have had inadequate resources to begin with are now forced to spend money on testing and testing supplies. Monies spent on the arts, field trips, resources are redirected to testing.

How does this standards movement affect TEPs? Field experience for teacher candidates have been altered by public schools for the preservice teacher. The timing of "the" standard test must be considered for time of placement and teaching opportunities for the preservice teachers. Because of accountability requirements as well as the knowledge of test scores becoming public knowledge, supervising teachers are more reluctant to accept student teachers and/or unwilling to relinquish their classrooms for any substantial length of time.

The requirements from TEP instructors and disciplines have had to be altered to fit the strict guidelines adopted by each school system and school. These guidelines often go against the TEPs philosophical beliefs, requirements, and research based practices. Many schools have been forced to follow strict guidelines of "canned" programs that allow for no creativity or inquiry and result in scripted lessons for the teacher. This is sending mixed messages as well as creating boundaries for the cooperative relationships between schools and TEPs. A final example of how that has affected TEPs is the fact that many teachers are complaining the joy of teaching is being drained (Wood, 2004, p. 39). What is this doing for our future teachers as well as our children and the future generation of children?

Summary

The only consistency in ME research has been the inconsistency in the research. Results have been generally inconsistent and inconclusive; outcome measures are not well developed; and there are few longitudinal or large-scale studies (Hollins and Guzman, 2005; Cochrane-

Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2004). While there are definite issues that need to be addressed in multicultural education, disregarding the social and human element will only exasperate the issues. Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries (2004) explain we see the best and worst times for multicultural education (ME).

> By President Bush reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), now called NCLB, which directly targets poor students and struggling schools, this catapulted multicultural education and issues of diversity to the forefront. Major professional educational organizations related to preparation, licensing, certification, and or accreditation have consistent standards or recommendations regarding diversity and teachers' competency for all students. NCATE has made teacher preparation institutions seeking accreditation incorporate multicultural guidelines in the framework. This attention for ME is the "good". However, new ways of assessing teacher quality, schools, and students have dumped unyielding pressures and humiliation on the educational system. Funding for unequal resources and opportunities to learn has not changed, unless one would count the budgetary cuts do to the cost of testing supplies. Moreover, on one hand prestigious educational organizations are joined together preparing a broad-based effort to develop a consistent approach to teacher education nationwide based on high standards for the initial preparation, licensing, and certification of teachers. On the other hand conservative political groups and private foundations including the Fordham Foundation, the Heritage Foundation, the Pioneer Institute, and the Manhattan Institute, oppose the professionalization agenda and have well-publicized a movement to deregulate teacher preparation by dismantling teacher education institutions. They prefer alternative routes for teachers and high stakes teacher tests as "gatekeepers" for the

profession. Another concern initiated by policy makers is the questioning of whether the research base for teacher education is rigorous, reliable, and valid (p. 936).

The achievement gap has raised many societal concerns. As a catalyst for reform, its impact on the educational community has resulted in drastic changes nationally, statewide, and locally. Education can now be described as in a standards-based and high-stakes testing era. While educators of all racial and cultural groups need to develop new competencies and pedagogies to successfully engage our changing populations (Howard, 2007), teaching is being narrowed to standards closing the narrow definition of the "achievement gap". Since the achievement gap is much more than a discrepancy in reading and math scores, preparing teachers to work with all students proves to be more crucial than ever. Prestigious national educational organizations are requiring teacher preparation institutions to provide evidence they are committed to preparing candidates to teach all students. However, there is a gap in the literature about the impact inservice teachers have on preparing preservice teachers to be able to teach all students. This investigation may play an integral part in providing the preliminary evidence needed to address this gap in the literature.

For this investigation, two prominent questions were established.

1. How do cooperating teachers perceive preservice teachers' preparation to teach all students?
2. What do teachers perceive as their involvement in teacher education preparation programs?

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the procedures used in the current study. This chapter provides a background of the local context in which the study took place along with an in-depth description of the participants. The theoretical framework that undergirds the study and the role of the researcher is discussed. Procedures for data collection are specified including the interview guide used for the study. Specific data analysis strategies are overviewed.

Study Context:

The current study took place in a rural elementary school in the southeast. The elementary school was comprised of kindergarten through grade 5. A Title 1 school, the school met the criteria for the year 2008 under the federal NCLB legislation. With 439 students, 14.4% of the student population received services for special needs. The percentage of students who received services for English to Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) was 11.2%; 2.7% were identified as Gifted and Talented. The racial and ethnic population was 5% Asian, 5% Black, 12% Hispanic, 1% Native American, 74% White, and 3% were multiracial. Forty-nine percent were eligible for free and reduced lunch.

The school employed 32 teachers of whom 12 had a bachelors' degree and 20 had advanced degrees. All teachers were white. The average years of teaching experience for all teachers in the school was 12.4 years. This school was nationally and state accredited through

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). In 2006 and 2007, state testing results showed progress in reading achievement and a lower score trend in mathematics.

Participants

Participants in this study were 8 White, middle-class, female elementary school educators supporting the evidence of a predominantly, White, middle-class, female teaching force (Cochrane-Smith & Zeichner, 2005) which was typical of most public schools in this area. At the time of this interview, they all worked at the same southeastern rural school. Seven educators were certified Preschool through Grade 5 and one was a certified paraprofessional. The certified paraprofessional had many years of experience in a Kindergarten classroom and was a highly regarded member of the staff. She worked with the teacher education liaison to the Teacher Preparation Institutions that provided preservice teachers for that school. The teacher education liaison, who was also a participant in the study, worked with multiple institutions from all over the state. The paraprofessional had the unique opportunity to work with many preservice teachers. What made her interview valuable was not only did she work one-on-one with preservice teachers in a Kindergarten setting while the cooperating teacher was out of the classroom; she was attending a local teacher education college at night and had just taken a multicultural education class. When she heard my questions, she wanted to share her thoughts and concerns about this course in relation to what she believed about the classroom. Because of her unique perspective, her interview is included in the study.

Participants varied in years of experience ranging from a beginning second year teacher to teachers with over 22 years of experience. All of the educators had experience hosting preservice teachers except the beginning second year teacher. While the beginning second year

teacher's experience was limited in working with preservice candidates, her interview information was valuable because of the recency of her own preservice experience compared to her first year. Through grade-level cooperative planning, the beginning second year teacher worked with a preservice candidate who came from a higher education institute that was not local.

The mode of data collection was through individual tape-recorded and transcribed interviews. This study uses Maccoby and Maccoby's definition for interview (1954, pg. 449, as cited in Mischler, 1986, p. 9) "a face-to-face verbal interchange, in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expressions of opinion or belief from another person or persons." For research purposes, Mishler also cites Kahn & Cannell's (1957, p. 16) text:

> "We use the term interview to refer to specialized pattern of verbal interaction – initiated for a specific purpose, and focused on some specific content area, with consequent elimination of extraneous material. Moreover, the interview is a pattern of interaction in which the role relationship of interviewer and respondent is highly specialized, its specific characteristics depending somewhat on the purpose and character of the interview." (p. 9).

Mishler (1986) offers these definitions because they are widely accepted; however, he cautions researchers of problems and assumptions implicit to the interview process. Empirical studies in the research process of interviewing "have shown problems can arise in the effects on responses of variations in question wording, contexts, and interviewer characteristics and behaviors (p. ix)."

While I tape-recorded all the interviews, each participant was able to turn off the tape recorder if they desired. Each participant was asked prior to the interview of their willingness to participate. A convenient time and place were decided upon, and interviewees were offered a copy of the interview guide, except for the paraprofessional. As mentioned above, she decided to participate because of her willingness to share her thoughts on the subject.

Theoretical Framework

To determine a framework for the philosophical beliefs for teaching all students, a synthesis of two prominent educators in the field were considered: Gay's (2000) theoretical perspective of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) and Ladson-Billings' (1995) theory of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). Gay's culturally responsive teaching provides a sound basis for how teachers should be teaching all students. It has greatly advanced the field in its critique of teaching and provided necessary implications for classroom practice. Ladson-Billings' (1995) culturally responsive pedagogy was built upon three categories: "an ability to develop students academically, willingness to nurture and support cultural competence, and the development of sociopolitical or critical consciousness" (p. 483).

The purpose of this investigation was to ascertain educators' perceptions of preservice teachers' preparedness to work in today's diverse classrooms. Expectations for educators in the school include espousing and modeling teaching that is supportive for all students. While both theoretical perspectives were influential and important for this research, Ladson-Billings' culturally responsive pedagogy was chosen as the basis for this research because of its behavioral focus on teacher's knowledge base and cultural conceptions of self and others. A more thorough explanation of both perspectives follows to further explain their influences on this research.

Gay, 2000, maintains "culturally responsive teachers are actively involved in promoting equity and excellence; teaching all students the knowledge, values, and skills they need to function effectively as citizens of the pluralistic U.S. society; and teaching relational competencies such as how to relate better with people from different ethnic, racial, cultural, language, and gender backgrounds (p. 20). In other words, culturally responsive teachers are concerned with teaching centered on instruction in multiethnic cultural frames of references to improve sociopolitical consciousness, student academic achievement, and cultural competency.

Gay (2000) notes that culturally responsive teaching has a validity component where the legitimacy of all students' cultural heritages are endorsed, where home and school connections are embraced, where unique learning styles of children are considered, and where resources and information needed to support the teaching of children are sought and provided. This validity perspective is endorsed in the research and writing of other prominent researches in the field (Banks, 2004; Howard, 2007; Trent, Kea, & Oh, 2008). Gay continues with a second characteristic of CRT that is the comprehensiveness of that teaching. Specifically, she notes the connections of cultural reference to fully embrace the needs of all students. This comprehensive approach leads to a more multidimensional practice. This multidimensionality brings focus to the contextual factors which influence a child's ability to learn which directly correlates to student success.

Through teaching that is empowering, transformational experiences may occur in the classroom where academic success is a mandate for all students. This transformative perspective is often a neglected component of actual classroom practice where pedagogy is constrained by prior philosophical beliefs. Finally, Gay notes that CRT is emancipatory in its ability to advance multiple discourses in the content taught in classrooms.

While Gay's theory of CRT has greatly advanced the field in its critique of teaching, Ladson-Billings' (1995) theory of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) more centrally addresses the issue of knowledge and the cultural conceptions of self and others. Therefore, the current study is undergirded by Ladson-Billings (1995) theoretical perspective. Specifically, Ladson-Billings discuss three broad propositions as components of her theory. Her theory also avoids an imposed dichotomy of the pedagogy of teachers. Rather, her components help to explain a continuum of teachers' behaviors which provides room for explaining the development of the teacher as a culturally responsive professional. The first of Ladson-Billings propositions is a focus on the conceptions of self and others. She notes that teachers believe that students are capable of academic success, that teachers believe their pedagogy is an art, that teachers are a member of a learning community, and that teachers give as much as receive as members of the community. The second propositions of her theory focus on the teacher's role in classroom social interactions which is evidenced in fluid teacher-student relationships, a connectedness of all students, a development of a community of learners, and where students are collaboratively responsible for well-being of the entire classroom community. Finally, and most importantly, Ladson-Billings' third proposition focuses on the conceptions of knowledge. She asserts that knowledge is shared and co-constructed where teachers must view knowledge critically and passionately and ultimately where teacher's help scaffold bridges to new learning.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher was a public school educator for 15 years and had served as a teacher in this school for two years. This provided a firm understanding of the workings and operations of the elementary school dynamics and the operations particular to this school. The relationships

between the researcher and the participants would be characterized as based upon a collegial professionalism in a work-base setting. While this position allowed the researcher the ease of access and opportunity to interview the participants, it may have had both a positive and negative influence on the data collection. For example, in a positive light, even though many of the teachers did not like discussing the topic of culture, they were willing to discuss it with me due to familiarity. Negatively, these participants may have felt inhibited due to their desire to be perceived in a certain collegial light.

Research Questions

How do cooperating teachers perceive preservice teachers' preparation to teach all students?

What do practicing teachers perceive as their involvement in teacher education preparation programs?

Data Collection

The mode of data collection was through individual tape-recorded and transcribed interviews. Questions were designed to minimize error in data collection by ensuring that questions (a) were not misunderstood, (b) did not require information that respondents did not have nor recall accurately, and (c) did not promote an atmosphere in which respondents were not willing to answer accurately (Fowler & Mangione, 1990). In addition, interviewer error was diminished by reading the questions as worded, probing directly, relating in an equivalent manner to all of the respondents, and recording answers accurately through the use of audio taping.

While I tape-recorded all the interviews, each participant was able to turn off the tape recorder if they desired. Only two teachers chose to do this in the interviews. One participant wanted time to think about her response. The second participant requested to turn off the tape recorded to ask the researcher the correct term for students of Hispanic origin. While she offered several terms, the researcher provided assurance that any term she chose would be acceptable for the purposes of the interview. Each participant was asked prior to the interview of their willingness to participate. Each indicated a willingness to do so by signing the consent forms. A convenient time and place were decided upon to conduct the interviews. Interviewees were provided with a copy of the interview guide. The interview format also encouraged the respondents to provide, whenever possible, specific examples that reflected their views and experiences.

Prior to the teacher's interviews, the researcher explained the purpose of the interview and established a rapport. Any questions in regards to the format or purpose were resolved prior to the interview. Interviews were conducted in May of 2008. The interviews ranged in length from 30 minutes to an hour. Five specific questions were posed to each of the participants. These questions were: (1) Describe yourself professionally; (2) How would you describe culture and or multicultural education in the public school today?; (3) What do you think educators need to teach all students to learn?; (4) Compare how preservice teacher are prepared to teach diverse groups of students today versus in the past?; and (5) What do you think Teacher Preparation Institutions should do to better prepare preservice teachers to work with all students?

Data Analysis

Consistent with the work of Erikson (1986), transcripts were coded for major themes noted in the procedures sections which were conceptions of self and others; social relations; and conceptions of knowledge. An open coded process was employed, along with a search for discrepant cases as recommended by Patton (1990). Discrepant case analysis allows for the explicit search for examples of data that counter trends found in the majority of study. Interview transcripts were examined against the protocol to ensure that all questions have been asked of each participant. Every effort was made to protect the anonymity of the respondents by assigning a pseudonym to the participants. Each individual case was analyzed and a cross case analysis for all eight participants was conducted to look for general themes across all cases. Chapter 4 provides a summary of each participant's responses along with specific quotes from transcripts to provide support for assertions made. These quotes allow the reader to examine the evidentiary value of the assertions drawn from the data (Erikson, 1986).

Validity and Reliability

In this qualitative research, validity and reliability were addressed through the work of Eisenhart and Howe (1992). They identify five general standards to support the validity in the qualitative research design. Standard one confirms there is "a fit between the problem statement of the research, data collection methods, and data analysis" (p. 657). Standard two assures research has "the effective application of specific data collection and analysis techniques" and they are applied to acceptable methods (p. 658). Standard three is making sure the researcher has an "alertness to and coherence of knowledge" (p. 659). Standard four assuring that "value constraints" are applied to the study both internally and externally (p. 659). Standard five

confirms the “comprehensiveness” of the research. (p. 660). The first three standards rely on an overall clarity, coherence, and competence of the investigation. Standard four and five make sure there is a comprehensive value and importance to the study and it proves to be important to a certain field.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter 4 presents a summary of the findings for each of the eight individual teachers. The findings are based on Ladson-Billings (1995) theoretical perspective of culturally responsive pedagogy. The teachers' discussions are presented on the teachers' perceptions of self and others, social relations, and conceptions of knowledge. Following the eight individual cases, a cross case summary is provided for these three areas to synthesize the data for all teachers.

Lilly Frantz

Conceptions of Self and Others. Although Lilly Frantz received her teaching degree through the traditional methods, she did not consider herself a traditional teacher noting, "I am not the sit down, be quiet and work," [teacher]. She earned a Master's degree and had 14 years of teaching in a midsized, rural, southeastern school district. Even though questioned directly about her perceptions of herself professionally, she neglected to describe her own personal characteristics instead focusing on her incorporation of technology and instructional strategies as nontraditional. Lilly is held in high esteem by her peers and administrators as working very well with all students and historically has an inclusive classroom that includes children with special needs, English Language Learners (ELL), gifted children, and general education students.

Despite the placement of these groups of students in her classroom, it did not appear that Lilly perceived herself as having any unique identity other than non-traditional teacher. Regarding Lilly's leadership roles in the school, she was grade level chair, and actively,

participated on numerous committees always excited about trying new ideas and concepts. She did note her leadership experience with student interns was limited to her having several short term student teachers in the years prior to the interview. However, this year she had her first full-time student teacher.

When asked to describe culture or multicultural education in the classroom, Lilly reasoned that due to "so many multi-raced children" the meaning of culture is not referred to as "more of a race type of thing to us". She said it "is past race and more into economics." Using national and ethnic labels, Lilly speculated cultural behaviors are personal and that people presume their culture is the "right" one.

> "I think especially with the Hmong and some of the others, the Hispanics, what we may think is culturally or economically low, they don't view it as that. And so I mean, I think there are different viewpoints on it, too. There is a lot of cross cultural systems."

Lilly viewed culture in public schools "a lot different than when [she] started teaching". The change was due in part from a decrease of a once high population of Hmong students that was replaced with an increase of Hispanic children. Of particular importance was the change in the second and third generation of immigrants compared to Lilly's first years working with these groups. They displayed a different "mind set" from originally having an attitude "to work hard" and "do their best" to presently having a lack of motivation and decreased "parent support".

Social Relations. Social relations with students were framed from a traditional, White, middle-class, majority orientation. Lilly noted "that what we may think is culturally or economically low, they [families of cultures other than white, middle-class] don't view it as that." While Lilly is noting that cultures may be perceived individually, her thoughts about the

inability of the families to see this view is traditionally rooted in stereotypical middle-class, American ideals, rather than factual assertion.

She acknowledged knowing personally "a lot of people that want their kids out of public education" due to the increase in students who are culturally different. Further I probed to ask her to define the meaning of "culturally different". She stated these families make decisions about culture and the inclusion of their children in specific school and social environments on the perception that students from more limited economic circumstances were linked to "the threat of drugs and family history of drugs". The exposure to "culturally different" groups of children was somehow detrimental to the public school because of the racial and economic factors that "these kids bring to school."

Lilly defines groups of children and their families through their overt physical, national, or economic characteristics. Her assumptions were not rooted in facts or data, but could be traced to her traditional, white, middle-class, American identity, educational experience, and perceptual opinions of changes in the public schools. Her definition of diversity supports a belief in the cultural deficit model (Banks, 2004; Nieto, 2002). Yet, her caring disposition, along with her educational experience working with diverse populations may have stimulated a growth of cultural sensitivity.

Conceptions of Knowledge. When asked what an educator needs to teach all students, Lilly believed "experience and just getting out there" was the best way to be prepare preservice teachers. She explained that student teachers were not prepared to teach all students; however, she was not sure what kind of knowledge they need and if it can be taught in a university setting. Lilly believed student teachers need more hands on experience working with diversity. She notes each school environment is different and there is no way that TEPs could prepare teachers for all

environments. “There is not a cookie-cutter or a certain recipe that will work out that is going to help you teach that type of kid whether it is a different culture or economics.” Lilly describes a student teacher she had last year that was visiting a school for one of the first levels which is just for a couple of weeks. This person was from an affluent background and “was not shocked by the children as how they looked or how they dressed” but by behaviors and attitudes of students that were culturally different from her. A response of, “Oh, my gosh. I am not used to seeing that,” was given followed by wanting to go back to just observing instead of working with the children. She was “baffled at how to answer them” and by the children revealing nonchalantly, “My daddy was in jail. He did….” Lilly’s missed opportunity to help her student teacher understand or process the difference between a behavior and a trait brought to light the issue of Lilly’s perceived role in the professional development team for this student teacher.

Lilly believes that TEPs are better preparing the student interns to work with all students especially by requiring “a lot more field experience” than before. To further strengthen the experience for the student interns, she thought multiple opportunities should be provided to student teachers to discuss their experiences, issues, needs, and concerns, along with the cultures of the school, classroom, and students.

Lilly states that there were three main weaknesses with student intern preparation: lack of experience, lack of communication, and a false sense of confidence. Whereas more time in the field was offered, Lilly thought many student interns want to just observe instead of trying lessons and actually working with the students. She states they should be required to come out earlier in the school year and “build a relationship” with students instead of coming after the classroom rapport has been established. She did not allude to any strategies she provided to the student intern to help develop relationships with children.

Implications for the teacher education programs include Lilly's concern of a need for more communication and dialogue between the student intern and the stakeholders involved (administrators, classroom teacher, university supervising teacher, teacher liaisons). Of particular concern, was the lack of communication between the TEPs supervising teacher and the classroom teacher. With the minimal or nonexistent dialogue, classroom teachers were often left at the mercy of the student intern's syllabus and paperwork to provide the expectations for the intern's experience. Further, some student intern's exhibited "overconfidence". Lilly stated, "They think they are so prepared." Sometimes interns "don't want to listen to any of your suggestions." Lilly requested that to further strengthen the experience for the interns, multiple opportunities should be provided to discuss the experience, culture of the school, and issues that have arisen pertinent to that school culture.

A major finding from Lilly's discussion was revealed in her acknowledging that she did not know if she would take anymore student teachers. Lilly thought the lack of financial incentives for classroom teachers to support a student teacher, increased paperwork, high-stakes testing, Response to Intervention (RTI), and a weak communication network, were causing many teachers to decline the responsibility of working with student teachers – "especially when it a crap shoot if you don't know if you are going to get a good one or a bad one or one that can control the class." This makes it very difficult professionally, especially when the year ends, the classroom teacher knows they are the one held accountable for the classroom students' success on the annual high-stakes test. Further, it was their reputation and job on the line.

Instead of perceiving the added support of another trained educator in her classroom, Lilly presented a number of barriers to the professional development of young teachers. Unsure of her role in the preparation of student interns and not seeing herself as a crucial component of

the professional development team, she was well aware of a need for more communication and exchange with all educational stakeholders for the improved education of student interns along with all students.

Michelle Greene

Conceptions of Self and Others. Michelle Greene, an elementary school teacher of 22 years, had taught in the same mid-sized, southeastern, rural school system her entire career. The community and school system were located next to a major metropolitan city and has experienced an explosion in growth in the last 10 years. Michelle began her career traditionally with her Bachelor's degree from a local university and taught for a while, then stayed at home to raise her children. She returned to teaching, but never pursued an advanced degree. She was very apprehensive to participate in this interview and had mentioned she had never had classes on multicultural education. Throughout the dialogue, she worried she was saying something incorrectly. When asked to describe herself professionally, she limited her answer to, "I have taught for 22 years and I have worked with numerous student teachers now. I probably started working with them my fifth year of teaching." She did not offer any statements about her personal characteristics, skills as a teacher, or relationships with her students.

Michelle was viewed in the school as a proud person espousing the traditionally structured and text-driven educational philosophy. Her leadership abilities included being grade-level chair for many years, along with being a stable and active person in the school system and community. She particularly enjoyed having the special education students mainstreamed in her classroom and appeared to work very well with them. Whereas, in prior years she had relished in confidence of her teaching abilities due to parent requests and administrative support, Michelle

was feeling the pressure and stress of NCLB with the publication of high-stakes scores being thought of as representative of a teacher's skills and teaching abilities.

Michelle's foundation of teaching was grounded in the historical paradigm of supporting students "equally" by providing the same instruction for all. Effective teachers did not "see color" as this would be prejudicial and educationally limiting. Equality and justice were based in the "same" treatment for all students. When asked to describe culture in the public school today, she asked to turn off the tape, noting her high anxiety in discussing this topic and her concern for being politically correct. She wanted to make sure that I understood she had not received training in multiculturalism except for brief professional learning experiences during faculty meetings held at the elementary school. This supports, Ladson-Billings (2001) report of many White educators simply not having acquired the experiential and educational background that would prepare them for the growing diversity of their students.

Michelle's frame of reference for culture was situated in the conservative, southern, White middle-class American ideals, acknowledging differences as "other". A strong binary belief in her American heritage and culture as the standard was supported throughout her discourse, "I think you need to know things about the Asian culture that usually those normal American is not going to know. " In describing culture, Michelle varied labels associated with socio-economics, race, nationality, and ethnicity. "…you have everything from poverty level to upper middle class in the classroom. You have the Hmong. You have the Asians. You have the Mexicans. You have the Whites and you have the African Americans." While "Black" was juxtaposed with "African American ", and "Mexican", "Spanish", and "Hispanic" were used synonymously, " Hmong" was not associated with "Asians". Definitions of culture were superficial, limited to the stereotypic nationality, traditions, holidays, religion, and language. She

did not extend her dialogue past these labels, nor did she acknowledge the impact culture had on students' knowledge and the influence it had on the way individuals focused and processed information.

Social Relations. Michelle's view of culture was a fixed content which could be taught. A question about what an educator needed to know to teach all students revealed a major frustration in educating ELL students. While [American] teachers need to know "their" culture, ESOL students were expected to be better prepared [for American schools]. She stated,

> "that they [government needs to] understand it is very difficult for us as American teachers to learn all the cultures and all the different things these children need. For example, the Spanish culture [looked for guidance for an appropriate label]…Yes, the Hispanic come in with not knowing our language and this is very difficult for any teacher who has to teach a child, every child, that is here. The child knows no English, but the teacher was supposed to be able to teach her. So, I think that it is very important that we learn their culture and we learn their traditions, but also they come to us a little better prepared than they are."

Michelle's perception of educating "diverse" students conflicted with her personal beliefs about her job description and responsibilities as an educator. Her traditional paradigm of her job was to teach the required local and state content, curriculum, and standards strictly through texts and resources purchased by the local system conveying an assumption that all students should be on grade-level and prepared to learn. The mandated NCLB influenced Michelle's state and local school system to base teachers' job performance and reputations upon statistical reports based on the classroom students' test results of an annual criteria-referenced high-stakes test. All of the students were required to pass with an autocratically chosen and unsubstantiated achievement

score in all content areas or be held back and or placed in summer school. Data from the tests are publicly reported, making the community believe teachers and or schools are not effective if scores are lower than the chosen standard. Having students that cannot speak English or read a text did not fit the traditional paradigm of education where all students are prepared to learn. Social relations were obviously hindered by these frustrations.

Conceptions of Knowledge. Michelle perceived multicultural education as a forced ideology to satisfy a societal requirement by learning the knowledge of the national and/or ethnic cultures along with some factual knowledge of some heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements of the students placed in her classroom (Banks, 2002, p. 13). This additive work was time consuming and not substantiated by the curriculum or annual testing requirements. Further, the stress of the high-stakes testing reports and unrealistic expectations of 100% student success for all students was fueling fear for job security and a negative attitude toward teaching students that were not capable of immediate academic achievement at average or above average levels from conventional education. At the time of this writing, this state permitted one year of classroom experience for non-English speaking children to become proficient in the English language skills necessary to pass all tests.

This year, Michelle had a student intern from a college located in the southern region of the state. She exclaimed her student intern was well-prepared, but was a bit overwhelmed at the beginning and did not know how to handle certain behavior problems Michelle attributed to as "cultural differences". One particular incident was of an "Asian" student in the classroom expressing herself "different than the way the Americans express themselves" with an outburst of a profanity. The outburst was difficult for the student intern to handle, as the student had no remorse for saying the word and was even "proud" she said it. Michelle attributed the

inappropriate outburst as being culturally expressive, and showing no remorse was explained as the child's cultural beliefs of not believing such outburst of profanity were connotatively negative.

Michelle believed the student interns of today were much better prepared by teacher preparation programs to teach diverse groups than in the past. She believed the universities were "preparing their student interns, probably a lot better, and probably will continue to as the different populations arrive." This statement further supported her binary concept of culture referencing cultures as "different". However, she continued by requesting teacher preparation institutions prepare student interns with more knowledge about the "differential leaner than the different cultures" asserting the "average all American child is the one being left behind" when the emphasis was being placed on cultural knowledge revealing culture and knowledge were not connected. This conveyed that so much emphasis on cultures was a cause of decreased quality educational experiences for the White, middle class students as well as increased problems for the public schools prompting legislative mandates such as NCLB. She noted student interns should be "taught how to teach low, low to the gifted, much more than how do I teach an Asian; how do I teach a Hmong; how do I teach a Black, because the kids are going to fall into one of those categories, too. And it will also help our good ole' American children."

Michelle did not place herself in the network of supporters who would facilitate the professional development of student interns. The examples she provided relegated that task to the teacher preparation institutions. While acknowledging the teacher education programs were doing a much better job in preparing student teachers to work with culturally diverse students, she felt their need was to prepare teachers to work with different abilities. This confirms her beliefs of knowledge being totally separate from one's culture. Therefore, culture would not be

an educational issue. Education could concentrate on achievement levels, albeit from a color-blind stance. Worth noting is that Michelle did not relinquish the control of creating individual lesson plans, allowing any deviation from her lesson plans, or working independently in the classroom to the student teacher during their time to solo teach.

Linda Snider

Conceptions of Self and Others. Ms. Snider was a nontraditional student in a local TEP pursuing her Bachelors in Elementary Education part time, while serving as a full time paraprofessional in a kindergarten class. Her work ethic and many years of service at this rural school elevated her status to a valued educational team member providing services for the students, teachers, and administrators. Years of working with the same teacher and grade-level built a level of comfort, confidence, and security exuded through phrases such as "we teach" and "our students". She has worked with many student interns, as the classroom teacher she works with is the liaison between the school and local teacher preparation programs. However, Linda's contributions to this study seemed of particular interest because her views were situated in her juxtaposed roles as an educator and college student. She had just completed a Multicultural Education (ME) course at a local college and was willing to discuss her opinions and concerns of the usefulness of this class in the preparation of teacher educators. Linda did not provide any information on her perceptions of herself.

Linda's perceptions of culture were founded in the traditional ideals of the southern, middle-class American, white woman. Culture was synonymous for traditions, nationality, holidays, and language absent from the student's learning.

Social Relations. Effective teachers did not "see color" as this would be prejudicial and educationally limiting. Equality and justice were based in the "same" treatment for all students, often referring to relational treatment, such as love and nurturing qualities. When referring to culture she used typical national and educational labels. "We have children that are Hispanic, Hmong, and even special ed in this class, and I think that I treat them all the same. Those are my kids and I love each one of them for different reasons." The perceived condescending tone of the ME class and teacher, whom was described as African American, only served to firmly cement her beliefs and bolstered a more defensive stance in the dominant ideals.

Conceptions of Knowledge. Linda was "really disappointed in [the] multicultural education class because it took the place of a special education class that "I really thought I could have benefited more from. The multicultural class was not realistic to me." She further explained her frustration because the "ME class takes, the way I understood it, the place of the Special Education class." The special education class was perceived as pertinent epistemological, pedagogical, and methodological knowledge pertaining to learning differences; whereas, ME was perceived as superficial content knowledge of traditions, holidays, nationalities, and language – not needed for student success in a standards based curriculum measured by annually mandated, high-stakes (English only) tests. To explain the point of her impractical and antiquated views of the class and professor, Linda stated, "Some of the assignments, I didn't think were realistic because here we don't teach Spanish to our children. We want our children to know English. And a lot of my games and things I had to make were for Spanish children." A mind-set based in the traditional belief systems, equates teaching in Spanish and providing games for Spanish students is racially discriminating and further separates the "Spanish" children from the English-speaking children. Presumably, the teacher would be enabling the student to be

dependent upon their language; therefore, preventing the "Spanish" children from the necessary tools to become a successful American."

The teacher, material, and textbook of her ME course were perceived as negative and oppositional towards her belief system, "even the book and what it talked about, I did not agree with it." Because of this disconnect between what she thought she would get from a ME class and what actually transpired, Linda angrily noted, "It seemed that it [class] was against the average white American teacher." She added, "I just think she [the teacher] was very negative and it is just really turned me off. I don't see that."

In terms of Linda's role in the professional development of preservice educators, Linda was perceived by other teachers and her peers as knowledgeable and often provided suggestions for the student interns in the building. Her role as classroom paraprofessional often left her working with the student intern during the entire student teaching experience, even while the classroom teacher was out of the room. Linda was more assertive in her interactions discussing student interns and saw herself as a positive contributor to their professional development. However, one might question how her disappointment with her ME class would transfer to working with student interns in the future? This experience may have hindered any development of an understanding of identity and agency through thoughts and cultural beliefs systems. Linda did not conceptualize culture as an integral part of student learning. In fact, her anger about her college experience made her more defensive of her beliefs in her discussion of cultural issues and much more leery to even discuss the topic.

Jenny Johnson

Conceptions of Self and Others. Jenny Johnson was the teacher for English Language Learners (ELL) for a small school. When asked to describe herself professionally, she was very basic and stated she has taught for nine years beginning as a PreK teacher, followed by teaching fourth grade for several years. Two years ago, she received her ESOL Add-on Endorsement and changed positions from a self-contained general education teacher to the one ELL teacher for the elementary school. This position involved both an immersion model of working collaboratively in a fifth grade general education class part of the day and the implementation of the pull-out model of small group instruction with Kindergarten to fifth grade students. She stated she had limited experience working with student interns. Of the six interns she had, only two were full time. Jenny's beliefs about religion and other cultural matters did not resonate well with the individuals with whom she teaches. While her openness to other views may explain her understanding and tolerance of "others", her views were often seen by her teaching peers as meek, permissive, or liberal. Her views on religion were considered blatantly wrong.

When asked about her perception of multicultural education, Jenny wanted clarification of whether it [culture] was from the perspective of "are they [teachers] teaching multicultural education or are they [teachers] educated? Giving her the choice in discussing culture, Jenny focused some of her discussion on cultural content knowledge specifically to what she taught students through units. She believed inservice teachers incorporated culture through standard specific curricula about countries, nationalities, ethnicities, traditions, holidays, etc. Exposure to different cultures was dependent "on what they are teaching…maybe Native American culture, African American culture – depending on what the units are on". She noted an improvement in increased cultural representations in textbooks – "of cultural names and stuff like that". Though

admitting her limited grade level experience may be prohibitive to pertinent knowledge on cultural content integration, Jenny explained she has seen more teaching on cultures in the younger grades because they were required to teach about specific countries in the standards. As far as an expanded definition of culture from the basics of standards and units, Jenny was well aware of a lack of cultural education, noting many teachers were completely unaware of the cultural systems represented in their school.

Social Relations. Jenny's comments during the interview centered on tangible ways of viewing culture only through curriculum materials, she did not discuss children or similarities or differences among people. While she did not explicitly state that differences in her community were not embraced, it was my opinion as the interviewer that she believed her community to be very closed-minded and that given the way that her peers treated her when she told them she was an "atheist", she did not feel that connection or comfort to discuss what she might have internalized as her perceptions of others.

Jenny perceived herself as responsible for the education her classroom students received from the student interns and for supervising, training, and facilitating the educational environment for the student interns. She mentioned, "I had two of them that were very good and open to any ideas to working with them [students]. One of them just really took on my Hmong children as a challenge. They really wanted to work with them and really learn how to scaffold their education." This exposed a social relationship between the students and Jenny, along with the student interns and Jenny. These relationships were built upon the expectancy of her giving appropriate instructional knowledge, feedback, and modeling. She further explained, "Then, I have had some [student teachers] that really did not know what to do…They kind of just left

them [students]. They kind of just left them behind. They gave the regular work to all of them [students] and I had to work with them [student interns] on how to modify assignments."

Conception of Knowledge. When asked about her experience working with student interns, Jenny noted she had some student interns who were "very enthusiastic about working with the children". She was unaware of their "formal" training in working with children of other cultures in their university coursework. However, she noted that in the past the school system provided an in-service training for student interns at the schools explaining more about the representative population; yet, was not sure if they still provided that service. Jenny believed "that in other [education] classes they have talked about diversity" and reiterated the importance of pedagogical and methodological knowledge in working with all children, she revealed through discussion she was not sure how much knowledge student interns actually obtained in their university coursework. Jenny perceived the need to support her preservice interns in working with culturally diverse students because student interns did not come with strong skills in this area.

Pursuing her line of thought, I asked her what she thought would be beneficial preparation in cultural diversity for student interns. She reiterated that "they should come out of the school with an ESOL endorsement". Jenny was moving to a state that required teachers to "have a cultural class" and "there you have to have that [ESOL} add-on to their certificate". She explained student interns need "a cultural awareness class [and] a linguistic class to learn how we learn language." Having these classes were "eye-openers" for her, helping her learn the process of linguistics and some "sort of idea of how language comes." More notably, student interns should know the required content "because you are responsible for their academic language these kids are learning". Training in the strategies of differentiation and scaffolding,

along with the disposition of "openness to ideas" were considered essential to the successfulness of the student interns being able to teach all students. While she agreed that the preparation of the student intern was important, she did not feel adequately qualified to discuss this because of not truly knowing what classes the student interns have had before entering the public schools.

Throughout the dialogue, Jenny revealed cultural learning as multifaceted. While she is aware of cultural nuances, whether discussing nationalities, race, ethnicities, or awareness of cultural traits and or stylistic patterns, the conversation centered mostly upon the content, pedagogy, and methodology. In conclusion, Jenny appeared to see herself as part of the professional development system. She did, however, express a particular concern of the lack of communication between teacher preparation programs and the classroom teachers in which the student interns were placed. It was clear that she believed there were gaps in the professional development system for student teachers, but did not convey a causality or blame. Suggestions for improvement were for student teachers to becoming certified in ESOL and more communication between the professional team working with the student teacher.

Macey Andrews

Perception of Self and Others. Macey Andrews had been an elementary school teacher for 13 years, 9 of those years have been teaching ESOL. She completed her Bachelor's in Education through the traditional route, and obtained her Master's Degree and endorsements in Gifted Education and ESOL, a couple of years later. Although new to the rural, small school, she had proven to be a valuable asset, knowledgeable and well trained in many areas such as assessments, programs, and grant writing. Macey was very intelligent, yet soft spoken and quiet. She came to the school this year in need of a half-time position due to the needs of her elderly

parent. Presently, she was the one half time gifted teacher at the elementary school serving kindergarten through fifth grade.

Social Relation. Like Jenny, the ESOL teacher, Macey saw culture as multifaceted and changing. She used the traditional fixed representations including the nationalities, language, economics, and ethnicities; however, her views expanded to include socially constructed attitudes, behaviors, characteristics, patterns, and circumstances that tie groups together. "Most people think of culture more as race, when there are things that are bonding us" together. It is much more "than language and celebrating different holidays" even though she saw that is what many classroom students believe. Macey asserted more emphasis should be placed on understanding the cultural impact of economics and social class on populations attributing it to behaviors, attitudes and motivations. It "can make people more similar when they are from a certain economic level than they would be otherwise. Honestly, the money factor affects the children in many more ways than necessarily the [different] language." She added classroom experiences of "children would actually cry when they knew they would be home for spring break or summer because they knew that they would not have the opportunity to get food or for some of the things that they actually depended on the schools for. Some children did not "even like school, but they came to school because you get lunch and breakfast every day. Showing up for school means you will be fed." The "class difference hurts the children more than the fact that they speak another language". Her White, southern, middle-class frame of reference was definitely skewed by working with children of poverty.

Conceptions of Knowledge. No required "multicultural" classes were offered during Macey's traditional route to become an educator. She pursued advanced education and endorsements to become more culturally responsive, commending the TEPs that are requiring

student interns to “get the ESOL endorsement” in their undergraduate coursework. Believing her student interns had courses that exposed them to culture, she believed understanding diversity was difficulty when “they really have not experienced” working with students culturally different from their own. The student interns’ book knowledge gave them “sort of an idea” of differences; however, at times this proves problematic and disconcerting. The knowledge presented in class was often different from their teaching experience “when they are in the school, when they are immersed in the culture of the school which contains multiple cultures.” Additionally, misconceptions student interns have about “students who might be from a different culture” often led to low expectations attributed to the “child’s background or home environment”. Thus, the children were not challenged or held to high standards perpetuating lower achievement levels. The need for student interns to have social interaction and experience with diverse populations was much more important than knowledge presented briefly in undergraduate classes.

Macey brought up a concern about culture from the perspective of the gifted teacher. She acknowledged a discrepancy in the proportional amount of cultures other than White, middle class, Americans, represented in the gifted classes. She believed the criteria and standardized tests used for admission into the program needed to be reviewed. We have many “bright students that are Black and Hispanic. In the classrooms they are showing it, but then when you give them a standardized test, they are just not producing the scores they need” to enter the program. She stated “we need to figure out a better way of getting those groups into the gifted program.”

Morgan King

Perception of Self and Others. When asked to describe herself professionally, Morgan began with her name followed by middle-aged. She began her career and taught for 3 years, stayed home for 6 years to raise children, then returned to the classroom making this her 15th year teaching. Twelve of those years had been at her current school. The other three were at a nearby affluent county and school. She obtained her Bachelor's and Master's degrees, receiving her teaching certificate the traditional way. Morgan lived and is actively involved in this community. Morgan considered herself a natural nurturer working very well in the kindergarten setting and with this "lower socio-economic and transient" population of students. As far as leadership abilities, Morgan was the grade-level chair and student intern liaison for the school and surrounding teacher preparation programs. She was respected in the school and considered a vital part of the school team. She had many student interns stating she always volunteered for one loving their "great new ideas".

When asked to describe culture and or multicultural education in the school, she offered national and economic labels, along with educational acronyms, such as ELL and ESOL. "I think we had more Hmong children, let's say 5 years ago than we do now. I think this school is very low socio-economic, very transient." She compared this to the county 12 years ago, when there were "more of the middle class".

Social Relations. Morgan used avoidance techniques when asked for a description of culture. The topic was changed creatively through discourse of her relationship and accomplishments as a teacher to the children.

> "With these kids, I feel like I really make a difference in their lives. I am really someone who loves them and cares for them. I guess in Kindergarten you are still kind of the nurturer. And I mean our kids, they are grateful for everything you give them."

Very proud of one accomplishments, Morgan announced, "I had one little girl who spoke no English and started out with a 3 on the BLT (Basic Literacy Test) and ended up with a 26."

When asked how best to teach all students, she described relationships through the affective domains offering phrases such as she "feels like [she] makes a difference," "nurtures", and was "someone who loves them and cares for them". As far as strategies to use with "these" students, Morgan alluded to "hands-on" strategies as the favored, explaining that kindergarten has always been taught through hands-on strategies and had not had to change her teaching strategies or style over the years as the cultural population changed. While she "sets really high expectations" for all the students, this goal was difficult because some students " did not know the language" and "you take for granted that they know what something is, like even vocabulary, and they have no clue." Additionally, the lower socio-economic populations often entered kindergarten without knowing the entire alphabet. Measuring the improvement was seen through a typical reading/literacy assessment.

Conceptions of Knowledge. When asked about student interns, she noted that "some are better prepared than others. Three different institutions filtered their interns through this school. She noted she "can tell a difference". The students who were better prepared to teach were the ones who were required to do 18 weeks of student teaching compared to the traditional 10 weeks by the other two institutions. She believed all the students were knowledgeable in content areas, however they were all lacking in the realities of being a teacher, "paperwork", "preplanning", "postplanning", and "classroom management".

Morgan believed student interns' misperceptions about teaching all students "has to do with their [student intern's] own background. "If they went to school in the upper middle class and they are the Princess or the Prince, it is very hard to realize that some of these kids do not know where they are going to eat." She saw herself as crucial to the professional development team saying the best way to work with student interns was to model appropriate strategies, require them to be in the school longer, and require them to work in the school and not observe as much. "When my student teachers come in, from day one, they are given something to do. And I also think they need to get up there and make mistakes." She required them to reflect on their mistakes and contemplate how to improve the lesson.

Morgan saw the school and school system as very important in the preparation of the student interns. She believed there was much that could be improved by the school system and schools. Consider matching "your student teachers with the [classroom] teachers. Presently, she admits the only criteria for teachers getting a student intern, was answering her email "if you would be interested in hosting a student teacher". While she thought personality of the teams should be considered, she wished there was more communication before students came out, along with coming out much earlier in the school year – preferably fall instead of spring. Students need to know how to build relationships, "set the tone of the classroom and how you set those rules." The student interns should receive more seminars from the county. In the past, "they all got on a bus and rode through the county". This may "help them to see where their kids are coming from" to better understanding the students they will teach.

She noted teacher education programs needed to improve in there preparation of the student interns. Some of the supervising professors "really need to be familiar with what is going on in the classroom. She offered an example of a recent student intern, "her ELL Professor, she

had never ever been in a classroom. She was about to retire. And the assignments and the things she was teaching them was not what was going on in the classroom." Morgan suggested she "would rather have them working on classroom management ideas, or setting up files, or portfolios that were actually going to use in the classroom, instead of making up units. Because units you can find anywhere, online, or anywhere."

On her opinion of the impact of NCLB, she revealed this mandate had "unrealistic goals – extremely unrealistic goals." As a student teacher liaison, Morgan saw the mandate having a negative impact on schools working with student teachers. Some teachers were actually refusing to accept student teachers especially in those grade levels that were crucial to high stakes decisions about passing or failing students. Even when host teachers accepted student teachers, they were severely limiting the field experience once given and expected for crucial teacher development. There were too many accountability issues, law suits, and mandated progress monitoring to allow the student teacher to experiment with teaching lessons that may not meet the needs of all the students.

Morgan's perceptions of culture were filtered through her conservative, female, White, middle-class views. She perpetuated the color-blind belief where one should love, care and nurture all of the students the same. In her view, truly wonderful teachers would not have an issue with race, nor would they have to acknowledge or discuss it. Culture was something void of the cognitive process and was only perceived as content oriented topics and holidays, except for the issue of language. She believed hands-on strategies were best for "all" students especially for those that were limited English speaking, and acknowledged that was easier to incorporate because she was a kindergarten teacher.

Tracey Newton

Conceptions of Self and Others. Prior to this interview, Tracey had completed her first year teaching at the same southern, rural school. She received her teaching credentials through a traditional route and had already begun an advanced degree. Tracey proved to be an excellent first year teacher; surviving the many challenges she was given such as a tough classroom dynamics, lack of resources, weak support system, and an unreliable communication system. A new system-wide program was implemented requiring individual testing and student progress monitoring for students not on academic grade level; however, the school did not adequately train, support, provide the resources, or provide time to implement the programming resulting in more stressful working conditions and low teacher morale. This program was new to the school, system, and state. Instead of waiting until all procedures, resources, components, etc., were established, the new competitively driven administration wanted to immediately implement it. As the year progressed, multitudes of drastic changes and explanations were given which meant additional work, confusion, and high stress levels. When asked for clarity and or assistance, the administrations' response became their motto of the "no excuse" approach (Rothstein, 2008). Just do it and if you have questions it is your fault. Although this was a difficult situation for even a veteran teacher, Tracey looked back at this year as having "learned a lot [her] first year and wouldn't take anything for the experience."

Social Relations. As a first year teacher, Tracey had a very diverse fifth grade class including the majority of ESOL students, which allowed for the ESOL teacher to work collaboratively with her in the classroom for two segments a day. When asked to describe herself professionally, Tracey stated she was "a second year teacher that believes all children are capable of learning. She believes that students should learn "who they are and how they can be

successful" and they are "very important" to her. She believed it is unprofessional to talk "down about students to other teachers." As an educator you were supposed to "encourage the [students] to be better."

While Tracey did not discuss culture expansively, she mentioned in an earlier conversation with this interviewer that she had a course in multicultural education in her traditional teacher education coursework and was excited about learning more. Whether from this course or her disposition or experience, she believed culture to be something of great importance for the students to learn, understand, and experience. Tracey showed a limited but developing understanding of the diverseness and complexities of culture. Her attitude was positive towards culture and she desired to learn more. She had high expectations of receiving the support and training from the school and inservice teachers where she began her career to become a more successful and competent teacher working with all students. Unfortunately, this public school did not understand the explicit connectedness of culture and learning.

Tracey stated the school in which she taught did not place enough emphasis "on cultures in America, much less cultures from different nations." She believed the children at this school were "deprived of learning about culture" and that public schools should provide those experiences and opportunities for all. "School administration should offer these students opportunities to experience some rare American culture and culture from other nations. These opportunities could even be incorporated into PTO nights." The high population of students experiencing lower-socio economic conditions confirmed her belief that "for some students school is more than likely the only place these students can experience something different from what they [families and students] know."

In addition to being culturally and economically diverse, Tracey's classroom was academically diverse ranging from first grade reading ability to approximately ninth grade reading ability. Tracey admitted her first year she "was terrified". She was "co-teaching" with the ESOL teacher and had "a class that was so diverse." When I asked her if she felt prepared, she said, "No!" "Professors quickly presented the material they were required to teach" and "I did not feel that I actually learned how to teach students with different abilities and how to adapt and change lessons according to the students." "One major reason why it is so hard to teach is because you have so many students that are on so many different levels." Noting this as a personal challenge and goal in teaching, she wished her preservice training would have included learning how to "identify a weakness and then adapt the lesson to fit that weakness."

Because her student teaching experience was in a "well-to-do school and neighborhood," she "was unaware of the need to teach in a more diverse population." "Student teachers should be required to complete at least one of their student teacher experiences in a diverse classroom." As a student teacher, I didn't get to see all the paperwork that is involved with teaching, all the assessments for RTI or SST, or all the time put in at home. Even when I was [student] teaching full –time, my cooperating teacher helped me with all my lesson plans. My first year teaching was a slap-in-the-face. I was overwhelmed with paperwork, deadlines, and RTI." Clearly, she felt very responsible for the students' academic growth and did not feel adequately prepared to teach.

Conceptions of Knowledge. Tracey admitted that she thought she was prepared to teach until the first year began and she was faced with the many challenges and false assumptions. Tracey was expected to "fix" the ESOL students and bring them to grade-level or above with minimal assistance or resources or she was considered a failure. Any voiced questions or

concerns would be considered as “an excuse” for her failure to teach. Throughout the discussion, one could clearly tell that Tracey began and ended that year with a caring and developmentally appropriate philosophy of teaching and students. Moreover, her philosophical beliefs and what her teacher preparation program taught her were clearly in conflict with what is being espoused in this public school.

The juxtaposition of her expectations versus the reality of her first-year experience proved to be a major source of conflict for Tracey. As the interviewer, I could tell she struggled to understand the true role of the public school and teacher as well as the expectations and goals for this career. Her paradigm of what she expected to happen in a public school along with what she had been taught, clearly were not what she was experiencing. Tracey’s disposition of determination and perseverance, prompted her to seek employment elsewhere, become proactive about her learning and obtain higher education, and stand firm to her beliefs – all of which she has been successful in doing.

Tracey’s experience made her aware of vast discrepancies in educational services and caused her to become more cognizant of current legislation. Yet, Tracey had experienced the effects of how the current mandates meant to have a positive effect on public schools, swayed even inservice educators to go against philosophical beliefs and understandings of child development and how to teach and learn. Tracey ended the discussion saying “the Code of Ethics should be more strictly enforced” especially in regards to diversity. “It’s sad to say but some teachers discriminate against students because of their race or ethnicity.”

JoBeth Smith

Perception of Self and Others. JoBeth described herself professionally beginning from her first job experience working with children to the present. These included working with special needs students during high school. Presently, she has taught for 11 years a variety of grade levels. She acknowledged she had a Bachelors of Science degree and a Masters. She is now pursuing her Specialist Degree. JoBeth comes from a family of educators and administrators. She values her hard-working ethics and organizational skills. However, she did not elaborate on a description of culture despite the likelihood that she would have more sensitivity to others given that her sibling has a significant special need and that JoBeth, herself, completed an add-on endorsement in English as a Second Language (ESOL).

When asked about cultures in the public schools, JoBeth spoke of public schools differing in their effectiveness of "addressing different cultures". She mentioned school letters were sent home in different languages, but they needed to do a better job of "addressing the children's needs coming from different cultures." Simplistic classroom practices such as the use of multicultural literature were offered. Later in the discussion, typical labels for ethnicities and race were used. However, she did not provide a complex description of cultures that would indicate her awareness of unique groups of people bound by similar characteristics, nor did she elaborate on her relationship skills with her students. Interestingly, she did not present responses to interview questions of culture, multicultural education, or the many varied and unique ways that she was connected to culture in terms of her cultural identity. This could be attributed to the avoidance technique often used by White, middle-class, female teachers in relations to the discussion of culture.

Social Relations. In JoBeth's description of herself, she spoke of being a teacher/nurturer with all students. Her beliefs included she "get(s) wrapped up too much in my children's [students] private lives and wanting the best for them."

Conceptions of Knowledge. In responses to questions that focused to what student interns should be exposed to meet the needs of all children in their classrooms, JoBeth explained skills such as effectiveness, use of technology, and classroom management. In the examples she provided, she suggested that teachers had to prepare students to pass standardized tests, get good grades, and learn how to treat others and get a job. Her responses were couched in her middle-class perspective that interactions and support of children could be learned by being taught through a preservice multicultural education class. This was surprising especially since her lack of recognizing or describing broad views of cultures were noted.

About her own undergraduate teacher preparation program preparing her to work with culturally diverse students, she commented, "I have no idea what they teach student teachers now, but I am sure that they have more than I had because I had nothing." She said she had to pursue higher education to receive knowledge of cultural diversity and multicultural education. In her description of whether student teachers were prepared she commented, "They did not prepare her very well for classroom management. A lot of that classroom management is also derived from how children are raised differently in multicultural homes and then they transcend that behavior to school." JoBeth's view of different parenting practices suggests that these practices led to more negative behavioral issues and thus might be interpreted as a cultural deficit. She went on to provide explicit examples of how her affluent student teacher could not understand the behavior of children from more limited economic means.

JoBeth equated lack of opportunities provided by parents as a deficit in the children her student teacher taught. She further noted that this lack of parent/child interaction lead to attention seeking behavior which makes teaching difficult. Despite this incorrectness of this view, JoBeth likely reinforced stereotypic perceptions of children by indicating to her student teacher that "I think that these parents don't know how to do things that they need to do with their children." Instead of taking an opportunity to converse with her student teachers about the experiences that she had on how her students may be different and how one could use that information to support children's needs and development, JoBeth equated such characteristics with a deficit and unintentionally reinforced the student teacher's notion that children are "other". These comments suggest that JoBeth may have a constrained skill set in dialogic conversation with her protégé and thus was impeded if not reinforcing belief sets that would not prepare the student teacher to effectively teach her own students. These beliefs were further solidified when she described another student teacher's experience in the classroom across the hall from JoBeth. She noted, "The teacher across the hall had the student teacher that quit, her personality is extremely opposite of mine. That student teacher's personality was different than my student teacher. The student teacher across the hall was multiracial and my student teacher was Caucasian. I think there was a big difference in family too…you know how they were raised. Mine was a very hard worker, luckily."

Conceptions of Knowledge. In a question that centered on what teacher preparation programs can do to help better prepare student teachers, JoBeth solidified her beliefs that student teacher just need more experience with different groups of children. Despite the potential positive outcome that could be realized if student teachers had more formal field experience, her comment suggested a restricted view of various groups of children.

> "They just need to be put in a school environment and different types of school environments. They need to be put in schools where the schools are predominantly Hispanic and Hmong and not just predominantly Caucasian schools. Of course, both are important. They need to compare the two. Ummm…But they need more classes on classroom management and why children behave the way that they do and that could be because of how they are raised. "

In a follow-up question, I asked JoBeth to expand to how this field experience would enhance teaching. She noted that when there are problems that student teacher has, that the university needed to provide more direction to the mentor teachers about how to address concerns. While likely this is a true statement, JoBeth did not perceive her classroom teaching peers to have skills to engage in dialogue about experiences in the classroom with their student teachers. She did not provide examples of how she herself engaged in dialogue with her student teachers.

JoBeth does not see her role in the professional development sequence of teacher education candidates. JoBeth was quick to dismiss concerns of student teacher to others' responsibility and did see that she could be an influential contributor to a student teacher's professional development. She noted, "they need to go back to the [university] classrooms and they need to talk." JoBeth ended her interview with a last comment about the role of multicultural literature. In summary, JoBeth accepted responsibility for things that went well in her interactions with her student teacher, but dismissed concerns or challenges as an internal deficit of the student teacher or the children in her class or lack of interaction from the university supervisor.

Cross Case Comparisons

Conceptions of Self and Others. A cross case analysis of the participants' interviews revealed that when teachers are asked to describe themselves, their responses focused on their degrees, years of experience, and teaching styles. These teaching styles were defined as either progressive, mainly through the use of technology or traditional. Only one teacher described herself using terms associated with race and socioeconomic status. The other seven teachers had a range of responses in their descriptions of their professional and personal selves. For example, one teacher noted that she was inhibited about responding to the question for fear of not presenting the politically correct answer. She reminded the interviewer she had no formal collegiate training in multicultural education or culture. This particular teacher was the most experienced with 22 years of service. Three teachers completely avoided the question by failing to describe in personal attributes related to culture. Despite the fact that teachers were asked two explicit questions where they could have provided information about their own culture and how it connects to their students and the school in which they teach, with the exception of one teacher, all other participants avoided identification ethnically, racially, and socio-economically.

A comparison of the data among all eight teachers indicates that these teachers view others through a very cursory lens. Specifically, they define others in terms of nationality, religion, language, ethnicity, and of curricular interventions such as the celebration of holidays or famous people, etc. Ultimately, this led to teachers suggesting effective teachers were culture blind. Teachers also commented specifically on the role of language, race, and socioeconomic status and its influence on academic performance and behavior in schools. One teacher suggested that as groups of children become more assimilated into the American culture, that this assimilation is associated with lower academic performance as children were less motivated to

work hard. Teachers also suggested the focus on culture was a detriment to public schooling and suggested specific examples of how culture should be fixed. For example, one teacher noted proficiency in the English language would allow for the child to be more successful because he or she would be then connected to the mainstream. A second example provided by teachers focused on the lack of support from parents of culturally diverse groups of children. Teachers noted that if these parents were more involved in proactive ways that the culture would not negatively influence the academics or behavior. The solution for this issue was to provide training for parents at PTO meetings. In summary, the teachers all had a perspective that any child who's characteristics were not the same as the teachers needed intervention to correct the cultural deficit.

Social Relations. When comparing the new teacher to the veteran teachers' responses, the new teacher's discussion included her being an encourager trying to develop a relationship with the students, working even harder with the students that were displaying behavior problems. She believed her role was to "meeting the needs" of all the students and was quite worried about accomplishing this throughout the year. The veteran teachers that worked in the younger grades described their role as nurturer. Their role intermixed from a nurturer to teacher. The teachers of older grades' discussions of students focused more on a teacher directed relationships and instruction. The teacher-student relationships mentioned were not based on cooperative learning and "equitable and reciprocal" relationship (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Across the teachers, a limited view of social relationships between teachers and students emerged. However, a question specifically addressing teacher-student social relations was not asked.

One particular concern was the embedded belief systems of "White Talk" (McIntyre, 1997). Some of the participants espoused rhetoric of being "color-blind" and not seeing color. "I do not see color. These are all my babies." This was believed to be a positive trait of a highly effective teacher. Strategies of "White Talk" prevailed in not acknowledging their own culture and avoiding questions in regards to racism and culture. This avoidance of the topic provides a safe haven between them and the controversial topic of racism. Implications of this belief system were strongly noted in some of the participants.

Conceptions of Knowledge. Across the eight teachers, a number of perspectives emerged concerning the public school teachers' role in professional development of preservice teachers. First, there is an alarming lack of communication between all the stakeholders involved in the preparation of the preservice teachers. Next, the teachers did not see themselves as critical components of the preparation of preservice teachers. Finally, teachers were unsure of their role in the professional development of process of preservice teachers. While almost all teachers noted a need for communication between the public schools and the teacher preparation programs, this lack of communication could be associated with a range of responses by the teachers in the study with regard to their perceptions of their role in the professional development of preservice teachers. In the end, across all eight teachers did not perceive themselves as a critical component of the preservice teachers' professional development experience.

Suggestions for improving the preservice teachers' preparation were offered by the participants. While one teacher commented on the length of the actual internship, all teachers noted the need for additional field experience where preservice teachers could interact with culturally diverse students instead of just observe. Specific suggestions for enhancing the

student teaching experience including providing opportunities for reflection and discussion, spending more time interacting with children than just observing, and learning about the cultures represented in your school.

As a lack of communication between the TEP and the inservice teachers was mentioned, many teachers admitted confusion of what course work student interns were receiving, especially in regards to cultural diversity. As far as the knowledge of diversity, most believed it to be the responsibility of the TEP. Several teachers suggested that teachers should be certified specifically in English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) as a requirement of undergraduate certification. While this training in ESOL may positively contribute to preservice teachers' skill sets, it suggests a very narrow definition of meeting the diversities of all children. Only two teachers noted the presence of such training in their own formal undergraduate schooling.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

A major goal of multicultural education in teacher education programs is to prepare teachers to work with all students (Garmon, 2004). These programs need pedagogical strategies that prepare all teachers to understand, analyze, and challenge racism and ethnocentrism in the larger society as they affect school practices and procedures that influence all children (Nieto, 1999; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). In this standards-based high-stakes testing era, teachers' suggestions on how to better prepare preservice teachers to work with all students was an anticipated, yet not fully realized, result of this study.

Preservice teacher preparation institutions depend on positive relationships with schools and cooperating teachers to serve as models and mentor for their apprentices. The current study sought to capture perceptions of eight public elementary school teachers and their views on diversity and the preparedness of student teachers to educate all populations. Two research questions guided this study. How do cooperating teachers perceive preservice teachers' preparation to teach all students? What do practicing teachers perceive as their involvement in teacher education preparation programs?

To answer the first question, cooperating teachers' cultural belief systems had to be determined to fully understand what they perceived as effective practices in teaching in culturally diverse classrooms. Banks (1991) asserts that before teachers can teach students who are different from themselves, they must "come to grips with their own personal and cultural values and identities…" (p. 139). Many of the classroom teachers did not acknowledge themselves as having a culture (McIntrye, 1997). To not understand one's culture, perpetuates a

view of themselves as the norm and others of color as "different" (Nieto, 1999). This lack of knowledge of culture in self and others will prevent their ability to identify discriminatory practices in school institutions that may inhibit learning for students of color (McIntyre, 1997). Teachers will not understand how their own biases are affecting their teaching and the learning of the students as well as the preservice teachers. Further, preservice teachers will not have the modeling or experience needed for the development of cultural responsiveness or be able to practice multicultural pedagogies, methodologies, and approaches espoused by the teacher education program. Therefore, the importance of culture and the influence it has on education and learning will not be taken seriously.

The findings revealed the teachers did not have a solid cultural conception of self and others; however, strong embedded belief systems and strategies of "White Talk" were noticed throughout the discussion (McIntyre, 1997). Being "color-blind", as was mentioned by some of the educators, is a common cultural belief system stereotypic of some American, White, middle-class populations as a public affirmation of one's acceptance of others, especially in terms of ethnicity. Some of the participants espoused rhetoric of being "color-blind" and not seeing color. "I do not see color. These are all my babies." This was not only believed to be a positive trait of a highly effective teacher, it was seen as effective pedagogy for teaching all students.

Strategies of "White Talk" prevailed in not acknowledging their own culture and avoiding questions in regards to racism and culture (McIntyre, 1997). This avoidance of the topic provides a safe haven between them and the controversial topic of racism. The discussions of race and ethnicity may be viewed as discriminatory and serve to only foster inequalities. This may explain why some teacher education students' view the discourse of ME classes as accusatory, blaming, and a form of prejudice creating angry emotions (Helms, 1990). Some

activities viewed as culturally responsive by the ME instructor, mentioned by one of the participants, such as to create a game for a specific ethnicity, was in direct opposition of the philosophical beliefs of color-blindness. This project would serve only to further separate other from them. In addition, the ME class discourse and requirements, as for this educator, would become a catalyst for negative opinions towards the instructor including a belief the instructor was not "in touch" with public schools and hated White people.

Some of the participants mentioned not having any courses on multicultural education or diversity in their teacher preparation. An obvious apprehension was noted in discussing the topic of culture. Surprisingly, professional development in multicultural education or culture for the inservice teachers was not mentioned. Uncertainty of what and how culture and multicultural education is incorporated in the local school and system was revealed. Even the ESOL teacher admitted not knowing how the rest of the school incorporated culture into the classrooms, except for the inclusion of units and literature on Native Americans and American Heroes explicitly required by the state performance standards. A lack of dialogue, focus and commitment towards culture was evident.

Three of the educators that did have some ME courses, chose to take the classes to receive an endorsement to teach ESOL students. Each was in a different stage of development and none had progressed through to a transformative approach towards multicultural education. Two participants that had a course in ME coursework but no ESOL endorsements were required to take the classes as part of their preparation. While one had a very negative experience, the other participant showed a genuine concern of the lack of cultural knowledge and acceptance in the school. She acknowledged in a later conversations how she had expectations that in your first

year, your school prepared you to teach the culturally diverse students represented in the school population and was disappointed to see such a lack of commitment.

This lack of understanding by the teachers not only provides a barrier for them understanding their own culture, it posits that cultures of others are the foundation perpetuated in the deficit model of understanding cultures. The culturally diverse students are in need of "help" or "fixing" to become like the culture of power (Delpit, 2006). Because we have such bonded ideas of culture, social relationships are inhibited; therefore, knowledge cannot take place in such systems. Additionally, teachers with this belief system cannot model consistent culturally relevant pedagogies for the perservice teachers. Therefore, what has been presented in teacher preparation institutions may not be evident, practiced or supported in the public education classroom. This perpetuates a cycle of students who are not valued for what they do bring to the school system. Many programs and curriculums and were created as "quick-fixes" and "band-aid" approaches to address these culturally diverse students now considered "at-risk" (Portes, 2007). What was interesting about this data set was that teachers did not even endorse these cosmetic approaches to diversity.

Not without mentioning, were the positive effects ME had on several of the inservice teachers. A recommendation asserted by the teachers was that all preservice teachers take courses affiliated with becoming certified in ESOL. Albeit, there may be other factors, the only known correlation between the educators' positive and negative perceptions of the ME courses were the teachers that had a positive experience chose to take the courses and/or had a plethora of culturally diverse life experiences.

Definitions and politically correct educational discourse is a frequent topic of professional learning communities and faculty meetings, especially in terms of those students

that may not be successful in public school environments. A concern for being "politically correct" was noted in several of the participants. However, one participant was very reluctant to even discuss culture and feeling unsure about the correct terms made her even more apprehensive. Providing specific definitions and a consensus of terms to use in discussing culture may prove to be a necessary component and appropriate way to reduce fears and open communications of culture. Similarly, a lack of consensus in terms makes it difficult for a inservice educator to discuss culture with preservice educators. In particular, inservice teachers admit limited or no "training" in multicultural education. When a preservice teacher has more knowledge in an area than a inservice teacher, an obvious insecurity develops. For many of these inservice teachers, the inclusion of the topic of culture would be problematic in the mentor/mentee relationship. Consequently, methodologies and strategies taught in teacher preparation institutions would not be observed, modeled, or incorporated in the host classroom. The discourse of culture would be devalued or dismissed.

In answering the question of preservice teachers' preparedness, most candidates felt like TEPs were doing a much better job in educating students on cultural diversity; however, that was not perceived by some as what was needed in today's schools. The intern teachers did not perceive themselves as a critical component of the preservice teachers' professional development experience. Most of the participants discussed a need for better communication from the TEPs during the preparation of the preservice teachers' field experience. This was not a request directed at one institution, as a synthesis of the participants revealed their interns came from a variety of TEPs from all over the state serving this school. Of particular importance is the need to clearly define the roles and expectations of the inservice teacher in the preparation of preservice teachers.

The inservice teachers provided suggestions for improving the TEPs. Specifically they mentioned increasing the length of internship, prompting reflection and discussion for interns by University faculty, and having preservice teachers engaged more actively with children rather than observe them. In addition, teachers noted there was a lack of communication about what preservice teachers knew before they entered the field experience and what teacher education programs hoped these preservice teachers would gain from their field experience. All of these suggested modifications are noteworthy given that these inservice teachers almost exclusively did not situate themselves in the solutions. That is, these inservice teachers situated flaws with professional development and the individuals who would fix these flaws in other members of the professional development system, and did not see themselves as an important part of the process.

An unexpected and surprising finding was the negative impact NCLB is having on the willingness for teachers to host preservice teachers. Several participants revealed a concern. One participant acknowledged that she did not know if she would take anymore student teachers. The lack of financial incentives for classroom teachers to support a student teacher, increased paperwork, high-stakes testing, Response to Intervention (RTI), and a weak communication network between the TEPs and classroom teachers, were causing many teachers to decline the responsibility of working with student teachers – "especially when it a crap shoot if you don't know if you are going to get a good one or a bad one or one that can control the class." This makes it very difficult professionally, especially when the year ends, the classroom teacher knows they are the one held accountable for the classroom students' success on the annual high-stakes test. Further, it was their reputation and job on the line. The preservice teacher is no longer being perceived as additional support.

Although NCLB mandates require a closing of the achievement gap, the view of professional development by inservice teachers suggests weak links to issues concerning culture. Teachers' interviews revealed that the firm foundation needed to support cultural diversity has not been embraced in the public schools. Therefore, how can we expect comprehensive preparation systems for preservice teachers to be able to teach all students?

The findings of weak cultural conceptions of self and others, the "White Talk" belief system, and a lack of school-wide commitment to culture provide important implications for the educational system. NCLB is based on the premise of eradicating the "achievement gap". The true achievement gap is much more than the academic difference between the Black population and White population and the students living in poverty and the students living in higher socioeconomic conditions. While eradicating of the true achievement gap will requires much more than the public schools and teachers can be expected to accomplish, providing a high quality education in a safe and secure environment is crucial to meeting the needs of all students. This cannot be achieved with an understanding of the social injustices and inequities experienced by many cultures. It requires knowing the importance of culture and the influences it has on knowledge and achievement of students.

Implications for Future Research

Future implication from this research reveals a gap in the literature about the impact inservice teachers have on preparing preservice teachers to be able to teach all students. While this investigation may play an integral part in providing the preliminary evidence needed to address this gap in the literature, research is also needed on how teachers conceptualize their own cultural identities and culture as a large global construct. Consistent with previous research

(Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2000; Howard, 2007), further study in the development of teachers' cultural identities and how those identities influence the development of others in the profession which ultimately influences student learning is warranted. Additional research in how teachers conceptualize the cultural backgrounds of the children they teach and how those conceptions influence the relationships (Ladson-Billings, 1995) they have with those children and their families is also needed. Finally, reviews of teacher education professional development systems and the systemic and sociocultural influences and the outcomes of those programs (Neuharth-Pritchett, Reiff, & Pearson, 2001) should be undertaken.

While this study focused on a small sample of inservice teachers, its results helped to highlight some concerns about the process of teacher professional development. Until we understand the complexities of all the factors that can influence a effective teaching to meet the needs of all children, research that brings these complexities into focus is needed. This study provided a glimpse into the beliefs and ways of thinking of established teachers. Its outcomes suggest that while a substantial amount of progress has been made in quality educational environments that foster the educational success of all children, there is still a great deal of work yet to be realized.

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