

A Mixed Methods Inquiry into the Multicultural Efficacy of Preservice and Beginning Teachers

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

Within the context of increased cultural and linguistic diversity presently underway in our nation's schools, it is imperative that preservice teachers are effectively trained to meet these diverse school environments. Current teacher employment trends suggest that most new teachers will have life experiences different from the students in their classrooms. Such a cultural mismatch between teachers and their students is problematic given the range of diversity present in today's classrooms. The training of novice teachers and their beliefs in their abilities to be successful in multicultural education are important in the preparation of effective teachers toward meeting these changing school demographics. This mixed-methods research study examined preservice and beginning teachers multicultural efficacy before, during, and after exposure to a stand-alone multicultural education course as part of a teacher preparation program. Study participants include preservice, student and beginning teachers from within the same Midwestern university teacher preparation program. The purpose of this study was twofold: (1) to examine preservice and beginning teachers attitudes, beliefs, and values underscoring their confidence in their abilities to implement multicultural educational practices, and (2) to examine the impact of a multicultural course in preparing preservice teachers for diverse classrooms. The findings from this study suggest that a single, stand-alone course on multicultural education has intermittent effect on the multicultural efficacy of preservice teachers as they advance through a teacher preparation program into the early years of professional service. Conclusions drawn from this study has implications for teacher educators who design multicultural education course work toward preparing effective and competent teachers for culturally pluralistic classrooms.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

#### Introduction

*“My greatest fear is in not knowing how to deal with issues of diversity in the classroom, what if the students reject me because I come from a different culture than them . . .”*

*“How realistic is it for a teacher to incorporate all of these differences into a typical classroom . . . as a teacher, I am only responsible for content and testing, not teaching values.”*

*“I don’t know if multicultural education is really that significant for me . . . I don’t want to teach in one of those schools [urban], and I don’t feel that I should be pressured to do so.”*

*“I don’t feel that I know enough to be truly effective in a multicultural or diverse school setting . . . what if I make a mistake that causes more harm than good.”*

The aforementioned quotes by preservice teachers enrolled in a teacher education preparation program highlight two principal problems that occur when attempting to implement multicultural teacher education. Banks (1995) and Irvine (1992) describe these problems as preservice teachers’ resentment and resistance to multicultural and diversity issues. What accounts for these feelings of resentment and resistance by preservice teachers to multicultural education and diversity issues varies. However, one possible explanation is the prejudicial and stereotypical attitudes toward those seen as different from oneself. Allport (1979) suggest that prejudicial attitudes often develop in early childhood. Allport contends, that prejudiced students use selective perception, avoidance, and group support strategies to resist confronting or changing their beliefs about themselves and others. For those young adults entering teacher preparation programs, prejudice when left unexamined can be problematic for teacher educators.

Teacher educators have long recognized the arduous task of attempting to effect change in preservice teachers’ attitudes and beliefs regarding issues of multiculturalism and diversity (Cockrell, Placier, Cockrell, & Middleton, 1999). Nieto (2000) clarifies the problem facing

teacher educators best when she states, “For many preservice teachers the introduction of multicultural theory in teacher preparation courses presents the disquieting prospect of a significant change in perspective” (p. 39). Preservice teachers’ reactions to proposed changes in their belief systems are as Brown suggests (2004) often reflected as feelings of resentment on teacher evaluations and resistance is evident by inadequate preclass preparation and reluctance to engage in class discussion (p. 326).

Despite the vast body of multicultural education scholarship (e.g. Banks, 2006; Banks & Banks, 2004; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Gay, 2000; Grant and Sleeter, 2007; Nieto, 2004) coupled with an expressed commitment to diversity by university accreditation institutions, such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education programs (NCATE; 2008), the research literature suggest that many preservice teachers are entering and exiting teacher preparation programs with their prejudicial beliefs unchanged often reinforcing stereotypical perceptions of self and others in the process. This phenomenon suggests that many novice teachers are leaving teacher preparation programs ill prepared to effectively teach in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The research literature suggests any number of possible reasons for why this is occurring, such as, lack of adequate preparation (Varvus, 2002); insufficient exposure to cross-cultural immersions experiences (Brown, 2004a); the disconnect between the theory of multicultural education as understood at the university level, and realities faced by practitioners in the field (Banks, 2001).

Yet despite this evidence there is an emerging body of multicultural teacher education research that suggests that particular courses may positively affect aspects of multicultural education teacher development (Brown, 2004; Larkin & Sleeter, 1995; Szabo & Anderson, 2009; Zeichner, 1993). Specifically, the research literature finds those teacher education programs

which infuse a multicultural perspective, a perspective which demonstrates an appreciation of cultural pluralism and accepts the right of individuals to retain their cultural and racial background, across the curriculum and throughout the field experience, as more successful in effecting change in preservice teachers' attitudes as opposed to those teacher preparation programs which offer a stand-alone course on multicultural education or diversity (Neuharth-Pritchett, Reiff & Pierson, 2004).

The degree to which multicultural education and diversity courses are effective in bringing about changes in preservice teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding issues of diversity is in dispute. However, what is not in dispute is the need for properly trained teachers who are able to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse public school population. As Jordan (1995) succinctly reminds us, it is important for teacher preparation programs to create a teacher force prepared to meet the rapidly changing demographics of our nation's schools. We do this, she maintains by confronting those entry-level beliefs of prospective teachers and determining strategies as well as, a curriculum, to shape those beliefs in accordance to the goals of multicultural education.

The aim of this study was not to diminish the significance of resistance and resentment as feasible explanations to preservice teachers' seemingly oppositional beliefs and attitudes toward multicultural education and diversity issues. Rather, the goal is to suggest another viable explanation. This study sought to determine if what teacher educators perceive as preservice teachers' resistance or resentment could be a representation of frustration and anxiety regarding ones' ability to successfully implement multicultural educational practices. Sleeter (2001) supports this notion by suggesting that preservice teachers' lack of knowledge, understanding, and skills regarding the purpose and intent of multicultural education inevitability impacts their

ability to effectively and confidently implement multicultural education and diversity pedagogy, engendering feelings of frustration and anxiety. This study sought to explicate those components identified by preservice and beginning teachers' as influencing their beliefs in their abilities to effectively implement multicultural educational practices.

This study incorporates both theory and practice suggesting that in order for multicultural education teacher preparation to be effective, it should begin by clarifying preservice teachers' understandings of their beliefs regarding race, class, culture, and other human diversities as a necessary first step toward becoming multiculturally confident (Hilliard, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995). To understand the context of this study it is necessary to understand the theoretical and conceptual frameworks which guide the research.

Gorski (2008) categorizes the research on Multicultural Teacher Education into four broad categories:

- research that analyzes multicultural teacher education from a theoretical or philosophical position (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Gay, 2005, Jenks, Lee, & Kanpol, 2001; and Varvus, 2002);
- inquires conducted by teacher educators measuring the effectiveness of a stand-alone multicultural education course ( Ambe, 2006; Lesko& Bloom, Mihael, 2006: Wasonga & Piveral, 2004);
- exploration of the challenges faced by teacher educators exploring multicultural and diversity issues within teacher education programs, particularly as these issues center around discussions of power and privilege (Nieto, 1998, 2004, Sleeter, 1996); and lastly
- research that examines the evolution of multicultural teacher education as a whole in terms of its conceptual development Cochran-Smith et al, 1994; Irvine, 2000, Sleeter, 2001a, 2001b; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996) (p. 3).

This study stands at the crossroads of three areas of multicultural teacher education research.

First this study examined the effectiveness of a stand-alone multicultural education course within a particular teacher education program. Secondly, embedded within the context of the first, this

study sought to understand the challenges of exploring multicultural and diversity issues within teacher preparation programs. Additionally, this study sought to support research which suggests that as our nation's public school demographics are changing, so has our need for multicultural education for all preservice teachers, regardless of where they intend to teach, thus indicating a need to elevate the status of multicultural education course(s) within teacher preparation programs (Nieto, 2006). Lastly, this study advocates for a broader conceptualization (approach) to multicultural education for teacher preparation programs, one geared toward a social justice perspective. By embracing a social justice approach, more specifically a critical multiculturalist lens as a foundational framework for teacher preparation programs, the study advocates a need to extend the customary discourse on multicultural education, beyond a cursory or tokenism approach to create new spaces for preservice teachers to critically examine multicultural and diversity topics which include critical discourse on issues of power, privilege, and structural inequities.

The research of DiAngelo and Sensoy (2010) among others, support this foundational framework. More specifically DiAngelo and Sensoy (2010) maintain that one of the primary tenets of critical multicultural education is the need for each of us to examine our own socialized stereotypes and assumptions about marginalized groups to which we do not belong, and understand how this socialization shapes our relations with those groups (p. 99). As such, critical multicultural education references those approaches within education programs that explicitly address relations of inequitable power and how such power relations manifest in schools. This understanding of multicultural education requires that we engage in what DiAngelo & Sensoy (2010) call a "lifetime of practice, reflection and self-courage" (p. 99). Such an approach requires that teacher training should not only examine self-concept, perception and motivation,

but also that it should engage preservice teachers in meaningful reflective practices geared toward thinking deeply and critically about their beliefs regarding issues of multiculturalism beyond a single-course in multicultural education and into their own professional practice.

Consistent with the conceptual framework for multicultural education is the study's theoretical framework which encompasses a constructivist paradigm for teacher educators. When viewed through this lens, it is understood that teacher education involves working with preservice teachers to help them to understand their own tacit understanding; how these understandings have developed; and the effects these understandings have on their actions. It is a way in which to introduce new conceptions as potential alternatives to those counter-beliefs regarding multicultural and diversity issues as held by preservice teachers.

Fundamental to these understandings is the role of beliefs. The role of beliefs and its relationship to behavior and action has long been investigated. For example, Bandura (1982), a noted psychologist specializing in social cognitive theory and self-efficacy suggests that, "beliefs serve as filters for individuals' knowledgebase which ultimately affects one's actions" (p.8). An emerging group of researchers (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 1998, 2002) extended Bandura's concept of efficacy to include teachers. These researchers define teacher efficacy as teachers' beliefs in their abilities to organize and execute courses of action necessary to bring about desired results. As the research on teacher efficacy indicates, teachers' beliefs in their ability to perform tasks relates to context specific teacher tasks, such as student achievement (e.g., McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978), student motivations (e.g. Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989), teacher valuing of educational innovations (e.g. Cousins & Walker, 2000), classroom management skills (Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990) and teacher stress (Greenwood, Olejnik, & Parkay, 1990). Building upon this context specific application of

teacher efficacy, Guyton and Wesche (2005) applied the concept to multicultural education. They suggest that just as personal efficacy (the confidence that one can effectively teach children) has been shown to be an important teacher attribute (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), teachers need similar confidence to be effective in multicultural settings—introducing the concept of multicultural efficacy (p.23).

A central aspect of teacher efficacy research suggests that *a priori* beliefs are well established by the time a student enters college, and that these beliefs are often shaped by personal experience, schooling instruction, and formal knowledge. This position has implications for the present study. For instance, if prospective teachers lack a set of accepting beliefs about multicultural education, then one could reasonably argue that even after a significant increase in multicultural knowledge will not lead to a change in beliefs after a single exposure to a multicultural education course (Cockrell, Placier, Cockrell & Middleton, 1998). However, other studies suggest that through engagement in diversity focused teacher education courses, preservice teachers can gain insight into the effects of diversity upon teaching and learning, thus impacting their behavior and actions in the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995b; Lawrence, 1997). These two seemingly contradictory positions reflect a quandary for teacher educators.

Thus the question worth consideration is whether or not teacher preparation programs can effect change in preservice teachers' beliefs? If so, at what point does this change occur and is this change sustainable into their professional practice. As Levin (2006) concludes, "we don't know what, where, how, or when teacher education is most effective" (p.29). Influencing changes in belief systems is not an easy task, for as Voshiadou (1992) asserts, restructuring requires the reinterpretation of certain beliefs that individuals construct on the basis of their every day experiences and in order to promote restructuring of prior beliefs, preservice teachers

should first be made aware of their own entrenched beliefs. Thus, learning could be thought of as “a process by which behavioral changes are a result of experiences” (Maples and Webster, quoted in Merriam and Caffarella, 1991, p. 124). It is the contention of this study that teacher educators can assist in this process by constructing courses and cross cultural experiences which provides preservice teachers with a different explanatory framework in which to replace the one they constructed on the basis of the phenomenal experience (Voshiadou 1992). Therefore this study sought to delineate critical junctures where changes in preservice teachers’ beliefs regarding multicultural education might occur and at what points of entry, teacher educators can impact beliefs and attitudes conducive to multicultural education. Consequently, the goal of this study was to contribute to the following research agendas; exploring preservice and beginning teachers attitudes toward multicultural and diversity issues, understanding the effect of a multicultural education course on preservice and beginning teachers (if any), as well as clarifying preservice and beginning teachers’ conceptualizations and perceptions regarding multicultural issues. The outcomes of this study are to further the discussion on ways in which teacher preparation programs can best train preservice teachers toward becoming effective and competently prepared in the area of multicultural education.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Today’s public school student population demographics demonstrate increased diversity in cultural, racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds (Ball & Farr, 2003; Banks 2001; Cooper, 2007; Hodgkinson, 2002; National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES, 2008]), as well as a growing population of students who do not speak English as their first language (Brook, 2001; Digest of Education Statistics 2004; U.S. Census 2000(b)). Historically, the school system in the United States produces less success for students of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds

different from the American macro culture (Banks, 1997; Giroux, 1995). For example, Irvin & Armento (2001) indicate that 18% of African-American students, 13% of Hispanic students and 9% of white students in grades K-12 repeated at least one grade. Llagas & Snyder (2003) reveal that 28% of Hispanic students and 13% of African-American do not have a high school credential. The research further indicates that if projections are accurate, children of color will constitute the statistical majority of the student population by 2035 and account for 57% by 2050 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1996; Villegas & Lucas, 2002a). These dramatically changing public school demographics present a unique challenge for teacher preparation programs as exemplified in a speech by the U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan. Calling education the “Civil Rights issue of the day”, Secretary Duncan asserts, “Today, more than ever, we acknowledge America's need and a public school's obligation to teach all students to their full potential. And yet today we are still far from achieving that dream of equal educational opportunity. Nearly 30% of our students today drop out, or fail to complete high school on time. That's 1.2 million children every single year. Barely 60% of African American and Latino students graduate on time. In many cities, half or more of low-income learners drop out of school” (Duncan, speech to Teachers College, 2008). These sobering statistics illuminate the importance for teacher educators to address the needs of those student groups historically marginalized by the nation’s public school system (Allard & Santoro, 2006).

In addition to the rapidly changing public school demographics, teacher employment recruiting trends indicate that 86% of new teachers are white females, monolingual speakers with life experiences significantly different from the students they will teach (AACTE, 1996; Cushner, McClelland, & Safford, 2006; Haberman, 1989, 1991; Hodgkinson, 2002; Nieto, 2000). This represents a potential problem for teacher educators. Delpit (1995) identifies this

cultural conflict facing educators when she writes, “we all carry worlds in our heads, and these worlds are decidedly different. We educators set out to teach, but how can we reach the world of others when we don’t even know they exist.” This cultural gap produces a disconnect leading to misunderstandings which can impair minority students classroom success (Cazden, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sleeter, 2001). Diaz (2001) suggests that no matter where one chooses to teach, one will encounter some form of diversity. It is within this context of changing public school demographics coupled with teacher employment recruitment trends, that it is crucial that teacher preparation programs prepare prospective teachers who are effectively and competently trained to meet these challenges (Ball, 2000; Cruz, 1999; Garcia & Willis, 2001; Gay, 2002).

### **Rationale for the Study**

A brief review of the research literature indicates three imperatives essential for consideration in the effective preparation of future educators: (a) transforming educators multicultural beliefs and attitudes, (Cabello & Burstein, 1995; Cochran-Smith, 2003, Gay, 2000; Pang & Sablan, 1998; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), (b) increasing educators knowledgebase by reconceptualizing their understanding of diversity (Avery & Walker, 1995; Barry & Lechner, 1995), and c) equipping educators with the skills needed to effectively teach culturally diverse students (Leavell, Cowart & Wilhelm, 1999). Each of these is essential toward strengthening the multicultural efficacy of preservice teachers in meeting the inherent challenges of teaching in multicultural classroom environments.

The purpose of this study was to investigate key areas crucial for teacher educators in their attempts to prepare preservice and subsequently beginning teachers in the effective implementation of multicultural education. These areas are: (a) to understand preservice and beginning teachers’ perceptions regarding the purpose of multicultural education, (b) to explicate

preservice and beginning teachers conceptualizations of multicultural and diversity issues, and (c) to determine whether a single course in multicultural education has the potential to influence both preservice and beginning teachers capacity to implement multicultural educational practices. This study is consistent with other research in the field, as it explored the Lortie (1975) position, which asserts that the beliefs and values preservice teachers bring into teaching are a much more powerful socializing influence than either preservice education or later socialization in the work place has indicated (Johnson, 2002, p. 154). This position supports the rationale for this present study's examination of preservice and beginning teachers' beliefs and values regarding multicultural education. Through the examination of the *a priori* beliefs of both preservice and beginning teachers, this study sought to expose preservice and beginning teachers' beliefs in their abilities to effectively implement multicultural education. This was achieved by measuring the multicultural efficacy of preservice and beginning teachers. Multicultural efficacy is defined as one's belief in his or her ability to successfully implement multicultural educational practices (Guyton & Wesche, 2005). To measure preservice and beginning teachers' multicultural efficacy, the researcher utilized the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES) designed by Guyton and Wesche (2005) to capture perceptions and approaches toward multicultural education through the collection of empirical data. However, as Ladson-Billings (1995) suggests, one measure is not sufficient in capturing the nuances of preservice teachers' beliefs regarding multicultural education. Nor is it effective in explicating the effects of a multicultural education course. It is this researcher's contention that these components are uniquely captured through the combined use of both a quantitative and qualitative research design. For these reasons, this study employed a mixed-methods research inquiry, specifically the explanatory sequential participant selection model. This research design represented in

Figure 1, started with the collection and analysis of quantitative data collected from the multicultural efficacy scale. The second phase of the study, the qualitative data collection phase, asked participants to engage in a semi-structured interview. Analysis of the transcribed interviews utilized Glaser and Strauss' (1967) constant-comparison method to identify trends, patterns, contradictions, and themes.

Figure 1. Explanatory Sequential Participant Selection Model

Process	Procedures and Outcome
Quantitative Phase Data Collection	Administered Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES) to preservice and beginning teachers within the same teacher preparation program.
Quantitative Data Analysis	Utilized descriptive, bivariate, and multivariate analyses to examine quantitative data
Form Qualitative Groups	Participants in phase solicited to voluntarily take part in the second phase of the study.
Qualitative Phase Data Collection	6 preservice teachers; 5 preservice teachers; 4 student teachers and 4 beginning teachers selected to participate in a follow up interview
Qualitative Data Analysis	Data from the interviews transcribed using Glaser and Strauss' (1967) Constant Comparison Method
Summation of Quantitative Results and Qualitative Findings	Findings of the study were summarized and discussed together with their implication for teacher educators and strengthening the multicultural efficacy of preservice teachers.

This mixed-methods approach was appropriate for clarifying preservice and beginning teachers' multicultural efficacy and more specifically in addressing the three research question which frame this study:

1. Do preservice and beginning teachers' approaches to multicultural education differ as measured by the Multicultural Efficacy Scale, (MES)?
2. What is the difference (if any) between preservice and beginning teachers' multicultural efficacy, as measured by Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES)?
3. What factors do preservice and beginning teachers see as influencing the construction of their knowledge, attitudes, skills, and understandings toward their ability to effectively implement multicultural educational practices?

To help answer these research questions, the researcher surveyed and interviewed participants who were current and past students within the same teacher education preparation program at a research extensive university in the Midwest. The determination of when to administer the MES coincides to critical points in teacher preparation impacted by a single course in multicultural education. Each group of participants represented varying degrees of exposure to multicultural education teacher preparation. The first group represented entry level preservice teachers enrolled in one of two offerings of the multicultural education course, *Education in a Multicultural Society*. In order to capture initial beliefs regarding multicultural education and diversity issues, this first group of participants completed the MES, the second week of the spring semester. The second group of participants used in the study were also entry-level preservice teachers from within the same teacher preparation program. These preservice teachers were currently enrolled in the course, *Education in a Multicultural Society*. As a means of measuring the effect of a multicultural education course after limited exposure to key multicultural theories and concepts, these preservice teachers completed the MES, mid-semester of a 16-week course. The third group of participants consisted of student teachers. The Student teachers completed all course work, including *Education in a Multicultural Society*, and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education, but had yet not obtained a teaching license. These preservice teachers were administered the MES during their student teaching

semester. The final group of participants' represented beginning teachers, who were in their first but no more than their third year of public school teaching. These participants had also completed the multicultural education course, *Education in a Multicultural Society*, as part of their preparation from within the same teacher education preparation program as the other participants and completed the MES electronically.

### **Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions will be utilized.

*Beginning Teachers*- Teachers who have no more than three years of professional teaching.

*Beliefs*-Due to its abstract nature, this is not an easy term to conceptualize. As such a commonly shared definition offered by several researchers is utilized consistent with the purpose of this study. Harding & Cuthbert (1988) Nespor (1987) & Torbin (1990); define beliefs as a statement of relation among things accepted as true.

*Cultural Pluralism*- A vision of society affirming the democratic right of each ethnic group to retain its own heritage (Kallen, 1924, as quoted by Bennett, 1990).

*Diversity*- Indicates groups of individuals from different ethnic and cultural groups that have distinct characteristics, qualities or elements (Bennett, 1995).

*Multicultural Education*-“A democratic approach to teaching and learning that seeks to foster cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies in an interdependent world” (Bennett, Niggle & Stage, p. 8).

*Multicultural Efficacy*- A teacher's belief in his or her confidence to successfully implement multicultural practices (Guyton & Wesche, p. 23)

*Preservice Teachers*- Prospective teachers enrolled in a teacher preparation program with the intent of teaching in a school setting.

*Teacher Beliefs*- Personally held convictions about the nature of teaching and learning, students, content and the classroom context.

### **Assumptions**

During this study several assumptions regarding the participants were made. The first assumption was that all of the preservice teachers and student teachers were enrolled within the same accredited teacher preparation program with the intent to teach in a school setting. It was also assumed that all preservice and student teacher participants had taken or were presently enrolled in the *Education in a Multicultural Society* course, as part of the required course work of the teacher education program within the same research extensive university in the Midwest. It was further assumed that the beginning teachers were employed by a public school district. Additionally, participating beginning teachers were at least in their first but not beyond their third year of professional teaching. All of the participating beginning teachers were graduates from the same teacher education program as the preservice and student teachers and consequently had completed the course, *Education in a Multicultural Society*.

All participants engaged in the study voluntarily. It should be noted that those preservice teachers enrolled in either the researcher's course or the other course offering of *Education in a Multicultural Society* participated on a voluntary basis and their grades were not influenced by a students' participation or non participation in the study. Also, none of the participants were compensated for their participation.

From those surveyed, a sample was identified from those participants who volunteered for the follow-up interview process. It is assumed that those selected participants were honest in their answers to the interview questions.

Finally the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES), created by Wesche & Guyton (2005) was implemented according to its original intent and purpose as outlined by the designers of the instrument. The preservice students, enrolled in both sections of the *Education in a Multicultural Society* course, were administered the instrument by the researcher. The directions were read and clarifications made in terms of how to complete the scale. For the student teachers and beginning teachers, the MES was administered electronically via the Internet. The researcher assumed that the participants understood the directions provided in order to successfully complete the scale.

### **Limitations**

The participants in this study represented four distinct stages of teacher preparation. The first group was preservice teachers currently enrolled at a research extensive public university's teacher preparation program. These participants represented preservice teachers who were at the beginning stages of their teacher preparation. In addition, these preservice teachers were enrolled in the multicultural education course, *Education in a Multicultural Society*. This course is part of a sequence of required teacher preparation course work for licensure in the state of Kansas. The second group also preservice teachers currently enrolled within the same research extensive public university's teacher preparation program as the first group. These students were also at the early stages of their teacher preparation. The difference between the first and the second group of participants, was that the second group completed the multicultural efficacy scale, 8 weeks into the semester, after some exposure to multicultural educational concepts. The third group of participants represented those preservice teachers who had recently completed their student teaching semester and were in their student internship semester. These student teachers were enrolled within the same research extensive public university's teacher preparation program as the first and second group of participants. In addition, the student teachers had completed all of

their required course work including the *Education in a Multicultural Society* course and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Education, but were not yet licensed to teach. The fourth group of participants was composed of recent graduates of the same Midwestern research extensive public university teacher education preparation program. These participants represented public school teachers with at least one year, but no more than three years of professional public school experience. As recent graduates of the same university teacher education program, these participants had also completed the multicultural education course, *Education in a Multicultural Society*. Given these specific conditions, the researcher acknowledged that the results may not be generalized to other preservice and beginning teachers, nor to those who are either present or past students of other colleges or universities located in other geographic regions, including those institutions either private or public offering multicultural teacher education preparation courses.

In addition, to the surveys, interviews were another important aspect of this study. The interviews were a means to collect a significant amount of data as well as provide explanatory information regarding the quantitative data collected. However, there are limitations associated with interviews. Although the researcher attempted to ask relevant questions, there was the chance that some important information was not obtained because the researcher did not ask the right questions. In addition, possibilities exist that the individuals interviewed gave answers they thought the researcher wanted to hear, rather than their true opinions. As such, the researcher was cognizant of these factors and steps were taken to ensure validity and reliability of the statements made by those interviewed.

Another possible limitation to the study was the fact that each group of participants had different instructors for the course, *Education in a Multicultural Society*. Although the goals of

the course were the same, a different instructor may have delivered the content with a different emphasis and/or focus.

### **Overview**

The purpose of this study was to employ a mixed-method inquiry measuring preservice and beginning teachers' multicultural efficacy. Toward that end, this document has six chapters. Chapter One explored the research problem, which established the nature and complexity of the problems facing our public schools today. More specifically, the chapter focused on the changing public school demographics, as well as the growing cultural gap, represented by the plethora of new educators entering the teaching profession with lived experiences vastly different from the students in the classroom of today and tomorrow. Thus the goal of chapter one was to illuminate the need for teachers to be effectively and competently trained in multicultural education as a national imperative. To explore the crisis facing our nation's public schools through a critical lens, a further goal of this study was to explore the relevant literature in a critical and thoughtful manner. Chapter Two offers a review of the pertinent literature situated within the context of several categories including; multicultural education, multicultural teacher education preparation and teacher efficacy with a lens toward emerging research on multicultural teacher efficacy. The literature review included a broad definition of multicultural education as well as an examination of the overall goals and approaches to multicultural education. Also, the review of literature included succinct overview of the NCATE Standards (2008), as well as an analysis of a multicultural teacher education conceptual framework, both of which provide insight into the construction of multicultural teacher education coursework. Finally, the literature review included topics relating to social cognitive theory, particularly as it relates to the construct of teacher efficacy in general and multicultural teacher efficacy more specifically. These issues

were specifically targeted for discussion because of how they informed the present study and established the framework for understanding the difficult task facing teacher educators today. Chapter Three offers an outline and discussion of the research methodology utilized in this study. The principle goal of this chapter was to provide a justification for utilizing the Explanatory Sequential Participant Selection model as a research design for the study. Moreover, this chapter included details about the participants in the study; the origins of the instrument used, the procedures detailing the administration of the instrument, as well as the providing a structure for understanding how the data was analyzed. Chapter Four of the study provided an analysis of the quantitative data more specifically, the first section of the chapter examined the findings of the Multicultural Efficacy Scale in detail with a within and between case analysis and item specific analysis. The second section of this chapter analyzed the qualitative data garnered from the semi-structured interviews. This section of the chapter provided a descriptive analysis of the findings as they relate to the findings of the quantitative and qualitative data. Chapter Five of the dissertation presented a mixed analysis of the findings from the both sets of data. It is at this point in the study in which the two data sets are mixed, providing a depth of understanding to this complex issue. Chapter Six of the study presented the implications and conclusions of the study based upon the major findings of the study. In addition, this chapter also presented implications for practice and future research.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

The literature reviewed for this study was extensive; it ranged from theoretical papers, to research papers and articles. This review also draws upon research from both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. More specifically this literature review centers on research as it relates to multicultural education research, multicultural teacher education, and teacher efficacy. The overall goal of such an exhaustive approach was to provide a theoretical and conceptual framework for this study.

#### **Multicultural Education**

##### **History and Definition**

Ongoing disparities in educational attainment among various ethnic and racial groups in the United States has led to an educational reform movement known as multicultural education (Montecinos & Rios, 1999). Grounded in the Civil Rights Movement, the reform's primary goal is to redesign public schooling in ways that will increase the educational equity for a range of cultural, ethnic, and economic groups (Banks, 1997, as cited in Montecinos & Rios, 1999). Thus the roots of multicultural education encapsulate ideals such as freedom, justice, and equality (Banks, 1999; Grant & Tate, 1995; Nieto, 2002). Recently multiculturalists are articulating a broader view of multicultural education one which envisages multicultural education as encompassing all people regardless of their race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religion (Nieto, 2004).

Despite a myriad of definitions for multicultural education that vary widely with respect to content selection, methodological focus, and referent group orientations, the researcher sought

an operational definition, one which encompasses the complexities of today's diverse society. As such, this study utilized Bennett, Niggle & Stage's (1990) definition as a framework. These researchers define multicultural education as "a democratic approach to teaching and learning that seeks to foster cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies and an interdependent world" (p. 244). This definition serves as a framework for defining multicultural education because of its implicit broader conceptualization of diversity which acknowledges the intrinsic value of cultural pluralism. Kallen (1924) defined cultural pluralism "as a vision of society affirming the democratic right of each ethnic group to retain its own heritage" (Kallen, 1924 as quoted by Bennett, 1990). By acknowledging the importance of cultural pluralism this definition extends the concept of multicultural education to include an alternative way of thinking about how to provide quality education for diverse groups within the context of democratic ideas, an important attribute recognized by leading theorists in the field (Baptiste, 1979; Bennett, 1990; Banks, 1990; Sleeter, 1991; Garcia, 1982; Gay, 1988, 1990; Nieto, 1992)

In addition, this definition of multicultural education centralizes goals not only for student learners but also for teachers charged with its implementation. The inclusion of educators marks the entry of emerging research paradigms signifying the critical role of teachers in ensuring the successful implementation of multicultural educational practices. This definition presented by Bennett et al. (1990) represents not only multicultural education's progression, but also speaks to the inherent complexities in attempts toward successful implementation. This is evident when one considers how multicultural educational theory is outpacing its practice and implementation. Banks (1995(b) suggest that this is due in part because many practitioners have a limited conception of multicultural education, viewing it primarily as curriculum reform that requires changing or restructuring the curriculum to include content about ethnic groups, women

and other cultural groups (p.4). Other researchers, (Campbell, Canella & Reiff, 1994a, 1994b; Sleeter & Grant, 1999), suggest that one of the barriers to the effective implementation of multicultural education is preservice teachers' narrow conceptualization of diversity and multicultural issues. Silverman (2009) posits that teachers and researchers struggle to conceptualize a meaningful understanding of what constitutes multicultural education. For example, in her study, she suggests that it is difficult to transcend current norms in multicultural education aimed toward ending marginalization when who and what constitutes diversity is unclear. Silverman sought to centralize preservice teachers' understandings of what constitutes diversity and multiculturalism by using survey data to test a hypothesized structural equation model of the relations among identity groups and responsibility. More specifically, the study sought to examine the fit of a theoretical model for data, measuring teachers' beliefs about the constituent meaning of the terms multicultural and diversity. The 88 participants included preservice teachers in educational psychology, graduate students in early childhood, middle childhood education and math and science education students from a large Midwestern institution. To measure these outcomes, Silverman developed a scale, The Teachers' Sense of Responsibility for Multiculturalism and Diversity, (TSRMDS) to investigate three issues: (a) the meaning teachers attribute to ambiguous terminology (i.e. multiculturalism, culture, and diversity), (b) distinctions between efficacy, responsibility and advocacy; and (c) the measurement of responsibility as an independent construct. In addition the scale had 8 subscales, consisting of attributes of diversity including; race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, faith, conflict, family values and opt-out. The findings from the study suggest that preservice teachers have a limited view of what constitutes diversity, which in turns impacts their sense of efficacy, as well as their responsibility to serve as advocates for individuals and more specifically their

roles as teachers. Silverman's (2009) study is helpful because it provides an extensive interpretation of multiculturalism and diversity consistent with its present day conceptualization. However, what is missing from the reported data is information is an explanation of how the preservice teachers derived their understandings of these key terms.

Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, Neuharth-Pritchett, Reiff & Pearson (2001) utilized an open-ended questionnaire and follow-up focus interviews to investigate preservice early childhood education teachers' definitions of multicultural education. The 103 participants represented different levels of teacher preparation. Level I students were entry-level preservice teachers with no prior coursework in multicultural education. The program of study at this level focused on the preservice teacher as a teacher-learner with reflections on preprofessional experiences and emerging teaching philosophy. The primary focus of study for students at Level II was a concentration on issues of diversity, including multicultural issues and teaching strategies. Level III exposed students to the planning and assessment aspects of teaching, developing student-teacher relationships, management and organization of the classroom. Level IV students were their ten-week student teaching internship. The findings of the study indicate approximately 39% of the total respondents displayed a minimal definition of multicultural education by providing definitions which: (a) focused on a surface-level understanding; (b) suggested few components or examples; (c) illustrated little or no developmental thought to the role of diversity; and (d) suggested a response that could be mimicked or memorized (p.260). An examination of the results across the four levels revealed a large proportion of students from each of the four levels demonstrating a minimal understanding of multicultural education. The researchers conclude while one would expect that those with minimum exposure, particularly those participants in the lower levels to have a minimum understanding of multicultural

education, the results of those respondents at the higher levels with more exposure to multicultural educational theory to display a deeper understanding of diversity. The research revealed those participants' responses indicate slightly over 33% of Level III and just over 35% of Level IV provided minimum definitions. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the researchers report that only 16% of the total population of those surveyed demonstrated a strong understanding of multicultural education. Strong definitions of diversity included: (a) recognition of many elements of diversity; (b) an internalization of the role of, and responsibility to incorporate multicultural education in classroom practices; and c) development on the role of diversity which suggests integration of such perspectives into classroom practice. The researchers identify several factors contributing to this outcome, a discrepancy between students' formative understandings and realizations after field-based experiences, the mirroring of their cooperating teacher's perspective on multicultural education, and preservice teachers reliance on their own limited lived experiences with diversity (p. 261).

Based upon an analysis of the quantitative data, Neuharth-Pritchett et al. (2001) determined, that students appeared to place relatively little importance on the extent to which their field experiences affected their perceptions of diversity issues. The researchers propose two rationales to explain these findings dependent upon the preservice teachers' field settings. First, the researchers suggest that preservice teachers placed in homogenous classrooms where natural opportunities for developing a multicultural perspective were minimized (p. 266). Additionally, the researchers propose a second possible scenario, one which places preservice teachers in diverse settings; however the environments did not display a strong commitment to multicultural education. In either case, this is problematic as the researchers assert it indicates the commitment or lack thereof to the implementation of multicultural education in schools (p.267). It also

illustrates a larger issue at the heart of the present study, specifically that preservice teachers are being confronted with incongruencies between the diversity perspective advocated in university coursework and their diversity experience in the field.

The findings of both studies suggest that teacher education programs must move toward helping students acquire more complex definitions or constructions of their multicultural education through their experiences in both the university classroom and field-based experiences. These conceptualizations should help students examine their personal experiences and recognize that diversity is not limited to race and ethnicity but that natural diversity is a component of seemingly homogenous groups. These studies indicate that instruction in critical reflection and examination of one's individual perspective may foster receptiveness toward including all elements of diversity (e.g. socio-economic status, religion, gender) (Silverman, 2009). Moreover as the researchers (Neuharth-Pritchett et al. 2001) conclude, such reflection may help preservice teachers gain a personal stake in diversity; that is, a personal connection to the importance and complexity of diversity.

In the final analysis, preservice teachers' narrow conceptualization of what constitutes diversity is a concern for teacher educators. As Ladson-Billings (2001) asserts, "today's notion of diversity [for teachers] are broader and more complex" (p.14) than they were decades ago.

She further contends that teachers will encounter students who are

Not only . . . multiracial or multiethnic but they are also likely to be diverse along linguistic, religious, ability, and economic lines that matter in today's schools . . . In the final analysis, today teachers walk into classrooms with children who represent an incredible range of diversity (Ladson Billings 2001, p. 14, as cited in Milner & Smith 2003 p. 205).

Thus the research indicates the essential need for today's educators to have a clear grasp of the multifaceted conceptualizations of multicultural education and diversity in order to

understand and work within increasingly diverse school environments. As a result, the reality facing those entering the teaching profession today, indicates a high probability that novice educators will be placed in schools in which their cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds will differ from that of their students (Gallego, 2001; Taylor & Sobel, 2001; Torok & Aguilar, 2000; Zuniga-Hill & Yee, 1995).

### **Goals of Multicultural Education**

There is a high level of consensus among multiculturalists regarding its overall goals. Researchers (Banks, 2001; Bennett, 2005; Gay, 2002) identify three major goals accentuating the primary aim of multicultural education. First and foremost is the need to reform the school so that students from diverse racial and cultural groups will experience educational success and mobility (Klein, 1985; Sadker & Sadker, 1982; as quoted in Banks, 1992). Second, seek to provide both male and female students an equal chance to experience educational success and mobility. Third, is the need to acknowledge the interaction of race, class, and gender upon schools and students (Banks, 1989a; Grant & Sleeter, 1986, 1986; Sleeter, 1991). While agreement among scholars and researchers is important for the advancement of the field and the establishment of theoretical consistency, it is equally important for teachers to understand these goals (Gay, 1995). As Nel (1993) suggests, “what prospective teachers view as the most important goal of multicultural education determines their effectiveness, especially in reversing the cycle of failure” (p. 121).

In a survey of 120 preservice teachers, Goodwin (1994) found that 41% of the respondents believed that the most important goal of multicultural education is to enable students to come to know others, while 30% of the total respondents, indicated goals that reflected affective outcomes. Goodwin categorized affective outcomes into five subscales: “being able to

empathize with the perspective of others” (2%); “tolerating difference” (3%); “engendering openness or communication” (5%); “appreciating or accepting difference” (8%); and “appreciating or valuing difference” (13%). (p. 122). Goodwin contends this range of affective outcomes is noteworthy, for it depicts the variance in preservice teachers’ understandings regarding the primary goals of multicultural education. For example, she notes that tolerating difference is a qualitatively different affect response from the action of respecting or valuing others (p. 124). A third category totaling 16%, of the responses focused on addressing the needs of the individual child. According to Goodwin, this category perceived the goal of multicultural education as fostering pride in one’s own culture. This category indicates an awareness of multicultural education but fails to look to the historical and systemic causes underlying these issues, beyond its impact upon the individual. The final category of responses suggests that the goal of multicultural education should be for social change or at least changes extending beyond the individual or the classroom. Respondents defined social change as combating racism, dealing with stereotypes and reducing prejudice, however only a small percentage (2%) of the total respondents surveyed perceived the goal of multicultural education as achieving equal educational opportunity. Additionally, Goodwin (1994) notes of the 120 preservice teachers surveyed only one respondent perceived the goal of multicultural education as the “ability to look critically at existing political, economic and social structures” (p. 122). This suggests a possible disconnect between multicultural theory and practice. As the field progresses in theory toward a more critical interpretation, this goal or understanding of multicultural education is yet to be evident in practice. What remains unclear from the studies is whether this is an indication of a lack of clarity on the part of teacher preparation programs in articulating a clear vision of multicultural education or to larger societal issues in understanding its primary goals. Overall,

Goodwin's (1994) study suggests that the variability of responses demonstrates little consensus about the goals of multicultural education among preservice teachers who were near the completion of their program. Goodwin deduces that the most unfortunate conclusion of this study is that while preservice teachers may enter teacher education unsure of how to conceptualize multicultural education, the current state of multicultural education programs suggests they are not likely to receive further clarification from their teacher preparation programs (p. 127).

### **Approaches to Multicultural Education**

In a comprehensive review of multicultural education, Grant & Sleeter's (1987, 1994; 2005) constructed a five-approach typology as an analytical lens for organizing students' perceptions of multicultural education. This framework serves as the conceptual framework for the present study. The first approach is teaching the exceptional and culturally different, and it includes programs intended to assimilate students of color into the dominant culture and defines multicultural education primarily along racial and ethnic dimensions. Grant & Sleeter posit that this approach "perceives visible racial/ethnic group people as the main recipients of multicultural education" (p. 63). Emphasis is placed on individualizing instruction to help students develop the cognitive skills and knowledge that represent the standard defined by the experiences of the dominant cultural group. The goal of the teacher is to make sure that marginalized students adjust to the dominant norm. This approach is problematic, the researchers assert, because of its cultural deficit perspective. Additionally, this approach is often utilized by those who hold a conservative approach to multicultural education. Conservative multiculturalists, as Groski, 2008, suggests, "are committed to equality and inclusion, but apply that commitment only to those willing to adopt mainstream culture and its attending values, mores, and norms" (p. 6). A

second approach, human relations, promotes unity and tolerance for the purpose of developing better understanding and interactions among different groups. This practice-based approach targets younger children and emphasizes non-stereotypical materials. It encourages students to develop relationships across ethnic, gender, social class, and disabilities by promoting feelings of unity and reducing stereotypes, prejudices, and biases. Critics (Jencks, Lee, and Kanpol, 2001) of this approach note its lack of attention to structural inequities and how this approach avoids addressing ways that larger sociopolitical contexts inform interpersonal conflict and prejudice. Jencks et al (2001) ascribe Grant and Sleeter's human relations approach to liberal multiculturalism. While the human relations approach, acknowledges diversity and cultural pluralism, it fails they argue to address the larger issues of privilege, and power. Thus the overarching goal, for these first two approaches, at the societal level, is to help people adjust to the existing social structure and mainstream cultural program. The third approach transcends the first approach beyond its surface level focus. This approach focuses on single-group studies more specifically it focuses on the contributions and experiences of identified ethnic, gender, and social class groups, usually in isolation. Through an in-depth study of that group's historical and contemporary presence and a critical examination of the group's oppression by society at large, this approach seeks to promote social justice for the group in question. A criticism of this approach is that it often ignores the interactions of race and class; class and gender; and gender and sexual orientations. Multicultural education, the fourth approach, rests on two fundamental ideas: equal opportunity and cultural pluralism. This approach calls upon teachers to address issues of power and privilege in the classroom and to purposely educate about injustices and ensure educational equity for all students. This approach also promotes social structural equality and cultural pluralism by emphasizing respect for and the celebration of cultural diversity

through the infusion of a multicultural perspective throughout the curriculum. In addition, the multicultural education approach attempts to reform the total school process in an effort to reduce discrimination, provide equal opportunities, and strive for social justice for all groups. This requires re-conceptualizing the entire schooling process so that it reflects the diversity of society at large and reforming schools based principles of equality and pluralism. The fifth approach is education that is multicultural and social re-constructionist. This approach includes programs that go one step beyond the multicultural education approach by accentuating social action and the reconstruction of societal norms and structures in order to achieve equity. Critics suggest that this approach prepares students and teachers to be active citizens (Gorski, 2008). Additionally, it seeks to restructure the whole educational program in order to achieve greater equality and social justice. This critical approach to multicultural education enables novice teachers to practice democracy in the classroom, analyze current social arrangements and develop social actions skills to change adverse circumstances in their own lives as well as the lives of people from socially subordinated groups. Inherent in this approach is a broad understanding of multicultural education to include not just those marginalized by the system, but also those who have been privileged by the system (Nieto, 2008).

In Nel's (1993) study, 280 preservice teachers were asked to choose between the five approaches (based upon a rewording of Grant & Sleeter's typology) for teaching in a culturally pluralistic classroom. Over 60% of the respondents selected the first two approaches, teaching the exceptional and culturally different and the human relations approach. Nel (1993) argues that these approaches do little to challenge the "disabling relationships between teachers, students and communities" (p. 10). She also predicted that students who selected these two categories would be resistant to multicultural education. In another study utilizing Grant and Sleeter's

typology, Haberman & Post (1999) asked 227 preservice teachers to choose among the various approaches identified by Sleeter and Grant, (1993). The study is consistent with Nel's (1993) earlier findings suggesting that teachers tend to gravitate toward teaching the exceptional and culturally different and human relations approaches. In addition, Haberman & Post (1999) found that the respondents emphasized approaches which focus on changing individuals not groups or society.

In their qualitative study, Montecinos & Rios (2000), administered a paper and pencil questionnaire to 79 preservice teachers to explicate their rationales for endorsing and rejecting various concepts associated with approaches to multicultural education, specifically addressing issues of race, class, gender and exceptionality, based upon the framework outlined by Grant & Sleeter (1993). Data for the study was from three different groups taking courses in a teacher preparation program at a state university in the Pacific Southwest. Each of the groups had differing levels of exposure to multicultural and diversity issues. The students in the first group were in the course titled *Cultural Diversity and Schooling*. This course represents the prerequisite course for entry into the university's teacher preparation program. At the time of the study, these participants had no formal exposure to Grant & Sleeter's (1993) framework. The second group of preservice teachers was in a second course offering of the same entry-level course, *Cultural Diversity and Schooling*. These students completed the questionnaire five weeks into the semester, after limited exposure to Sleeter & Grant's (1993) framework. The third group of preservice teachers completed the *Cultural Diversity and Schooling* course as well as completion of an additional one-credit hour multicultural and bilingual education class. Each group of participants responded to six short vignettes describing approaches teachers could use to address the issues encountered in schools. For each vignette, respondents indicated what

aspects they agreed with and why, what aspects they disagreed with and why, and to provide a justification for choosing their preferred approach (p. 12). The researchers utilized an inductive analysis to identify patterns in the rationale behind a concept's endorsement and/or rejection (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997, as cited in Montecinos & Rios 2000). Of the respondents, 97% had committed themselves to one or a combination of approaches they deemed as representing their approach to multicultural education. The respondents' choice of approaches fell into the following categories; 44% selected multicultural education; 29 % selected teaching the culturally different, 10% selected social reconstruction, and 6% selected both multicultural education and teaching culturally different. Another 6 % selected various other combinations with 2% selecting the human relations approach. The results indicate that prior to substantive education in multicultural education and diversity course work, preservice teachers tend to gravitate more toward the multicultural education approach, whereas with limited training, such as that received by those in the second category, there is a more evenly divided representation at 1% each, with respondents selecting between multicultural education and teaching the culturally different approaches. After several courses addressing multicultural and diversity issues, as represented by the third category of respondents, the opinions of the preservice teachers were more diversified among the various approaches. The researchers found identifiable patterns in the preservice teachers' choices. More specifically they found; (a) commitment to integration; (b) conceptions of equal educational opportunities; and c) conceptions of racism. Based upon these identified patterns the researchers conclude that the preservice teachers consistently and concomitantly demonstrated strong beliefs in integration and a rejection of practices they deemed would engender greater divisiveness among social groups (p. 17). This study is useful in how it enables teacher educators to have a clearer understanding of how preservice teachers respond to the

different approaches to multicultural education. What the researchers could not discern is whether or not this disposition was something the participants brought with them into the teacher preparation program, or if it was developed by the courses they had taken. This issue is at the heart of the present study. This research suggests that the multiple conceptualizations of multicultural education held by preservice teachers can represent different levels of readiness in personal, developmental and intellectual understandings of this complex issue. This also implies that preservice teachers are not empty vessels and are not uniformly prepared to receive the same message at the same time. Depending upon one's circumstances and life experiences, change can occur at different junctures in life. As such, it is vital that teacher educators acknowledge the *a priori* beliefs of entry-level preservice teachers in a constructive manner. Without providing ways in which preservice teachers can articulate their own beliefs about multicultural education, misconceptions, naïve thinking, hidden assumptions, and prejudices cannot surface. If allowed to remain buried, these beliefs can influence prospective teacher's actions and possibly prevent new understandings from occurring, which ultimately impact preservice classroom behavior.

It is this researcher's contention that influencing the approach to multicultural education a preservice teacher adapts are those beliefs and values they bring into a teacher preparation program. Gay (2002b) underscores the need for teacher educators to understand the beliefs of preservice teachers. She suggests that, "counter-productive beliefs [regarding issues of multicultural education] must be transformed before effective multicultural education can be successfully implemented" (p. 8). Failure to transform these counter-productive beliefs can contribute to teachers viewing of cultural and linguistic differences from a cultural deficient perspective, which as Gay claims, impedes the goals and aims of multicultural education. The impact of teachers' beliefs on students outcomes has long been investigated, and there is an

abundance of research which reveals that teachers' beliefs about students leads to differential expectations and treatment based on race/and ethnicity (Guttmann, & Bar-Tal, 1982; Hale-Benson, 1982; Rist, 1970), social class (Barron, Tom & Cooper, 1985; Cooper, Baron & Low, 1975, Rist, 1970), and gender differences (Sadker, Sadker & Long, 1993). This is significant for teacher educators to explore, for as Pohan & Aguilar (2001) suggest, if schools are to "better serve the needs and interests of all students, particularly students from groups that have not fared well in the U.S. educational system, then low expectations, negative stereotypes, biases/prejudices, and cultural misconceptions held by teachers must be identified, challenged, and reconstructed" (p. 160). This illuminates the imperative facing teacher educators today, namely a call for teacher preparation courses to effectively and competently prepare prospective educators in the areas of multiculturalism and diversity.

## **Multicultural Teacher Education**

### **Multicultural Teacher Education Framework**

There is an oft-cited quote that says "as our students become more diverse so must our ways of teaching them" (ASCD, 1995). A report on teacher quality (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2008) confirms that new and veteran teachers felt minimally prepared to teach students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Consequently, the increasing diversity of the United States public school population and its concomitant poor school performance has lead both educators and policy makers to reform teacher education programs (Banks, 2001; Nieto, 2004, Zeichner, 1993). As a result, state education departments are increasingly requiring colleges and universities to include in their curricula courses on cultural diversity (Varvus, 2000). According to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), teacher education programs must include coursework, field experiences, and clinical practice that

help prospective teachers to “acquire the ability to develop meaningful learning experiences for all students” (2008, p.31). More specifically Standard 4 on Diversity has requirements for curricula, field experiences, faculty, candidates, and the P-12 students with which preservice teachers work. It requires candidates to acquire and demonstrate the capacity to help all students learn. In addition, NCATE maintains that all accredited institutions have a conceptual framework which includes diversity. At the acceptable level, the following are proficiencies for preservice teachers’ capacity as it relates diversity:

- understand diversity, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities;
- be aware of different learning styles and adapt instruction or services appropriately for all students;
- connect lessons, instruction, or services to students’ experiences and cultures;
- communicate with students and families in ways that demonstrate sensitivity to cultural and gender differences;
- incorporate multiples perspectives in the subject matter being taught or services being provided;
- develop a classroom and school climate that values diversity;
- demonstrate classroom behaviors that are consistent with the ideas of fairness and the belief that all students can learn. (NCATE, 2008b)

The research literature suggest that interventions of coursework and field experiences can positively affect preservice teachers’ attitudes toward issues in multicultural education (e.g., Artiles & McLafferty 1998; Baker 1973, 1977; Bennett 1979; Bennett, Niggle, & Stage 1990; Tran, Young, & Di Lella, 1994; Warring, Keim, & Rau 1998). In one such study, Capella-Santana (2003) utilized a pre-, mid-, and post-test research design, which found that coursework and field experiences effected significant positive changes in preservice teacher attitudes toward issues in multicultural education. What is less clear in this pre-mid-post test inquiry design is what accounts for this change. The abundance of empirical research does not sufficiently explicate what attributes to this change. The limitations presented by such empirical inquiries help to contribute to critics of multicultural education central argument that the field and the

practice lack a sense of clarity (Schlesinger, 1998). In response, to such critics, multicultural theorists (Banks & Banks, 1989; Bennett, 1990; and Sleeter & Grant, 1988) recommended the following strategies as a necessary component to an effective multicultural teacher education curriculum:

- At least one course in multicultural education that takes into consideration the needs of all students.
- Information about the history and culture of students from a wide number of ethnic, racial, linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- Content about the contributions made by various groups.
- Information about first and second language acquisition and effective teaching practices for working with students from limited English proficient backgrounds, field experiences and student teaching opportunities with students from various backgrounds.

In “Educating Teachers for Diversity”, Doody (1997) takes a comprehensive approach to teacher training. Two goals form the foundation of his proposal;

1. Teacher educators will emphasize multicultural education to ensure equity of opportunity to learn, both in the teacher education classroom and in the future classrooms of preservice students.
2. Teacher educators will use multicultural education targeting those preconceptions of preservice students that are relevant to educating school children of and for diversity. (p. 4)

In addition, Zeichner (1997) identifies 16 components associated with effective education for diversity. Zeichner (1997) asserts that 12 of these components can be utilized to create an overview of the construction of a course that teacher educators can use as a framework for preparing preservice teachers for working in diverse educational settings. These components include:

*Element 1:* Preservice education students are helped to develop a clearer sense of their own ethnic and cultural identities.

*Elements 2 and 3:* Preservice education students are helped to examine their attitudes toward other ethno-cultural groups. They are taught about the dynamics of prejudice and racism and how to deal with them in the classroom.

*Element 4:* Preservice education students are taught about the dynamics of privilege and economic oppression and about school practices that contribute to the reproduction of societal inequalities.

*Element 5:* The teacher education curriculum addresses the histories and contributions of various ethno-cultural groups.

*Element 6:* Preservice education students are given information about the characteristics and learning styles of various groups and individuals. They are taught the limitations of this information.

*Element 7:* The teacher education curriculum gives much attention to socio-cultural research about the relationships among language, culture and learning.

*Element 8:* Preservice education students are taught various procedures by which they can gain information about the communities represented in their classrooms.

*Elements 9 and 10:* Preservice education students are taught how to assess the relationships between the methods they use in the classroom and preferred learning and interaction styles in their students' homes and communities. They are taught how to use various instructional strategies and assessment procedures sensitive to cultural and linguistic variations and how to adapt classroom instruction and assessment to accommodate the cultural resources that their students bring to school.

*Element 11:* Preservice education students are exposed to examples of successful teaching of ethnic and language minority students.

*Element 12:* Instruction is embedded in a group setting that provides both intellectual challenge and social support.

Notwithstanding this framework, a content analysis of multicultural teacher preparation course offerings revealed a substantial amount of variance regarding the topics covered in such courses (Sheets & Chew, 2001). Sleeter (2001) found that the goals and objectives of these courses were often dependent on a variety of instructor-related factors including instructors' qualifications, preparation, past experiences, and implicit attitudes toward multicultural education. As such, several researchers (Cabello & Burstein, 1995; Larke, 1990; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Mood, 1998) have questioned the effectiveness of coursework to transform teacher's beliefs about diversity.

### **Conceptual Framework for Multicultural Teacher Education**

McGeehan (1982) proposed four areas that multicultural education should address in order to be effective; knowledge, understanding, attitudes and behavior. Adding a degree of specificity to McGeehan's (1982) work, Bennett, Niggle & Stage (1990) outline four dimensions of a conceptual model for multicultural teacher education programs which is similar in scope: (a) knowledge is having a consciousness of the history, culture, and values of major ethnic groups, as well as acquiring and articulating a theory of cultural pluralism, (b) understanding includes having cross-cultural interactions and immersion experiences in which to apply cultural theory, (c) attitude involves an awareness and reduction of one's own prejudices and misconceptions about race; and (d) skill which includes planning and implementation of effective multicultural teaching practices (p.39). Offering a comparable conceptual framework for multicultural teacher education, Noel (1995) posits three components; knowledge, attitude and skills. According to Noel, knowledge is the fundamental basis for the other two components.

She asserts that preservice teachers must be equipped with a knowledgebase of others in order to be able to effectively engage with those who are different from themselves. As Noel contends, the second element, the attitudes component is quite complex because of its personal and subjective nature. The task of creating, changing and refining one's attitudes regarding diversity issues is accomplished, by examining one's own beliefs and perspectives because if left unexamined it can lead to discrimination and bias (p. 23). Finally, Noel asserts the skills component of a multicultural program involves planning and implementing multicultural lesson plans, addressing diverse learning styles, and worldviews and communication styles of students in schools. Hence, the importance of the frameworks is, as Guyton & Wesche (2005) insinuate, that a multicultural teacher education program will only be successful to the extent in which it develops courses and field experiences which address each of these dimensions (p.22). To that end, the Bennett, Niggle & Stage (1990) conceptual model also served as a means to organize the multitude of studies relating to multicultural education research into a cogent review of the related literature in support of this study.

### **Attitude**

Sleeter (2001) reported that research on changes in preservice teachers' attitudes and knowledge toward diversity yields different results. Most experimental studies investigated changes in attitudes using Likert type scales. She states that these studies provide decontextualized information in regards to preservice teachers' attitudes without a reference to their learning (p. 20). One of the most frequently cited measures in the multicultural beliefs literature is the 28-item Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (CDAI; Henry, 1986). Henry created a checklist to measure respondents' awareness of their "attitudes, beliefs and behavior toward young children of culturally diverse backgrounds" (p. 2). A review of the items on this

inventory conceptualized cultural diversity as cultural groups (e.g. ethnic groups) and non-English speakers. No information for scoring, interpretation, or for the reliability and validity of the checklist was provided in this booklet. In an oft-cited study, Larke (1990) used a modified version of the CDAI to study the cultural sensitivity levels of 51 elementary preservice teachers following a required multicultural education course. The reported data were group percentages based upon a 5-point Likert scale rather than on individual awareness scores. In addition, Larke did not discuss reliability or validity issues in her study. Other studies utilizing the CDAI (Davis & Turner, 1993; Davis & Whitner, 1994) also excluded data on the reliability and validity of the inventory. In sum the scoring procedures and data interpretation varied among those studies using the CDAI.

In other studies examining preservice teachers' attitudes regarding multicultural education, a majority of these cases are action research projects, subjecting them to researcher biases. For example, in a study conducted by Szabo & Anderson (2009) examined the impact of an entry-level teacher education course on preservice teachers' multicultural attitudes. The researchers wanted to find out which curriculum was the most effective at helping preservice teachers examine their multicultural attitudes. The researchers utilized a formative experiment framework. The experiment's framework does not include a control group, permitting modifications to the interventions as the study unfolds (p. 193). The participants were 144 undergraduate preservice teachers enrolled in a required introductory educational foundations course at a large Southwestern university. Unlike earlier studies of its kind, the Szabo and Anderson study utilized a constructivist framework, specifically the social learning theory. Social learning theory focuses on learning that occurs within a social context. The theory explains that individual attitudes and motivations as well as the environment in which learning

takes place are important elements in personal development. As such, social persuasion and support play important roles in what we think and how we act (Vygotsky, 1986).

Szabo & Anderson administered a pre- and post-test to measure preservice teachers' sensitivity to and familiarity with multicultural issues. Based upon the results, the researchers conclude a reasonably high internal-consistency coefficient for the pre-survey (alpha =.80), and for the post-survey (alpha =.81) which suggesting that the results are reliable (Ponterotto et. al, 1998, p. 194). Furthermore, the data revealed that the preservice teachers achieved a higher post-survey score (M=77.32; SD 7.49), than the pre-survey score (M=76.24, SD 8.83). However, as the researchers report, these differences were not statistically significant ( $p = .732$ ) (p. 194). The researchers also report findings collected from class discussion and reflections. However, in reporting their results, the researchers provide no analysis that examines themes or patterns which might help explain the rationale behind the frequency count.

### **Knowledge**

One of the challenges for teacher preparation programs comes from the cultural mismatch between educators and the students they serve (Ladson-Billings 1995). As such many multiculturalists propose a goal for teacher educators is to find a way to facilitate intercultural sensitivity and learning among preservice teachers, one way to do this is to increase the knowledgebase of prospective teachers (Causey, Thomas, & Armento, 2000). Causey et al. conducted a qualitative study to examine the effectiveness of a multicultural education course objectives to facilitate intercultural sensitivity and learning among 24 preservice teachers during their final year of a teacher preparation program and again three years later. Prior to the course the majority of the preservice teachers expressed little to no confidence in their prior knowledge about other ethnic groups. In a qualitative analysis of the autobiographical and post-experiences

essays, reflection journals, and the diversity actions plans developed by the students, distinct patterns emerged from the data that provided a description of the preservice teachers knowledge and dispositions toward diversity issues at the start and close of the course. In analyzing the data, the researchers were looking for evidence of cognitive restructuring such as recognition of cognitive dissonance between prior beliefs and new learning (p. 36). Causey et al. concluded that the majority of the preservice teachers retained their former belief schemata (p.38). However, the researchers note that some of the student teachers came away from the course with new insights and knowledge about themselves and others as evident in their post-essays. Seeking to investigate whether the effects of a diversity course can result in long term changes in knowledge and beliefs, the researchers returned to their initial study three years later this time to conduct a case study involving two participants who appeared restructured their diversity schema as a result of the multicultural education course. To triangulate the data, the researchers conducted individual interviews, classroom observations, with two observers per class, and a group interview with both participants. The researchers found one of the participants restructured her diversity beliefs after her teacher education program revert to a less than culturally sensitive stance during her three years of teaching; while another participant restructured her notions about diversity as a result of the teacher education program and continued to act upon her new belief schema over her three years of professional teaching. Causey et al. (2000) highlight several important implications for teacher education as a result of their study. First they note that it is difficult to influence long-held beliefs and attitudes in the space of one course (p. 43). Second, they conclude that a well articulated program with attention to diversity issues over several semesters provides the best hope for moving preservice teachers toward greater cultural sensitivity and knowledge in order to be effective in culturally diverse classrooms.

Similarly, Torok & Aguilar (2000) conducted a mixed-methods study with 33 preservice teachers to investigate preservice teachers' knowledgebase and belief systems about diversity in general, with a focus on language issues including bilingual and English as a Second Language education programs. The preservice teachers' knowledgebase and beliefs regarding language issues were measured before and after a multicultural education course. Changes were reported on pre-test and post-test items regarding language beliefs and language knowledge. The researchers also found that the preservice teachers' beliefs about language were more accepting following the intervention. Torok & Aguilar that increased multicultural education knowledge could lead to a deeper understanding about diversity, as well as changes in personal and professional beliefs.

In a case study of preservice teachers taking a course, *Multiculturalism in Education*, at a Midwestern university, Wasonga (2005) investigated the effects of multicultural knowledgebase on attitudes and feelings of preparedness to teach children from diverse backgrounds. This descriptive study used a series of surveys. The surveys and assessments were taken at the beginning (pre-test) and at the end (post-test) of the course, *Multiculturalism in Education*. The pre-and post-tests were used to quantify growth within the period (one semester). The results indicate that a class in multicultural education significantly increased knowledge about diversity attitudes toward multicultural and levels of preparedness to teach children from diverse backgrounds. However, the researchers acknowledge that the findings of the study do not demonstrate that the course was the only factor improving preservice teachers' attitudes, knowledge and preparedness to teach children of diverse backgrounds (p. 69). The researchers report no correlation between multicultural knowledge and attitudes and between attitudes and preparedness to teach children from diverse backgrounds. Wasonga asserts that for many teacher

educators, the primary goal of multicultural education courses is to focus the instruction on deepening students' knowledgebase regarding issues of diversity and multicultural education (Cabello & Burstein, 1995). While the research is promising, as Schunk (1996) notes, knowledge alone cannot predict future classroom behavior. Schunk contends that the focal point of teacher education programs should be to develop ways to increase preservice teachers' sense of efficacy by incorporating efficacy--building activities (e.g., mastery experiences and vicarious experiences) into the course work.

### **Understanding**

According to Bennett, Niggle & Stage (1990), understanding includes having cross-cultural interactions and immersion experiences in which to apply cultural theory. Teacher educators have push to supplement coursework with practicum and clinical experience (Sleeter, 2001). Cabello & Burstein (1995) and Hilliard (1998) assert that when coursework is supplemented with practicum and clinical experiences, it provides students with additional opportunities to link theory to practice. Linking theory to practice involves exposing students to best practices and simultaneously teaching them about the theory underling those practices (Hilliard, 1998). Influenced by the work of John Dewey (1938), most teacher education programs across the nation use field experiences to allow preservice teachers to integrate knowledge and experiences, practice teaching skills, and connect theory to practice (Gallego, 2001; Moore, 2003). According to Dewey (1938), this firsthand experience is important in preservice teacher preparation; however, he cautioned that not all experiences are beneficial. Dewey (1938) stated,

The belief that all genuine education comes through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are miseducative. Any experience is miseducative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further

experience. An experience may be such as to engender callousness; it may produce lack of callousness; it may produce lack of sensitivity and of responsiveness. Then the possibilities of having richer experiences in the future are restricted (p. 25-26)

Dewey's words serve as a reminder that not all experiences are valuable for preservice teachers (Siwatu, 2007). As Wiggins and Follo (1999) conclude from their study, field experiences in diverse settings can if not properly structured reinforce some long-held stereotypes by some of the preservice teachers.

Pattnaik and Vold (1998), using an ethnographic methodology investigated multicultural beliefs and attitudes of preservice teachers placed in either a rural or a suburban public school for their student teaching. Overall, the study participants tended to favor a multicultural curriculum which emphasized commonalities so the curriculum could be tension free. The study further revealed inconsistencies between study participants' beliefs and classroom practices.

In another study, Mason (1998) investigated the differences among preservice teachers' attitudes regarding teaching in urban and suburban populations. Mason compared two groups of preservice students, one placed in an urban school and the other placed in suburban schools for their field experiences. Mason found that field experiences in urban schools had an overall positive effect on preservice teachers' attitudes toward urban schools. Additionally, the preservice teachers placed in urban schools for field experiences believed that they gained a better understanding than the suburban peers about students from different cultural backgrounds. This study indicates the importance of pairing academic course work with proper field experiences for preparing preservice teachers to teach in diverse school contexts. What is not evident from Mason's study is whether or not those preservice teachers reporting a positive experience in the urban setting had a pre-disposition to teach in such context thus making them more accepting of the prescribed goals of multicultural education.

As the research literature indicates it is common for a pre-test treatment, post-test design to be used as a part of the methodology to evaluate change. However as researchers (Rokeach, p. 140, as cited in Bell, 1977) who specifically examined the concept of change, suggest, what is important to remember when examining change is for one to keep in mind that the pre-post test design methodology “is not capable of telling us whether an expressed behavior indicates change; it can only tell us whether an expression of behavior has or has not changed as a result of a particular experimental treatment” (p. 139). Consequently, what accounts for this change is often missing in studies of this nature, thus suggesting a need for more qualitative research studies explicating prospective educators’ rationales. For if change is to occur in teachers, Bell (1997) asserts, “it will do so as a result of satisfaction from the change” (p.140). Understanding what accounts for this change is an important factor to consider when examining change or a lack of change in teachers.

Agnello & Mittag (1999) examined 33 preservice teachers’ attitudinal changes between their internship and student teaching experience using a cultural sensitivity inventory. In addition, the researchers also included a qualitative component to their study. The treatment group consisted of preservice teachers in either their student teaching or internships while the students in the control group had yet to complete their student teaching semester prior to participation in the study. The researchers found that classroom teaching for one semester had not statistically affected the cultural attitudes of those preservice teachers even though the magnitude of positive change was more for the treatment group (Agnello & Mittag, 1999). The mean of the treatment group was 1.19 and 0.90 for the control group (p. 28). Whereas in their analysis of the qualitative data, the researchers found that many of the preservice teachers had

incorporated information relating to working with students from different cultural backgrounds to create positive learning environments.

### **Skills**

The skills component of a multicultural education programs involves planning and implementing multicultural lesson plans, addressing diverse learning styles, worldviews and communication of students in schools. While this is an important component of the multicultural education conceptual framework, the research in this area is sparse. Understanding the complexity of this component, researchers, such as, Hilliard (1996) suggests a component of teacher preparation should be a competency test by preservice teachers on their ability to implement multicultural educational pedagogy.

As these studies indicate, multicultural teacher education programs understand the centrality of improving preservice teachers' skills, attitudes, knowledge and understanding in order that preservice teachers may become competent and effective teachers in rapidly changing school context. Also, as the more recent research literature seems to suggest that as the field of multicultural education has evolved to its present status, so has the ability of teacher educators to create effective multicultural education courses to meet the challenges inherent in teaching in a culturally pluralistic, democratic society.

### **Teacher Efficacy**

In a review of research examining teacher beliefs, Kagan (1992) concludes that few would deny the connection between teacher beliefs and teacher behavior in the classroom. He asserts the beliefs teachers hold influence their perceptions and judgments, which in turn affects their behavior in the classroom. Consequently, teacher efficacy is a future-oriented motivational construct that reflects a teacher's competence beliefs for teaching tasks. In 1976, the RAND

Corporation and its researchers designed a series of studies to examine the factors that influenced the success of various reading programs and interventions (Armor, et al., 1976; Berman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly & Zellman, 1977). The researchers operationally defined teacher efficacy as “the extent to which the teacher believed he or she had the capacity to affect student performance” (McLaughlin, & Marsh, 1978, p. 84). This interest in teachers’ sense of efficacy led to the creation of two survey items:

Rand Item #1: When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can’t do much because most of a student’s motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment.

This item reflected an external control orientation. It highlights the powerlessness of teachers in the face of students’ home experiences. The second RAND item asked:

Rand Item #2: If I really try hard, I can’t get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students (Berman et al., 1977, p. 159-160).

This item reflected an internal control orientation, emphasizing the power of the teacher to reach students regardless of their environmental conditions (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). The efficacy items in the RAND research study were strongly related to reading achievement (Armor et al., 1976); student achievement; teacher behaviors known to foster achievement; a willingness to accept change and an increased likelihood of successfully implementing innovation (Berman, et al., 1977). The belief to which teachers believed they had the capacity to affect student performance was among the most powerful factors examined by RAND researchers in their investigation of teacher characteristics and student learning (Armor et al., 1976).

Expanding upon the RAND work, Guskey (1981) developed a 30-item instrument titled Responsibility for Student Achievement. In constructing this scale, efficacy, they defined as “a teachers’ belief or conviction that he or she can influence how well students learn, even those

who may be difficult or unmotivated” (Guskey, 1987, p. 41). Self-efficacy became a causal explanation for what an individual can do. Guskey’s scale measured the amount of responsibility for student learning a teacher felt in general, as well as two subscale scores, which reflected the degree of responsibility felt for student success and student failure. This understanding of efficacy described by Guskey was rooted in attribution theory (Weiner, 1979, 1992) and conceptions of locus of control (Rotter, 1966). Both theories reflect an individual’s willingness to act based on perceived amounts of control over consequences. In this case the consequences referred to achieving positive student outcomes despite the impact of external conceptualization. Building upon Rand’s and Guskey’s study, a second strand of research emerged. This strand of research examined teachers’ sense of efficacy through the theoretical lens of Bandura’s (1977, 1986) social cognitive theory (Soodak & Podell, 1998; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Woolfolk, 2001).

### **Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory**

The second strand of research on teacher efficacy comes as a result of Bandura’s (1977) social cognitive theory. In social cognitive theory, Bandura (1977) introduced the concept of self-efficacy as the primary motivational force behind an individual’s actions. Bandura’s social cognitive theory and the construct of self-efficacy were first described in his seminal article, “*Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change.*” Bandura (1978) defines self-efficacy as “belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (p. 3). He contends that self-efficacy influences thought patterns and emotions that enable actions in which people are willing to expend substantial effort in pursuit of goals, persist in the face of adversity, rebound from temporary setbacks, and exercise some control over events that affect their lives (Bandura, 1986, 1993, 1997). The development of the

construct reflects the belief that effective functioning requires more than the acquisition of knowledge and skills and a level of competence (Bandura, 1986, 1993). Bandura posits that the development of a strong sense of efficacy is necessary to put the acquired skills to use (Evans, 1989). In an attempt to explain how efficacy beliefs develop, Bandura (1978) proposed that efficacy beliefs develop from four sources of information: mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and psychological and emotional states.

### **Mastery Experience**

According to Bandura (1978), mastery experience is the most influential source in the development of self-efficacy (Evans, 1989; Pajares, 1996; Schunk, 1991, 1998). These experiences provide an individual with evidence pertaining to their ability to execute a specified task. Tschannen-Moran (1998) suggest that when applied to teachers and teaching tasks, that the actual teaching experience becomes the most influential activity that shapes a person's confidence in their abilities. It is through enriching teaching experiences researcher's Lee (2002) asserts that both student teachers and in-service teachers acquire information about their effectiveness and the consequences of their efforts.

### **Vicarious Experience**

Bandura (1977) believes that when an individual observes a model successfully execute a task, this observation influences an individual's beliefs in his or her own abilities. In teacher education, preservice teachers' formulate ideas about their abilities from professional literature, field experiences, and classroom observations (Lee, 2002). Several studies investigated the influence that field experiences have on the development of preservice teachers' sense of efficacy (Cannon & Scharmann, 1996; Paramewwaran, 1998). The findings from these studies suggest that field experiences have a positive influence on the development of students' science

teaching efficacy. The results support the idea that vicarious learning experiences influence the development of preservice teachers' sense of efficacy. These findings also have implications for not only field placement decisions but also for the design, structure and expectations for clinical experiences.

### **Verbal Persuasion**

Bandura (1977) contends that individuals receive information about their efficacy through verbal persuasion and messages from others. When preservice teachers receive positive messages from sources such as their cooperating teachers, practicum supervisor, and peers, as well as constructive feedback from faculty increases their sense of efficacy (Lee, 2002). This increased sense of efficacy results in preservice teachers' exerting more effort and persisting longer when they experience difficulty in the classroom (Lee, 2002). Thus verbal persuasion has implications for preservice teachers and their relationship with cooperating teachers, as well as for new and beginning teachers and the need for quality mentors.

### **Physiological and Emotional States**

Bandura (1977) posits that when confronted individuals with an emotionally arousing situation that is stressful, or a physiological change, these reactions have an impact on an individual's self-efficacy. This is applicable to teacher self-efficacy beliefs when preservice teachers experience an emotional or physiological reaction. Their responses may influence their confidence in their teaching ability. For example, high levels of stress may decrease preservice teachers' confidence to teach (Lee, 2002).

### **Gibson and Dembo's Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES)**

Grounded by the theoretical work of Rotter's (1966) locus of control and Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory, Gibson and Dembo (1984) developed a scale, The Teacher

Efficacy Scale (TES). The TES assessed teachers' sense of general teaching efficacy and personal teaching efficacy. The researchers administered the TES to 208 elementary and middle school teachers. For each item participants were to rate their level of agreement using a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 6 (strongly disagree). When the factor analysis of the items yielded a two-factor structure, Gibson & Dembo assumed that the two factors reflected the two expectancies of Bandura's social cognitive theory: self-efficacy and outcome expectancy (Siwatu, 2009). Consequently, they called the first factor, personal teaching efficacy (PTE  $\alpha = 0.75$ ), assuming that it reflected self-efficacy; and the second they called general teaching efficacy or teaching efficacy; (GTE  $\alpha = 0.79$ ) assuming that it captured outcome expectancy. Other researchers using the Gibson & Dembo's items confirmed the existence of two factors (Anderson et al., 1988, Burley et al, 1991; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). In the second phase of their study, they conducted a multitrait-multimethod analysis. The purpose of this analysis was to determine if the construct could be differentiated from other constructs pertaining to teachers. To conduct this analysis, 55 teachers participated in the study. The participants completed a variety of instruments: (1) two measures of efficacy (TES and an open-ended measure of teachers' sense of efficacy), (2) two measures of verbal ability (Verbal Facility Test and Controlled Associations Test), and (3) two measures of flexibility (Find Useful Parts Test and the Planning Test). The results of the analysis revealed significant correlation between teacher efficacy, verbal ability and flexibility which suggest that the construct of teacher efficacy is a distinctly different teacher trait (Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

### **Subject-Matter Specific Modifications of Gibson and Dembo's Instrument**

One unresolved issue in the measurement of teacher efficacy is determining the optimal level of specificity. Pintrich & Schunk (1996) note, that the level of specificity is one of the most

difficult issues to be resolved for cognitive or motivational theories that propose domain specificity (p. 79). They assert, that in general, while attempts to limit the scope of the efficacy beliefs have been fruitful in terms of finding significant results, but whether these measures have greater predictive value and are more generalized than other global measures has yet to be determined (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Recognizing that many standard efficacy instruments overlook the specific teaching context, some researchers have modified the Gibson & Dembo (1984) instrument to explore teachers' sense of efficacy within particular curriculum areas.

### **Science Teaching**

Science educators conducted extensive research on the effects of teacher-efficacy on science teaching and learning. Riggs & Enoch's (1990) developed an instrument, based on the Gibson and Dembo (1984) approach, to measure the efficacy of teaching science, The Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument (STEBI). Consistent with Gibson & Dembo (1984), Riggs & Enoch's (1990) study found two separate factors, one they called personal science teaching efficacy (TSTE) and a second they labeled science teaching outcome expectancy (STOE). The results indicated that the two factors were uncorrelated.

### **Special Education**

To explore efficacy in the context of special education, Meijer & Foster (1988) developed the Dutch Teacher Self-Efficacy scale, which they used to study the likelihood of referral to special education in the Netherlands. Teachers completed an 11-item instrument assessing personal teaching efficacy beliefs. Questions included such items as "I become truly discouraged when I see a pupil returning to problem behavior" or "I can handle virtually any learning problem." The researchers found that high efficacy teachers are more likely to believe that a problem student was appropriately placed in the regular classroom.

### **Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, and Hoy Model of Teacher Efficacy**

Subsequently, while Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy and Hoy (2001) note that the Gibson & Dembo's (1984) measure is the most popular of the teacher efficacy instruments; they maintain that problems remain with it both conceptually and statistically. They point out its lack of clarity regarding the meaning of the two factors and the instability of the factor structure, thus calling for a new clearer measure. Tschannen-Moran et al (1998) proposed a new model of teacher efficacy. Sources of efficacy beliefs in this model explicitly follow those proposed by Bandura (1977): mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological cues, providing a backdrop for the mechanisms of cognitive processing. The researchers assert that cognitive processing in this model refers to the combined examination and evaluation of the task (i.e., task analysis) and the assessment of the individual's personal competence. This belief is then manifested into goals, efforts, and persistence which teachers employ to complete a task which in turn impacts their self-efficacy. Thus Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk and Hoy (2001) created, The Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES), to assess teachers' competence reflecting the full range of teaching tasks. The factor structure, reliability, and validity of the new measure indicate the appropriateness of the new scale for both preservice and in-service teacher populations. The researchers found the total score on the OSTES to be positively related to the Rand ( $r = 0.35$  and  $0.28$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and to the personal teacher efficacy (PTE) factor of the Gibson & Dembo measure ( $r = 0.48$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), as well as to the general teacher efficacy (GTE) factors ( $r = 0.30$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk and Hoy (2001) distinguish their study from Gibson & Dembo's (1984) TES instrument in that their instrument, the OSTES, looks beyond focusing on students with difficulties and centers its attention on the components of good teaching. As Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk and Hoy (2001) demonstrate in

their study, understanding the efficacy of preservice and beginning teachers is crucial for teacher educators to understand. This line of research is relevant because a greater understanding of a teacher's efficacy belief can contribute to fostering greater equity in school, which is a central goal of multicultural education.

### **Teacher Efficacy and Multicultural Competency**

An emerging body of research has begun the task of contextualizing efficacy with an explicit focus on diversity, culturally responsive teaching and multiculturalism. In an attempt to increase efforts to prepare culturally responsive teachers; Siwatu (2009) developed the 40-item Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSE). Siwatu (2009) believes that many of the existing teachers' self-efficacy measures were insufficient in assessing preservice and in-service teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy beliefs. He designed a scale to assess teachers' self-efficacy to execute practices of culturally responsive teaching. The items on the scale included reference to each of the 29 culturally responsive teaching competencies (p. 4). These competencies describe the practices (e.g. knowledge and skills) of successful teachers of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and whose pedagogical approach is culturally responsive (Siwatu, 2009). The scale used Bandura's (2006) guidelines for constructing self-efficacy scales. According to Bandura (2006), self-efficacy scales should contain a variety of items that vary in their degree of magnitude. Bandura asserts that varying the level of difficulty avoids ceiling effects and highlights the types of tasks that individuals are confident in their ability to execute. The data for this study was drawn from a population of preservice elementary school teachers enrolled in a teacher education program located in the Midwest. Of the total sample (n=104), (93%) were female and (7%) were male. To obtain background information on the participants, such as their academic and demographic

backgrounds, the Academic and Demographic Background Information Questionnaire, included in this questionnaire were items eliciting information from preservice teachers pertaining to their racial background; major, coursework; number of practicum completed; feelings of preparedness; and experience in multicultural settings. The participants in the study had taken two courses dealing with issues of diversity. In addition to their coursework, preservice teachers in the study also had at least one practicum...

The CRTSE consists of 40 items in which participants were to rate how confident they were in their ability to engage in specific culturally responsive teaching practices, (e.g. "I am able to identify the diverse needs of my students") by indicating a degree of confidence ranging from 0 (no confidence at all) to 100 (completely confident). The responses to each item were summed and divided by the total number of items to generate a CRTSE strength index. This index, which ranges from 0 (low self-efficacy beliefs) to 100 (high self-efficacy beliefs) is a quantitative indicator of the strength of each preservice teacher's CRTSE beliefs. The internal reliability for the 40-item measure was .96, as estimated by Cronbach's alpha. The sample of preservice teachers' self-efficacy strength indexes ranges from 11.13 to 100.0 with a mean of 78.7 (SD =13.06). While the means and ranges of the CRTSE strength indexes are helpful in assessing the strength of the surveyed preservice elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, Siwatu (2009) indicates that the scores may be misleading. He suggests that since culturally responsive teaching is multifaceted, more weight should be placed on the item-specific mean rather than the strength index (p. 6). Item-specific means examined the nature of preservice elementary teachers CRTSE beliefs. The results indicate that preservice teachers were most self-efficacious in their ability to use a variety of teaching and instructional methods (e.g. cooperative learning activities) that incorporates students' interests into the teaching-learning process.

Preservice elementary school teachers were also more confident in their ability to develop positive, trusting student-teacher relationships, and helping students feel like important members of the classroom. Also, the item specific means reveal that these preservice teachers also believed in their ability to communicate with parents regarding their child's academic progress and to structure parent conferences that were not intimidating for parents. Based upon the study's findings Siwatu (2009) concludes that preservice teachers are more self-efficacious in their ability to develop personal relationships and use a variety of teaching strategies when working with culturally and linguistically diverse students. A closer examination of the findings suggest that preservice teachers' self-efficacy beliefs were highest for successfully completing tasks that may come naturally such as building a sense of trust, developing personal relationships with students and making students feel important. In addition, the findings suggest that preservice teachers were confident in their ability to execute tasks that may be more commonly discussed in their teacher preparation courses (e.g., using students' interest in the teaching-learning process, and using cooperative learning groups). Noticeably missing from the list of tasks and skills in which preservice teachers were highly self-efficacious was the integration of culture into the teaching learning process and communicating with English Language Learners. Given the nature of preservice teachers' CRTSE beliefs, Siwatu suggest that preservice teachers may be less likely to implement the more critical and essential aspects of culturally responsive teaching once they enter the classroom. He offers one possible explanation for the above findings, stating that they may be attributable to the fact that preservice teachers in this particular study lacked meaningful and prolonged experiences with culturally and linguistically diverse students and had limited opportunities to observe culturally responsive teachers in action. He contends that providing opportunities for preservice teachers to observe and execute the practices of culturally responsive

teaching may provide them with the mastery and vicarious experiences needed to develop their self-efficacy. The research literature supports this assertion indicating that field-experiences that constitute self-efficacy building is effective in sustaining and building preservice teachers self-efficacy (Cannon & Scharmann, 1996; Paramewwaran, 1998). Siwatu's (2009) study informs the present study, specifically in his call for quantitative research questions that examine how CRTSE beliefs differ among teachers at various stages of development (e.g. preservice, novice and experienced novice educators) and the use of qualitative research questions that explore the sociocultural factors which influence the development of CRTSE beliefs.

Furthering the research seeking to contextualize teacher efficacy, researchers, Guyton & Wesche (2005) created the Multicultural Efficacy Scale, (MES) to capture the multicultural teacher education dimensions of intercultural experiences, minority group knowledge, attitudes about diversity, and knowledge of teaching skills in multicultural settings. In Guyton and Wesche pilot study a total of 665 undergraduate and graduate teacher education students from geographic regions across the United States completed the 160-item MES pilot, and supplied demographic information regarding their gender, age, socioeconomic status, education level, and ethnic and religious backgrounds. According to the researchers, item selection for the MES was selected on the basis of a two-stage statistical analysis of the pilot project data. The first stage of analysis reduced the MES to 80 items. The second stage produced a final MES consisting of 35 items: 7 experience items, 7 attitude items, 20 efficacy items, with one additional item asking participants to identify their strongest beliefs about teaching in multicultural educational settings (p. 24). The experience with diversity section (Section (A) is not for scoring multicultural efficacy, but for providing descriptive information used for comparative purposes. The findings of their study support the internal validity of the total MES and its subscales. For example, in all

cases in the attitude section, the researchers report a median score of 4. In all cases in the efficacy section the median was a 3. In addition to the findings on each of the subscales, the researchers report that a majority of the respondents (42%) indicate that they viewed multiculturalism as the major purpose of multicultural education. Guyton and Wesche insist that this viewpoint held is significant for teacher educators to understand for it is consistent with the current research on multicultural education, representing a shift in the tolerance perspective, which as researchers note can lead to resistance on the part of preservice and beginning teachers and their abilities to effectively implement multicultural educational practices. Finally, the overall intent of the scale is consistent with the goals of this study, namely, to use the MES as a means of diagnosing the kinds of teacher education needed in terms of the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and understandings to move preservice teachers toward becoming multiculturally efficacious.

The intent of this section of the dissertation was to present an understanding of multicultural education from its earliest beginnings as a curriculum reform movement, to its more present day conceptualization. It is evident from the research that the tremendous cultural, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic diversity in schools today calls for multicultural education programs that reflect understanding and respect for student' differences. Embracing cultural pluralism as a positive element in society provides individuals with increased opportunities to experience other cultures as well as opportunities to understand their own. As the research literature indicates, there is a need to strengthen preservice teachers' multicultural efficacy, by increasing their understanding, knowledge, skills, and attitudes which can serve as a point of entry for teacher educators toward effectively preparing novice teachers for the challenges of teaching in a culturally pluralistic society.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore the importance of multicultural education for preservice teachers. More specifically, this study examined preservice and beginning teachers' multicultural efficacy, which researchers define as "one's confidence in his or her ability to effectively implement multicultural educational practices" (Guyton & Wesche, p. 23 2005). To accomplish its stated goal, this study sought to address three research questions, namely: (a) Do preservice and beginning teachers approaches to multicultural education differ as measured by the Multicultural Efficacy Scale, (MES)?; (b)What is the difference (if any) between preservice and beginning teachers' multicultural efficacy as measured by the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES)?; and (c) What factors do preservice and beginning teachers see as influencing the construction of their knowledge, attitudes, skills, and understandings toward their ability to effectively implement multicultural educational practices? To address this question, the study compared preservice and beginning teachers' multicultural efficacy before, during, and after exposure to a multicultural education course taken as a part of a teacher preparation program.

This chapter describes the methodological approach framing this study and includes discussions pertaining to the following areas: (a) the rationale for the selected research approach, research design, and the underlying philosophical assumptions guiding this decision, ((b) methods of data collection, (c) the system for analyzing both the quantitative and qualitative data, (d) issues of trustworthiness (legimatization), and (e) exploration of the inherent limitations in conducting such an investigation. The chapter concludes with a summation of this section.

## **Rationale for Mixed-Methods Research in Multicultural Education**

As Ladson-Billings (1995) suggests, “the field of multicultural education is complex and no one measure alone can sufficiently capture [its] complexity” (p. 237). While the MES can be a useful tool in measuring developmental changes in preservice teachers beliefs and attitudes regarding issues of diversity as they are trained in multicultural education, it fails to provide as Sleeter (2001) contends a textured reading of what [preservice teachers] learn. As such Guyton & Wesche (2005) assert that, “triangulation of measures is the best way to determine a person’s multicultural perspective” (p. 26), thus suggesting that quantitative measures when used in conjunction with qualitative data can provide a degree of richness and depth that is not as clearly articulated when using either approach alone.

When considering the use of mixed methods research, Newman (2003) asserts that the goals of the intended research are made explicit. As such, the primary aim of this study was to measure changes in preservice teachers as they are trained in multicultural education and the impact of the course on their student teaching and into their early years of professional practice. A secondary aim was to make note of relative strengths and weakness of a multicultural education teacher preparation course, and lastly the study sought to diagnose levels of multicultural efficacy as possible indicators of the kinds of teacher education programs (e.g. course work) needed to effectively and competently prepare future educators for the challenges in teaching in culturally pluralistic school context. In consideration of the aims of the present study, a mixed method research approach is the most appropriate mode of inquiry.

### **Overview of Research Design**

According to Onwuegbuzie (2009) mixed methods research is both a research approach and a research design. The choice of a mixed method research design utilizes what Turner and

Johnson (2003) call the “fundamental principle of mixed research.” According to this principle, researchers should collect multiple data using different strategies, approaches, and methods in such a way that the resulting mixture or combinations are likely to result in complementary strengths and no overlapping weaknesses (p. 230). Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) argue that the effective use of this principle is a major source of justification for mixed methods research because the product will be superior to mono-method studies (18). A mixed method research design is formally defined as:

[T]he class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study. Mixed-methods research design is an attempt to legitimize the use of multiple approaches in answering research questions, rather than restricting or constraining researchers’ choices. It is an expansive and creative form of research, not a limiting form of research. It is inclusive, pluralistic, and complementary, and it suggests that researchers take an eclectic approach to method selection and the thinking about the conduct of research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004 p. 17).

Teddlie & Tashakkori (2006, 2009) provide a useful typology for selecting a mixed methods research design called the Methods-Strands Matrix. This matrix presents design options that are organized by: (a) choosing the type of approach that will be utilized in the study and (b) selecting the number of strands or phases that will be implemented in the study. Ultimately, this matrix yields five families of research design: parallel, sequential, conversion, multilevel, and fully integrated. This research design consists of two distinct phases, a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. More specifically, for this study the researcher first collected and analyzed the quantitative (numeric) data. Then the qualitative (text) data was collected and analyzed to help explain, and/or elaborate on the quantitative results obtained in the first phase (Creswell, Plano Clark et al., 2003). The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data and their subsequent analysis provide a general understanding of the research questions under

investigation. While the qualitative data and its analysis reflects and explains those statistical results by exploring the participants' views in more depth (Rossman & Wilson, 1985; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Creswell, 2003).

### **Philosophical Assumptions**

Collins & O'Cathain (2009) assert that a researcher who utilizes a mixed methods design approaches an investigation by initiating and completing a series of steps focused on the process of mixing in a study. These steps represent what the researchers call a recursive process that is shaped by a researcher's mental mode. Greene (2007) defines a mental mode "as a complex, multifaceted lens through which a social inquirer perceives and makes sense of the social world...and it is the inquirer's mental mode that frames and guides social inquiry" (p. 89).

According to Creswell (2007) when designing and conducting mixed methods research, researchers should know the alternative worldviews underlying their research and be able to articulate the paradigms they are using. Creswell, among others (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Paul, 2005; Slife & Williams, 1995) identify four worldviews used in basic research namely; post-positivism, constructivism, advocacy and participation, and pragmatism. Creswell (2007) suggests that post-positivism is often associated with quantitative approaches. From this worldview he maintains that researchers make claims for knowledge based on (a) determinism or cause and effect thinking; (b) reductionism, by narrowing and focusing on selecting variables to interrelate; and (c) detailed observations and measures of variables and the testing of theories that are continually refined. While in contrast, constructivism is typically associated with qualitative approaches. Creswell contends that those who hold this perspective seek to understand or gain meaning of phenomena through participants and their subjective views. He further argues that this form of inquiry research is shaped "from the bottom up" from individual

perspectives to broad patterns and ultimately, to theory. The third worldview, Creswell identifies is advocacy and participatory; this approach is more often associated with qualitative approaches than quantitative approaches. However, as Creswell points out, it does not always need to have this association. Central to this worldview is the goal to improve our society. Issues such as empowerment, marginalization, hegemony, patriarchy, and other issues affecting marginalized groups are addressed and researchers collaborate with individuals experiencing these injustices. The final worldview, pragmatism is often associated with mixed methods research. Pragmatism is a set of ideas articulated by many people, from historical figures, such as Dewey, James, and Pierce to contemporaries, such as Cherryholmes (1992), Murphy (1990), and Worthy (1990). It draws on many ideas, including employing what works using diverse approaches and values both objective and subjective knowledge. Recently, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003(a) formally aligned pragmatism and mixed methods research, arguing that

1. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods may be used in a single study.
2. The research question should be of primary importance—more important than either the method or the philosophical worldview that underlies the method.
3. The forced-choice dichotomy between post-positivism and constructivism should be abandoned.
4. The use of metaphysical concepts such as “truth” and “reality” should also be abandoned.
5. A practical and applied research philosophy should guide methodological choices.

Morse (1991) suggests that the worldview framing a study should serve as a guide in determining the weight of each approach. In mixed methods research, weighting refers to the relative importance or priority given to the quantitative and qualitative methods used to answer the study’s questions. For instance, a postpositivist worldview calls for a quantitative priority, a naturalistic worldview calls for a qualitative priority, and a pragmatic worldview calls for either equal or unequal weighting, depending on the research question. Considering the research

questions under investigation in this study coupled with the selected research design, the explanatory sequential participant selection model this study can best be described using the following notation: quan→QUAL. This notation depicts the fact that two methods were implemented in a definite sequence with emphasis on the qualitative data.

### **The Research Sample**

As Onwuegbuzie (2007) suggest, sampling is the most important step in the research process because it helps to inform the quality of inferences made by the researcher. This decision becomes complicated in mixed methods designs using either concurrently or sequential approaches (p.281). Thus Onwuegbuzie (2007) suggest one important consideration in selecting a sampling scheme is the overall goal of the study. Since the goal of the present study is to obtain insights into the multicultural efficacy of preservice and beginning teachers and the impact of a multicultural education course upon these participants, a multistage purposeful sample was selected. The multistage purposeful sampling scheme consists of choosing settings, groups, and/or individuals representing a sample in two or more stages in which all stages reflect purposeful sampling of participants.

Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) suggest three basic questions regarding sampling procedures that should be openly addressed by researchers considering a mixed research approach procedure: 1) *Should the sampling be the same or use different individuals?* In an explanatory design with a follow up component, the same individuals are included in both data collections. The intent is to use the qualitative data to provide more detail about the quantitative results and to select participants that can best provide this detail. 2) *Should the sample sizes be the same or different?* In an explanatory design the qualitative data collection is from a smaller sample than the quantitative data collection because the intent is not to merge the data, therefore

unequal sizes are not an issue in sequential designs. 3) *What criteria should be used in an explanatory design in which quantitative data is analyzed in stage 1 and needs to be explained by a qualitative stage 2?* Onwuegbuzie & Collins (2007) suggest several possible considerations including: examining key results from stage one to follow up on, or results which might be statistically significant or statistically non-significant, outlier or extreme cases, or as in the case of the present study individuals who volunteer to participate in interviews.

Preservice and beginning teachers from within the same teacher education program at a large Midwestern research extensive university served as the population for this study. The sample for this study represents 4 groups of respondents; the first and second groups consist of preservice teachers (n=92) enrolled in one of two offerings of the course, *Education in a Multicultural Society*. The third group (n=93) is comprised of preservice teachers finished with their student teaching semester and were in the midst of their student teaching internships. These participants completed, the required course, *Education in a Multicultural Society*. The fourth group of participants (n=31) consist of beginning teachers in at least their first, but no more than their third year of professional teaching. These participants were done with the required coursework for licensure in the state of Kansas, including the course, *Education in a Multicultural Society*. Preservice teachers and graduates in other programs in the School of Education were not included in this study. Additionally, drawing from those individuals who volunteered to participate, a subset of the original sample participated in one in-depth telephone interview. The 92 preservice teachers, 93 student interns and 31 beginning teachers who participated in the study represent demographically the nation's teacher recruiting trends, which indicate that most novice teachers are white (93%) and female (91%).

## **Information Needed to Conduct the Study**

This descriptive study focused on a multistage purposeful sample of preservice, student teachers and beginning teachers from within the same research extensive teacher preparation program with exposure to the same multicultural education course as part of their teacher preparation. To understand this sample, the three research questions were reexamined to get a sense of the information needed in order to answer each of the questions. The theoretical framework underscoring the study was based upon three components: (a) conceptual, (b) demographic, and (c) theoretical components, specifically addressing three main issues:

1. How do preservice, student and beginning teachers' conceptualize multicultural education before, during and after exposure to multicultural educational pedagogy?
2. How does the demographic information collected inform our understanding about the participants, along ethnic, racial, socioeconomic status, class, gender in relationship to their understanding of multicultural education?
3. How does a review of the relevant literature expanding three research paradigms—multicultural education, multicultural teacher preparation, and teacher efficacy intersect to influence preservice teachers' sense of multicultural efficacy.

## **Context of the Course**

The course, *Education in a Multicultural Education Society* is a stand-alone course examining issues related to multicultural educatory theory and practice and it is part of a sequence of required course work for licensure in the state of Kansas. The sequence of the course situates it prior to preservice teachers' methods courses and foundations of education course. However, there are exceptions with some preservice teachers who take the foundations of education course concurrently with the multicultural education course. The sequence of courses builds upon a body of knowledge consistent with a conceptual understanding of diversity, a thread which according to NCATE (2008) standards should run throughout each of the teacher preparation courses. Additionally, this is also one of only a few of the teacher preparation

courses offered at this institution in which students from across content and programs of study take together.

The participants in the study had three different instructors for this course, the researcher, who is a graduate research teacher, an assistant professor with a background in cultural studies, and an associate professor with extensive background and expertise in multicultural education. As Cochran-Smith (2004) insinuates, the perspective of multicultural education of a teacher educator holds significant influence in terms of how the course is conceptualized by students. Thus information regarding the instructors of the course is essential for contextualizing this particular study. Based upon a review of course syllabi it appears that each of the instructors was guided by the course description which states “this course is designed to provide the student with an awareness of and sensitivity of the concept of multicultural education. Topics related to the rational for and processes of providing a multicultural perspective within the schools is addressed. Field experiences are structured to provide students with opportunities to observe the diversity within our society.” Given this as the basis for the structure of the course, each instructor in his or her syllabus also provided a statement which further illuminated their unique perspective in terms of how they approached the course. The researcher (GTA) reflected a social-reconstructionist position, consistent with Grant and Sleeter’s’ (2006) approach of multicultural education that is social re-constructivist, with an additional emphasis on the role of teachers as change agents. The Assistant Professor with a background in cultural studies emphasized Grant and Sleeter’s Human Relations approach, although in her syllabus she identifies as one of the goals of multicultural education, education that is social re-constructivist. The Associate Professor with extensive research experience on multicultural educational and

equity issues focused on providing a practical approach for schools and teachers regarding multicultural and diversity issues.

### **Methods of Data Collection**

The sequential data collection method has three stages. In the first stage, the data collection and analysis can be either qualitative or quantitative. Decisions are then made in Stage 2 about how the results will influence the Stage 3 data collection and analysis. Stage 3 involves a second data collection and analysis of data. In this approach, the final Stage 3 data collection and results build on the initial Stage 1 results. What follows is a summary of the process used to conduct the quantitative phase of the research study and then a summary of the process used to conduct the qualitative phase of the study.

#### **Quantitative Phase of Data Collection**

1. Before the collection of both the quantitative data and qualitative data a review of pertinent literature of other scholars in the areas related to teaching multicultural education, teacher preparation for culturally diverse school contexts, and teacher efficacy.
2. Receiving approval from the University of Kansas Human Subject Committee of Lawrence (HSCL) to proceed with the research. The HSCL approval process entails outlining the procedures and processes needed to ensure strict adherence to human subject standards, including assurances of participants' confidentiality and informed consent forms See Appendix (A).
3. During the fall semester of 2009 a pilot study was undertaken with preservice teachers in the course, *Education in a Multicultural Education*, offered by the researcher. The intent of the pilot study was to receive feedback regarding the data collection instrument. The information collected proved to be helpful in making minor changes to the formatting of the survey. The data from the pilot study was not used in the present study.
4. The spring semester of 2010 I was the instructor for a section of the course, *Education in Multicultural Society*. This provided me with access to possible research participants. Aware of the potential for researcher's bias often associated when conducting research on one's own class, I purposely sought to include in the sample those preservice teachers enrolled in the other section of the course, as well as seeking those who had previously taken the course from the professor of whose section I was to teach.

5. The Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES) (See Appendix B) was administered at four critical junctures of a preservice teacher's preparation. This approach was seen as necessary in order to measure the effects of a multicultural education course on novice teachers' attitudes and beliefs in a way that had not be previously undertaken. (*Before*) In order to capture the beliefs and attitudes regarding multicultural education that preservice teachers bring into a teacher preparation program, the preservice teachers in my class completed a paper copy of the MES survey during the second week of the spring 2010 semester. (*During*) As a means of capturing preservice teachers' beliefs and attitudes regarding multicultural education after limited exposure to multicultural educational pedagogy, the researcher administered a paper version of the MES to those students in the second course offering of the Education in a Multicultural Society. (*After*) To capture preservice teachers' understandings of multicultural education after the course and after experience in the classroom. The third group, the student interns, was sent an email asking them to participate in the survey. Those who responded to the email were sent a link to access an online version of the survey. (*After*) The last group of participants, the beginning teachers was surveyed in an attempt to capture their conceptualizations of multicultural education after the teacher preparation course and after some professional experience in their own classroom. These respondents were sent an email request soliciting their participation. Those who responded were sent a link to access the online survey.
6. At the end of both versions of the survey (paper and online) asked for volunteers to participate in one phone interview.
7. In keeping with the intent of mixed methods research, particularly when utilizing the explanatory sequential participant selection model, the quantitative data collected from the surveys was analyzed first and then used to inform the second phase, the qualitative phase of the study.

### **Qualitative Phase of Data Collection**

1. After collecting and analyzing the quantitative data, those respondents agreeing to participate in one in-depth semi-structured phone interview were contacted.
2. Additionally, those who agreed to participate in the interviews reflected similar demographics of the larger sample.
3. With assistance from committee members, an interview protocol was created. (See Appendix C). From the 37 that indicated a willingness to participate in the follow up interview, 19 participants confirmed.
4. The sequential design method used from this study required that data from the survey was first administered and analyzed followed by the collection and analysis of the interviews.

The following provides in greater detail the process of the data collection process used in this study, first a discussion of the quantitative data collection procedures followed by detailed description of the qualitative data collection process.

### **Human Subject Committee (HSCL) Approval and Assurances of Confidentiality**

According to Onwuegbuzie & Collins (2007), a major consideration for those considering the use of mixed methods research is the assurance of ethical sampling. These researchers define ethical sampling as one that “adheres to the ethical guidelines stipulated by Institutional Review Boards in order for the integrity of the research to be maintained throughout and which ensures that all sample members are protected” (cf. American Educational Research Association [AERA], 2000; Sales & Folkman, 2002 as quoted in Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007, 306). The Standard I.B.6 of AERA (2000) asserts that mixed methods researchers provide information about their sampling designs and strategies accurately and sufficiently in detail to allow knowledgeable, trained researchers to understand and interpret them. Even more important, mixed methods researchers should undertake the following:

- fully inform all sample members about the “likely risks involved in the research and of potential consequences for participants” (AERA, 2000, Standard II.B.1)
- guarantee confidentiality (Standard II.B.2 and anonymity (Standard II.B.12);
- avoid deception (Standard II.B.3);
- ensure that participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time” (Standard II. B.5)
- have a responsibility to be mindful of cultural, religious, gender, and other significant differences within the research population in the planning, conduct and reporting of their research (Standard II.B.7); and
- carefully consider and minimize the use of research techniques that might have negative social consequences (Standard II. B.7) (as quoted in Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007, 306).

### **Ethical Sampling Procedures Undertaken**

1. Each group of participants was fully informed of the likelihood of any foreseeable risks involved in their participation in the study. It was explicitly stated in the Informed Consent Form (See Appendix D) that by agreeing to participate in the study no foreseeable risks or unnecessary burdens would be placed upon the participants.

2. Those agreeing to participate were assured of their confidentiality. Other than those who agreed to participate in the follow-up interview, participants from all four groups were asked not to provide any identifying information. The student teachers and beginning teachers who completed the survey online were randomly assigned a number, created by the researcher that was used for the sole purpose of maintaining an accurate count of participants. To further ensure the confidentiality of those who agreed to participate, the surveys that were completed by paper and pencil were kept secure in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's university office accessible only by the principal researcher.
3. To avoid deception the intent and purpose of the study was clearly articulated by the researcher when administering the paper and pencil survey. As well as through the online survey informed consent form.
4. The participants in each group were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at anytime without consequences as it related to enrollment in the multicultural education course, involvement with the School of Education and/or their relationship with the university.
5. Given the nature of the study, I was mindful of the responsibility associated with collecting demographic information. Based upon feedback from the pilot study, the demographic information was expanded to represent the cultural, religious, gender and other significant differences within the research population. In addition, participants were informed that they did not have to answer any question in which they felt to be intrusive.
6. In utilizing a mixed methods research design careful consideration was given so as to minimize the use of research techniques that would impose negative societal consequences. In keeping with the original intent of the survey. The survey was used and administered to ensure that the beliefs and attitudes of the participants were respected. During the interview data collection phase, steps were taken to ensure that the participants felt at ease with the researcher and that their opinions would be respected and valued.

### **Quantitative Data Collection Methods**

#### **Phase I. Surveys**

The survey represents the first phase of the data collection process. The survey was given in two ways: (a) first a paper version of the MES administered by the researcher to both groups of preservice teachers and (b) the second, an online survey version of the MES completed by both the student interns and the beginning teachers. The online surveys were completed by participants via SurveyMonkey, a web-based survey tool ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)). The decision to administer rested on the availability of the participants. The preservice students enrolled in either of the two course offerings were on campus and easily accessible. The decision to use SurveyMonkey reflected the accessibility of the student teachers and beginning teacher, as

well as the reported benefits of web-based surveys. For example, (a) the reduced mailing costs, (b) higher response rate, (c) reduced response time and, (d) data that could be immediately sorted and examined for patterns and correlations (Fetterman, 2002).

### **Instrumentation**

The Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES) designed by Guyton & Wesche (2005) to assess educators' confidence in their abilities to successfully implement multicultural educational practices. Guyton & Wesche do not report a total score for the MES; they do however compute a mean score for each of the subscales. The use of a mean score reflects the original rating scale and allows direct comparison across the subscales. Accordingly, the researchers developed the following ranges for items on each of the subscales: for attitude the range of scores are as follows: 0 to 15 represents a low score; 16 to 24 is an average score; and 24 to 28 indicates a very positive score. For the subscale efficacy, the researchers report score ranges as 0 to 54 representing a low score, 55 to 66 indicating an average score, and 67 to 80 as a high score. For the final question item 35, participants were asked to identify their conceptualization of the purpose of multicultural education. Wesche & Guyton report that 42 % identify with the multiculturalism views (Item 35D) with less than 8 participants identifying with the advocacy view (35E), with the tolerance view (Item (A) representing one fourth of the surveyed participants.

### **Preservice Teachers Researcher's Classroom**

During the second week of the 16-week spring 2010 semester, the students in my section of the course, *Education in a Multicultural Society* completed a paper and pencil version of the MES. By administering the survey early in the semester the intent was to capture the attitudes and beliefs that preservice teachers bring with them into teacher preparation programs on issues

of multiculturalism. The participants were provided with a survey packet which contained an informed consent form and a copy of the MES. The preservice teachers were told the purpose of the survey and that their participation was strictly voluntarily. There were 46 students enrolled in the course and 46 completed the survey. Eleven preservice teachers indicated a willingness to participate in one-in-depth semi-structured phone interview.

### **Preservice Teachers Colleague's Classroom**

Upon receiving permission from HSCL and after the proposal defense, I contacted the instructor of the second course offering of *Education in a Multicultural Society*, to obtain permission to enter her classroom and administer the MES. This occurred eight weeks into the 16-week spring semester. Similar to the first group, the MES was given in a paper and pencil format. I reviewed with the group the purpose of the study and read the informed consent form. Of the 47 preservice teachers enrolled, 47 completed the survey and 11 agreed to participate in the phone interview.

### **Student Teachers**

The spring, 2010 semester, the third group of participants was in the midst of their student internship semester. The director of field supervision provided a list containing email addresses of all of the student teachers. An email message was sent soliciting their willingness to participate. Those who responded to the initial email were then sent a link to access the survey. The first email netted 20 responses. A reminder email was sent ten days later. The second email yielded 73 responses. Of the 116 student teachers on the list, 93 completed the survey. From those surveyed, nine agreed to participate in the phone interview. From those nine, 4 confirmed and participated in the interview process.

## **Beginning Teachers**

Attempting to collect data from beginning teachers in the midst of the school year presented unique challenges, such as their availability to participate, and the fact that the beginning teachers were in locations throughout the region. As such, the online survey seemed the best approach to collect data. The administrative assistant in the Dean's Office provided a list of recent graduates from the teacher preparation program. A general email was sent soliciting their participation. From the list of 113 beginning teachers, 73 had viable email addresses. An email message was sent soliciting their participation, from these 20 participants completed the survey with 1 agreeing to participate in the follow-up phone interviews. Repeated attempts were made to increase the numbers with a second and third request messages sent ten days and 15 days respectively yielding a total of 31 participants completing the survey and four agreeing to participate in the follow-up phone interview.

## **Qualitative Data Collection Methods**

### **Phase II. Interviews**

The sequential research design permits the researcher to emphasize one method over another. In this particular study, the qualitative phase has a stronger emphasis in the research design than the quantitative phase, primarily because of its' ability for eliciting rich, thick descriptions for the phenomenon under investigation. Since the goal of this study was to make explicit preservice and beginning teachers' views regarding multicultural education, interviews seemed to be the most effective means to collect this data. Patton's (1990) interview guide structure informed the construction of an interview guide because it allowed for the researcher to select from a list of topics to be covered without formalizing a specific sequence or wording of questions (Merriam, 2005). With feedback from advisors as well as the use of the research

questions serving as a foundation, an interview protocol was developed. The interview questions encompass what Merriam (2005(a) categorizes as hypothetical, ideal position and interpretative questions giving preservice and beginning teachers the multiple opportunities to articulate their beliefs in their confidence to effectively implement multicultural educational pedagogy.

Across each of the 4 groups, those participants willing to participate in the interview provided their contact information (e.g., name, email, and phone number). From the respondents surveyed, 19 preservice and beginning teachers agreed to participate in the interview phase of the study. Before beginning the interview process, participants were to verbally consent to participation to the interview phase of the study. The verbal consent included participants being made aware that any identifying information would be taken out during the transcription process; that all information was strictly voluntary; that the participants could end the interview at any time during the process; and that they were not required to answer any question or topic in which they may have felt uncomfortable. The interviews were fully transcribed and then returned to the participants for review. Only one beginning teacher responded for corrections (current job placement), otherwise based upon the lack of further responses on the transcribed interviews. I assumed that the remaining participants did not have any concerns with the transcriptions.

### **Mixed Methods Data Analysis**

Given the inherent complexities of engaging in mixed methods research, Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003) conceptualized a seven-stage process for mixed methods data analysis. According to these authors, the seven data analysis stages are as follows: (a) data reduction, ((b) data display, (c) data transformation, (d) data integration, (e) data consolidation, (f) data comparison, and (g) data integration. Noting that not all of the seven stages have to be used in a

single study, Creswell (2007) consolidates this conceptualization into five broad categories that serves as a framework for the present study including;

- preparing the data for analysis,
- exploring the data,
- analyzing the data,
- representing the data analysis and
- validating the data analysis process

What follows is a summary of the data analysis process undertaken to conduct this study. To maintain the integrity of the sequential research design, the quantitative data analysis precedes the qualitative data analysis.

### **Quantitative Data Analysis (Survey)**

#### **Stage One: Preparing the Data for Analysis**

Upon collecting the completed surveys the researcher created a code book listing the variables and their definitions. The raw data was then converted into a form useful for data analysis using SPSS, a computer statistical analysis database system ([www.spss.com](http://www.spss.com)). Once entered into SPSS the data file was checked against the original surveys to ensure that data entry errors were corrected.

#### **Stage Two: Exploring the Data**

Exploring the data in quantitative research data analysis consist of visually inspecting the data and generating descriptive statistics to determine the item specific means and standard deviation among the four groups of participants. The descriptive statistics were conducted for all major variables in the study (e.g., race, class, gender, socioeconomic status, and field of study).

#### **Stage Three: Analyzing the Data**

Analyzing the data consists of examining the database as it relates to the research questions posed in the study. This is done in order to determine the choice of statistical test best

suited to answer the question. The quantitative data analysis proceeds from descriptive analysis to an inferential analysis, which builds a more refined analysis and has multiple steps (e.g., interaction effects to main effects to post-hoc group comparisons). *Research Question 1* is a descriptive quantitative question that seeks to examine the multicultural efficacy of preservice and beginning teachers. Specifically it seeks to answer: *As measured by the MES, how confident are preservice and beginning teachers in their abilities to implement multicultural educational practices before, during, and after exposure to a multicultural education course?* To answer this question it was determined that a MANOVA would be the best approach, given that the question contains one independent variable with two or more levels and two dependent variables that lie on a continuum. *Research Question #2* is a comparative quantitative question that seeks to address: *What is the difference (if any) in the multicultural efficacy among preservice and beginning teachers?* This question is a sub-question of the first. It can be answered by information generated by conducting a crosstabs analysis comparing the four groups within and between cases. *Research Question #3* seeks to understand *How do preservice teachers and beginning teachers conceptualize (approach) multicultural education before, during, and after exposure to a multicultural education course?* This question is answered by looking at the responses to item #35 on the MES.

#### **Stage 4: Representing the Data Analysis**

The next step in Creswell's mixed methods data analysis process is to present the results of the analysis. The findings of the quantitative data are represented in summary form. Charts representing each of the four groups are presented in Figures 2-18.

## Qualitative Data Analysis (Interviews)

The second phase of data analysis consists of evaluating transcripts from the recorded phone interviews. According to Patton (1990), the first decision to consider in analyzing interviews is whether to begin with case analysis or cross-case analysis. For the purposes of this study, I began with a case analysis followed by a cross-case analysis using the constant comparison method. This approach enabled me to understand the respondents first as individual cases and then to look for patterns across cases, thereby producing a deeper descriptive analysis of the sample in general. Glaser & Strauss (1985) suggest that the central function of the constant comparison method is to group answers...to common questions [and] analyze different perspectives on central issues (p.29). The researchers further describe the constant comparison method as following four distinct stages: (a) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (b) integrating categories and their properties, (c) delimiting the theory, and (d) writing the theory (32). According to Goetz and LeCompte (1981) the constant comparison method “combines inductive category coding with a simultaneous comparison of all social incidents” (p. 58), meaning that as social phenomena are recorded and classified, they are also compared across categories. Thus relationship discovery begins with the analysis of initial observations, in the case of the present study; it begins with the initial reading of the transcripts. This process undergoes continuous refinement throughout the data collection and analysis, continuously feeding back into the process of category coding. Hence the researchers contend that to categorize should accomplish three goals: (a) to render discriminately different things equivalent, (b) to group the objects and events and people around us into classes, and (c) respond to them in terms of their class membership rather than their uniqueness (p. 16). This act of categorizing enables the researcher to reduce the complexity of the environment; give direction for an

activity; identify the objects of the world; reduce the need for constant learning; and allow for ordering and relating classes of events. The researcher groups or clusters the data, which becomes the basis for the organization and conceptualization of the data (Dey, 1993).

Categorizing is therefore a crucial element in the process of analysis (p.112). In sum, the process of analyzing the content of interviews includes identifying, coding and categorizing the primary patterns in the data (Patton, 1990). It is in this categorizing process, one which guides the present study, that the role of a qualitative analyst becomes clear, namely to uncover patterns, themes, and categories, which according to Patton (1990) is a creative process that requires making carefully considered judgments about what is really significant and meaningful in the data (p. 406).

### **Stage One: Preparing the Data for Analysis**

The qualitative data collection and analysis phase of this study were conducted simultaneously. As the interviews were completed a coding scheme was developed to help organize and maintain a system for storing the data. Since the researcher is familiar with *Microsoft Excel*, ([www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)) it was seen as the most appropriate storage system. As each interview was completed data was entered into the data base according to the criteria of the coding scheme (e.g., date, time of interview, length of interview, and which group the participant belonged). All of the interviews were transcribed fully meaning that every utterance, pause and hesitation was recorded. After the transcription and prior to analysis each transcription was checked against the audiotape for accuracy. The transcriptions were then saved using *Microsoft Word* ([www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)) with extra wide margins to assist in the coding phase, the next phase of the data analysis

### **Stage Two: Exploring the Data**

Given the recursive nature of the constant comparison method, the analysis used an emergent approach to identify patterns, broad categories and overarching themes. After the interviews were transcribed, the process of reading through and coding them began. Each transcript was read through in its entirety at least twice. This initial coding generated a category of codes and the process of labeling the data began.

### **Stage Three: Analyzing the Data**

To analyze the interviews both a deductive and inductive process was used. Deductive analysis serves as a means of confirming information for the researcher. It enables the researcher to look at what all the respondents said to the same question and to begin the process of identifying possible codes, categories or themes. Another use of deductive analysis is to confirm or refute research hypotheses or interactions within the data that was presumed. The inductive analysis explores the data to assess what unexpected relationships or issues emerged from the data. This analysis included a line-by-line reading of the transcribed interview in order to identify relationships or issues that had not been anticipated. To fully engage in the deductive and inductive analysis, the researcher utilized the process of writing analytic memos, which are summaries with selected excerpts from the transcriptions. These memos served as an effective means of focusing the data collection and coding enabling the researcher to explore ideas within and across cases. From the initial coding phase, the exploration of data moved to focused coding. The intent of focused coding was to eliminate, combine, and subdivide categories looking for repeating ideas. After developing coding categories a final list that assigned each code an abbreviation and a description was created. A coding scheme based upon the qualitative research question framed the qualitative data analysis phase. The process of analyzing data continued until both category and theoretical saturation was obtained. According to Glaser and Corbin's

(1978) book, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, saturation occurs when no new information seems to emerge during coding, that is, when no new properties, dimensions, conditions, actions/interactions, or consequences are seen in the data (p.124-126). For the present study this means that coding continued until; (a) no new or relevant data seemed to emerge regarding a category; (b) the category was well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions demonstrating variation; and (c) the relationships among categories were well established and validated. Glaser and Corbin (1978a) contend that unless a researcher gathers data until all categories are saturated, the theory will be unevenly developed lacking density and precision. As an additional check upon the veracity of the analysis phase, the coding scheme and categories were shared utilizing inter-rater reliability to ensure validity of the coded data.

#### **Stage Four: Presenting the Data**

McMillan (2004) suggests that visual devices (e.g., matrices, charts) helped to organize and guide a research study. He further asserts that visual devices aid critical thinking, confirmation of themes, or consideration of new relationships and explanations. As the qualitative research questions were answered the participants' responses were organized in a matrix demonstrating relationship within and among the respondents.

#### **Stage Five: Validating the Data Analysis**

As noted by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003) a primary decision that confronts the field of mixed research is what to call the concept of validity. The authors suggest that qualitative researchers tend to reject to the concept of validity based on their rejection of the Correspondence Theory to Truth, which holds that there is no single reality. Given the disagreement of acceptable terminology, Teddlie & Tashakkori (2003) suggest the use of a "bilingual nomenclature, deemed acceptable to, both specifically the term "legitimation" (p.58).

Onwuegbuzie & Johnson (2006) suggest that research be defensible to the research and practice communities in which it takes place. Since mixed methods research involves combining complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research, assessing the validity of mixed research findings is a particularly complex undertaking. Validity in mixed research is as Onwuegbuzie (2006) suggest plagued by three problems: (a) representation; (b) integration; and (c) legitimation. The problems of representation and integration suggest the need to identify specific legitimation issues not associated with monomethod designs. In response, Onwuegbuzie & Johnson (2006(a) developed a typology of 9 legitimation types, of which, the following will be addressed as they apply to the present study: sample, inside-outside, weakness minimization, multiple validities, and paradigmatic mixing.

### **Sample Legitimation**

Sample legitimation applies to situations where a researcher wants to make statistical generalizations from the sample participants to a larger target population. This is not problematic since the goal of the present study is not to make a statistical generalization. While generalizability was not the study's goal, it is nevertheless important to address. Thus the intent was to provide enough description so that readers of the study could determine the extent in which findings from this study could be applied to their context. Maxwell (1992) suggests that the selected sample should generate sufficient data pertaining to the phenomenon of interest to allow for thick, rich description thereby increasing descriptive validity and interpretive validity. Consequently, in order to address this issue, a dual strategy employed by the researcher was implemented. The first strategy was to randomly select participants from within the same teacher preparation program to ensure variance in the sample. Secondly, detailed descriptions and analysis of the participants' multicultural efficacy, before, during and after their exposure to a

multicultural education course, was made explicit, with the intent that readers of this study could determine the extent in which the circumstances reflect their own research context.

### **Inside-Outside Legitimation**

There are times according to Tashakkori (2001) when a researcher should assess insider-outsider legitimation. Insider-outsider legitimation refers to the desire in which the researcher accurately presents the insider's views and the observer's view. One strategy for addressing this point is to use peer review. To ensure that the participants' views were properly presented the findings of the study were discussed with members of the dissertation committee. To further ensure a balanced perspective, the secondary strategy of member checking was completed after the interviews were transcribed. According to Maxwell (2007) member checking is the process of systematically soliciting feedback about the data and conclusions from the people under investigation (p.111). More specifically this was done by contacting the participants and providing them the opportunity to assess the researcher's interpretations of their interviews. Each participant was sent a copy of their transcribed interview with the understanding that if they felt that any part of the transcription did not fully represent their views to contact the researcher so that corrections and revisions could be made.

### **Weakness Minimization Legitimation**

The very nature of mixed research maximizes this form of legitimation because the researcher is able to systematically design a study that combines two or more methods, building upon the strengths of one while diminishing the weakness of the other. As a means of explicating the source of preservice and beginning teachers multicultural efficacy, the researcher felt that an explanatory sequential research design to be the best approach. This research design begins with a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. By adding a qualitative phase through the

use of a semi-structured interview, in conjunction with survey research, accomplishes as Maxwell (2007(a) suggests, “rich” data which provides a full and revealing picture of what is going on, ultimately providing a rich detailed grounding for the findings of the study (p.305).

### **Multiple Validities Legitimation**

A common element of concern for both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms and of central concern for the present study is the issue of researcher bias. Maxwell (2006) asserts that separating your research from other aspects of your life cuts you off from a major source of insights, hypotheses, and validity checks (p.38). Peshkin (1992) in discussing the role of subjectivity in research writes, “my subjectivity is the basis for the story that I am able to tell. It is a strength on which I build. It makes me who I am as a person and as a researcher, equipping me with the perspectives and insights that shape all that I do as a researcher...”(Glesne & Peshkin, 1992 p. 104 as quoted in Maxwell 2006, p. 38). Peshkin & Strauss (1992(a) caution researchers that subjectivity should not be a license to “uncritically impose one’s assumptions and values on the research” (p. 38) but rather to engage in what Maxwell (2006, p. 38) identifies as “critical subjectivity”,

[critical subjectivity] is a quality of awareness in which we do not suppress our primary experience; nor do we allow ourselves to be swept away and overwhelmed by it; rather we raise it to a [level of]consciousness and use it as part of the inquiry process, (1988, p 12).

Maxwell (2006) identifies several strategies to ensure this validity. Specifically the researcher sought to incorporate Maxwell’s concept of researcher identity memo. The purpose of memo writing was to identify the goals and reconcile the personal identity the researcher brings to the study as well as to identify any resulting benefits or liabilities based upon these beliefs. From the onset of the study, the researcher maintained a researcher’s notebook. In addition the

researcher also found that by engaging in a dialogue with committee members utilizing their expertise in the subject matter and the research process enabled a deeper analysis that might not have occurred if the researcher were engaged in the process alone.

### **Paradigmatic Mixing Legitimation**

Paradigmatic mixing is the extent to which the researcher's epistemological, ontological, axiological, methodological, and rhetorical beliefs which underscore the quantitative and qualitative approaches are successfully combined and made explicit. While the pragmatic approach is typically associated with mixed method research, the sequential design typically utilizes a positivist approach, particularly in those instances in which the quantitative precedes the qualitative phase. However, because this study utilizes the sequential explanatory research design with a qualitative emphasis it is permissible as Onwuegbuzie (2007) suggests the mixing of paradigms, especially if consistent with the overall goal of a study. Given the aim of the study, which is to explicate preservice and beginning teachers multicultural efficacy and the factors which influence this belief, a pragmatic approach seemed to be the most appropriate.

### **Limitations of the Study**

As with any research this study contains limitations that need to be addressed. Careful consideration was given as to how to account for each of the limitations so as to minimize their impact upon the study. The first limitation involved gaining access to participants in the internship and beginning years of teaching. The school of education's administration office was a valuable resource. However, due to the difficulties of contacting former students, (e.g. current addresses and phone numbers) one limitation is that many graduates from the School of Education were not included. Numerous attempts were made to increase the responses from the sample for both groups, including sending reminder emails. A second limitation was that

participants would understand and follow directions for an on-line survey. By conducting a pilot study, I was able to see what elements of the survey might require additional directions and clarifications.

The study asked participants to reveal their inner thoughts and feelings toward multicultural education, which has the potential of being a sensitive topic; leading to the problem of social desirability, where respondents provide the answers they believe the researcher wants to hear. The researcher assumes that this was less of a challenge with the on-line surveys because of the distance between the researcher and the instrument. However, for the paper and pencil formatted survey this posed a challenge. The researcher instructed the participants not to identify their surveys in any way; also, also repeated assurances were given that their responses would be held in strict confidence. An additional limitation to the study concerns the ability to generalize the study to other preservice and beginning teachers. While generalizability was not the intent of the study, the attempt was to provide a depth of information regarding the context and background of the study for the reader, to enable readers of this study the opportunity to contextualize the findings to their own research sites.

The last limitation concerned the semi-structured interviews. The interview questions developed with the assistance of committee members to ensure that the questions reflected the research objective. In addition, in order to reduce the limitation of potential biases during the analysis, all participants' names were removed so as to not associate any material data with any particular individual.

### **Chapter Summary**

The goal of this chapter was to provide an overview of the research methodology utilized for this study. A mixed methods research design, specifically, the use of the sequential

explanatory research structure aligns with the goals of the study which were to examine preservice and beginning teachers' multicultural efficacy before, during and after exposure to a multicultural education course. A discussion of the rationale and the underlying worldview framing this study provides explicit the reasons for selecting a mixed methods research approach and design methodology. Consistent with the framework of the research design, two types of data collection methods were employed including; surveys and semi-structured phone interviews. The data analysis stage examined both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study. The qualitative phase included a discussion of the coding scheme and situated the data within the framework of the pertinent research literature. Whereas the quantitative phase addressed the statistics used to analyze the data. In addition, this chapter includes a discussion of the mixing of the data, an important element to consider when utilizing a mixed research approach. The issue of validity examined from the perspective of a mixed research paradigm, explored the concept of legitimation. To counter the issue of legitimation specific strategies were discussed. Ultimately this chapter detailed the structure utilized to address a central outcome of this study, which was to make a contribution to the field of multicultural education and how teacher educators can better prepare future teachers in meeting the challenges of teaching in culturally diverse classrooms.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULTS**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was twofold: (1) to measure preservice and beginning teachers multicultural efficacy before, during, and after exposure to a multicultural education course, and (2) to explicate the factors influencing preservice and beginning teachers' multicultural efficacy. The researcher believes that by gaining a better understanding of this phenomenon would provide teacher educators an informed perspective of the complex nature of multicultural education. Furthermore, it was my hope that this informed perspective would provide teacher educators with valuable information to assist in the design and development of multicultural teacher education courses. Ultimately, the intent was to contribute to the existing scholarly research exploring ways to effectively and competently train preservice teachers toward meeting the inherent challenges of teaching in culturally diverse school contexts. The key findings were obtained from 220 survey responses and 19 in-depth interviews.

#### **Reporting Considerations**

The participants were not required to answer each item; therefore for some of the questions the numbers of responses is smaller than the total reported sample size. Percentages were rounded and totals may not always equal 100%. Ninety-three preservice teachers (1 and 2) initiated the paper/pencil version of the MES, with 100% completing the survey. One hundred and sixteen student teachers initiated the on-line survey, with eighty percent (93 total) completing the survey. Forty-two beginning teachers began the on-line survey with eighty-three percent (34 total) completing the survey. Table 1 represents the demographics of the respondents of the MES.

**Table 1: Survey Demographics of Preservice and Beginning Teachers**

		N	%
Gender	Female	159	72.0
	Male	61	28.0
Age	20-25	211	96.0
	26-31	4	1.9
	32-37	4	1.9
	45-older	1	0.5
Race	White /European American /Non-Hisp.	202	92.0
	African-American	4	1.8
	American Indian	2	0.9
	Asian-American	5	2.3
	Multi-racial	3	.1
Ethnicity	Hispanic/Non-white	4	1.9
Degree Program	Early Childhood	15	6.8
	Elementary Education	72	33.0
	Secondary Education	96	44.0
	Health and Physical Education	14	6.4
	Visual Arts	16	7.3
	Special Education	2	0.9
	Foreign Language	5	2.3
Country *	USA	211	96.0
	China	5	2.3
	Europe	2	.9
	Middle East	1	.5
		1	.5
Religious Background*	Christian	189	87.5
	Muslim	2	.9
	Jewish	6	2.8
	None	11	5.0
	Other	6	2.8

One preservice teacher chose not to disclose country of origin

One preservice teacher chose not to disclose religious background

**Table 1: Survey Demographics of Preservice and Beginning Teachers**

	N	%
Sexual Orientation*		
Heterosexual	215	98.0
Homosexual	1	.5
Bisexual	1	.5
Disabilities*		
None	213	98.0
Yes	5	2.3
Father's Educational Background		
GED	31	14.4
High School Diploma	27	12.0
Some Community College	33	14.8
Associates Degree	21	9.5
Bachelors Degree	54	24.5
Masters Degree	37	16.8
Professional Degree (Law, Medicine, Business)	14	6.4
PhD	3	1.4
Mother's Educational Background		
GED	29	13.2
High School Diploma	27	12.3
Some Community College	40	18.2
Associates Degree	34	15.5
Bachelors Degree	50	22.7
Masters Degree	34	15.5
Professional Degree (Law, Medicine, Business)	5	2.3
PhD	1	.5
Socioeconomic Status (Child)*		
Lower	9	4.2
Lower Middle	37	17.1
Middle	63	29.2
Upper Middle	55	25.5
Upper	50	23.1

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Three preservice teachers chose not to disclose sexual orientation

Two preservice teachers chose not to disclose if they had disabilities

**Table 1: Survey Demographics of Preservice and Beginning Teachers**

	N	%
Socioeconomic Status (Adult)		
Lower	56	25.9
Lower Middle	32	14.8
Middle	58	26.9
Upper Middle	31	14.4
Upper	38	17.3

Two pre-preservice teachers chose not to disclose socioeconomic status as a child

#### Gender, Age, Race and Ethnicity

Of the 220 respondents, 72% (n=159) were female, with 28% (n=61) males. The median age reported was 22 years of age, the range of ages reported 96 % (n=211) were between the ages of 20-25. Ninety-two percent of the respondents taking the survey identified themselves as being white/non-Hispanic. While there was a relatively even distribution among the remaining races/ethnicity, namely, 1.8 % African-American (n=4), .9% American Indian (n=2); 2.3 % Asian-American, n=5); .01% (n=3) indicating a multiracial background, with those indicating a Hispanic/Non-white ethnicity at 1.9%, (n=4). These statistics indicate findings consistent with the current teacher employment trends, indicating that most new and beginning teachers are white, and female.

#### Program of Study

The respondents of the survey represented a cross-section of the degree program offered in this particular university's teacher preparation program. One assumption that can be drawn from this data is that the multicultural education course is one of the teacher preparation courses required of all preservice teacher candidates. More specifically, those indicating a program of study in Secondary Education (including the content areas of Math, Science, English and the Social Studies/History) represented 44% (n=96), with 33% (n=72) indicating Elementary Education as their degree program. The remaining degree programs were relatively evenly

represented with Early Childhood at 6.8% (n=15); Health and Physical Education at 7.3% (n=14); those in the Visual Arts representing 7.3% of the sample, (n=16); Special Education at .9%, (n=5) and 2.3% (n= 2.3) indicating a Foreign Language program of study.

#### Religious Background

Many of the participants self-identified as having a Christian background, with 5% (n=11) who responded as having no religious background, with 2 participants choosing not to disclose their religious preference.

#### Disabilities

The majority of the participants indicated that 98% (n=213) had no disabilities, 2.3% (n=5) self-identified as having a disability (e.g. one learning disability and one who wore glasses); two preservice teachers choose not to indicate whether they had a disability.

#### Educational Background of Parents and Socioeconomic Status

According to the survey, the respondents indicated that the highest degree obtained by their parents was a Bachelors Degree (e.g. fathers represented 25% (n=54) and mothers at 23% (n=50). In addition, the survey revealed that more fathers 6.4%, (n=14) held professional degrees than mothers at 2.3% (n=5). Whereas the degree obtained by parents remained consistent, there was a great deal of variance between the socio-economic status between their status as a child and as an adult. Thirty-percent of the respondents indicated that they were of middle class status as a child, with 25%, (n=56) indicating an upper middle class status, and 23.2% (n=51) indicating an upper middle class and above socio-economic status. The socio-economic status of the respondents as adults revealed a lesser degree of variance. For example, while 26% (n=58) of the participants indicated a middle class status, 26% (n=56) indicated a lower middle class socio-economic status. An assumption to be draw from these findings could be that many of the

preservice and beginning teachers are now living independently of their parents resulting in a lower socio-economic status.

### **Experience with Diversity Subscale**

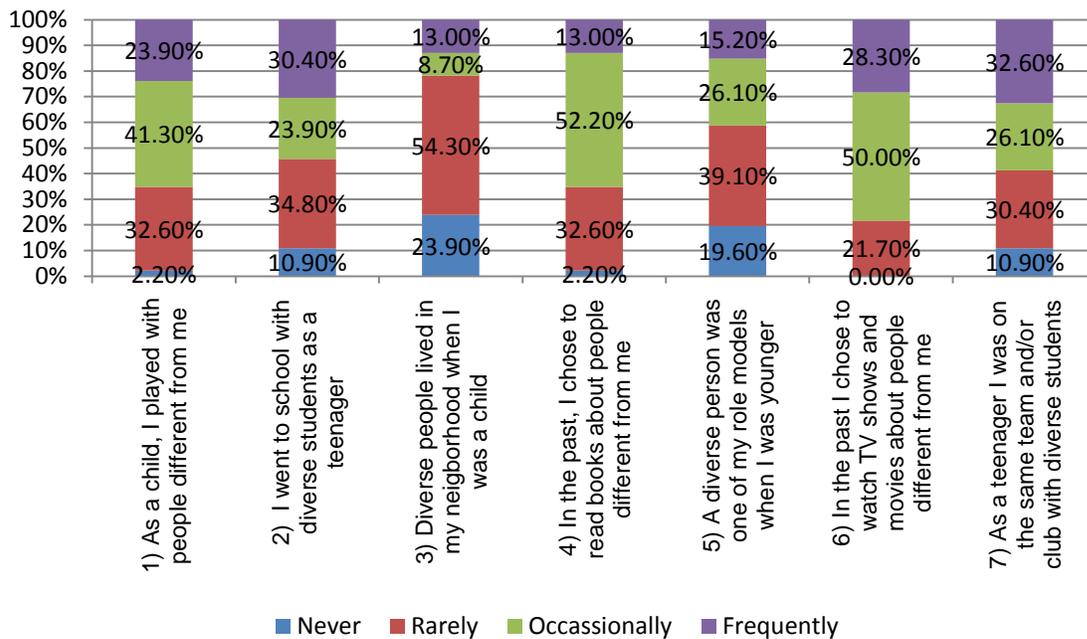
Using the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES) the researcher asked participants to respond to statements relating to seven experiences with diversity. The authors of the MES specified diversity to include differences along the categories of race, class, gender, religion, disability, and sexual orientation. Each statement examined an aspect of diversity which included the following: as a child, I played with people different from me, I went to school with diverse students as a teenager, diverse people lived in my neighborhood when I was growing up, in the past, I chose to read books about people different from me, a diverse person was one of my role models when I was younger, in the past, I chose to watch TV shows and movies about people different from me, and as a teenager, I was on the same team and/or club with diverse students. A cross tabulation was conducted to provide within and between case analysis. Figures 2-5 represents the respondents' responses to this subscale.

#### Preservice Teachers (1)

Overall, the majority of the preservice teachers in group 1 report they experienced diversity. However, in examining the item specific statements describing different types of interactions, the findings reveal variation in terms of the type of interactions and experiences of the respondents. While many of the respondents in group 1 indicate experience with diversity, they also report that they did not live in diverse neighborhoods growing up. For instance, 54% (n= 25) indicate they rarely had diverse people in their neighborhoods as a child, and 24% (n=11) who report that as a child they never had diverse people in their neighborhood. In those instances, in which the respondents had the opportunity to choose their level of interaction, the

responses reflect more experience with diversity. For example, 50% of the 46 preservice teachers in group indicate that occasionally they chose to watch TV shows and movies about people different from themselves, with 52% (n=24) responded they occasionally chose to read books about people different from themselves. For the preservice teachers in this group the variance in their responses regarding their experience with diversity is best represented by statement 7 on the Experience with Diversity subscale. This question asked the respondents, as a teenager if there were on the same team and/or club with diverse students. 33% of the respondents indicate that they frequently were teammates with diverse students, 26% (n=12) indicate that occasionally they had teammates from diverse backgrounds. However, 30% (n=14) indicate they rarely had teammates from diverse cultures and 11% (n=5) responded that they never had been teammates with someone from a culture different from their own. Figure 2 represents their responses to the experience with diversity subscale.

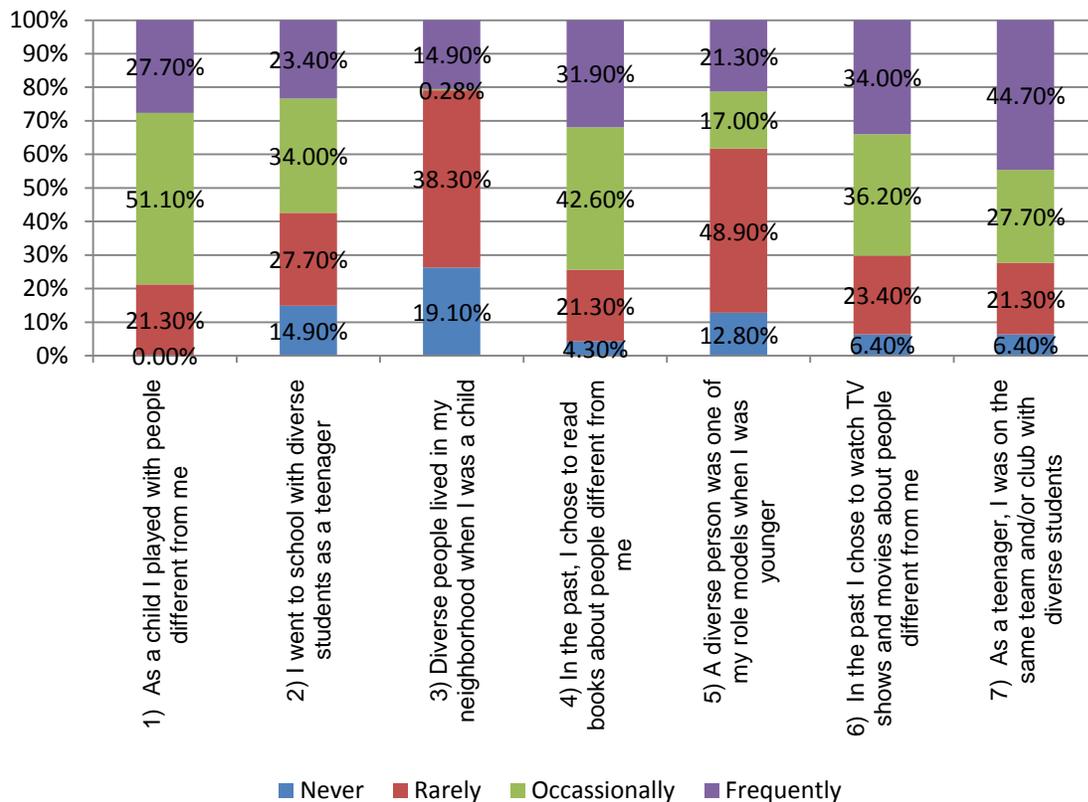
Figure 2. Preservice Teachers (1) Experience with Diversity Subscale



## Preservice Teachers (2)

The responses from the preservice teachers in group 2 reveal that most of the participants occasionally experienced diversity. Forty-five percent (n=21) of the 47 preservice teachers in group 2, indicate they frequently played on a team or were in a club with diverse people. Forty-three percent (n=19) responded that they occasionally chosen to read books about people different than themselves. And 51% (n=24) indicate that as a child they occasionally played with diverse people. While many of the respondents in this group indicate that they had occasionally experienced diversity, 49% (n=23) indicate they had *rarely* had a diverse person as a role model. Figure 3 presents their findings from the experience with diversity subscale.

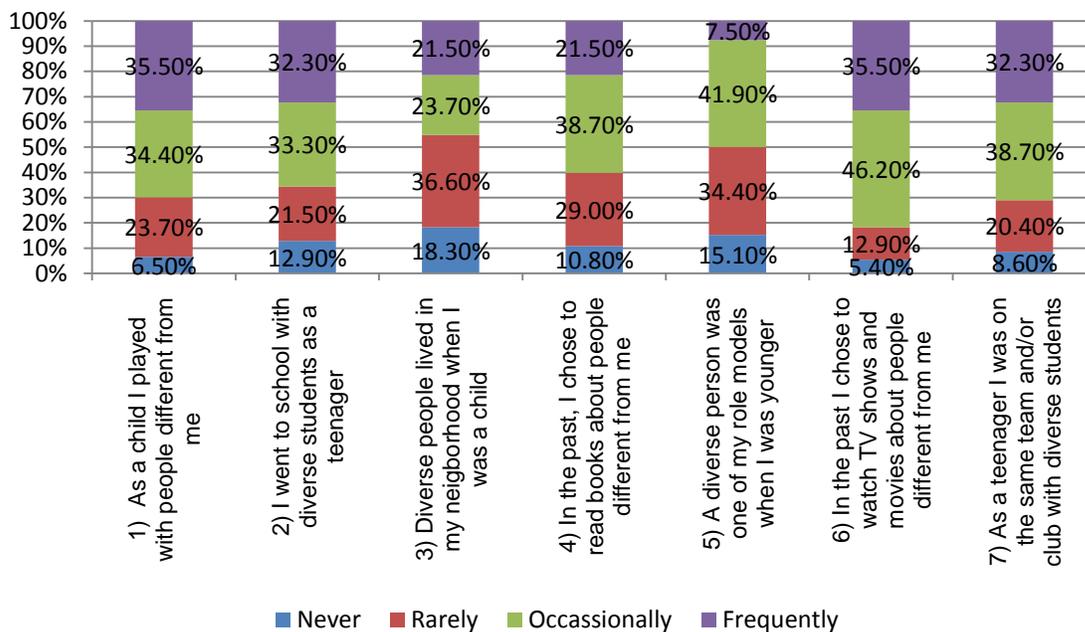
Figure 3. Preservice teachers (2) Experience with Diversity Subscale



## Student Teachers

The responses from the student teachers reveal variance within each of the statements. Of the seven statements, five of those statements indicate that the student teachers had either occasionally or frequently encountered diversity. For instance, 46% (n=43) indicate that occasionally they watched TV shows and movies with diverse people, and 36% (n=33) who indicate that they had frequently chosen to watch TV shows and movies with diverse people. Thirty-nine percent (n=36) indicate that occasionally they had been on a team or in a club with diverse people, and 32% (n=30) who indicate that they frequently had been on the same team or in a club with diverse people. While many of the responses by the student teachers indicate occasional or frequent experiences with diversity, there were instances in which the student teacher responded to not having had much experience with diversity. For instance, 37% (n=34) indicate that as a child diverse people rarely lived in their neighborhoods. Figure 4 represents their responses to the experience with diversity subscale of the MES.

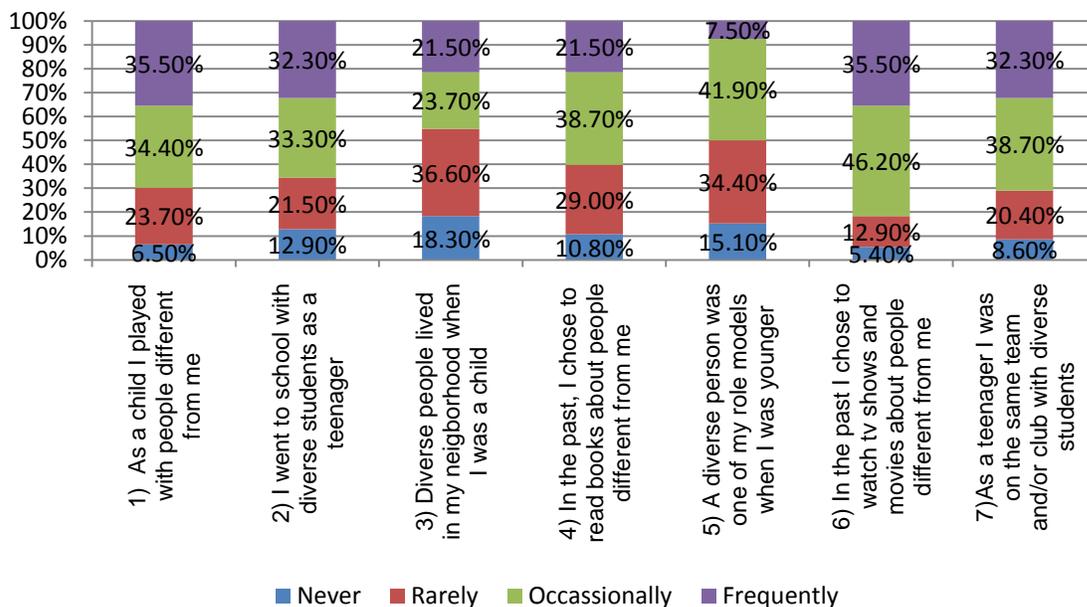
Figure 4. Student Teachers Experience with Diversity Subscale.



## Beginning Teachers

Across each of the seven Experiences with Diversity subscale statements, the beginning teachers exhibit a consistent response describing their encounters with diversity. Over 50% of those responding indicate that they had occasionally experienced diversity. The beginning teachers responses reveal that 65% (n=22) had occasionally attended school with diverse students. An equal number of respondents 56% (n=19) indicate that as a child they had diverse people who lived in their neighborhoods and in the past they had chosen to read books about people different from themselves. While these findings indicate a high degree of interaction with diversity, it is also worth noting that a number of respondents also indicate that they rarely had experiences with diversity. For instance, 35% (n=11) indicate that in the past they rarely chose to watch TV shows and movies about people that were different from themselves, and 32% (n=9) responded that rarely was a diverse person one of their role models as a child. Figure 5 represents their responses from this subscale of the MES.

Figure 5. Beginning Teachers Experience with Diversity Subscale.



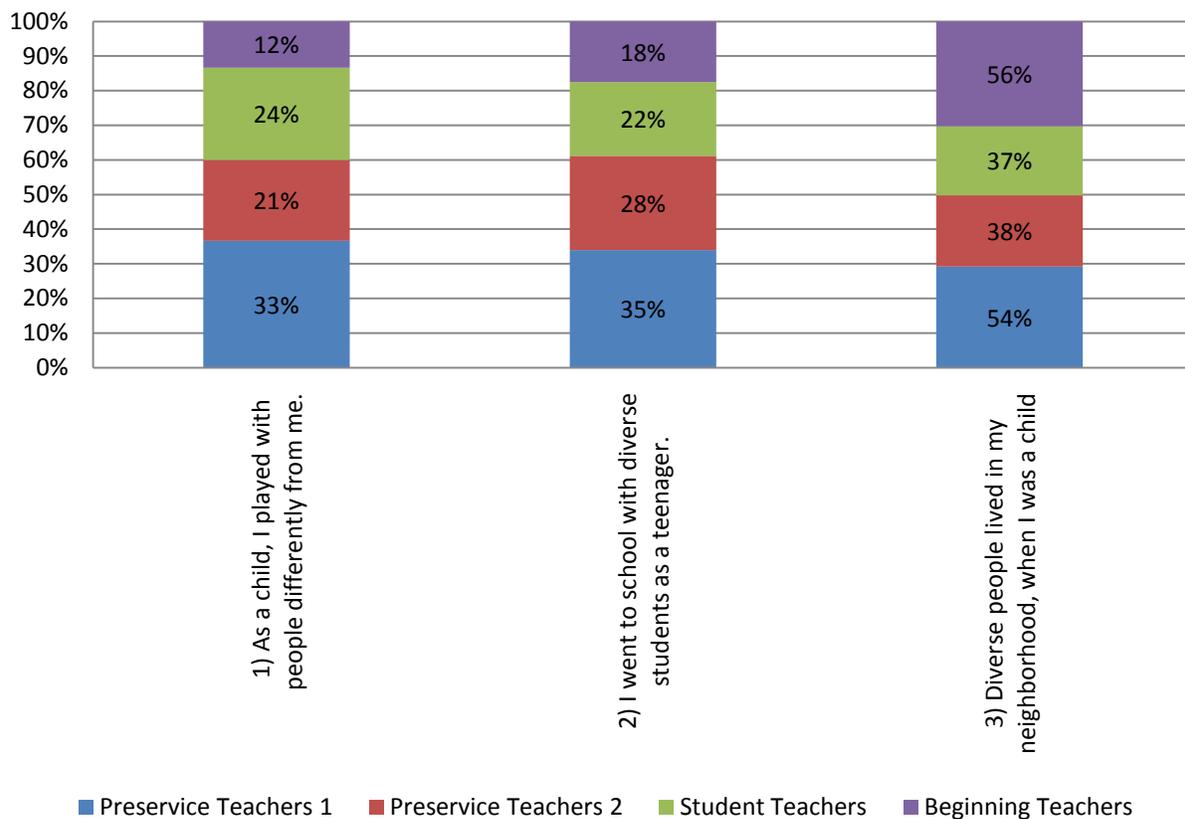
## **Summary of Findings between the Four Groups**

### Between Group Analysis on the Experience with Diversity Subscale, Questions 1-3

An item analysis of the statements reveals differences between the four groups of respondents. For instance, statements 1-3, ask respondents their level of interaction in their neighborhoods and schools with diversity. Of the four groups, the preservice teachers in group 1 indicate that they had the least amount of experience with diversity at home and in their schools. For example, 54% (n=26) of these respondents indicate that they rarely lived in diverse neighborhoods growing up, 35% (n=16) indicate that they rarely went to school with diverse people, and 33% (n=15) of these preservice teachers indicate that they rarely played with people different from themselves. In comparison, the preservice teachers in group 2 indicate more variance in their responses, with 38% (n=18) who indicate that they rarely lived in diverse neighborhoods growing up, 28% (n=13) indicate that they rarely attended school with diverse people, and 21% (n=10) indicate that they rarely played with children who were different from themselves. The responses by the student teachers reflect similar experiences with diversity as those responses given by the preservice teachers in group 2. For example, 37% of the 93 student teachers indicate that they rarely lived in diverse neighborhoods growing up, 22% (n=20) indicate that they rarely attended school with diverse students as a teenager, and 24% (n=22) who responded that they rarely played with people different from themselves as a child. Between the four groups, the responses from the beginning teachers reveal interesting findings. 56% of the beginning teachers indicate that they rarely had diverse people in their neighborhoods. Their response on this statement represents the largest percent among the four groups, suggesting that at least in terms of where the respondents lived, the beginning teachers experienced the least amount of diversity in their childhood neighborhoods. However, 18% of the beginning teachers

indicate that they rarely attended school with diverse students, and 12%, the lowest between the four groups, indicate that as a child they played with people differently from themselves. These findings suggest that while the beginning teachers did not live in diverse neighborhoods, there were opportunities for diversity to which they interacted. Figure 6 represents a between group analysis of the experience with diversity section of the MES.

Figure 6. Between Group Analysis of the Experiences with Diversity Questions 1-3



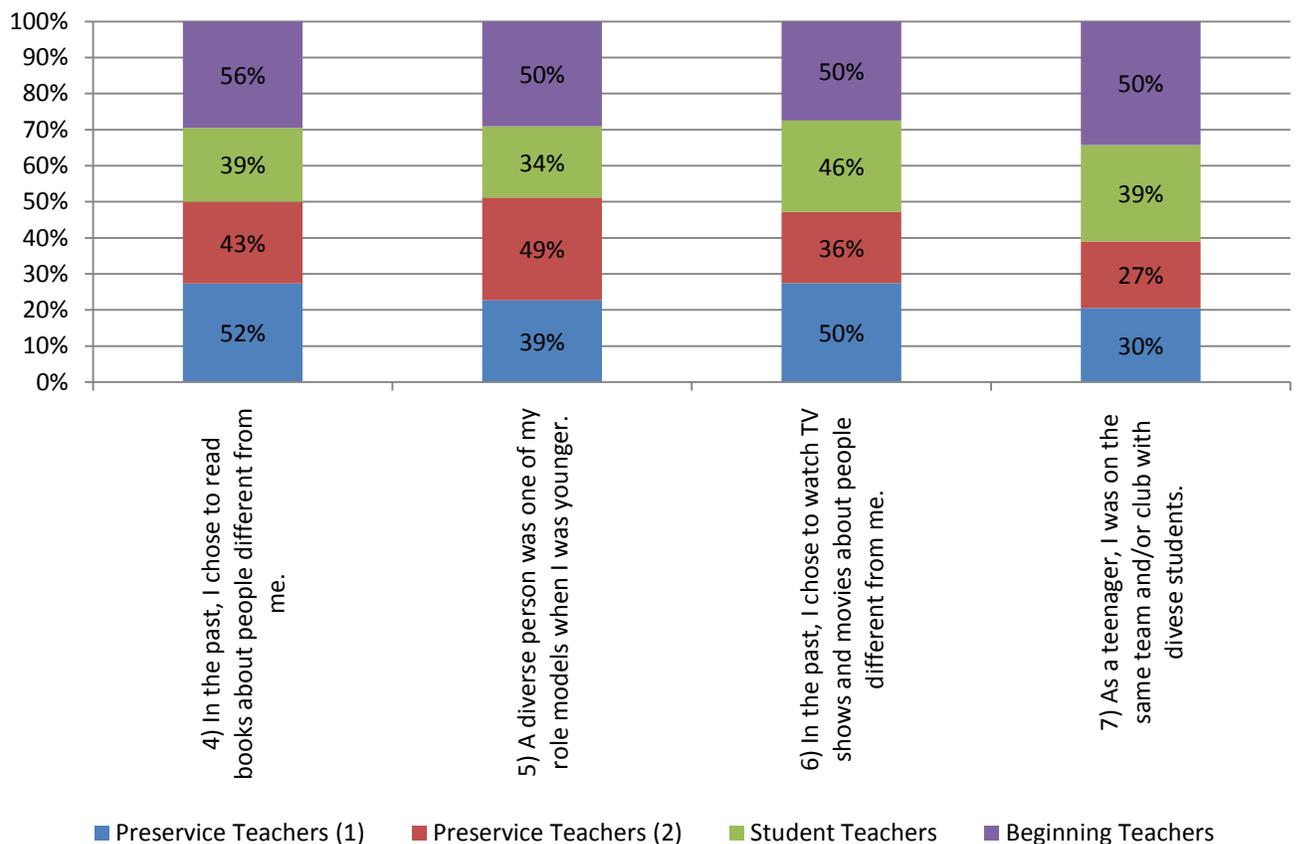
**Between Group Analysis on the Experience with Diversity Subscale, Questions 4-7**

The statements 4-7, on the experience with diversity subscale, represent respondents’ ability to choose their level of interaction with diversity. For instance, even though the preservice teachers in group 1 had a limited amount of experiences with diversity in their neighborhoods and schools, it appears that when given the chance to choose their level of engagement, they

selected more opportunities to interact experiences with diversity. For example, 52% (n=20) of the preservice teachers in group 2, indicate that in the past they had occasionally chose to read books about people different from themselves. In addition, 50% (n=23) of the preservice teachers in this group, indicate that in the past, they occasionally chose to watch TV shows and movies about people different from themselves. On these same statements, the preservice teachers in group 2 had slightly lower experiences with diversity, than the preservice teachers in group 1 when given the chance to choose their level of interaction. Forty-three percent of the preservice teachers in group 2 indicate that they had occasionally chosen to read books about people different from me. Whereas, 36% (n=17) of these preservice teachers indicate that they occasionally watch TV shows and movies about people different from themselves. The responses by the student teachers reflect similar experiences. For example, 39% (n=36) of these respondents indicate that they had occasionally chosen to read books people different from themselves. And 46% (n=43) of the student teachers indicate that they chose to watch TV shows and movies about people different from themselves. Among the four groups of respondents, the beginning teachers again demonstrated the most experiences with diversity. On each of the 4 statements in this section, fifty percent of the beginning teachers respond that they had occasionally experienced diversity. There was one statement on the experiences with diversity subscale, in which there was a consistently low level of interaction with diversity among the four groups. Statement 5, on the subscale, asks the respondents, if a diverse person was one of their role models when they were younger. While 39% (n=18) of the preservice teachers in group 1 indicate that they rarely had a diverse person as a role model growing up. 49% (n=23) of the preservice teachers in group 2 indicate that they had rarely had a diverse person as a role model. 34% (n=32) of the student teachers indicate that they rarely had diverse people as role models,

and 32% (n=10) of the beginning teachers. These findings suggest that while the respondents' experiences with diversity differed according to either where they live, or their ability to choose their level of engagement, as a sample, these respondents generally did not have diverse people as a role model. It is unclear from the findings what contributes to this particular outcome. Figure 7 represents the between group findings on the experience with diversity section, statements 4-7.

Figure 7. Between Group Findings on the Experience with Diversity Section, Statements 4-7.



### Attitudes toward Diversity and Multicultural Efficacy Subscales

The next section examines the results on the Attitudes toward Diversity and Multicultural Efficacy subscales. A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) determined if differences exist between the four groups (preservice teachers (1 & 2), student teachers, and beginning teachers) on the two dependent variables, the mean scores on the attitude

and multicultural efficacy subscales of the MES. Statistically significant differences were found to exist among the four groups on each of the dependent measures, Wilks's  $\Lambda = .51$ ,  $F(6, 430) = 29.05$ ,  $p \leq .01$ . The multivariate  $\eta^2$  based on Wilks's  $\Lambda$  was strong, .29. Table 2 contains the means and standard deviations on the dependent variables for each of the four groups.

Table 2. Participants Mean and Standard Deviations on the Dependent Variables

	Attitudes		Multicultural Efficacy		
	M	SD	M	SD	N
Preservice teachers (1)	23	2.17	58	10.44	46
Preservice teachers (2)	22	6.70	65	8.21	47
Student teachers (3)	15	3.30	61	8.00	93
Beginning teachers (4)	20	3.45	59	6.18	34

Analysis of variances (ANOVA) on each dependent variable was conducted as follow-up tests to the MANOVA. Using the Bonferroni, method the ANOVA on the attitudes means scores was found to be significant,  $F(3, 216) = 56.03$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .44$ . In addition, the ANOVA on the multicultural mean scores was also found to be significant,  $F(3, 216) = 7.16$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .09$

### Follow Up Tests

Post hoc analysis to the univariate ANOVA for both the attitude and multicultural means scores consisted of conducting pairwise comparisons to find which group exhibited the most favorable and least favorable attitudes toward multicultural education. Possible item responses ranged from 1 Disagree Strongly to a score of 4, which represents agree strongly. Presented in

Table 4 are the Preservice Teachers (1) 1, item specific mean and standard deviation for the Attitudes toward Multicultural Education Subscale of the MES.

Table 4. Preservice Teachers (1) Mean and Standard Deviations for Attitudes toward Multicultural Education Subscale, items 8-14.

Item	M	SD
8. Teachers should adapt lesson plans to reflect the different cultures represented in the classroom	3.69	.465
9. Teachers should provide opportunities for children to share cultural differences in foods, dress, family life, and beliefs	3.80	.453
10. Discussing ethnic traditions and beliefs in schools leads to disunity and arguments between students from different cultures.	2.04	1.01
11. Children should be taught mostly by teachers of their own ethnic and cultural background.	1.89	.971
12. It is essential to include the perspectives of diverse groups while teaching things about American History that are common to all Americans.	3.65	.706
13. Curricula and textbooks should include the contributions of most, if not all, cultural groups in our society.	3.73	.491
14. The classroom library should reflect the racial and cultural differences in the class.	3.67	.555

Overall, the preservice teachers in group 1 responded indicate a positive attitude toward multicultural education. Of particular interest is this group of respondents responses to those items in which teachers are expected to engage in multicultural educational practices, particularly since these preservice teachers had not had prior exposure to multicultural educational theory or practice. For example, with a mean score of 3.80, the respondents indicate their most positive attitude toward multicultural education on item 9, which holds that, teachers

should provide opportunities for children to share cultural differences in foods, dress, family life and beliefs. It is difficult from the MES alone to ascertain what accounts for such beliefs, but the positive score indicates that this group of respondents holds favorable attitudes toward multicultural education and would be receptive to multicultural theory and practice. Further suggesting that this group of respondents are receptive to multicultural educational theory and practice is item 10 on the attitudes subscale. This item suggests that discussing ethnic traditions and beliefs in school leads to disunity and arguments between students from different cultures, with an average mean response of 2, the respondents indicate that they disagree somewhat with this statement. Again it is difficult from the MES to ascertain what accounts for this response, but it does suggest that this group of respondents is willing to engage in the difficult conversations with their prospective students. Finally, also in support of this group of respondents positive attitude toward multicultural education, especially in terms of their roles as future teachers, in culturally diverse classrooms, is item 11 on the attitudes subscale. This item suggests that children should be taught mostly by teachers of their own ethnic and cultural background. With a mean response of 1.8, many of the respondents either disagreed somewhat or disagreed strongly with this statement. The question this raises for the researcher is whether this is an indication upon the part of these respondents of their understanding of the school contexts in which they may ultimately teach, again, this is not easily determined from the MES alone.

Despite having the least amount of formal exposure to multicultural educational pedagogy, the preservice teachers in group 1 had the most positive attitude toward multicultural education. The preservice teachers in group 2 who had significant exposure had a mean total score of 22, also indicating a positive attitude toward multicultural education. Table 5 represents

the item specific means and standard deviations from the preservice teachers (2) attitudes toward multicultural education subscale of the MES, specifically items 8-14.

Table 5. Preservice Teachers (2) Mean and Standard Deviations for Attitudes toward Multicultural Education Subscale, items 8-14.

Item	M	SD
8. Teachers should adapt lesson plans to reflect the different cultures represented in the classroom	3.50	.850
9. Teachers should provide opportunities for children to share cultural differences in foods, dress, family life, and beliefs	4.00	5.91
10. Discussing ethnic traditions and beliefs in schools leads to disunity and arguments between students from different cultures.	2.47	1.16
11. Children should be taught mostly by teachers of their own ethnic and cultural background.	2.10	1.15
12. It is essential to include the perspectives of diverse groups while teaching things about American History that are common to all Americans.	3.29	1.14
13. Curricula and textbooks should include the contributions of most, if not all, cultural groups in our society.	3.20	1.12
14. The classroom library should reflect the racial and cultural differences in the class.	3.35	1.10

The preservice teachers in group 1 had a positive response on item 9, teachers should adapt lesson plans to reflect the different cultures in the classroom, with an overall average response of 3.5. It is clear from this response that the respondents are aware of their obligations as teachers for creating multicultural lesson plans. This presents an important point of entry for teacher educators as the skills to address when constructing multicultural education teacher preparation courses. The respondents' most positive response is on item 9, suggests that teachers should provide opportunities for children to share cultural differences in foods, dress, family life,

and beliefs, with an average response of 4. As encouraging as the respondents' response to this item presents, one wonders if it is possibly a representation of a superficial approach to multicultural education, one which fails to address with any depth the structural and systemic inequities that exist in both society and schools. Although the respondents in group 1 present similar findings, it is because the respondents in group 2 had more exposure to multicultural educational theory, calls into question the ability of the teacher preparation course to address deeper multicultural and diversity issues. Additionally, when taken in consideration with preservice teachers in group 2 responses on item 11, which states that children should be taught mostly by teachers of their own ethnic and cultural background. It appears that again these respondents are aware of their responsibilities as classroom teachers in creating multicultural classrooms, but the response on item 11, could also indicate their lack of confidence to be reach across cultural boundaries and be effective teachers in classrooms with students who are different from their own cultural or ethnic background. This is supported when one also takes into consideration item 10, which holds that discussing ethnic traditions and beliefs can lead to disunity, this is a common criticism of multicultural education and the respondents in group 2 responses of a 2, indicates that even though they have had exposure to multicultural education, they are somewhat less sure in their beliefs that this will occur. It is unclear from the MES alone if this is a representation of their own lack of experience in directing such conversations or represents agreement of an oft-cited criticism of multicultural education. Regardless, these findings have implications for teacher educators in terms of how courses are constructed, particularly the need to model how to create safe spaces for these dialogues to take place.

Both groups of preservice teachers display positive attitudes toward multicultural education. These findings indicate that those respondents are entering the program with attitudes

receptive to multicultural educational theory. The third group of respondents, student teachers had the least positive attitude toward multicultural education, with an average mean score of 15. The following table presents the student teachers item specific responses to the attitude toward multicultural subscale of the MES.

Table 6. Student Teachers Mean and Standard Deviations for Attitudes toward Multicultural Education Subscale, items 8-14.

Item	M	SD
8. Teachers should adapt lesson plans to reflect the different cultures represented in the classroom	1.88	.958
9. Teachers should provide opportunities for children to share cultural differences in foods, dress, family life, and beliefs	1.67	.984
10. Discussing ethnic traditions and beliefs in schools leads to disunity and arguments between students from different cultures.	2.93	.874
11. Children should be taught mostly by teachers of their own ethnic and cultural background.	3.29	.819
12. It is essential to include the perspectives of diverse groups while teaching things about American History that are common to all Americans.	1.71	.917
13. Curricula and textbooks should include the contributions of most, if not all, cultural groups in our society.	1.75	.807
14. The classroom library should reflect the racial and cultural differences in the class.	1.43	.668

The student teachers consistently indicate a less than positive attitude toward multicultural education. This is seen on those items specifically dealing with teacher responsibilities for infusing multicultural educational practices into the classroom. For instance, on item 8, asked if teachers should adapt lesson plans to reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity represented in the classroom, unlike the preservice teachers in groups 1 and 2, the student

teachers disagreed strongly with this statement. This presents a potential problem for teacher educators'. Is this a reflection of a lack of skills, knowledge, or understanding of the merits of cultural pluralism, or is it a reflection of resistance and resentment regarding multicultural education. The MES does not provide enough insight to effectively address that question. While the student teachers had presented the least positive attitude toward multicultural education, it was still was in the low range for an average response according to Guyton and Wesche's reported findings.

Overall, the beginning teachers indicate a positive attitude toward multicultural education, with an average total score of 20. Table 7 presents the item specific findings for the beginning teachers' responses to the attitudes toward multicultural education subscale on the MES. Although the beginning teachers responses are not as high as the preservice teachers in groups 1 and 2, these findings are promising as they rebound from the responses given by the student teachers. Among the beginning teachers' responses on the attitude toward multicultural education subscale of the MES, there appears to be a degree of consistency among their responses, not evident with the other three groups. Across the statements the beginning teachers' agreed somewhat to each of the 7 items on this section of the attitudes subscale, giving the overall impression of their awareness of their responsibilities as teachers in creating a multicultural classroom. Item 11, which asks if children should be taught by teachers from the same racial and ethnic backgrounds, the beginning teachers indicate that they agree with this statement. The question becomes are they facing difficulties in their own classrooms when working with diverse students and believe that this is a solution or is this indication of their resistance to multicultural education. The later as a rationale is inconsistent with their overall finding, thus suggesting that a more viable response is that this is a reflection of the respondents

lack of confidence in their abilities to work with diverse students. The structure of the MES does not provide enough information to form a conclusion. Table 7 presents the item specific mean and standard deviations for the attitudes toward multicultural education subscale of the MES.

Table 7. Beginning Teachers Mean and Standard Deviations for Attitudes toward Multicultural Education Subscale, items 8-14.

Item	M	SD
8. Teachers should adapt lesson plans to reflect the different cultures represented in the classroom	2.94	.982
9. Teachers should provide opportunities for children to share cultural differences in foods, dress, family life, and beliefs	2.70	.970
10. Discussing ethnic traditions and beliefs in schools leads to disunity and arguments between students from different cultures.	2.64	.848
11. Children should be taught mostly by teachers of their own ethnic and cultural background.	3.02	.869
12. It is essential to include the perspectives of diverse groups while teaching things about American History that are common to all Americans.	2.82	.911
13. Curricula and textbooks should include the contributions of most, if not all, cultural groups in our society.	2.67	.726
14. The classroom library should reflect the racial and cultural differences in the class.	2.67	.726

The previous section provides insight into preservice and beginning teachers' attitudes toward multicultural education. It is clear that while the preservice teachers are entering the teacher preparation program with attitudes receptive to multicultural education, that over time and experience in classroom that these attitudes wane. This is useful information for teacher educators when designing multicultural education course work for it explicates what teacher

tasks to include in preparing future educators for culturally pluralistic classrooms. While the attitude section provides a look at how responsive the respondents are to multicultural educational theory and practice, the following section examines respondents' multicultural efficacy, belief in their abilities to be successful in such tasks. In general the respondents total scores on the efficacy section of the MES indicates an average belief in their abilities to successfully implement multicultural educational practices, with scores ranging from 58 to 65. The following tables represent each group's item specific response to the efficacy subscale.

Table 8 Preservice Teachers (1) Mean and Standard Deviations Multicultural Efficacy Subscale Statements 15-34

Items	M	SD
15. I can provide instructional activities to help students develop strategies for dealing with racial confrontations	2.71	.655
16. I can adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of learners from diverse groups.	2.80	.909
17. I can develop materials appropriate for the multicultural classroom.	2.86	.957
18. I can develop instructional materials that dispel myths about diverse groups.	2.80	.909
19. I can analyze instructional materials for potential stereotypical and/or prejudicial content.	3.06	.952
20. I can help students to examine their own prejudices.	2.76	.923
21. I can present diverse groups in our society in a manner that will build mutual respect.	2.73	.905
22. I can develop activities that increase the self-confidence of diverse students.	2.84	.965
23. I can provide instruction showing how prejudice affects individuals.	3.06	.618

Table 8 Preservice Teachers (1) Mean and Standard Deviations Multicultural Efficacy Subscale Statements 15-34, Continued

Items	M	SD
24. I can plan instructional activities to reduce prejudice toward diverse groups.	2.86	.618
25. I can identify cultural biases in commercial materials used in teaching	2.89	.849
26. I can help students work through problem situations caused by stereotypical and/or prejudicial attitudes.	2.91	.783
27. I can get students from diverse groups to work together.	3.17	.876
28. I can identify school practices that may harm diverse students.	2.91	.938
29. I can identify solutions to problems that may arise as the result of diversity.	2.76	.899
30. I can identify the societal forces which influence the opportunities for diverse people.	2.84	.759
31. I can identify ways in which various groups contribute to our pluralistic society.	2.97	.856
32. I can help students take on the perspective of ethnic and cultural groups different from their own.	2.80	.778
33. I can help students view history and current events from diverse perspectives.	3.04	.815
34. I can involve students in making decision and clarifying their values regarding multicultural issues.	2.89	.854

Despite not having had prior exposure to multicultural educational pedagogy, the preservice teachers in this group responded that they felt reasonably confident in their abilities to complete certain multicultural tasks, with a total score of 58. The preservice teachers in group 2 were the most multiculturally efficacious with a total score of 65 on the multicultural efficacy scale. Table 9 presents the preservice teachers (2) item specific mean and standard deviations on the multicultural efficacy subscale.

Table 9 Preservice Teachers (2) Mean and Standard Deviations Multicultural Efficacy Subscale Statements 15-34

Items	M	SD
15. I can provide instructional activities to help students develop strategies for dealing with racial confrontations	2.95	.581
16. I can adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of learners from diverse groups.	3.14	.583
17. I can develop materials appropriate for the multicultural classroom.	3.33	.595
18. I can develop instructional materials that dispel myths about diverse groups.	3.12	.605
19. I can analyze instructional materials for potential stereotypical and/or prejudicial content.	3.22	.691
20. I can help students to examine their own prejudices.	3.20	.671
21. I can present diverse groups in our society in a manner that will build mutual respect.	3.41	.577
22. I can develop activities that increase the self-confidence of diverse students.	3.33	.630
23. I can provide instruction showing how prejudice affects individuals.	3.29	.617
24. I can plan instructional activities to reduce prejudice toward diverse groups.	3.06	.598
25. I can identify cultural biases in commercial materials used in teaching.	3.41	.709
26. I can help students work through problem situations caused by stereotypical and/or prejudicial attitudes.	3.37	.569
27. I can get students from diverse groups to work together.	3.56	.580
28. I can identify school practices that may harm diverse students.	3.25	.668

Table 9 Preservice Teachers (2) Mean and Standard Deviations Multicultural Efficacy Subscale Statements 15-34, Continued

Items	M	SD
29. I can identify solutions to problems that may arise as the result of diversity.	3.10	.660
30. I can identify the societal forces which influence the opportunities for diverse people.	3.16	.663
31. I can identify ways in which various groups contribute to our pluralistic society.	3.33	.663
32. I can help students take on the perspective of ethnic and cultural groups different from their own.	3.25	.669
33. I can help students view history and current events from diverse perspectives.	3.35	.601
34. I can involve students in making decision and clarifying their values regarding multicultural issues.	3.27	.706

The student teachers also displayed an average confidence in their abilities to successfully implement multicultural pedagogy, with a total score of 61. Across each of the items the student teachers indicate they were reasonably confident in their abilities to implement multicultural educational pedagogy. The only item in which the student teachers expressed less confidence is item 16, which states, I can adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of learners from diverse groups. This very specific task provides essential guidance for teacher educators' in terms of the skills the respondents see as necessary in being effective in the classroom. Table 10 presents the student teachers item specific mean and standard deviation on the multicultural efficacy subscale of the MES.

Table 10 Student Teachers Mean and Standard Deviations Multicultural Efficacy Subscale Statements 15-34

Items	M	SD
15. I can provide instructional activities to help students develop strategies for dealing with racial confrontations	2.71	.700
16. I can adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of learners from diverse groups.	3.06	.692
17. I can develop materials appropriate for the multicultural classroom.	3.09	.680
18. I can develop instructional materials that dispel myths about diverse groups.	3.00	.679
19. I can analyze instructional materials for potential stereotypical and/or prejudicial content.	3.06	.822
20. I can help students to examine their own prejudices.	2.93	.767
21. I can present diverse groups in our society in a manner that will build mutual respect.	3.22	.630
22. I can develop activities that increase the self-confidence of diverse students.	3.15	.769
23. I can provide instruction showing how prejudice affects individuals.	3.23	.635
24. I can plan instructional activities to reduce prejudice toward diverse groups.	3.09	.663
25. I can identify cultural biases in commercial materials used in teaching.	3.04	.863
26. I can help students work through problem situations caused by stereotypical and/or prejudicial attitudes.	3.04	.627
27. I can get students from diverse groups to work together.	3.33	.699
28. I can identify school practices that may harm diverse students.	3.01	.791
29. I can identify solutions to problems that may arise as the result of diversity.	2.93	.767
30. I can identify the societal forces which influence the opportunities for diverse people.	2.93	.767
31. I can identify ways in which various groups contribute to our pluralistic society.	3.18	.740

Table 10 Student Teachers Mean and Standard Deviations Multicultural Efficacy Subscale Statements 15-34, Continued.

Items	M	SD
32. I can help students take on the perspective of ethnic and cultural groups different from their own.	3.07	.740
33. I can help students view history and current events from diverse perspectives.	3.31	.645
34. I can involve students in making decision and clarifying their values regarding multicultural issues.	3.15	.627

The beginning teachers' total score had a total score of 59 on the multicultural efficacy subscale of the MES; while this was not the lowest total score it is second to the preservice teachers in group 1. The beginning teachers' scores represent their confidence in their abilities to complete certain teacher tasks in their present classrooms, whereas the other respondents' responses are more future-oriented. It is difficult to ascertain if the multicultural education course had an impact. Table 11 represents the beginning teacher's item specific mean and standard deviations on the multicultural efficacy subscale.

Table 11 Beginning Teachers Mean and Standard Deviations Multicultural Efficacy Subscale Statements 15-34

Items	M	SD
15. I can provide instructional activities to help students develop strategies for dealing with racial confrontations	2.61	.853
16. I can adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of learners from diverse groups.	3.00	.953
17. I can develop materials appropriate for the multicultural classroom.	2.73	.790
18. I can develop instructional materials that dispel myths about diverse groups.	2.88	.685

Table 11 Beginning Teachers Mean and Standard Deviations Multicultural Efficacy Subscale Statements 15-34, Continued

Items	M	SD
19. I can analyze instructional materials for potential stereotypical and/or prejudicial content.	3.17	.757
20. I can help students to examine their own prejudices.	2.94	.693
21. I can present diverse groups in our society in a manner that will build mutual respect.	3.05	.600
22. I can develop activities that increase the self-confidence of diverse students.	3.02	.626
23. I can provide instruction showing how prejudice affects individuals.	2.67	.684
24. I can plan instructional activities to reduce prejudice toward diverse groups.	2.91	.621
25. I can identify cultural biases in commercial materials used in teaching.	3.05	.648
26. I can help students work through problem situations caused by stereotypical and/or prejudicial attitudes.	2.88	.728
27. I can get students from diverse groups to work together.	2.97	.626
28. I can identify school practices that may harm diverse students.	2.88	.685
29. I can identify solutions to problems that may arise as the result of diversity.	2.85	.657
30. I can identify the societal forces which influence the opportunities for diverse people.	3.08	.570
31. I can identify ways in which various groups contribute to our pluralistic society.	2.79	.729
32. I can help students take on the perspective of ethnic and cultural groups different from their own.	2.73	.567
33. I can help students view history and current events from diverse perspectives.	2.88	.728
34. I can involve students in making decision and clarifying their values regarding multicultural issues.	3.20	.686

## **Summary of Findings**

On both the attitude and the efficacy subscales of the MES, the respondents display overall positive attitudes and an average belief in their abilities to successfully implement multicultural educational pedagogy. According to the teacher task or context of the statements, the participants' responses varied according to their exposure to multicultural education. For those preservice teachers in group 1 who had limited prior exposure to multicultural education, they expressed an overall positive attitude toward multicultural education yet on the efficacy scale; they expressed some reservations for certain teaching tasks. Even though this group of respondents expressed some reservation, this is consistent with the fact that they had not had any formal exposure to multicultural education. The preservice teachers in group 2 expressed the most positive attitude toward multicultural education as well being the most efficacious in their multicultural educational pedagogy. It is unclear from the MES if the course as an intervention accounts for these differences. The student teachers had the least positive attitudes toward multicultural education, which could be an indication of their resentment or resistance toward multicultural education. Or it could be a reflection of their limited knowledge, skills, and understanding of multicultural education, at this point given the data it is difficult to say with any certainty what accounts for these findings. The beginning teachers also had a positive attitude toward multicultural education. Their score was higher than that expressed by the student teachers, which makes one wonder if the placement of the student teachers is a contributing factor to their low scores. The results of the beginning teachers holds promise that despite scores not as high as the preservice teachers, that possibly they are able to implement some multicultural pedagogy in their current places of employment.

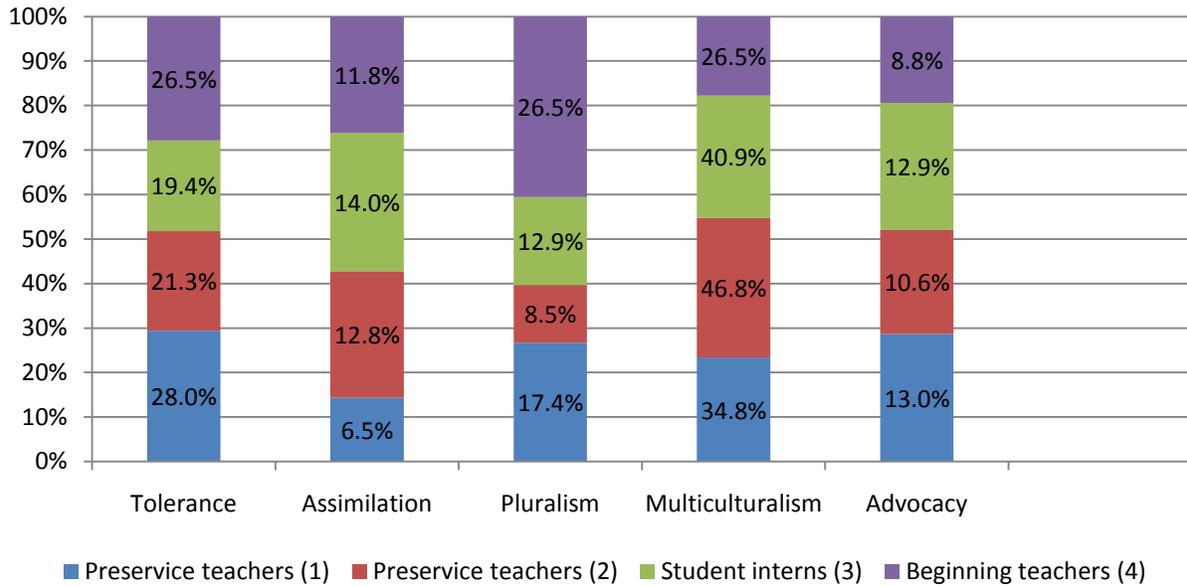
## **Approaches to Multicultural Education**

The final item on the MES addresses respondents approach to multicultural education. Guyton and Wesche (2009) developed 5 statements corresponding to each of the five approaches as developed by Grant and Sleeter's (2006) approaches to multicultural education. A between case analysis revealed that the majority of the respondents in each of the four groups approached multicultural education either through a *tolerance* or *multiculturalist* lens. For example, 28% (n=13) of the preservice teachers in group 1 indicate a *tolerance* approach to multicultural education with 35% (n=16) who indicate a *multiculturalist* perspective. The preservice teachers in group 2 indicate that 21% (n=10) held a *tolerance* perspective with 47% (n=22) who responded that they conceptualized multicultural education through a *multiculturalist* lens. The majority of the student teachers envisioned multicultural education from the *multiculturalist* perspective, with 19% (n=18) who approached it through a *tolerance* perspective. The beginning teachers response were relatively evenly distributed between three of the five item choices for question five, with the selection of *tolerance*, *pluralism* and *multiculturalist* each garnering 26% (n=9) of their overall responses. The item choice with the least amount of responses among each of the 4 groups was the advocacy perspective including;

- 13 % (n=6) of the preservice teachers (1)
- 11% (n= 5) of the preservice teachers (2)
- 12% (n= 11) of the student teachers (3) and
- 9% (n=3) of the beginning teachers (4)

The cross tabulation revealed that the preservice teachers in group 1, those who had the least experience to multicultural education in their teacher preparation demonstrated the largest percentage of those respondents holding an *advocacy* perspective. Figure 8 presents a between group analysis to item 35, approaches to multicultural education.

Figure 8 Between Group Analyses Approaches to Multicultural Education, Item 35



Overall, the findings of the quantitative data revealed statistically significant differences among the four groups. The item specific analysis indicates in greater detail where some of the differences occurred. However, what remains to be answered is what accounts for these differences. It is through the use of a mixed research approach that those unanswered questions might be explained. The researcher’s use of semi-structured interviews in the next section sought to explain those differences.

**Findings from Interviews**

Interviews were conducted in the spring of 2010 with six preservice teachers (1); five preservice teachers (2); four student teachers (3) and four beginning teachers (4). The participants volunteered for the interview through their participation in the multicultural education course and through the online survey. Those preservice teachers, student teachers, and beginning teachers willing to participate in the follow-up interview provided their contact information at the end of the survey. Of the 6 preservice teachers in group 1 who agreed to

participate in the interview process, all were white (European-American) females, two were elementary preservice teachers and the remaining four were secondary with emphases in History/Social Studies, English education, and Art education. Of the 5 preservice teachers in group 2; three of the preservice teachers were white (European-American) and female, one was a female German national, and one was a white (European-American) male. These respondents represent a range of program of studies; two were elementary education majors, one was an early childhood education major, two were secondary education majors in the fields of History/Social Studies and Math. All 4 of the student teachers were female; two were white (European-Americans), one African-American, and one who identified as being mixed race. Two of the four student teachers were elementary education majors, one was a secondary Math major and the other was a secondary History/Social Studies major. In the final group there were four beginning teachers. Two of the beginning teachers were white and female. One was a white male and the other an African-American male. In terms of years of experience and subject area taught, one was a secondary History/Social Studies teacher with one year of professional teaching experience. Another was a white female secondary History/Social Studies teacher with two years of teaching experience. The two remaining teachers had 3 years of teaching experience at the elementary and middle school levels.

The transcribed interviews were analyzed and interpreted using an emergent approach. Data analysis was inductive and identified common themes and emerging patterns using content analysis of the preservice, student teachers, and beginning teachers' interviews. This section of the chapter includes a discussion of those interview findings with details that support and explain each finding based upon the respondents responses. The researcher sought to listen to the voices of the respondents to garner a sense of their range of experiences as it relates to multicultural

education. The intent was to allow the reader a point of entry in which to better understand the perspectives of the research participants. As such, quotations from the participants are used to explicate the themes, as well as to provide a space in which the participants could voice their values, beliefs and attitudes toward multicultural education.

From the interviews six overarching themes emerged: (1) influence of family/childhood experiences; (2) influence of significant incident; (3) understanding based upon empathy moral disposition/religious/or spiritual beliefs; (4) discrimination due to minority status; (5) influence of experiences with diversity; (6) influence of coursework/teacher preparation; and awareness of issues related to diversity.

#### Influence of Family/Childhood Experiences

The respondents were to explain what diversity means to them and explain what factors influenced these understandings. All of the respondents indicated that the strongest influence upon their understanding of diversity came from their families. Among the comments, a general consensus arose which they had been taught by their parents to ignore the color of a person skin, one student teacher commented,

My parents taught me that it was impolite to make mention of someone's skin color or their race. A person was just a person and should be judged by the merits of their actions, not the color of their skin. It is somewhat confusing now that we are taught that we should take into account someone racial background, I guess I struggle a bit with knowing how this information really impacts what I do as a teacher...shouldn't our goal as teachers be to treat everyone fairly...and to do so would mean that color or race...I guess doesn't matter.

Others cited their parents' upbringing as being consequential in their understanding of diversity. For instance, one of the beginning teacher's recounts how her father's upbringing impacted her and her siblings' outlook on racial and cultural differences she stated:

I would say that my grandparents...especially my father's parents were particularly racist. I remember when I was a senior in high school and I began dating an African-

American guy...and I made the mistake of inviting him to a family gathering. It was like...not the younger members of my family who had such a strong reaction...but the older ones made it a very difficult time for my boyfriend. Their comments were absolutely horrible. I think that I knew from the stories my father would tell that some of them were racist. I guess but I didn't want to believe the level in which they would demonstrate these feelings. I think my father tried to shield my siblings from this side of the family. I think that is also why we went to the schools and church that we attended and lived in the neighborhoods that we did...I think he really just wanted to get as far away from that negative background as he possibly could. We were taught that it doesn't matter what color your skin is...but rather who you are as an individual that is most important. I think that this was his way of promoting multiculturalism.

Others comments indicate that in retrospect some of the respondents felt like their upbringing particularly their limited exposure to people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds was a disservice; their comments conveyed a sense of loss. This sentiment was best expressed by one of the beginning teachers, who came from an affluent suburb, she surmised:

Living in the suburbs...where everyone essential looks like you can be very restricting. I mean I think in some ways my parents were trying to shield us from what they saw as possible dangers... perhaps that is a bit harsh, rather I should say some of the less than positive aspects of life, but I think in reality I always felt that it was a disadvantage growing up with very little exposure to other ethnic groups and cultures. My neighborhood, and school certainly didn't reflect much diversity, and I didn't have opportunities to take classes that would introduce me to those things until I got into college, its' really ironic because after all that my parents tried to shield me from I find that knowing about different cultures and ethnicities is fascinating. I think that taking the course kind of open the door for me and this is when my interest in it really started to grow and I started to see myself more as a member of a global community rather than just, you know a self-absorbed individual who didn't really consider how much more there was to learn about the world. So I think that it is extremely important for a teacher or anyone in any field really to understand the importance of diversity and acceptance, especially teaching what I teach and the history that we have with intolerance. I think that by not having had the experience growing up with different kinds of people was definitely a disadvantage for me...but I don't think that at the time I understood it as being a disadvantage.

#### Influence of Significant Incident

Many of the respondents' comments indicate that their understanding of diversity was developed in response to a particular incident that occurred as a child. For instance, several of the respondents defined diversity in relationship to their own socioeconomic status. Their responses

indicated that given their economic status, diversity was not something that they were generally aware of, unless it directly impacted their own lives. For example one preservice teacher (1) stated, “When I was younger, my parents made a lot of money and I guess being young and naïve, I just assumed that’s how everyone lived. As I got older and my parents went through hard economic times especially after the divorce and my mother really had nothing. It was not until then that I began to understand that people lived differently.” Likewise, another preservice teacher (2) responded that because everyone appeared to be similar to her family, that she did not notice differences. She remarked:

I don’t remember there being a whole lot of diversity in my schools or in my neighborhood growing up. It [diversity] was simply never something that [I] was ever really concerned about. It not like I was deliberately tuning it out...it just was not there so I didn’t think about its existence. As I think about it now, coming from a predominately white middle class neighborhood, one just assumed that everyone was the same.

Other respondents indicated an awareness of cultural diversity, particularly through socio-economic class from the deliberate choices made by their parents. For instance, a beginning teacher remarked that while her family had the means to live in a more affluent neighborhood, her parents’ choice of neighborhood and schools were selected for the diversity it could provide. As an example she stated:

It wasn’t like uh...he is Muslim (my family is Jewish)...so let’s have him over for dinner...or black people live in that house, so let’s buy the house next door. I remember thinking about this when I returned home to the south, and I asked my mom why they chose to live in this transitional neighborhood. The comment from my mom was that the decision was intentional; she explained that it was done in order to provide my sister and me with a realistic understanding of the world. My parents, I think made it all seem quite natural, so I guess while I didn’t think about it as being different...I guess it really was. And because it was so natural, I think I thought that other people experienced a similar background and upbringing, being surrounded by all kinds of people. I guess I was fortunate that my parents wanted us to be well rounded and ready to live in a more inclusive world as compared to the upbringing of some of my peers.

In one very emotionally charged interview one of the preservice teachers from group 2 noted that given where she grew up, that money was the primary means of differences, she stated:

Well everyone, but not me, but a lot of the other kids... you know got cars for their sixteenth birthday. One of the kids I went to school with, parents owned Hallmark, um and it was never race that really played a role, it was money that played a role because kids who had a lot of money like could afford to start driving at a really young age. They can buy whatever they want so they have really nice clothes, and they let you know it. They always had their hair done really nicely and they let you know it. I mean it was sickening. I mean there was just a huge disparity with money. The teachers even made assumptions. They all assumed that we all had computers, which I didn't. I mean um you know the section eight kids who went to my elementary school, it fed right into the Shawnee Mission East so, and you know, sometimes the teachers would ask us to do pod casts. Well I don't, I mean I didn't have an iPod at that time. Those things are three hundred dollars and my family could afford that. Or there was a girl who like tried out for cheerleading and didn't make it...so her parents bought everyone new uniforms and she go on. Yeah so money played a huge role.

#### Understanding based upon Religious or Spiritual Beliefs

Another way in which the respondents contextualized their understanding of diversity was through the lens of religion. One beginning teacher recounted experiencing a great deal of hostility for being Jewish, she stated:

There was a lot of hostility directed toward me in school because I am Jewish. There was an 'I hate Jews' club in my third grade class, and I was the only known Jew. But like there was actually one other guy who was Jewish, who was one of my best friends, but he kept being Jewish quiet. He was actually a member of the 'I hate Jews' club because he didn't want to be associated as being a Jew. As I think about it now, my third grade teacher didn't do anything...but I don't think that her response was unusual, because this was the south, the Bible Belt so I think that one has to expect a certain mentality...it's sort of funny because my experience in high school was not that much different. In high school we moved to the area, actually we moved to Olathe and that was a different kind of situation...while there is a large Jewish community, I was in shock...but I remember my mother going through the phone book, of our neighborhood when we got the welcome basket...and our neighborhood was white, protestant, like the definition of WASP, this was hard for my mother to adjust to as I recall. Just like my elementary years, there was no evidence of religious diversity in my high school. I think that by having to deal with religious diversity and religious intolerance has enabled me to think about diversity very differently, you can share the same skin color...but you

know...just looking like the person sitting next to you is not enough...you never know how people are different.

Another preservice teacher from group 1 also of the Jewish faith expressed similar experiences but in college, she stated:

When I first came to college, I was assigned a random roommate and you know, one of the first things that she said to me, she said 'Oh you are the first Jewish person I've ever met.' It's just that in that moment you begin to realize that you have to represent your culture and your background well...so people don't get a misunderstanding of your history...you know people have such different viewpoints and they are not always taught the correct ways to um accept other people.

While the experiences expressed by these respondents provided them with a unique perspective on diversity. It was not the only way in which religion influenced the respondents understanding of diversity. Nearly eighty-eight percent of the respondents who participated in the survey indicated that they were of the Christian faith. One of the preservice teachers (1) interviewed responded how Christian beliefs influenced how she thought about diversity, she remarked,

We were taught in my church that everyone should be treated with respect, but yet, I remember when this posed a conflict for my family and it was when my parents decided that we would leave this particular church. I don't recall the entire story, because I was still young, maybe about 9 or 10 years old or so...and in Sunday school we were talking about differences and someone brought up the issue of gays. Our Sunday school teacher stated that this was a sin and that it was wrong to be gay. I remember asking her if gays would be allowed to go to heaven and she said no... and this didn't make much sense to me, so I asked my parents. My parents were upset that the Sunday school teacher had made this comment and wanted to challenge what she was teaching us. Well this became a big issue as I remember and my parents took a stand and said that this was not something that they believed in nor did they want this message taught to their children, so we left that church. I don't think that my parents knew people at the time who were gay...but I do remember that we talked about differences and how everyone should be treated equally. I guess this is why I am a bit confused when I hear people say that they are Christian but they don't demonstrate Christian ways toward those who are different. It is like if you are not like me than you are morally wrong or something. I also think that's why Christians are negatively portrayed as being intolerant toward others...we are not all like that. I think that due to my parents influence and my strong Christian

faith...that I have shaped my understanding of not only what is diversity but also how to deal with diversity as a future teacher.

### Discrimination Due to Minority Status

The respondents' comments regarding race evoked perhaps the deepest and most revealing look at how the participants thought (or did not) think about race. For instance, one of the preservice teachers (1) revealed that when she thought of diversity the first thing that she always thought of was the color of the person's skin. She remarked, "there was not a whole lot of diversity in either my school or in my neighborhood growing up, and so when I thought about it diversity (if I thought about it) it always involved the race of the person;" She continued, "race is not something that you really think about if everyone around you looks like you. But if someone doesn't look like you, the first thing that you see is the color of their skin...I mean that is what you tend to notice first." Another student teacher expressed similar sentiments when she stated,

At school and in my classes and in my neighborhood, I never really gave much thought about people who did not look like me...I mean of course I knew that there were different races of people...but this was not a part of my everyday experience about who these people were, so I guess that sounds pretty bad to admit to...but I just didn't think about it growing up. I know that there were black people in my school but they weren't in any of my classes, in high school 'cause I was primarily in AP classes.

In contrast, the students of color interviewed provided a different understanding of how their race influenced their understanding of diversity. Their comments seemed to indicate an acute awareness of one's race and what it meant to be seen as other. For instance, one African-American female student teacher responded that growing up the area of town in which she grew up was predominately white, was at times difficult. She stated:

Despite the efforts of my parents, I think growing up I was always aware of my race, even though most of my friends and neighbors were nice, they were nearly all white...and they tried to like not make me feel different...yet it was like it was an unspoken presence in the room, [laughing] you know that it's there but everyone tries not

to talk about it sort of thing, so I guess even at an early age I was always aware of being different from my friends. Not much has changed in college either, because in my classes here at KU, I sometimes would feel the same way...sorta like being an outsider.

Another student teacher who self-identified as being biracial recalled how when racial topics were discussed in class, or something happened in the news involving a racial incident, she was often called upon to offer a “black perspective.” When asked if she thought that this experience had any impact upon how she would teach, she stated:

I purposely completed my student teaching and internship at two very different schools. One of the schools was a suburban school with just a few minority students. And the other was an urban school with a high range of diversity. I did this not just for the experience as I was trying to decide where I wanted to eventually end up teaching. But I think also there was an element of wanting to serve as a positive role model for either school setting. I am very cognizant of my being seen as an African-American and that often time people will see me as having a certain perspective. I think this is more so as a teacher. So when I am working with students, I try to make sure that I tried to make sure that when we were talking about history...that I didn't single the minority kids out to give me their perspective of things, especially as we talked about World War II and what was happening in American at the same time. I don't know if that was the correct thing to do...but even for those students who I knew were Jewish and we were talking about the Holocaust I didn't want to single them out to give me the Jewish perspective. As I think about it now...I don't think I my students got out of the discussions as much as I would have liked them to because of my not wanting to get their perspective and make them feel called up...I don't know that is something to think about my experiences at the two placements were quite different. During my student teaching experience, I taught a lesson on the Civil Rights Movement; I felt a bit more freedom to talk about issues of race, because I was at a PDS [professional development school] with a high minority enrollment. Um...for an urban district or a place like Harmon and everyone gets along and the idea of race is just much more fluid and people talk about it and people joke about it, and it is just a much more open society, I feel like. But as I think about it there were differences, for in the honors class that I taught, with seniors, most of them were white...I still felt like I still had to be on my guard with the unit...I didn't want to appear as if I had an agenda. I think because I am black that regardless of where I do end up teaching...that I will always view diversity different than say my white peers and it probably impact how I teach and what I teach.

Twenty-eight percent of those surveyed were males, however, only three agreed to participate in the follow up interview. Interestingly their responses to what constitutes diversity,

intersected the concepts of both race and gender, yielding a point of view quite different from their female peers. For instance, one of the white male preservice teachers from group 2 stated:

I understand that there are different people in the world...I did not grow up in a vacuum or with blinders on...so I know that there are people in the world who are different from me, on the other hand, I also really don't see how being a white male influences how I teach. I see how being a male teacher is not the most popular of jobs, especially if one were to teach elementary school...I have had many family and friends who question why I have chose this profession, but because I am going into the sciences and where I want to teach, I don't see that this really an issue for me. To me the bigger issue that we should be concerned with is whether or not I am a good teacher and if my students are learning. This may not be a popular thought...but really...isn't that all that matters in the end.

In another example of the intersection of race, gender and class, an African-American male student teacher offered a different perspective. He stated,

I know diversity, I grew up in the inner city...my high school was mostly black but by the time I graduated there were more and more students from different places. The common bond was that we were all poor. I know being a black male teacher is rare...people have this misconception about who you are and what you are capable of...I think for me, becoming a teacher is one way to confront those misconceptions. The media depicts us [black males] as either being gang-bangers or drug dealers and I want to represent to those who see me as being labeled into one of those categories as being different. I guess what I am saying is that just because someone is a poor, black and male doesn't mean that they will become a gang banger or [a]thug, yeah, unfortunately people like that exist but that is not all there is...I want to be the role model for students of all backgrounds that that is not the story their lives have to tell. And that is not the only story there is to tell.

As the respondents' comments suggest many points of entry in terms of how they came to understand diversity, there were two additional aspects which seem to resonate quite strongly with several of the respondents and demonstrated how their understandings were deeply connected to their own personal experiences.

#### Awareness of Issues Related to Diversity

Several of the respondents indicated an awareness of the emerging population of English Language Learners entering the school system and expressed concern over their ability to

interact and teach these students. One beginning teacher noted how she has watched this process evolve over time. She expressed the following;

Growing up in California I would have some Hispanic classmates, and I hate to stereotype but a very large influx of the Hispanic population coming into southern California at the time caused a lot of issues with language. I remember noting that you know they don't have what we have or you know that they were different. Um... so I do think how we come to understand people who are different definitely starts at home and I should say that my understanding of diversity is deeply rooted in that experience. I remember being in a class as a maybe a fifth grader with a girl who had just arrived in the United States and she was reading at maybe a kindergarten, first grade level and thinking how hard it must have been for her. But it was not just California, moving from California to western Kansas I think there were similar issues...there is a large Hispanic population in western Kansas and I don't know if we are really prepared for what this will mean. I think there is a great deal of discussion on race and class and yes these are important issues...but I don't think that we do a disservice to those who are facing language barriers. As teachers are we really being prepared to teach in these areas...it um like we focus on urban areas...but the rural areas also need attention as more and more Hispanics are moving into these communities? It's really kind of scary when you think about it. Right now, I am teaching near Gardner, Kansas and the influx of Hispanic families has increased. I often think about that little girl in my class as a child and why the teacher couldn't really help her...the irony is that now I am that teacher...I don't have the training to help many of the students in my classes because I don't have the language skills. I would like to stay in this school district, but it is so frustrating...my husband wants me to work in another school. I dunno what's going to happen.

#### Disability

The last way in which the respondents expressed their understanding of diversity was through the lens of disability. Similar to religion, the beginning teacher made connections to her own personal experience and her present experience in the classroom. She explained:

I don't really recall having a lot of diversity in my school in terms of racial/ethnicity or even along socioeconomic status. Everyone at least in my neighborhood was middle class. But I do remember there being a self-contained SPED program at my school. I don't know why this sticks out in my memory; I probably knew this because of my younger brother's disability. Coming from one of the wealthiest school districts I think that we had a certain privilege that other school districts didn't have... I think that is why some people like selected our school district because of the services it could provide those students with learning disabilities. I know that it is why my parents moved us here. And I feel very fortunate to have been able to find an elementary school to work in, with all of the different types of diversity; I feel that our school district is able to provide services to meet a wide range of needs.

From the interview data there was no one singular pattern that surfaced which adequately described the experiences of each of the respondents, however, a pattern did emerge that clearly articulated the elements of a process which could be used to delineate the shared experiences by all respondents in the study.

In addition to the six themes to emerge from the interviews, there were several patterns which arose based upon the respondents' comments. Four clear patterns emerged from their responses based in part on the experience with the multicultural education course.

Stage One: Contextual Awareness-“I didn't know that culture was important to understand as a teacher”

One of the patterns to emerge from the preservice teachers (1) interviews was this perception of not seeming to know that culture was an important element to consider in education. For example, one preservice teacher (1) stated,

In our [education] classes we are told how to teach kids with you know special needs...and we talk about how every kid is different...but I don't think that I have had a class until now that talks about the importance for understanding the student's cultural background and how that plays a part in how one should teach. This is something that should have maybe be presented at the beginning of our teacher education preparation....not now when I am about to go into student teaching.

Another preservice teacher in group 1 expressed similar sentiments, she stated, “In America I think we often take for granted that there is this one single American culture...I...I think that we all just assume that we have a shared culture because we have this shared history, but in reality this is not so. I guess I have always known that to be true but I did not understand how this could impact me as a teacher.”

Stage Two: Emergent Awareness- “I didn't understand at first, but after taking the course, I can now see the importance of taking such a course”

Many of the preservice teachers in group 2 stated that prior to taking the multicultural education course that they had always felt like they had an understanding of multicultural issues and the need for it in schools, however, what they did not understand was the depth of the complexities of these issues. These same preservice teachers from group 2 further expressed that they believed that the multicultural education course provided an avenue in which they could talk about these issues. One preservice teacher in group 2, in particular, stated this best when she stated, "I always have been aware of diversity issues, perhaps because of my family upbringing...but I never had the words to adequately describe these experiences." Associated with this emergent pattern among the preservice teachers in group 2 was a growing sense of being aware of the need for multicultural education but also an understanding of what this would look like in practice. For example, a preservice teacher from group 2 stated,

I get the need for teachers to understand the culture of our student and why this is so very important...especially when you look at all that is happening in our country right now...it seems that this should be obvious. But I mean students come to school with a set of preconceived stereotypes...and because of that I think that now I understand the importance of the role of teachers in addressing those issues in a safe non threatening environment. Umm, I think it helps just to kind of be aware that there is uh this kind of, oh, I don't know what the right word is, but it is not really talked about in schools, and that is something that I think should be talked about and that it would be helpful it were incorporated into the curriculum, and I think it would help people understand each other better and understand different cultures. So that they are not so, err, to kind of break down the stereotypes because I think that is probably what a lot kids get at home . Schools can serve as a way of breaking down those stereotypes. What I don't understand yet is how exactly this is to be accomplished in a classroom of 20 kids.

Another preservice teacher from group 2 went further when she expressed her concern with not knowing what to do with this newly acquired information she stated:

How do we know where to begin...there are so many different cultures and ways in which people live their lives...how do we as teachers know what to teach...we are bound to insult someone or make someone feel left out? I am glad that I am taking this course because there are so many things that I simply do not know...you know...I mean like how culture influences how we interact with one another...before this course I did not know if it was alright to refer to someone as black or African-American...I still don't

know what is the right terminology...but at least now I know that my questions on different cultures are not dumb...that it is okay to ask...I bet the students especially the middle school students I want to teach will feel the same way and I believe that this is part of my job to help them understand how to do it. I guess though I first need to know how to do it. This first step is important is awareness and that we need to be able to understand that differences exist and that it is okay for those differences to exist.

Stage Three: Transformational-“It was a requirement to take the course, but I really don’t see a connection between the multicultural education course and my methods courses.”

The third pattern to emerge was the ability of the student teachers to take the theoretical understanding of multicultural education and apply it to their practice during their student teaching experience. The assumption was that the student teachers, upon having completed the multicultural education course work and time in the field would be able to develop a depth of understanding of the consequences and realities of cultural diversity. However, this was not the case with this particular set of respondents. One recurring remark by the student teachers was a seemingly lack of connection between their course work and their student practicum experience. While the student teachers articulated an understanding of the need for taking the multicultural education course, several also indicated that they saw no clear relationship between the multicultural education course and their methods course. One student teacher expressed this by saying, “Clearly we could have designed our lesson plans with a multicultural perspective...but I didn’t feel that this was a requirement or expectation of what we were to do.” This difference became more apparent among student teachers along their program of studies in terms of how respondents perceived the purpose of multicultural education. For instance, the previous student was an English major, while a secondary history/social studies student teacher indicated a different perspective, she remarked:

I think that I have a clearer understanding of the importance of teaching from a multicultural perspective...I think that a lot of it has to do with the content that I am in. I mean that is what our job is, that we are social scientists, and we look at society and we look at people. We appreciate what different time periods offer and what different people

have to offer. I think that that the connection between my methods course and the multicultural education course was made, I don't think that it was every explicitly talked about...but I think that we were made aware of the cultural biases that can exists in certain materials...and gender biases and so as part of my training in methods we were taught how to evaluate those resources before you hand them out to students.

In addition to the differences among the program of study, the student teachers also expressed differences according to grade level. For example several of the secondary student teachers felt that the elementary student teachers had more of an opportunity to practice multicultural education in the field through their practicum experiences. One secondary English student teacher expressed the following concerns:

I wish that I had had more practice in actually teaching a multicultural lesson plan. I don't know if it is just because that would have too much, or if the professors felt like it would be too much work to include that or talk about it and include it in our coursework... and um have us include it in our lesson plan or too much in grading it or something...all I know it wasn't addressed. I feel like I should feel more prepared to teach and prepared to make lesson plans that reflect diverse learners...but I don't really feel that way. In talking with some of the elementary people, I feel like their program is different and in their methods classes, they go out and they are actively teaching. And by the end of their methods classes, they have taught, I think six or eight actual lessons, two classes with actual elementary school children. And in secondary, we really didn't do all of that. We did a tutoring thing, but it was just for one semester, and I would have liked a lot more experience actually teaching and putting into practice some of the these that we talked about in [the multicultural education] the 325 class.

Another student teacher expressed similar concerns, she stated:

Um, I just don't really, I don't know, I kind of don't feel very prepared to go out and teach because I mean and I did grow up going to very diverse schools, but I mean I have been out of that for four years now and I feel like I am kind of ill equipped to go back into that environment even though that is where I want to go, and I came into the program at KU knowing that that is what I wanted to do and so having not really had that issue addressed has kind of been difficult. I think there is also a need to incorporate more opportunities to practice multicultural education in all of our classes which would have been more helpful. I think the purpose of the multicultural education class...or at least part of its purpose is to prepare us to teach as well as help us to want to teach a multicultural curriculum, and so I think in order for that to happen to better enforce that, it should be incorporated in all of our classes that we are taking. Now that I think about it, I don't think I ever had anybody ask me while student teaching if I was incorporating multicultural issues in my classroom.

The consensus among the student teachers was the need for skills toward implementation and that this should become a part of all of their teacher education classes. But they also indicated in their responses that they felt that in their field placement they should be paired with teachers who are doing this [multicultural education] in the classroom. For instance, one student teacher explained:

I liked my placement...and I think that I learned a lot from my cooperating teacher. But if you asked me how she responded to students who were different...I think that the only culturally differences that I saw was one of the students had a hearing aid...and so there were accommodations that were made. But when I think about the experience now...I remember there being students who struggled for a lot of different reasons...and we at least not while I was there every addressed it. Our focus was on preparing the students for their assessments which seems strange because we would look at the data after each checkpoint to see how they performed...but I don't think we ever looked at the data beyond thinking that we had to reteach, or the kids simply didn't get it. Shouldn't we have been at least considering that the students learn differently and that we should take that into consideration and then plan our lesson according to their needs. This seems like it would make sense...and that we should be doing that...I know in some of my other classes we talked about data driving the curriculum...but at this point I am not sure what that means or really how to work with that and include an understanding of the multicultural differences that come in to effect.

#### Stage Four-“Now I get it”

The final pattern to emerge from the respondents' interviews was a depth of understanding of multicultural education and diversity implying a deeper awareness of the complexity of the issue. For example, one beginning teacher described how experiences teaching at both a rural and urban school setting changed her perspectives regarding multicultural education.

My first teaching experience definitely didn't go as well as my second. I was dealing with a completely different group of kids from what I was used to and that's not a bad thing. There was diversity. It was a different kind of diversity though. Um, it was, yeah it was [diversity] primarily in terms of socioeconomic status and learning abilities rather than cultural diversities. The kids seemed to be pretty homogenous as far as that goes. It was pretty much all white students, there were degrees of diversity, and it was interesting to me. When I was teaching there, I don't I want to be careful with how I, how I word things because I don't want to be like derogatory about the way that they were teaching there,

but it all seemed very low level, and, you know, very scripted and not especially challenging for the students and they seemed to have a very rigid way in which they wanted things to be done and uh so it wasn't my favorite environment. I didn't feel like I really got to do much of what I was interested in doing, and I felt like when I tried to do things outside the box that that it wasn't very well received. There were some definite issues in terms of the way the kids were growing up and the things that they had been exposed to that I would never have dreamed of for children in those age ranges, and that was definitely an eye opening. For example, their life experiences were very different from the one that I had growing up. Um...we had a student whose house was infested with roaches and roaches were crawling out of his backpack everyday and you know those kinds of things. And there was a young girl in a sixth grade class who was dealing with, you know, sexual abuse issues and just things that I you know, didn't really have any preparation to deal with at all. Um and that was, that was hard.

When asked for specific examples between the first two years of teaching, the beginning teacher explained that she moved back home and the only job available was in an urban setting and that the differences were not as great as some might imagined. She explained:

People have these preconceived ideas about...certain schools. I think people definitely would assume that the kinds of things I described in the rural setting as being only problems associated with being in an urban school. I think people automatically assume, well poverty, that is going to be the urban school, but that is not necessarily the case. Um... I think that it is much wider reaching than that. You know, it affects all schools and obviously the suburban schools much less so, but um, I think definitely those rural and urban schools have some similar issues that people don't realize. I think people as I was saying before, have preconceived misconceptions about what it's like teaching in an urban environment. They are assuming that there are fights and gangs, and yeah there are going to be some fights, but there were fights in the rural middle school that I worked at. There were issues with, um, with different groups of individuals not necessarily gang violence, but we had, you know um, some violent threats from students and things like that. I don't think that it's as different as people think it is but what is interesting to me is that I don't think that I was very well prepared to deal with those issues that I encountered in the rural school. Do you know what I mean? I think because we often think that issues of poverty, drug abuse, sexual abuse, etc., are part of what happens in urban settings. That in preparing us to teach if you don't want to teach in an urban setting...then you don't have exposure to how to work in such environments...but I think that's why these issues are important to be discussed no matter where you think you are going to teach...because as I learned the hard way...these conditions do exist and I was not prepared to deal with it all.

A secondary issue that arose from the interviews was a sense of their own responsibility in not knowing how to successfully implement multicultural educational pedagogy, and how in

hindsight, this was an opportunity lost from their teacher preparation. Several of the beginning teachers expressed a desire to have learned how to effectively plan lessons and units from a multicultural education perspective. One beginning teacher stated, “I don’t remember ever having to write a lesson plan in the School of Education implementing multicultural education practices. I remember we had to do more of a paper about multicultural education, but not actually what implementation would look like in practice.” Other beginning teachers felt that the activities completed in their multicultural education class provided a valuable service in terms of opening the discussion for potentially difficult conversations. For example, one beginning teacher recalled:

I remember one activity where we were challenged to come up with every, where it be derogatory or slang terms that we could think of for all of the different races and whatever stereotypes that we have and then go and analyze those and find out why that was a stereotype or you know, what our beliefs were about that. We did another simulation that was a study in culture, and it too was great because it forced us to interact in these environments where we weren’t sure what we were doing, and it really helped us to understand what it make feel like for an exchange student or an international student to be in an environment where they don’t know the langue or the culture what they are supposed to be doing. I think that these were great activities for preservice teachers because it got us to begin thinking about the different ways that people can be different. It widened my understanding from just thinking about diversity on a racial scope to understanding more about SES and lifestyle and just a broader range of what diversity can really be. But the question of whether it is enough to help me become an effective teacher...I think that first beginning to understand the different cultures is a beginning...but what do we do with that information is what is missing. And when I look back over my teacher preparation, I would say that that was at least for me the missing piece.

Another beginning teacher explained that through her experience in the classroom she was able to put into practice many of the elements she learned during her student teaching experience. She explained that things that were presented as theory did not become reality until she became a teacher. For instance she explained I didn’t really undestand multicultural education until I was in the classroom and I was confronted with all the different ways students

could be different. I know that in our teacher preparation, we are taught that students are different and that as educators we need to be aware of those differences...it doesn't really make sense to you until you confront those issues in your own classroom, she continued:

I think that as it is with a lot of things in education, you can talk to people about it, and you can say this is one of those things that you're are going to experience, but until they actually do and they have a face that goes along with that idea of kids failing and student apathy, when they actually have a personal relationship and understanding with their student, then it becomes much more real. Talking about it in theory or hypothetically, feeling pretty removed from it is a very different thing, but when you are emotionally invested in your students and their success, it can be much more challenging and meaningful. So I think to a degree you can prepare beginning teachers for the idea but not necessarily for the reality of it ...I think that comes with experience.

Another beginning teacher expressed similar sentiments when she stated:

I really think it is just getting out there and seeing it, especially if you are from a suburban district or a small town. You need to get as far away from your home base as possible to experience schools that are different from where you come from. I know many of my friends in the program just want to go back to a community similar to where they were raised...and there is nothing wrong with that. But I don't think that many of them every experienced anything beyond that...so I question what they are bringing into their classrooms. I think that it is fine to want to return to what is familiar to you...but I think that they need to do so in a way that brings in fresh perspectives. That seems to me to be one of the goals or should be one of the purposes of multicultural education. I don't think that we really did that as much. I mean we had the one or two urban school visits, but I don't think that was enough to really get people thinking about diversity or multicultural education in a meaningful way. I remember that on the bus ride back from Harmon...some of the students on the bus were saying things that made me think; this did not change them at all...if anything it seemed to reinforce the stereotypical thinking that they had from the start.

She also stated that she thought that teachers who wanted to implement a multicultural perspective in the classroom had to be careful, she stated:

I think teachers, especially new teachers have to be extremely careful with multicultural education...I mean our purpose is not tell students what to think about a certain issue...but it should be rather about how to think through different issues in a critical manner. Sometimes I think that people think with multicultural education that you have to provide every sort of perspective that is out there and that is simply not possible to do. I think that what I have learned maybe through practice and what I learned from my classes is that to be an effective teacher, I have to present the material with a balanced

approach and at least let the students know that there can be more than one way to look at a situation.

How Confident are you in implementing Multicultural Educational Pedagogy?

At the center of this study, the aim was to determine whether there were differences among the four groups in terms of their multicultural efficacy, which is their belief in their confidence to be successful in engaging in multicultural practices. Those interviewed were asked to rate themselves on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being low, 3 average and a 5 high, in terms of how confident they felt in implementing multicultural educational pedagogy. Overall, all of the participants interviewed reported an average confidence level. Yet, upon closer inspection a clear pattern emerged which indicated that according to the respondents' exposure to the class, as well as their understanding of diversity their comments varied. Of the four groups, the preservice teachers in group 1 reported the highest multicultural efficacy on the MES. This is interesting, given they completed the survey before any significant exposure to multicultural educational pedagogy was introduced. Additionally, this group was the most homogenous in terms of class, race, and gender. Many of them expressed a sense of being unaware of teaching about culture prior to taking the course. During the course of our conversation and as they processed through their own thinking about multicultural education, several of the preservice teachers in group 1 changed their confidence level with most reporting a low average confidence level. For example, one of the preservice teachers in group 1 stated,

I would say at this point I am at a two. A two because this is the absolute last course I am to take before student teaching and I am not sure if I have had enough practice at this. I mean I haven't written any lesson plans...I am still unsure of how to implement it and what I should be looking for and now I go out there and I am supposed to do it. I mean I feel like I could work really hard and I could think about, but I don't you know, it will take me a few years before I will probably really grasp how to do this and to remember all of the things I should consider...I don't know.

The preservice teachers' in group 2 multicultural efficacy on the MES was slightly lower than the preservice teachers from group 1. In the interviews this remained fairly consistent. While the preservice teachers in group 2 expressed an average multicultural efficacy, overall they expressed concern in their ability to successfully implement the pedagogy. For example, one preservice teacher in group 2 indicates that taking the course had broaden her awareness of the different types of diversity and how it is important for teachers to understand and use this knowledge in the classroom, but she also expressed concern as a new teacher in whether she knows enough to be able to do this successfully. Another preservice teacher from group 2 who changed her initial score to reflect an emerging understanding stated:

I would say that I am maybe two and a half. Like I feel like I am not very prepared just because we only had one class about it. I feel like it would have helped to have had it be taught in many classes...so that there was some continuity. Because I feel there is repetition of lots of other things and I feel like that is one thing that wasn't repeated in every class that really should have been and not just for a week, but just tie it in throughout our whole time we are in teacher training.

#### Student Teachers

On average, the student teachers who completed the MES also indicated an average confidence level. Their confidence differed according to their experience with diversity and their program of study. Of all the respondents, those interviewed from this group had the most diversity in terms of experience with diversity and their own cultural backgrounds. Those who were secondary education had a lower confidence level than their elementary education peers. The reason most cited by the secondary education majors was that they felt that they had the least amount of practice in teaching. Yet, one student teacher expressed a low confidence level on both her MES and during the interviews. When asked to expound upon her feelings she expressed the following:

I tried to implement multiculturalism in my classroom at Spring Hill, but the largest roadblocks my students encountered was the fact that they did not have examples of these multicultural differences to reference. They can only see what is in front of them and what they have been brought up to believe. I had hoped by using different multicultural books and activities, I would have been able to show them the differences in the world and how it makes this country so amazing. But I don't think I was too successful...I didn't have the support I needed in order to try something like this. The other barrier that really concerns me is the one between the races. I do not still understand why, but it seems to be that white children tend to have a better chance of succeeding academically than African-American students...no matter what the statistics show. I will never be able to fully grasp the real reason why this gap exists, but it does and we, as teachers, need to acknowledge it and fix it. However, that is my fear. I do not know how I can, as a teacher make this gap go away. I feel like it is almost impossible even though every teacher and student knows it is extremely wrong. How am I supposed to break this barrier? For me to be a more confident teacher in multiculturalism, I will need to find a logical answer to this question.

In analyzing the comments made by the two groups of preservice teachers and the student teachers, there seemed to be an underlying fear of their ability to successfully implement multicultural educational pedagogy. Whereas, nearly all of the beginning teachers commented that while they understand the challenges implementing multicultural education they felt that with sufficient practice, experience and resources, that they could be successful. One expressed it this way:

“Um...I feel comfortable in my ability to interact with a diverse population. I feel comfortable in my ability to find resources and in addressing all of the different viewpoints. I know that I can find material that I need, but I also think that I can get a lot better at it. Honestly, I think that experience is one of the key factors. So in practicing multicultural education consciously thinking about it for me...I think I do so naturally, I think that being Jewish helps me in that perspective. I hope to always teach in an environment that really promotes that...um but I realize that I haven't consciously engaged in it enough to really be, what I would consider really good at it. Perhaps at the core of what I have been trying to do and I don't know where I may have learned this...but I am working on understanding that not all students like to learn. And for me, we always talk about relevance and connection to make the classroom engaging, and part of that is finding those stories that connect to the students. I always try to find stories that connect to students because I realize the students are interested in learning about others and this is what makes the environment interesting.

With one beginning teacher you get the feeling that they are still coming to terms with her understandings of the practice of multicultural education. At the time of the interview this particular beginning teacher had just completed her first year of teaching. Her comments were quite revealing, perhaps evoking some of the strongest reactions of all the participants, she stated:

I think that multicultural education should be one of our core classes and definitely key to incorporating it into the other sequences because I looked at it first of all, I look at like this, I was lucky to find the school that I did, because not all of us are going to be able find jobs within this fifty mile radius. I think that we all are beginning to understand that more than ever these last couple of years. Um, and I know a lot of people who have interviewed or who have thought about applying to even um like metro Wichita, which while I don't like metro Wichita...I find it to be a challenging environment to teach in, but I think it is more attainable than my peers think it is. But for many metro Wichita scares them. Wichita in my mind, I mean it is not as good as Johnson County, by any means, but it is not a place to be scared of going. Um...for me going into inner city Chicago, for me, now that's scary because I don't have the knowledge to work with that group of students because I don't understand their issues. I have never had a gun drawn on me. I have never had to have the burden of walking past, you know, people dealing crack on the streets where a lot of those students might have. And I think by having a way to talk about these issues, to weave it through multicultural education classes is a good way to do so. I feel that most times the focus at least with some of the professors that I had was on the standards...but I think at some level we do need to have a more in-depth conversation about culture and how culture plays a part in how students learn. If I am going to teach this Latino kid over here who has issues reading on a fifth grade level and has absolutely no desire to connect to American history, well there are a lot of bridges I could build if I had some kind of framework for working it, and it has nothing to do with my pedagogy. I know how to teach that kid how to read, and I feel confident in my ability to find resources or professionals that could help me get, literally my strategies laid out one next to one another. But I am not as confident as I would like to be that I could have somebody in my building that I could go to and say, Look, I know this kid is Latino and I know there are family issues at play here. But what can I do to help him culturally see the importance of education. Or what can I do to help him feel more comfortable in this environment. To make people feel comfortable and honestly get the job done, concerns me. I mean with every professor in the School of Education I have had has done wonderful things individually with their students and the one thing I have heard as an overarching kind of kind of I guess, I don't know if I want to say mantra for the School of Education, is that you need to find ways to connect with your students. This is kind of what we have do as teachers to make kids learn, but I think the question of how do you connect with them is sometimes left unanswered.

## **Chapter Summary**

The purpose of this chapter was to explore in depth the respondents understanding of diversity in general and the goals and purposes of multicultural education more specifically. First the quantitative analysis explored the data through an empirical lens, looking at both similarities and differences within and between the four different groups and at differences on the item specific statements. The analysis revealed that differences among the four groups did exist. These differences aligned with the amount of exposure the respondents had to the multicultural education course. A secondary finding from the quantitative analysis indicated that preservice teachers entered the program with a high degree of confidence and that by their student teacher year that confidence had diminished, with a leveling of confidence occurring during the beginning teacher years.

The second stage of data analysis was filtered through a qualitative lens. From this analysis several patterns emerged which helped to give shape and meaning to the quantitative data. One theme to emerge is how sociocultural factors influence the respondents understanding of diversity. An additional theme to emerge was the impact of family. The qualitative data enhanced the findings of the quantitative data, by providing possible explanations as to why the variances in the data occurred. The next chapter of the dissertation discusses the findings of the quantitative data in relationship to the interviews collected during the qualitative phase of the study.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS**

#### **Introduction**

In re-examining the extant research on preservice teachers' multicultural education from chapter two of this study, several main points are worth reviewing. First, the field of multicultural education is in state of evolution, progressing from its earliest stages of ethnic studies to its more recent stage of multicultural education for social reconstruction. However, through this progression there has been very little to address the development of preservice teachers' initial beliefs regarding multicultural education to those skills, beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and understandings needed in an ever-changing culturally pluralistic school context. This is an important point to consider as it suggests a point of entry into the effective preparation of preservice teachers, including the coursework, field experiences and class time spent in preparing novice teachers in the area of multicultural education. Additionally, if teacher educators are charged with the responsibility of preparing preservice teachers for these challenges, teacher training and methods courses must facilitate preservice teachers' beliefs about the importance of multicultural education for all preservice teachers. The third and perhaps most important point I made was that as our nation's schools continue to change demographically, it is imperative that the teachers entering these classrooms are effectively prepared for such challenges, as such multicultural education must move from the margins of teacher education programs to a more central position reflecting its importance as an essential part of the teacher preparation programs for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond.

The research questions from this study were primarily answered by the findings presented in Chapter 4. The surveys and interviews were each analyzed separately. In this chapter, the data

are connected in order to draw conclusions about the data set as a whole. As Creswell (2009) notes, “mixed-research is recursive in nature and that the analysis of one type of data leads to (and thereby connects to) the need for the other type of data” (p. 85). More specifically the connection of the data occurred in the specific research questions addressed by the study. In the remainder of this chapter, I further analyzed some of the main research findings from the dissertation.

### **Question 1: Do Preservice and Beginning Teachers’ Approaches to Multicultural Education Differ as Measured by the Multicultural Efficacy Scale, (MES)?**

The participants were asked to choose the position that reflected their strongest beliefs about teaching. The response choices from the survey aligned with Grant and Sleeter’s (1987, 2007) approaches to multicultural education. A within group analysis determined that overall the majority of the respondents indicated a multicultural approach. A multicultural approach as defined by Grant and Sleeter emphasizes the benefits of cultural pluralism to society and focuses on attempts to reduce prejudice by portraying individuals from diverse racial, gender and disability groups in nontraditional roles. The interview data supported these findings. For example, many of those interviewed demonstrated an understanding of the growing culturally differences in our nation’s schools. A beginning teacher summarized the sentiments of the respondents best, when she stated, “the schools are different from before, not just along racial or ethnic lines, but more so along language and class, I don’t think that as a teacher we can simply ignore what is happening.”

Although the majority of the respondents indicated a multicultural approach, a between group analysis indicated differences among the four groups worth consideration. For example, the survey indicated that 28% of the preservice teachers in group 1 selected a tolerance approach to multicultural education. As Nel (1993) suggests while this is a point of entry for most student

teachers, she predicts that such an approach would serve as a source of resistance toward multicultural education practices for many preservice teachers. However, the preservice teachers in group 1 who were interviewed did not express resistance to multicultural education; more so what was apparent from their comments was their lack of awareness of the need to incorporate culture into their practice. For example, 50% (n=3) of the preservice teachers in group 1 interviewed stated that they did not realize there was a need to incorporate culture into their teaching practice. A secondary theme that emerged from the data generated by the preservice teachers in group 1 comes from when they were asked how they derived their understanding of multiculturalism. Many of them indicated that in their homes they had been taught that everyone should be treated equally and that they must learn to tolerate other people's differences. When pressed to define what they meant by tolerance, one preservice teacher stated, "quite simply, when I was growing up my parents taught us to accept others who might be different from me...to me acceptance and tolerance are basically the same...aren't they." Unlike Nel's prediction of resistance from those preservice teachers who hold a tolerance perspective, the preservice teachers in this survey expressed an overall lack of awareness more than resistance to multicultural education.

Interestingly the only resistance to be felt in terms of tolerance came from a preservice teacher in group 2 who sternly rejected this notion of tolerance, she stated, "what does tolerance mean?... I can put up with my little brother when he is brothing me...I can put up with music that I don't like for a bit...but what does it mean to say that I tolerate someone...it seems that implies that I am only willing to put up with you or tolerate your existence ...but I don't have to accept you." She concluded "to me tolerance doesn't require one to take any action." Clearly from these two examples, the struggle for preservice teachers is that they are entering the

program with preconceived notions regarding multiculturalism and diversity that have not, prior to taking this required course, been challenged. From the second preservice teacher the question becomes, whether her understanding of tolerance was challenged by taking the multicultural education course. Hence, what may have been perceived as resistance was alleviated by her deeper understanding of diversity. This was also expressed in interviews with both the student teachers and the beginning teachers. For example, one beginning teacher who expressed a multicultural approach stated, “before taking the course, I think that these are thoughts about diversity that I always had given my family background, but I never had the words to define what I was experiencing.”

Finally, of the four approaches listed, tolerance, assimilation, multiculturalism and advocacy, across the board, the approach with the least amount of respondents was the advocacy approach. Interestingly, three of those who aligned with that approach also participated in the interview phase of the study. These individuals through the interviews all expressed a sense of feeling like an outsider, due to either their race/ethnicity or their religion. Their feelings of being marginalized contributed to their want for change. For example, one of the beginning teachers, who self-identified as being Jewish commented, “Because of my own experiences growing up and feeling like an outsider, I think has made me see the world a little differently than my peers. I always wanted to be a teacher...and I have always wanted to teach in a school where those who might feel left out...not part of our country’s historical narrative can have a voice is at the essence of who I am as a teacher and what I hope that I bring into my classroom each day.

As the survey indicated the majority of the respondents shared the same approach to multicultural education. However, as the interviews revealed there were subtle yet important differences among the participants. The question to be determined was whether or not the

respondents had different approaches to multicultural education and the response is that yes, the respondents do have important differences in their approaches to multicultural education based upon many factors including; lack of an awareness of the significance of multicultural education and culture, one's personal beliefs framed by their family's influence or self-identity, meaning how one sees him/herself in relation to others and the impact of a course in multicultural education and diversity issues. In understanding the respondents approach to multicultural education it is also important to consider the approach of the instructor. While the researcher embraced a multiculturalism that is social re-constructivist, I am uncertain if this had much of an impact upon the students' responses, since the preservice teachers in group 1 completed the MES early in the semester, prior to any in-depth discussion. As for the preservice teachers in group 2 it appears through the interviews that the students were responsive to the approach taken by the instructor. Many of the preservice teachers interviewed commented that the course help them to understand diversity in more depth and they specifically attributed this deeper understanding to the position put forth by their instructor. For the student teachers and the beginning teachers this connection is somewhat less clear, for these respondents as indicated in the interviews had both the Assistant Professor and the Associate Professor as instructors. What is apparent from the interviews is that certain activities had more of an impact then perhaps the perspective that the instructor emphasized. Of importance is that given the state of multicultural education, as it has evolved into its present understanding is whether or not the course, *Education in a Multicultural Society*, embraces as Groski (2008) suggest the field's foundation of social justice, equity and critical pedagogy. Or does the course reflect a superficial celebration of diversity. When the interviews and the survey are taken together along with the context of the course, one could surmise that the course, regardless of the instructor attempts to actualize the more critical

perspective of multicultural education advocated by the theorists in the field. However, it should be noted that this is perhaps one of the difficulties in having a stand-alone course, is to move students who do not understand that culture is an important element to consider in teaching to supporting an advocacy position, implies that much needs to be covered but it may be impossible to move students developmental within the span of a typical 16 week semester course. One findings of this study is that instruments such as the MES are helpful in providing baseline data to inform teacher educators in terms of where the students are in their own development as they design course work consistent with Grant and Sleeter's developmental stages of multicultural practice in accordance to their typology of approaches (Groski, 2008).

In sum, the findings of the survey support the research, (Neuharth-Pritchett, Reiff and Pearson (2001) which suggests that preservice teachers' understandings and conceptualizations about multicultural education are restricted to issues of race and ethnicity. However, as the interviews suggest when probed the respondents across each of the four groups expressed a deeper understanding of diversity especially as it reflected their own experiences with diversity. As Richardson (1996) suggests and the findings from this study support, teacher beliefs are formed by different factors including age gender, race, and experiences with minorities, family background, and schooling.

**Question 2: What are the Differences (if any) Between Preservice and Beginning Teachers' Multicultural Efficacy as Measured by the Multicultural Efficacy Scale?**

The respondents' responses on the multicultural efficacy subscale on the MES revealed differences between each of the four groups in terms of their multicultural efficacy. These differences can be explained in relationship to Bandura's four sources of efficacy; mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional states.

## Mastery Experiences

According to Bandura (1978) Mastery experiences are those instances in which individuals perform the act under question, in this instance the act in question is the implementation of multicultural educational practices. The beginning teachers are the only group of respondents who have the autonomy to actually implement multicultural educational practices in their own classrooms. The beginning teachers had an average mean score on the multicultural efficacy subscale of 59, while this is not the lowest mean score it is problematic, as it relates to their multicultural efficacy. According to Bandura's rationale of mastery, experiences which suggest that the convergence of theory and practice would provide the source material for the formation and development of one's efficacy beliefs. Since the beginning teachers mean score is similar to the mean score of the preservice teachers in group 1 who entered the teacher preparation program at 58, causes one to wonder how effective is the multicultural education course and what factors are contributing to the beginning teachers near entry level score. Beginning teachers ascribed many factors that might explain their efficacy score. For example, many of the beginning teachers expressed concern that in their teacher preparation, they were not given the opportunity to create and implement multicultural educational lesson plans or units. For example, one beginning teacher stated, "I wish that during student teaching that I had had the experience of actually trying to write a lesson plan from a multicultural perspective...I would have liked to have been able to test some of these theories." Other beginning teachers expressed the concern that they were pleased with their teacher preparation and that no matter how much preparation one received it would still not be sufficient. For example, a beginning teacher stated, "I think that our professors tried to prepare us for the realities of teaching...but I don't think that you can ever really be prepared for everything...that could possibly occur, the best experience as

I think about it comes from just being in your own classroom.” Both of these are valid conclusions with implications for teacher educators. The question for teacher educators then is how we can create valuable experiences for preservice teachers to authentically engage in the implementation of multicultural pedagogy.

The preservice teachers in group 2 displayed the strongest confidence in their abilities to implement multicultural educational practices. Yet in the interviews there was no indication of their experience of putting multicultural educational theory into practice. Mindful of the fact that self-efficacy is a future-oriented predictor I wonder if this presents a false sense of confidence upon their part in what they will actually be able to do. It is unclear from either the MES or the interviews what accounts for these findings.

#### Vicarious Experiences

The second source of experiences according to Bandura (1978) is vicarious experiences. Vicarious experiences occur when individuals observe others and use these observations as a source of information in beliefs that are formed by the self. Bandura asserts that the power of vicarious experiences is dependent on the similarity of the model observed to the observer and the actions observed. The student teachers had a mean score of 61 on the multicultural efficacy scale. Again while this is not the lowest score, their score is problematic for student teachers who are in the field and observing master teachers. The difficulty is matching student teachers with those master teachers in the field who are multicultural efficacious and able to serve as mentor teachers.

By creating immersive field experiences which provide for authentic experiences for the preservice teachers in multiple school contexts, with opportunities to reflect upon these experiences could serve as providing vicarious experiences in which to build their multicultural

efficacy. According to those interviewed, the field experience connected to the multicultural education course is ineffective, in overcoming prejudicial and stereotypical attitudes of others.

### Verbal Persuasion

The third source of efficacy is verbal persuasion. Bandura (1977) asserts that this is found in the voiced support of our friends and colleagues as they provide verbal support for our attempts to take on and complete tasks. The preservice teachers (2) had the highest mean score on the multicultural efficacy subscale, at 65. There could be many factors that contribute to these respondents high degree of confidence however. While the *a priori* beliefs toward multicultural education of the preservice teachers in group 2 could not be determined. There is evidence based upon the interviews that the multicultural education course had an impact upon their beliefs regarding multicultural education. For example, as one preservice teacher in group 2 suggested, “this course gave me the names to those things that I always believed but before the class I never had the name for.” This is further supported by comments made by another preservice teacher from group 2 in regards to the overall class, “while we discussed some difficult issues, the professor provided a safe atmosphere for us to discuss those difficult issues.” This suggest that one of the goals for teacher educators teaching multicultural education classes is to create an environment in which the students feel supported and able to express their beliefs in an atmosphere that is nonjudgmental. However, the reactions from the beginning and the student teachers indicate a different experience, especially as it relates to their methods courses. During the interview phase of the study, the beginning teachers observed the lack of continuity between their methods course and their practicum, specifically in terms of being required to construct multicultural lesson plans or units. This implies that the relevance of multicultural education was not voiced by their methods instructors.

## Physiological and Emotional States and Preservice Teachers (1)

The preservice teachers in group 1 had a mean score of 58 on the multicultural efficacy scale. Their score represents the lowest mean score among all of the respondents. Given that that this group of respondents were administered the survey prior to formal instruction in multicultural educational pedagogy; these findings are not that surprising. Bandura (1978) posits that when individuals are confronted with an emotionally arousing situation that is stressful, or a physiological change, these reactions might have an impact on the individuals' self-efficacy. More specifically this is applicable to teacher self-efficacy beliefs when preservice teachers experience an emotional or physiological reaction. The theoretical framework of multicultural education can be disconcerting for many preservice teachers, as they are possibly confronted with beliefs that may challenge their own belief systems. As the research indicates (Nieto, 2000), this presents a disquieting imbalance that can manifest itself in feelings of frustration and resentment toward multicultural education. This was not the case, at least for those who were interviewed for this study. The respondents in this study indicated that while they were not aware of the need to incorporate their students' culture into their practice, none of those who were interviewed expressed feelings of frustration or resentment. In addition, to expressing feeling of not knowing, the preservice teachers in group 1 expressed other contributing factors which helped them to understand multicultural education. These contributing factors often had to do with their family upbringing which caused them to understand diversity in a more complex way.

**Question 3: What factors do preservice, student teachers, and beginning teachers see as influencing the construction of their knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, and understanding toward their ability to effectively implement to effectively implement multicultural educational practices?**

Bennett et al. (1990) identified four dimensions of a conceptual model of multicultural teacher education, namely; knowledge, understanding, attitude, and skill. The researchers posit that knowledge is having a consciousness of the history, culture, and values of major ethnic groups, as well as articulating a theory of cultural pluralism. Understanding includes having cross-cultural interactions and immersions experiences in which to apply cultural theory. Attitude involves an awareness and reduction of one's own prejudices and misconceptions about race. Skill includes planning and implementation of effective multicultural teaching practices. Guyton and Wesche (2005) assert that any consideration of multicultural attitudes must factor in each of these dimensions. When asked during the interview phase of the research, what factors were necessary to effectively implement multicultural educational practices, the respondents listed similar attributes as the researchers; their responses were categorized accordingly; skills, attitude, understandings and beliefs. The following presents representation of their responses.

### Skills

Each of the participants who were interviewed indicated that in order to effectively implement multicultural education pedagogy, novice teachers need to develop the skills to successfully implement the theory into practice. One preservice teacher in group 1 expressed it this way; "what is the purpose if after all we don't know how to use this in our classroom."

Another preservice teacher (2) responded similarly:

I think the goal of multicultural education should be to help us as individuals learn how to examine our own biases first...and I think that is what my professor did a very good job of doing. I think helping a teacher know how to look at self is a skill and to understand their own bias and their prejudices and what they bring to the table. So whether that is accomplished by taking a course in diversity, which all of us at KU are required to, I think that would be excellent training for all teachers. Secondly, I think that we need the skills to know how to implement multicultural educational practices. In our methods courses it was or at least it seemed to me that it was always emphasized that we need to meet, you know, the needs of our learners whether they be LD or BD or ED or ELL or you know even gifted, we of course need to know how to do this. But I would also say

that was probably the main thing that was emphasized; less emphasis was placed upon how to reach those learners who were different culturally. I mean we have only the one course in multicultural education, but I don't think and this is probably more just my feeling of across the full of education in general but I don't necessarily see the connections between the classes as far as connecting the curriculum for the students. I felt like the majority of our classes were disconnected. Like you went from one class and learned about that, and you went to the next class and learned about that, but there wasn't kind of this bigger picture painted of how all of these things actually fit together or an understanding of how all of this fits as a whole would make someone a better teacher.

One of the student interns succinctly stated what she believed to be an essential skill for all new teachers, she stated:

I would say that a lot of it is practice. Um...wouldn't that be that if students, you know, go out and teach a lesson to their desired areas, if it is you know elementary or secondary? They go and they teach a lesson or even a set of lessons to the classroom. I don't know how that works as far as if we are actually allowed to do that as undergrads or how that works, but and then just develop the curriculum and make plans designed to reach at multicultural views. In our multicultural education class it was more like discussing it, which was great. I mean discussing it, I think, is the first step, then putting it into practice. Like I don't think that we actually created any lesson or anything like that...tried to meet the needs of diverse learners.

The consensus among the student teachers was the need for skills toward implementation and that this should become a part of their all their teacher education classes. The respondents also indicated that not only should they have practice creating multicultural lesson plans and units in their methods class but that they should also have practical experience in their practicum. For instance, one student teacher explained:

I liked my placement...and I think that I learned a lot from my cooperating teacher. But if you asked me how she responded to students who were different...I think that the only culturally differences that I saw was one of the students had a hearing aid...and so there were accommodations that were made. But when I think about the experience now...I remember there being students who struggled for a lot of different reasons...and we at least not while I was there every addressed it. Our focused was on preparing the students for their assessments which seems strange because we would look at the data after each checkpoint to see how they performed...but I don't think we ever looked at the data beyond thinking that we had to reteach, or the kids simply didn't get it. Shouldn't we have been at least considering that the students learn differently and that we should take that into consideration and then plan our lesson according to their needs. This seems like it would make sense...and that we should be doing that...I know in some of my other

classes we talk about data driving the curriculum...but at this point I am not sure what that means or really how to work with that and include an understanding of the multicultural differences that come in to effect.

## Attitudes

Across each group of respondents, the participants expressed a favorable attitude toward multicultural education. More specifically, the participants all seemed to agree that having a positive and open attitude toward diversity and multicultural education should be developed throughout their teacher preparation. One preservice (1) teacher stated it this way, “I think that open mindedness is really important and being open to teaching that curriculum, being open to the differences that your student bring into the classroom and what they have to also teach you and the rest of the class is important for teachers to understand how to do. I think that this is achieved when we are receptive to cultural differences.”

While the interviewees expressed similar thoughts, there seemed to be a depth of maturity underscoring the beginning teachers’ comments, one that demonstrated a convergence of their understanding of theory into practice. For instance, one beginning teacher stated:

I really think it is just getting out there and seeing it, especially if you are from a suburban district or a small town. You need to get as far away from your home base as possible to experience schools that are different from where you come from. I know many of my friends in the program just want to go back to a community similar to where they were raised...and there is nothing wrong with that. But I don’t think that many of them every experienced anything beyond that...so I question what they are bringing into their classrooms. I think that it is fine to want to return to what is familiar to you...but I think that they need to do so in a way that brings in fresh perspectives. That seems to me to be one of the goals or should be one of the purposes of multicultural education. I don’t think that we really did that as much. I mean we had the one or two urban school visits, but I don’t think that was enough to really get people thinking about diversity or multicultural education in a meaningful way. I remember that on the bus ride back from Harmon...some of the students on the bus were saying things that made me think; this did not change them at all...if anything it seemed to reinforce the stereotypical thinking that they had from the start.

## Understandings

Central to the theme of understandings that underscored the participants' responses was this notion that multicultural education is important for all teacher educators. One beginning teacher stated, "I think understanding your own feelings on a topic is huge and I don't think that you this can be memorized and read in order to be prepared if you don't truly understand how to apply this information in practice otherwise it is not very helpful." Another beginning teacher made the following point:

I think that if you look at like a Shawnee Mission school, I mean as far as diversity, in my opinion, they are not extremely diverse schools, so you've have a much more heterogeneous population. So I think for the student, learning about others who are different from themselves is good, learning that and being exposed to that is only going to help them because as they grow up and they go on to college and then into the work force, there is going to be more diversity then say they had in their classrooms. For a teacher in those districts, I mean I think understanding just in general that their recognition that they are different views is going to be helpful to the teacher because you have that mindset that I need to adapt, I need to teach based on what my students needs...even if there are no signs of obvious differences.

## Beliefs

The last theme to emerge from those interviewed in terms of what should be the goal of multicultural education centered on beliefs. Many of the participants focused their discussion on wanting to know how to counter negative and stereotypical beliefs in the classroom. For example, one preservice teacher from group 1 said, "to hate, I believe is taught. I believe it is taught at a very young age. So how as an elementary teacher do I try to re-teach something that is being taught in the home?" She continued:

This hate is instilled in them, and so maybe after a few years of practice under my belt, I might be able to confront this a little bit better...but right now, I don't think I can do this. I feel like I am a moral person but I haven't done this so I am a little bit nervous because I know that not everyone thinks like me and you can't reason with unreasonable people, you know, I can read a book you know like there's a book on penguins, you know, how two male penguins raise a baby, and you know how that enraged some parents, like, oh this is a homosexual relationship and why are you reading that to my children. I hope that I will eventually become more confident in challenging parents beliefs...but I don't know...because there is a fine line between what I believe and what parents believe and I

don't think that I should necessarily be teaching values...but some of what the students will bring into the classroom runs counter to my own beliefs and what should be at the foundation of our education this belief in equality for all...so where does one draw the line.

A student teacher stated that the goal of multicultural education should be to help new teachers to develop positive, she stated:

We are told over and over again that all children can learn...but we are not told in our classes how to do this. I mean we talk about it somewhat, but if this is not at the center of your belief system ...the belief that all children can learn, then you probably are not going to be successful...and the kids are definitely not going to be successful. In our field experiences in the multicultural education course, it was obvious that some of the teachers we observed did not share the belief that all children could learn. I observed in the severe autism room, and I followed this teacher into the resource room. She was working with a boy who was obviously embarrassed that he couldn't read. And this teacher...I mean it was really weird. It was like she was not really paying attention to the child. It was really uncomfortable watching him try to read and struggle over words and the teacher kept looking at the clock like she had another place she needed to be in ten minutes and I need you to get through this book, and I am going to get through this book, whether the child understood it or not. I mean this was just tragic. I am concerned that this is what we are sent out to observe, it seemed to run counter to what we talked about in class. I also went into another classroom and there was an aid that was working with this one child. The Para [professional] was working with this little girl, who couldn't read a word and I was in there for about 20 minutes and this aid kept working with this girl. She just stuck with it until she got it and it didn't seem to matter to her how long it took her, she just kept on using different strategies until she found one that works. I think that is what I mean by belief that all children can learn. It became clear that of the two people I saw that day that the aid had a belief that the child could and would learn. I feel that multicultural education is extremely important for the early grades. They are still listening to their mom and dad, but teachers can have such a huge impact if it is presented in the right way...so it's important not only for us as new teachers to have the right attitudes...but it is just as important for us to know how to cultivate those attitudes in the students that we teach. You have to start with the foundation, which for me is what you believe in.

While acknowledging the importance of being prepared to deal with parents' limited understanding of diversity, one beginning teacher associated her belief system in the following manner, "For me the most important part, I guess of multicultural education, um...I know I won't be able to get every kid out to experience every wonderful part of this world, I myself am very limited. I know that, but in knowing that, I recognize that my goal is to kind of help students

at least become interested in going out and not to be afraid of what we call diversity.” Several key factors, consistent across each of the 4 groups of respondents, was identified as influencing their abilities to effectively implement multicultural education, specifically; (a) the need to understand one’s self before understanding others; (b) a broader understanding of what constitutes diversity; c) to learn and practice with support the instructional skills needed to be effective in diverse classrooms; and d) the belief that all students can learn and that it is the responsibility of the teacher to make sure that this occurs.

The findings from the data suggest that preservice teachers are entering the teacher preparation program with attitudes amenable to multicultural education. Additionally, the data suggest that the respondents’ are confident in their beliefs in their abilities to successfully implement multicultural education. This receptiveness is further enhanced by the respondents’ exposure to the multicultural education teacher preparation course. However, according to the data, once the preservice teachers enter their student teaching semester, there is a slight decline in both their attitudes and their confidence in their abilities to successfully implement multicultural educational theory. The data further suggest that this decline in attitudes and confidence in abilities continues into the first three years of professional teaching. In sum, the findings suggest several possible rationales for these differences, which have implications for teacher educators: (a) the respondents’ cultural backgrounds, and prior experiences with diversity; (b) the effectiveness or sustainability of the required multicultural education course from entry-level into the first years of teaching, c) the intentionality of the teacher preparation program in its attempts to make explicit the convergence of theory and practice; and d) the degree in which the respondents understand the relevance of knowing their own cultural background and the background of their students. This is salient when one considers the data on

those preservice and beginning teachers who saw themselves as “other”. These respondents displayed sensitivity toward diversity issues. These findings supports Neuharth-Pritchett, Reiff and Pearson, (2001) who posit that those who view themselves as minority demonstrate a more in-depth understanding of multicultural and diversity issues, this is illuminated particularly by those who expressed a difference based upon their religious beliefs. I cite this because in looking at a course of students, unless they self-identify as identifying with a certain group, the assumption could be made that the group is homogenous when it is not. This is key information for teacher educators to know and understand when constructing course work.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **Introduction**

This study represents an effort to understand the effect of a stand-alone multicultural education course on preservice and beginning teachers' confidence in their abilities to effectively implement multicultural educational pedagogy. The purpose of this study was to make explicit those factors deemed by the respondents as influencing their beliefs and attitudes regarding issues of diversity. It was hoped that a better understanding of the preservice and beginning teachers' multicultural efficacy at different stages of their professional development would provide an informed perspective in terms of the development and facilitation of multicultural education course work as part of a teacher preparation program. Three questions guided this study: Do preservice and beginning teachers' approaches to multicultural education differ as measured by the Multicultural Efficacy Scale, (MES)? What is the difference (if any) between preservice and beginning teachers' multicultural efficacy as measured by the Multicultural Efficacy Scale, (MES)? What factors do preservice and beginning teachers see as influencing the construction of their knowledge, attitudes, skills, and understandings toward their ability to effectively implement multicultural educational practices? The results of the study revealed three major themes: a need for opportunities to construct multicultural lesson plans and units, as well learn effective teaching strategies for diverse learners; a need to increase preservice teachers' awareness and exposure to culture, both their own culture and the cultures of others; and a need to make multicultural education a fundamental component within a teacher preparation program. In the following sections of this chapter, implications for practice and areas for future research are discussed.

## **Implications for Practice**

Multicultural education in its present form emerged in the 1980s as an attempt to provide educators with the necessary knowledge and skills to teach diverse learners. Among its earliest aims were to interrupt the cycle of inequality and oppression that produced a lack of achievement among students of diverse backgrounds (Banks, 2002). As such, multicultural education was conceptualized as a reform movement designed to develop pedagogical strategies to support school cultures which embraced the homes and communities of all children, with the explicit goal of creating an equitable educational system (Banks, 2002a, 2004; Bennett, 2003; Sleeter & Grant, 2003).

The main findings in this study present three principles factors important for teacher educators to address for the effective preparation of future teachers for culturally pluralistic classrooms. First, the study illuminated the relative strengths and weaknesses of a stand-alone multicultural education course. Second, the study identified a pattern charting changes in multicultural attitudes of preservice teachers at different stages of teacher preparation. Third, the study provided an understanding of the multicultural efficacy of novice teachers and the factors they believed which influenced their beliefs in their abilities toward becoming multiculturally efficacious. The following section provides recommendations for a teacher preparation program as it seeks to strengthen the multicultural efficacy of its preservice teaches.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce (2001) more than one-third of the students in today's K-12 public schools are students of color and, by the year 2025, at least half will be. Meanwhile, only 13% of their teachers are from minority cultures with more than 40 percent of schools across America that has no teachers of color on staff (Capella-Santana, 2003; Gay & Howard, 2000). These population and teacher employment trends have implications for

teacher education programs. For instance, it means that teacher education programs need to be mindful in the selection of students for their teacher preparation programs and well as the need to recruit and retain teachers of color. One consideration is a reexamination of the recruitment strategies utilized by teacher preparation programs to actively seek young people of color, who might have an interest in becoming teachers. This suggestion moves the discussion of who teaches and where to a new level. I am suggesting that teachers of color bring with them a wealth of lived experiences that could benefit not only those whose voices have been silenced in schools, but equally important these educators' bring a perspective into those communities in which representation of other is often invisible. This is not to suggest that the mere selection of people of color will solve the problem of the cultural divide that presently exists in our nation's public schools. Fundamentally, this is a larger issue calling for a careful scrutiny of teacher candidates. As Haberman (1991) suggest teacher educators need to find ways to focus more on "picking the right people" rather than on trying to change the wrong ones through teacher education. Selections criteria should include persistence, resilience, and the demonstrated belief that all students can learn.

In addition to a careful selection process of teacher candidates, thoughtful consideration should be given to preservice teachers' proceed throughout the program. There should be transition points within the teacher education program whereby preservice teachers are asked to discuss their willingness to rethink their conceptions of race as well as all other ways of being different. Hilliard (1998) suggests that throughout teacher education programs, preservice teachers need to be challenged to show their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and understandings of multicultural education. These situations could serve as checks points for continuance in the program. Are there dispositions that preservice teachers need to exhibit in order to gain entry into

teacher preparation programs? What means of evaluation for these dispositions are there? And should there be just one single measure that is used to determine whether a preservice teacher will be a good teacher in the future? If not, then what are the components that a teacher preparation program should consider in ascertaining whether a candidate is a good fit? These are questions that remain unanswered and warrant further inquiry.

### Multicultural Education Course

The findings of this study suggest that more time is needed for preservice teachers to engage in the multitude of topics that encompass multicultural education. As such, a single, stand-alone course, as part of a teacher preparation program is insufficient. This is particularly relevant, since the essence of the course attempts to confront and reconcile the cognitive dissonance often resulting from the introduction of beliefs and attitudes which may be contradictory to the *a priori* beliefs held by preservice teachers upon their entry into teacher preparation programs. As Giambo and Szecsi (2010) suggest the more teacher education courses on issues of diversity exposes preservice teachers to more opportunities to construct different concepts of and sensitivity to issues of diversity. Thus more courses in diversity and multiculturalism should be offered beyond the mere one semester. One possibility would be to offer multicultural education courses each year the preservice teachers are in the teacher preparation program.

### Structure for Multiple Multicultural Education Courses

Grant and Sleeter's (2006) typology of approaches to multicultural education could serve as a framework for designing multicultural education courses in a teacher preparation course, moving preservice teachers along a continuum which takes them from the first approach, teaching the exceptional and the culturally different toward a position which advocates for

education that is multicultural and social re-constructionist, which aligns with the current state of our nation's public school demographics. The first course could begin by allowing a space for preservice teachers to begin to view themselves as cultural beings, with a particular cultural lens and way of seeing the world, before they can engage in the process of understanding those deemed different from themselves. Banks (1994) and others suggest that individuals do not become sensitive and open to different ethnic groups until they develop a positive sense of self, including an awareness and acceptance of their own ethnic group (as cited by McAllister and Jordan, 2000). As the preservice teachers are made aware of their own culture, which should be a continuing process as they proceed throughout the teacher preparation program. A second multicultural education course could focus on the nature of prejudice and stereotypes. This second multicultural education course could begin the critical discourse on the nature of power and the structure of racism as it exists both in society and more specifically within our schools. As Nieto (2008) suggests this is fundamental for all preservice teachers to understand regardless of where they intend to teach. The findings of the study support this notion. The respondents' limited exposure to diversity as expressed on the MES coupled with those whose main source of understanding diversity comes from the media is troublesome as it replicates the structural and institutional understandings of race and difference, without an examination of the privilege. In examining the research on multicultural education, there appears to be a belief that multicultural education is only for those who intend to teach in an urban school setting. Yet, if our society is to adhere to its democratic principles then the issues of equality, equity, and race should be discussed not just by those who are marginalized, but also by those who are in power, if real sustainable change is to occur. These are difficult, yet important conversations which all preservice teachers need to participate, in order to be effective in culturally pluralistic schools.

As the preservice teachers take this second course, or at least in close proximity to it, there should be a tighter connection between the multicultural education course and the Foundations of Education course, where the preservice teachers are introduced to the historical origins of many of these concepts. This connection must be made visible and explicit to the preservice teachers.

The third multicultural education course should coincide with the methods courses and embed the theoretical into the practical. This can be accomplished in a number of ways. First, preservice teachers need to learn how to construct lesson plans and units that are culturally responsive. In addition to learning how to construct a multicultural curriculum, preservice teachers also need authentic opportunities to implement their plans. Thus field experiences need to be more than drive-by and/or observational visits, but rather real opportunities for preservice teachers to actively engage in meaningful interactions with diverse students. This can include ideas such as working on case studies, tutoring programs, and action research projects which enable preservice teachers to become familiar with schools, communities and students in a constructive manner. And finally, after implementation, preservice teachers need to learn how to deeply reflect upon their experiences and teacher educators need to provide a safe place for them to process this information. The potential problem is that this course could become a cookie cutter response, or a one size all fits all approach, which must be avoided. If the prior multicultural education courses are effective in broadening preservice teachers understanding of what constitutes diversity, then this third course could build upon that knowledge by incorporating an understanding of diversity that looks at constructing meaningful curriculum that meets the needs of a diverse group of students, along not only on race, but class, gender, exceptionality, language, and other markers of differences. Learning to differentiate instruction to meet these needs is important for meeting the realities of the multitude of differences that

novice teachers will encounter in their classrooms. The researcher recognizes the problems inherent in such a course, especially the lack of knowledge by the methods instructors. However, this should not serve as an impediment to infusing multicultural theory and pedagogy into the methods course. Based upon the findings of the study, this appears to be an area that overwhelming the preservice teachers, student teachers and the beginning teachers expressed a desire for more experience.

The fourth multicultural education course is a seminar course taken during the student teaching and internship semesters. This course offers an opportunity for the student teachers to meet with their faculty instructors as well as an additional opportunity for the student teachers to meet with their university supervisors in a non-threatening atmosphere in which to process through their experiences. The design of the course could provide a place for student teachers to talk about their abilities to implement multicultural educational practices. It is also an opportunity to focus our conversations on the challenges of working in diverse classrooms and help provide a way to not only strengthen student teachers multicultural efficacy, but also just as important, to help student teachers develop the resilience to persevere in spite of the challenges, obstacles and or discouragements they may encounter in attempting to work in culturally and linguistic diverse classrooms. It is in this telling of the experience that will enable them to integrate who they are and what they experienced into one (Merryfield, 2000). It is also an opportunity for them to reflect on those practices and instances in which they are successful in implementing multicultural educational theory. Such a framework of multicultural education courses for preservice and student teachers could extend beyond the university in terms of building capacity among novice teachers toward creating a community of teachers who are committed to the practice of multicultural education. Ongoing reflective practice is as Howard

(2008) maintains essential in order to engage in multicultural educational practices. He asserts, critical reflection is a personal and challenging look at one's identity as an individual person and as an active professional. This acknowledgment of the potential disconnect between the personal and professional lives of teachers is at the center of how confident teachers are in engaging in this critical pedagogy and one that must be developed and nurtured by teacher educators.

A concern of the viability of such a structure does not escape the researcher; many opportunities exist to incorporate multicultural educational practices as outlined above. Central to accomplishing such a task requires a commitment upon the teacher preparation program to move multicultural education from the sideline of teacher education to the center. This is done by making explicit the goals and relevance of multicultural education to preservice teachers.

#### Immersive Field Experiences

One of the common complaints about the multicultural education course's field experience is its "drive-by" [researcher's term] urban school visits. While the intent of these visits is to provide preservice teachers with exposure to schools in which they may not consider teaching. In its present form, this activity, while well meaning, is a disservice to the preservice teachers and the schools in which they are visiting. First this activity creates an assumption that diversity only occurs in urban settings. Second, the visits do not provide an opportunity for the preservice teachers to understand the students; families or communities in which these schools are situated. Third, without opportunities to authentically interact with the students in a meaningful way, often times, the preservice teachers are left with their unchallenged and biased opinions of these schools contexts. Consequently, the multicultural education course should provide preservice teachers with multiple opportunities for engaging in extensive field experiences with diverse populations. The idea of diverse populations should include not only

schools in urban areas, but also rural and suburban communities as well. Also, experiences should not be limited to schools but also diverse communities (e.g. homeless shelters, food banks, community centers, service organizations) who represent the diverse backgrounds of families and children.

While it should be noted that these immersion experiences alone may not increase racial awareness, however when combined with opportunities for preservice teachers to critically reflect on those experiences can help deepen their understanding of the experiences. Thus the immersive field experience must include opportunities for deep, critical reflections before, during, and after field experiences. These critical reflections should also include an investigation of who the preservice teachers are in terms of their own race. By understanding how others live provides opportunities for preservice teachers to see the world beyond their own lived experiences. Additionally, these reflections should include discussions of identity (including gender, race, class), as well as issues of power. By engaging in this process preservice teachers will be able to deconstruct and deepen their understandings, attitudes and assumptions they hold about racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse students. As Varvus (2002) and others suggest the placement of student teachers in the field is an important element in developing preservice teachers multicultural competency. This is further supported by Bandura (1984) work which suggests that vicarious experience, watching those in practice with the expertise to successfully execute a task, contributes to the efficacy of the observer. Again, the researcher acknowledges the difficulties in attempting to match those master teachers with student teachers. Yet, this can be achieved. For example, effective use of Professional Development Schools, (PDS) such as the one used by the institution in the study could serve a dual purpose, first provide for quality mentor teachers who demonstrate effective multicultural

educational practices, and secondly the university could work in tandem with the PDS to build capacity provide around a shared vision of multicultural educational practices. These are elements that are in place in many schools, it is a matter of making the connections and the relationships explicit.

### Teacher Preparation Program

As Ladson-Billings (1995) asserts, the problem of multicultural education is a problem of teacher education, consequently, its marginal status within teacher education programs needs to be reevaluated. At a minimum the guiding professional standards for the accreditation of teacher preparation institutions as outline by NCATE (2008) suggest the following:

- have the content knowledge needed to teach students;
- have the pedagogical and professional knowledge to teach effectively
- operationalizes the believe that all students can learn;
- demonstrate fairness in educational settings by meeting the educational needs of all students in a caring, non-discriminatory and equitable manner;
- understand the impact of discrimination based on race, class, gender, disability/exceptionality, sexual orientation, and language on students and their learning; and
- can apply their knowledge, skills and professional disposition in a manner that facilitates student learning.

As evident in the interviews, many of these components are clearly evident to the preservice teachers within this teacher preparation program. However, what is less clear is whether the courses in the program are explicit in making the students aware of the need to understand the impact of discrimination based on race, class, gender, disability/exceptionality, sexual orientation and language on students learning. Having taught the Foundations, Multicultural Education, and an Elementary Methods course, the opportunities to make this standard visible within the program are there, yet a disconnect exist and the students are not making the necessary connections between the courses. In order to create a program thread, faculty needs to be trained

in diversity, it should be mandatory that methods courses embed multicultural educational curriculum, practicum and field experiences should be in areas which expose students to a variety of diversity, and there should be benchmarks that measure students progress through the program as it relates to this standard, as well as established measures to hold the program accountable to meeting this standard.

#### Faculty

At the core of this study, lies a fundamental question which needs to be addressed in order to make these recommendations viable. Namely, how have the faculties within these teacher preparation programs kept pace with the changing demographics and curricular developments necessary for preparing future teachers to be effective in classrooms of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It seems that the first step is for schools of education, faculty members to engage in the difficult conversations regarding issues of diversity and perhaps more specifically race. We have to move past our own comfort levels to engage with one another in a respectful and productive manner that allows for a critical discussion regarding the space that differences occupy not only in society, but more specifically within our schools. As Howard (2008) suggests teacher educators should engage in a reflective process of self-discovery by undergoing a workshop designed for them to come to an understanding of their own identities around issues of race, ethnicity, social class, and gender. He further asserts that the willingness on the part of teacher educators to share their own lived experiences exposes their own human frailties, and their ever-evolving identities within a community of diverse individuals. However, the researcher is aware of the hesitation upon the part of faculty members to engage in this discourse. There seems to be a fundamental assumption that multicultural education is for the marginalized or for those who intend to teach in urban school settings, a sentiment often mirrored by preservice teachers. The

challenge is how to begin to enlarge this conversation to understand the depth of its complexity and understand how this impacts us all. Guinier & Torres in their book, *The Miner's Canary*; provide a metaphor that is helpful in understanding why we must begin with a conversation on race. The authors contend that like the canary's distress, which alerts miners to poison in the air, the issue of race, points to conditions in American society that endanger us all. Similarly, many of the issues that are facing urban schools today are early warning signals to the challenges, all communities, including rural and suburban schools are facing. The miners approach can be then extended to include other means of diversity, including gender, disabilities/exceptionalities, sexual orientation, social economic status, and language differences present in our schools today, and serve to broaden our conceptualization of what constitutes as diversity in our society. As Ladson-Billings (1994) suggest engagement in multicultural teaching instills a political consciousness in students. And she cautions teacher educators to be mindful of the how our actions can contribute to the development of a consciousness that is emancipatory and has social and cultural relevance. The implications of how this critical perspective is presented to preservice teachers can contribute to expressions of resistance and resentment if we are not careful.

### **Implications for Future Research**

This study offers preliminary findings that should be pursued more thoroughly in future research. The findings indicate a need for an effective intervention in the form of carefully constructed and multiple course offerings in the area of multicultural education. For example, the findings from this study suggest that a single, stand-alone course on multicultural education has intermittent effect on the multicultural efficacy of preservice teachers as they advance through a teacher preparation program into the early years of professional service. Therefore, the

researcher's first recommendation is to explore the relationship of effective multicultural education instruction before, during, and after a multicultural education course, specifically looking at the effectiveness of a multicultural education course into the first three years of teaching.

It is important to understand how colleges and university nationally are addressing the demographic revolution presently underway. It would be beneficial to see how schools are addressing multicultural and diversity issues in those places where diversity on the surface appears not to exist, more specifically how these issues are addressed in our rural and suburban communities. Such an investigation could help move the our perception of diversity as only for those who intend to teach in "those areas" to a broader understanding one which presents the notion that diversity is present everywhere. It can also begin to foster a critical discourse on diversity and inequities that run counter to our nation's fundamental beliefs about democracy.

It is the researcher's recommendation that the continued use of both quantitative and qualitative research methodology be utilized to further ensure a comprehensive understanding of this complex topic. While the researcher was able to collect a large volume of data based on the preservice, student teachers, and beginning teachers' responses from the MES, and the interviews, the advent of new technologies for gathering, recording, and storing information makes creating large more generalizable data sets possible. As such, longitudinal studies that follow a cohort of preservice teachers from entry level into their first three years of professional service could provide useful information in terms of how the multicultural education course can be structured. Especially in terms of what course work and field placement experiences that could be restructured to meet the needs of a culturally pluralistic school context. This data could be enhanced through the use of follow-up interviews with faculty members, building principals,

and students. In addition, the inclusion of a document review of lesson and unit plans created by novice teachers could provide useful insight to a beginning teacher's ability to effectively incorporate a multicultural educational pedagogy. The collection of this information could provide useful qualitative data which provides further evidence on the ability of preservice teachers to effectively implement multicultural educational practices. Such data could also provide useful evidence on the effectiveness of a multicultural education course within teacher preparation programs.

Other related areas of research could also contribute to the findings of this study. For instance, examining preservice teachers' dispositions toward multicultural education before, during and after teacher preparation for diversity, might yield useful insight into preservice teachers' future decisions about whether or not they feel confident in their ability to effectively deliver multicultural educational practices. Dispositions when viewed as a composition of beliefs, attitudes, and values, are critical attributes to consider when preparing teachers to work effectively with students of cultural backgrounds different from their own. As such, case studies or longitudinal projects that document novice teachers evolving dispositions toward multicultural educational theory and practices from teacher preparation into their first years of professional service would be beneficial. Also, research that explores the racial identity development (Helms, 1990) along with the process oriented model by (Bennett, 1986) provide essential information for preservice as they experience and work through their cognitive dissonance when confronting beliefs and values different from their childhood.

As Howard (2008) asserts over the past 30 years the issue of student diversity has been a part of the national discourse on teacher education. In 1973 the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, (AACTE) endorsed multicultural education. In its influential

document, *No One Model American*, they called for the profession to respond to the increase in cultural pluralism. They assert that a belief in cultural pluralism should permeate throughout all of the education preparation courses and experiences for preservice teachers. Consequently, those charged with the preparation of teachers must understand that multicultural educational courses are more than special courses added on to standard programs. The challenge becomes for colleges and universities to train teachers committed to cultural pluralism. Thus understanding the ways in which teacher educators can strengthen preservice teachers' confidence in their abilities to effectively implement multicultural educational practices deserves continued study. And finally, strengthening preservice teachers' multicultural efficacy may foster a commitment to multicultural education which is essential for the continued development of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and understandings needed to meet the challenges of teaching in a culturally pluralistic school environment.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A: HSCL

Approved by the Human Subjects Committee University of Kansas, Lawrence Campus (HSCL).  
Approval expires one year from 8/12/2010. HSCL #18192

March 6, 2010

HSCL #18192

Mary Denning, coordinator  
Human Subjects Committee Lawrence  
Lawrence, KS 66045

Ms. Denning this letter is in reference to **HSCL # 18192**. Since the initial request there have been a few minor changes to the study. The following list the items that have been changed:

Title of the project: Original title was How Do I Get From Here to There: Developing Pre-Service Teachers Multicultural Efficacy to ***A Mixed-Method inquiry into the Multicultural Efficacy of Pre-service and Beginning Teachers.***

Participants: The original study included pre-service teachers enrolled in the Education in a Multicultural Society class (both sections) as well as the student interns.

***Change: The previous groups are still a part of the study, but now the study includes a sample of beginning teachers who are recent graduates from the University of Kansas School of Education, specifically those with 1 to 2 years of professional service in the field.***

Data collection will remain the same, those pre-service teachers will be administered the survey in person by the principal researcher

***Change: The beginning teachers and student interns will take the survey electronically.***

Interviews: Those participants wishing to participate in a follow up study will be asked to indicate their consent, consistent in the manner described in the initial study.

Please let me know if there is anymore documentation needed. If you have any further questions please contact me.

Phyllis Paige Esposito,  
Principal Investigator  
Department of Curriculum and Teaching  
(816) 237-6629  
Phyl1905@ku.edu

cc: Professor Steven White  
Co-Investigator



**Part II**

**Section A (Experience)**

Definition: The authors intend the terms “diversity” and people different from me” to include people of different races, ethnic groups, cultures, religion, socio-economic classes, sexual orientations, and physical abilities.

Directions: Please choose the word; mark an X, in the column, that best describes your experience with people different from you by marking the corresponding column.

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently
1. As a child I played with people different from me.				
2. I went to school with diverse students as a teenager.				
3. Diverse people lived in my neighborhood when I was a child growing up.				
4. In the past I chose to read books about people different from me.				
5. A diverse person was one of my role models when I was younger.				
6. In the past I chose to watch TV shows and movies about people different from me.				
7. As a teenager, I was on the same team and/or club with diverse students.				

**Section B (Attitude)**

Directions: Respond to each statement by choosing one answer, mark an X in the column, which best describes your reaction to it. Since we are simply trying to get an accurate sense of your opinion on these matters, there is no right or wrong answers.

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly
8. Teachers should adapt lesson plans to reflect the different cultures represented in the classroom.				
9. Teachers should provide opportunities for children to share cultural differences in foods dress, family life and beliefs.				
10. Discussing ethnic traditions and beliefs in school leads to disunity and arguments between students from different cultures.				
11. Children should be taught mostly by teachers of their own ethnic and cultural background				
12. It is essential to include the perspectives of diverse groups while teaching things about American history that are common to all Americans				
13. Curricula and textbooks should include the contributions of most, if not all, cultural groups in our society.				
14. The classroom library should reflect the racial and cultural differences in the class.				

### Section C (Efficacy)

Directions: To the best of your knowledge, self-assess your own ability to do the various items listed below. Please mark an X in the column, which best describes your belief in your abilities to accomplish each goal.

	I do not believe I could do this very well	I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.	I believe that I could do this reasonably, if I had time to prepare	I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do
15. I can provide instructional activities to help students to develop strategies for dealing with racial confrontations.				
16. I can adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of learners from diverse groups.				
17. I can develop materials appropriate for the multicultural classroom.				
18. I can develop instructional methods that dispel myths about diverse groups.				
19. I can analyze instructional materials for potential stereotypical and/or prejudicial content.				
20. I can help students to examine their own prejudices.				
21. I can present diverse groups in our society in a manner that will build mutual respect.				
22. I can develop activities that increase the self-confidence of diverse students.				
23. I can provide instruction showing how prejudice affects individuals.				

	I do not believe I can do this very well	I could probably do this if I had to be difficult for me.	I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare	I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do
24. I can plan instructional activities to reduce prejudice toward diverse groups				
25. I can identify cultural biases in commercial materials used in teaching				
26. I can help students work through problem situations caused by stereotypical and/or prejudicial				

attitudes.				
27. I can get students from diverse groups to work together				
28. I can identify school practices that may harm diverse students.				
29. I can identify solutions to problems that may arise as the result of diversity				
30. I can identify the societal forces which influence opportunities for diverse people.				
31. I can identify ways in which various groups contribute to our pluralistic society.				
32. I can help students take on the perspective of ethnic and cultural groups different from their own.				
33. I can help students view history and current events from diverse perspectives				
34. I can involve students in making decisions and clarifying their values regarding multicultural issues.				

Note: The following item is different from the others in this section. (Approaches)

35. Choose the statement that best represents your approach to multicultural education, by placing a X, next to the statement, which most closely reflects your strongest beliefs about teaching:

If every individual learned to accept and work with every other person, then there would be no Inter-cultural problems

If all groups could be helped to contribute to the general good and not seek special recognition, we could create a unified America.

All cultural groups are entitled to maintain their own identity.

All cultural groups should be recognized for their strengths and contributions.

Some groups need to be helped to achieve equal treatment before we can reach the goals of a democratic society.

**Please indicate your willingness to participate in a follow-up interview by including contact information below:**

Yes, you may contact me for a follow up interview.

## Appendix C

### Interview Protocol

ID Number:

MES Number:

Time of Interview:

Start Time/End Time:

Preservice Teacher (1) (2)

Student Teacher (3)

In-service Teacher (4)

### Prepared Statement

*Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview. The interview will be audio-taped to ensure accurate representation of your views. The purpose of this interview is to seek explanation regarding your beliefs in your ability to effectively and competently implement multicultural educational practices. I have prepared several questions regarding your major (field of study), coursework, practice experiences, your understandings of multicultural education as presented by your teacher education professors and your sense of efficacy to teach in a multicultural school context. At the conclusion of the interview, I will provide you the opportunity to make any closing remarks you deem necessary regarding any of the issues discussed in this interview.*

- 1) What is/was your major field of study?
- 2) What influenced your decision to pursue a career in education?
- 3) You state that you want to teach \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ do you anticipate that you will be asked to teach culturally diverse students? Linguistically diverse students?
- 4) Do you think you possess the necessary skills needed to be effective in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms?
- 5) Using a scale of 1 (not very successful) to 10 very successful how think (are you) in teaching culturally and linguistically students? Why?
- 6) Which of the following statements best reflects your beliefs about teaching culturally diverse students? Why?

- 7) Do you feel this is/was a belief advocated by your professors?
- Statement 1: When teaching in a culturally diverse educational setting, it is important to not notice the color and culture of one's students.
  - Statement 2: When teaching in a culturally diverse setting, it is important for teachers to be aware of their students' cultural differences?
- 8) Which of the following statements best reflects your beliefs about teaching? Why?
- Children should adapt to the classroom
  - The classroom should adapt to meet the needs of children

### **Teacher Education Questions**

- 1) What experiences do you have working or studying in multicultural environments?
- 2) How many practicum requirements have you completed?
- Where were the sites of your practicums?
  - What responsibilities did you have?
  - During these experiences did you/did not interact with culturally and linguistically diverse students
  - Did you experience any anxiety when you first encountered culturally diverse students? With linguistically diverse students?
  - Did anything in your practicum increase or decrease your confidence to teach in a culturally diverse learning environment? Explain
  - What kinds of things did you observe during your practicum that facilitated the success of culturally and linguistically diverse students?
- 3) How many classes have you taken that address issues of diversity at the university? What topics were covered?
- On a scale ranging from 0 (not effective at all) to 10 (extremely effective) how would you rate the overall effectiveness of the course to prepare you to teach culturally diverse students? Your rating is \_\_\_\_\_. Why?

- Have your methods course shown you how to teach academic subjects to diverse students?
  - What strategies and methods were discussed
- 4) The MES outlines specific conceptualizations regarding the purpose of multicultural education. You indicated on your scale \_\_\_\_\_. Can you explain why you feel this is the primary purpose of multicultural education? Also can you explain how you formed your beliefs regarding your conceptualization of multicultural education?

#### Open-Ended Questions

- Before entering the education program, what were your experiences with others from different backgrounds?
- What were your perceptions or understandings about others from different cultural or ethnicities?
- Were your understandings challenged throughout courses and if so, in what way(s)?
- Were your understandings challenged during coursework, practicum and/or internship or time in your own classroom experiences and if so in what way(s)?
- Do you believe that you are prepared to teach minority students?
- What aspects of your coursework were most beneficial in helping to prepare you to work with diverse children, especially children not from your culture or race/ethnicity?
- What aspects of your practicum were most beneficial in helping prepare you to work with diverse children, especially children not from your culture or race/ethnicity?
- What aspects of your internship were most beneficial in helping to prepare you to work with diverse children, especially children not from our culture or race/ethnicity?
- Have you made any behavior or attitudinal modifications? Explain.

Thank you.

## Appendix D

### Informed Consent

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The department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Kansas supports the protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate, you are free to withdraw at anytime without penalty.

We are conducting this study to measure changes in preservice teacher as they are trained in multicultural education, as well as attempting to identify relative strengths and weaknesses of the multicultural teacher education program.

To accomplish these goals will entail the completion of a Multicultural Efficacy Scale, MES. The MES is a 35 item instrument with subscales for experience, attitude, efficacy and one item designed to measure views toward the major purpose of multicultural education. The survey will be administered to three different cohorts of students of which upon your agreement you will be one; the first cohort will take the MES during the 2nd week of a 16 week course with the objective of identifying beginning preservice teachers beliefs regarding multicultural education upon entering a teacher preparation program, the second cohort will comprise of students enrolled in a multicultural education course and will be given the MES instrument after completion of their second urban field experience, approximately 8 to 10 weeks into the 16 week course, the purpose of administrating the survey after the field experiences is to gain insight into preservice teachers beliefs and values after some exposure to the conceptual frameworks outlining a multicultural course and the third cohort of students will take the MES during their student teaching (intern) semester, the goal here is to see how well students believe they are able to implement multicultural elements into practice.

The content of the inventory should cause no more discomfort than you would experience in your everyday life. Although participation may not benefit you directly, we believe that the information obtained in this study will help us gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of our multicultural education courses. Your participation is solicited, although strictly voluntary. Your name will not be associated in any way with the research findings. If you like additional information concerning this study before or after it is completed; please free to contact us by phone or email.

Completion of the survey indicates your willingness to participate in this project and that you are at least eighteen (18) years of age.

If you have any additional questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call (785) 864-7429 or write the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence (HSCL) University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7563 or by email [dhann@ku.edu](mailto:dhann@ku.edu).

Sincerely,

Phyllis Paige Esposito

Steven White, Ph.D

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